

**The Bible And Science:  
Are They In Conflict?**

**Volume 5**

**The Days Of Genesis  
And The Age of the Earth**

By

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The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

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And The Age of the Earth**

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## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

### Table Of Contents

#### Introduction

#### **Part 1:       The Days Of Genesis**

*What Do They Represent?*

- |             |                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Question 1  | How Shall We Approach The Issue Of The Meaning Of The Word “Day” In Genesis 1?                                                        |
| Question 2  | What Are The Various Ways Bible-Believers Understand The Word “Day” In The First Chapter Of Genesis?                                  |
| Question 3  | What Is The Recent Creation View? (Six Literal Days Twenty-Four Hours In Length, The Calendar Day View)                               |
| Question 4  | What Is The Literal Solar Day/Creation Not Dated View?                                                                                |
| Question 5  | What Is The Local Creation View? (The Creation Account Only Deals With The Promised Land)                                             |
| Question 6  | What Is The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View?                                                                                              |
| Question 7  | What Is The Gap Theory? (The Ruin And Reconstruction Theory)                                                                          |
| Question 8  | Could There Have Been Gaps Between The Days In Genesis 1? (Progressive Creationism)                                                   |
| Question 9  | What Is The Revelational Day Theory? (Creation Was Revealed In Six Days)                                                              |
| Question 10 | Was The Account Of Creation Written On Six Tablets Long Before The Time Of Moses? (The Creation Account Was Possibly Written By Adam) |

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

- Question 11    What Is The Age/Day Theory? (The Days Represent Long Ages)
- Question 12    What Is Literary Framework View?
- Question 13    What Is The Religious Only View Of Genesis?
- Question 14    What Is The Analogical Day View? (Days Of God, Not Human Days)
- Question 15    What Should Be Our Conclusion About What The Bible Says Concerning The Days In Genesis?

### **Part 2            The Bible And The Age Of The Earth**

- Question 16    Do Christians Believe The Earth Is Old Or Young?
- Question 17    Why Do Some Bibles Say The Date Of Creation Was 4004 B.C? (Ussher's Chronology)
- Question 18    Does The Bible Give Us Clues With Respect To The Age Of The Earth?
- Question 19    Do The Days In Genesis Help Us In Dating The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 1)
- Question 20    Do The Genealogies In The Bible Give Us A Complete Chronology? Can We Date The Time Of Creation From The Genealogies Alone? (Clue 2)
- Question 21    How Does The Issue Of Animal Death Help Us Date The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 3)
- Question 22    What Is The Idealized View Of Time? (Mature Creationism) How Does It Affect The Way Things Are Dated? (Clue 4)

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

- Question 23     Why Would God Not Have Revealed Himself To Those Who Lived Before Adam And Eve? (Assuming Such Personages Existed) (Clue 5)
- Question 24     Do The Teachings Of Jesus Provide Us With Any Information About The Genesis Creation Account And The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 6)
- Question 25     How Does The Nature Of God, As Revealed In The Bible, Help Us Determine How Long Humanity Has Been On This Planet? (Clue 7)
- Question 26     How Does The Future Creation of the Heavens and the Earth Help Us Date The Original Creation? Clue 8)
- Question 27     Does The Fall Of Humanity And The Genesis Flood Have To Be Considered When Dating The Earth? (Uniformitarianism)
- Question 28     What Conclusions Can We Make About The Age Of The Earth And The Universe?

About the Author

## **Introduction**

In this final book of our series on the Bible and science, we will concentrate on two of the most controversial and often-discussed subjects in the Bible/Science debate—the meaning of the word “day” in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis and the age of the earth.

As we shall see, there are a number of different views that Bible-believers hold on these fascinating subjects.

Therefore, it is important that we take a more in-depth, though not exhaustive, look at the issues in an attempt to discover what the Scriptures are revealing to us about these fascinating topics.

## **Question 1**

### **How Shall We Approach The Issue Of The Meaning Of The Word “Day” In Genesis 1?**

One of the most basic questions about the biblical account of creation concerns our understanding of the word “day” in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis. Genesis speaks of God creating the heavens and the earth in “six days” and then resting, or ceased creating, upon the seventh day.

The question arises as to what the word “day” refers to and how it relates to the age of the earth and universe. In what sense, if any, does Genesis help us determine the age of the earth and the universe?

Throughout history there have been a number of answers given to this question by Bible-believing scholars. Indeed, this issue continues to be debated by Christians.

While Bible-believing Christians agrees that the God of Scripture is the sole Creator of the universe and that the creation is entirely dependent upon Him, there is no agreement on the meaning of the days in Genesis or the time in which He took to accomplish His creative work.

Since this is the current state of the discussion it is important that we take time to investigate the various positions which are held by those who believe the Bible to be God’s divinely inspired Word.

Before evaluating the most popular responses to this question we will first make some preliminary observations.

#### **1. This Question Is Not A Test Of One’s Faith**

We must emphasize that one’s view on the meaning of the days in Genesis, or the time involved in creation, should not be made a test of fellowship among Bible-believers. There is certainly room for charity and grace in this discussion.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Unfortunately, there are some churches and Christian organizations that have made a particular view regarding the days of creation, and the age of the earth and the universe, as a test of membership or leadership.

In other words, only those people who hold their particular view of these questions are worthy of membership in the group or have the qualifications to lead.

Yet, we will not find this “test” in Scripture. Indeed, nowhere in the Bible do we find a person’s view of the age of the earth, or their understanding of the days in Genesis, used as a test of their spirituality or qualifications for leadership.

Thus, we must not place our restrictions, restrictions that the Bible does *not* place, upon people who wish to become involved in Christian work. In sum, let us not elevate this issue to a place beyond where the Bible itself places it.

### **2. The Central Issue—What Did God Do?**

If creation of the earth and universe took place longer than six days of twenty-four hours each, then the character of God is not maligned. Time certainly does not diminish the miracle of creation. God could have created the universe in six seconds if He wished to do so. The issue is not what God *could* have done; the issue is what God did do.

On the other hand, if the evidence leads us to believe that the six days were twenty-four hours in length, and that God recently created the universe, we should not shy away from that because modern science opts for an old universe. The key is to find out, as best as we can, what the text of Scripture says.

### **3. The Rise Of Modern Science Caused Changes In The Interpretation Of Genesis**

This brings us to an undeniable fact. For the past one hundred and fifty to two hundred years the understanding of the biblical account of creation account has been shifting due to the changing views of modern science. Modern science now uniformly says that the universe is ancient.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Indeed, no longer is the earth considered to be relatively young. This assumption of the ancient age of the earth is found in every secular textbook. There are no exceptions.

Consequently, we have seen a change in interpretations of the Book of Genesis from many Bible-believers to fit the conclusions of modern science.

Indeed, because of some of the conclusions of modern science, as well as the desire to keep the Bible from contradicting the scientific evidence, some interpreters have sought to place nature on an equal footing with Scripture in determining Bible/science issues.

In fact, there are those who claim that God has given us two infallible revelations—one in the Bible and one in nature—and these are of equal authority. The “Book of Nature” and the Word of God are both considered to be “Divine Records.” They are put on an equal level, so that one Divine Record is not to be preferred, or advanced, beyond the other Divine Record.

Therefore, when the latest finds of science and Scripture are seemingly in conflict the usual response is to reinterpret the Bible to fit the latest finds of science.

### **The Dangers Of Elevating Modern Science Above The Bible**

This attitude, though common, has obvious dangers.

First, it fails to appreciate the difference between Scripture, which is an explanation of God’s plan for humanity, and nature—which is a silent testimony to God’s creative hand. Nature tells us about God’s power and majesty, but it does not tell us any specifics about His plan.

Furthermore, this idea denies what the Bible says about the inability of fallen humans to accurately comprehend the “book of nature” The Bible speaks of the world as presently being in a fallen condition—resulting from the influence of sin. This should make us cautious about any final conclusions that are proclaimed from modern unbelieving science.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, we should be careful when we attempt to equate Genesis with the latest discoveries of modern science.

In addition, we must appreciate that modern thought about the origin of things is still in its usual state of flux. In fact, there is nothing that can become out-of-date so quickly as an up-to-date scientific explanation of the first chapter of Genesis.

Indeed, the biblical narrative has often been “harmonized” with modern scientific theories, only to find that scientists have changed their position! This, of course, leaves the scientific explanation now out-of-date.

The opinions, and theories, of modern science may cause believers to consider whether we have correctly interpreted the Bible. There is nothing wrong with this way of looking at the issue.

However, modern science cannot, and should not, be allowed to tell us whether or not our understanding of the Scripture is true. That understanding must be based only on an honest interpretation of the Bible, and the Bible alone.

In other words, we must adopt our views on Scripture and science based upon what the text actually teaches—not what scientific theory or explanation may be the most convenient or the most current.

### **4. Scripture Must Be Our Guide**

This brings us to our main point: any determination of the meaning of the days of Genesis must come from Scripture alone. Indeed, we must first decide if the Scripture gives us a clear answer to this issue. If it does, then we must accept the answer and only then attempt to harmonize it with the latest findings of science.

Hence, we are not to begin with the beliefs of modern science and let it tell us how to interpret Scripture, neither are we to try to make the Bible fit with the latest theories of science. The Bible is God’s explanation of who He is as well as what He has done.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Consequently, it is the first place that we should go to discover ultimate answers to our questions about the universe, the earth, and ourselves.

### **5. A Fair Presentation Of The Facts Is Necessary**

It is our intent to give a fair and objective presentation of each of the major views on this subject using the best arguments that are put forward. It should also be noted that within each major view there are those who differ in the various details. We will, therefore, attempt to offer only the main points of each view so that they are accurately represented.

### **6. Each Theory Has Its Strengths And Weaknesses**

At the end of each theory, we will bring up difficulties that others have raised. Finally, the strengths and weaknesses of each view will be summarized, and the reader can decide what will be the best answer to this controversial question.

### **Our Position On This Issue**

While we will present the best arguments that we can find for each position, it is important that the reader knows that we have some definite convictions about this subject.

Indeed, we believe that when all the evidence is in, the only theory that fits all of the biblical evidence is that the days in Genesis are solar days, twenty-four hours in length, and that the earth and universe is relatively young.

In fact, it seems that the Lord has given us no other choice when we evaluate everything said on the issue.

Of course, we understand that not every Christian will agree with our assessment. However, it is important to know where we are coming from on this issue.

**Summary To Question 1**  
**How Shall We Approach The Issue Of**  
**The Meaning Of The Word “Day” In Genesis 1?**

One of the most problematic questions in the Bible/science debate concerns the meaning of the word “day” in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis. In fact, there are a number of issues involved in answering this question. These issues must be clearly understood before we can begin going about our quest for answers.

First, we should not see this particular question as a test of faith. Too often people make this issue more than the Bible makes it out to be.

However, it should never be used as a yardstick to determine whether or not someone is an actual Bible-believer, or that they have the proper qualifications for church membership or leadership. It is therefore important that we keep this issue in perspective.

Second, the real question which we need to answer is what did God do? It is not what *can* God do? God can do anything that He pleases! All agree upon this. We need to know what He *did* do.

We also must appreciate the fact that interpretations of Genesis have changed since the rise of modern science. Before that time, it was almost universally accepted that the days were literal solar days, twenty-fours in length, and that the creation of the universe was relatively recent. This is no longer the case. Indeed, in the secular world the idea that the universe is ancient is universally accepted.

This brings us to the main point: for us to answer this question Scripture alone must be our guide. Any conclusion to this issue must be derived from a careful reading of the Bible. It is the final word on this matter as well as upon every other matter.

Thus, we need to discover the intent of Scripture. What is it intending to teach us about the days of Genesis? This is what we need to discover.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we have a fair presentation of the facts and evaluate all legitimate possibilities. This is the only way we can come to the any type of conclusion on this question.

As we have noted, our view is that the days are solar days and that the earth is relatively young. We will give our reasons for this as we evaluate the various views.

However, we also realize that not every Christian will agree with our assessment. We have no problem with this.

## Question 2

### **What Are The Various Ways Bible-Believers Understand The Word “Day” In The First Chapter Of Genesis?**

Over the years, the meaning of the word “day” in the Genesis account of creation has been a question of controversy for Bible-believers. Therefore, it is important that we look at the various theories which have been proposed to best understand its meaning.

In our study, we will examine a variety of theories concerning the meaning of the word “day” found in the early chapters of Genesis. These different theories will be broken down into three basic categories. They are as follows:

1. Literal Twenty-Four-Hour Days
2. Long Ages
3. Symbolic Days

#### **Literal Days Of Twenty-Four Hours**

The following theories all treat the days of Genesis as being literal days of twenty-four hours in length. We will list eight of them.

##### **1. The Solar Day/Recent Creation Theory (Calendar Day View)**

A popular view is that the days in Genesis refer to regular solar days which are twenty-four hours in length. Furthermore, many who hold this position believe that the earth was created very recently—merely a few thousand years ago.

Therefore, the earth and universe are both very young. As already mentioned, this is the particular view that we hold.

## **2. The Solar Day/Creation Undated Theory**

The next theory holds that the days in Genesis were solar days, but that the creation of the universe is not dated. It argues that Genesis 1:1 states that God created the universe at some dateless time in the past.

After He created the heavens and the earth, He then filled the earth in six literal days. The Bible makes no comment, one way or another, about the time that God spent creating the universe before He concentrated on the filling the earth in six literal days.

Therefore, while the days of Genesis are literal days it makes no comment upon the age of the universe.

## **3. The Local Creation Theory**

This view is similar to the preceding one. It has Genesis 1:1 referring to the creation of the original universe at some dateless time in the past. However, this theory sees the rest of the creation account as only referring to the Promised Land.

In other words, what we find in Scripture in the early chapters of Genesis does not refer to the entire globe. The six days that are listed in Genesis, beginning with 1:2, merely talk about preparing the Promised Land for humanity to dwell in it. This occurred in six literal days.

The date of the original creation of the universe is purposely not given to us.

## **4. The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation Theory**

This theory says that the days in Genesis are solar days. However, Genesis 1:1 is not referring to the original creation of the universe but rather a re-fashioning of the earth. Genesis 1:2 speaks of some chaos which occurred which necessitated this re-fashioning. Therefore, the Genesis account of creation is of a re-fashioned or re-created earth—not the former earth.

**5. The Gap Theory**

The Gap Theory believes that Genesis 1:1 is a statement of the original creation of the universe. Between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 some catastrophic event happened that destroyed the first world. Genesis 1:2, through the end of the first chapter, describes a re-creation of the earth, not the original creation. This recreation occurred in six literal days.

**6. Literal Days/With Gaps Between Them Theory  
(Progressive Creationism)**

The next theory also holds to literal days in Genesis, but with gaps between the literal days. These gaps between the six days of creation could have lasted millions of years. It is argued that much of the creation activity took place between the six days, not necessarily during them.

**7. The Revelational Day Theory**

This particular theory argues that the days in Genesis were not days of creation, but literal days in which God revealed to Moses what He had created in the beginning. Thus, in six literal days, God told Moses about His creative work. Because these are days of revelation and not creation, it is impossible to date the earth and the universe.

**8. Moses Received The Creation Account  
On Six Tablets Possibly Written By Adam**

This view is similar to the Revelational day theory. The days are days of revelation, not creation. However, they were not revealed to Moses through some series of visions on six consecutive days but rather were written on six tablets long before the time of Moses. It is contended that they possible were written by Adam. Moses merely incorporated that which was previously written.

**Long Ages**

There is one theory that sees the days of Genesis as age/days, not as days of twenty-four hours in length.

### **The Age/Day Theory**

This option holds that the days in Genesis are not meant to be understood as solar days but rather as indefinite periods of time—possibly millions of years each. This allows Genesis to harmonize with the findings of modern science.

### **Symbolic Days**

The following theories see the days in Genesis as neither literal days nor long periods of time. They are merely symbolic of God's creative activity.

#### **1. The Literary Framework View**

The literary framework view understands the days in Genesis to be part logical and part chronological. It is argued that there is a definite literary framework in the entire Book of Genesis. This includes the creation account. The days, therefore, are not to be taken literally but rather are to be interpreted as symbolical of God's creative work.

#### **2. The Religious Only View**

This option believes we are asking the wrong question concerning what the Bible has to say about science. It claims that the author of Genesis did not intend to give us any scientific information whatsoever with respect to the creation of the heavens and the earth. His purpose was religious, not scientific.

Thus, to try to find any information of a scientific nature misses the purpose of what the author is trying to tell his readers.

Therefore, it is not necessary to attempt to harmonize Genesis and science since there was no intent to make them harmonize. The writer was not addressing that question.

Accordingly, Moses, the writer of Genesis used the term “day” as a literary technique to organize his description of creation. It can be compared to a playwright organizing a play into six acts.

### **3. The Analogical Day View**

This view sees the six days in the Genesis creation account as God's workdays. The days of God are analogous to human workdays but not necessarily identical.

In other words, each "day" in Genesis simply represents a period during which God performed some major creative activity. Thus, the days in Genesis are consecutive periods of time of indeterminate length.

This briefly sums up the various views put forward by Bible-believing Christians concerning the meaning of "day" in Genesis. As can be readily seen, there is certainly a wide difference of opinion as to how we should understand the biblical text.

#### **Summary To Question 2**

#### **What Are The Various Ways Bible-Believers Understand The Word "Day" In The First Chapter Of Genesis?**

The word "day" in the first chapter of Genesis has been understood in a number of ways by Bible-believing Christians. They can basically be placed into three general categories.

Some see the days as literal solar days, others as long ages, while still others see them as symbolic days.

While there are a number of theories which view the days as literal solar days, only one of these theories, the recent creation view, demands that the earth be relatively young. Each of the other theories, which believe the text speaks of literal days, do not make any statement, one way or the other, about the age of the earth.

Therefore, it is possible to hold to literal days in the Genesis creation account without necessarily arguing for a young earth.

All of the other theories either demand, or at least permit, an ancient earth.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

It must be emphasized that each of these theories has its supporters among Bible-believing Christians.

Since there is such a wide diversity among Bible-believers concerning the meaning of “day” in Genesis 1, we should be careful to insist that our particular understanding is the correct one—though we firmly believe the recent/creation solar day view is the best answer to this question.

While we may indeed hold the correct view, it is also possible that there is a better way to understand the text.

Consequently, each of us should carefully study each view to determine the one we believe best fits the totality of the evidence.

### **Question 3**

#### **What Is The Recent Creation View? (Six Literal Days Twenty-Four Hours In Length, The Calendar Day View)**

The most popular view of the first chapter of Genesis has been to consider the days as literal or solar days. In other words, each day was twenty-four hours in length.

Most people who believe the days are literal twenty-four-hour periods hold to what is known as the “Recent Creation View” or the “Calendar View.” They believe that the creation of the earth and the universe is a relatively recent matter, happening some ten to twenty thousand years ago.

Thus, the earth and the universe are very young. Individuals who hold this particular view are called “young earthers.” This is the view that we hold on this particular issue.

#### **The Case For Solar Days And A Young Earth**

The following arguments are usually given by those who argue for the solar day theory and the recent creation view.

##### **1. It Is The Normal Reading Of The Text**

Those that advocate the solar day/recent creation view maintain that this is the normal reading of the Genesis creation account as well as the rest of the Bible. Indeed, if one takes Scripture at face value, then they will conclude that the earth was created in six literal days a few thousand years ago.

Thus, if a person simply reads Genesis 1 without any preconceived ideas about what it is trying to tell us, then they will almost certainly get the impression that the author’s intent is to say that creation took place in six ordinary days which occurred one after the other.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Indeed, a simple reading will give the impression that the earth was created first, and afterwards came the sun, moon, stars and then finally people. All of this occurred relatively recently. Unless there is some compelling reason to read it differently, this should be the way the first chapter of Genesis should be understood.

In addition, unless there is biblical evidence elsewhere to the contrary, the natural way to read the text of Genesis 1 is the obvious way it is written.

It is also important to note that it is impossible for God to mislead us when He describes anything which He has done.

In fact, if Genesis 1 was not meant to be understood as a literal account, then why was it written that way?

### **2. It Has Been The Historical View Of The Church**

History is also appealed to when attempting to discover an answer to this question. Historically, the Jews interpreted the days as literal, solar days. The church has, for the most part, also held to a literal understanding of the days of Genesis. This furthers the argument that if the Scriptures are taken at face value, the days will be understood in their normal sense as solar days.

### **3. It Is The Obvious View**

In addition, those interpreters who believe the biblical record can be understood to mean “ages” instead of “literal days” recognize that the literal day view is the “obvious view.” Thus, all other views would be the non-obvious interpretations.

### **4. A Day In Scripture Defined**

There is evidence from the text itself. In Genesis 1:5, we find the Hebrew term *yom* as being defined as one day/night cycle. It reads as follows:

God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day (Genesis 1:5 NIV).

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The Hebrew literally reads, “one day” rather than “the first day.”

Consequently, the author of the Book of Genesis, from the beginning, gives us the definition of a day—it was the day/night cycle.

### **5. The Literal Days Are Elsewhere Restated**

Elsewhere, Moses, the same writer who wrote the first chapter of Genesis, restated that the creation occurred in six literal days. The children of Israel were told they were to work six days and then rest upon the seventh because this is what the Lord did. We read:

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Exodus 20:9-11 NIV).

The analogy of six days of work and one day of rest would not make sense if the days were other than literal solar days.

Therefore, those who advocate another view as to the meaning of the word day, have the burden of proof to show why the word should not be understood in its normal meaning.

### **6. They Are Understood As Literal Days**

Many Old Testament scholars contend that the ancient Hebrews would have only understood the days listed in Genesis 1 as literal days. In fact, it would never have occurred to them to interpret the days in any other manner.

### **7. The Hebrew Word For Day Usually Means Solar Day**

Another argument for solar days can be found in the Hebrew word (*yom*) translated “day” in Genesis 1. In the Bible *yom* is used in the singular

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

about 2,000 times in the Old Testament with the usual meaning being a solar day.

We find this particular term is also used for the time of daylight (as opposed to night), and for a point in time, particularly in the future (such as the phrase “day of the Lord”).

Only in rare cases, however, is it used for a period of longer than twenty-four hours and *only* if the context demands it.

Thus, unless there is some compelling reason in the text, we should understand the word to mean an ordinary day.

### **8. They Are Always Solar Days When Used With Numerical Adjectives**

We can add to this that there are about 200 references in the Old Testament where the word *yom* is used with a numerical adjective (e.g. day one, day two). This includes nine times within the creation account of Genesis (1:5, 1:8, 1:13, 1:19, 1:23, 1:31, 2:2 twice, and 2:3).

In every other Old Testament instance, a solar day is *always* in view.

If the days in Genesis are anything but solar days, then chapter one would be the *only* exception to that usage. While this is certainly possible because of the unique nature of the Genesis account, it would be the exception to the rule.

### **9. The Words Are Always Used For Solar Days In A Numbered Series**

In addition, when the word day is used in a numbered series in the Old Testament (for example Numbers 7:12-78), it is always used as a normal day. This is further evidence that solar days are in view.

Again, it is possible for Genesis 1 to be an exception to this rule because of the unique nature of the account but we still must recognize the burden of proof is upon those who would argue for anything other than a solar day.

#### **10. The Plural Of Yom Always Speaks Of Solar Days**

We also find the plural form of *yom* (*yamin*) is used over 700 times in the Old Testament and it always refers to literal days. The only exceptions would have to be the two instances where it refers back to the original creation in Genesis if the days are not meant to be understood as literal. For example, we read:

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it (Exodus 20:11 NET).

Later in the Book of Exodus it says:

It [the sabbath day] is a sign between me and the Israelites forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed” (Exodus 31:17 NET).

Thus, when we find *yom* in the plural used in Scripture solar days are always in view.

#### **11. Yom Is Used Of Daylight As Opposed To Night**

The term *yom* is also used for the twelve-hour period of daylight in four different places within the creation narrative of Genesis (1:5,14,16,18)). There are, however, no numerical adjectives used in these references.

Day and night are described here as periods of light and darkness (verse 5) which would give further testimony that a normal day is in view.

#### **12. The Days Are Linked With Years**

In Genesis 1:14 the term days are linked with years:

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for seasons and for days and years (Genesis 1:14 CSB).

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Here we find the contrast of the word “days” with years. It is clear that literal days are in view—otherwise the term “years” would be meaningless. This is another indication that the days in Genesis are meant to be understood as literal days.

### 13. The Phrase Evening And Morning Means A Solar Day

As we examine the text, we find other evidence that suggest the days were to be understood as literal. For example, the natural way of taking the phrase “evening and morning” would be in a twenty-four-hour sense of light and darkness.

This same phrase occurs one hundred times in other parts of the Old Testament and it *always* has a twenty-four-hour day in view.

Again, Genesis 1 would have to be the exception to the rule. The biblical use of the word *yom* coupled with the repetition of evening and morning in Genesis 1, have led many to conclude that a solar day is clearly in view in the Genesis account of creation.

### 14. God Has Rested From Creation

There is other evidence for the solar day view. The Bible explicitly states that God has rested from His creation:

By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing (Genesis 2:2 NET).

After the sixth day, God “rested” or “ceased creating” anything new. Though God is still resting from creation, the seventh day was a distinct period of time in the past when He rested. When the Bible says that God rested on the seventh day it is always in the past tense, not the present tense.

Thus, the seventh day of creation is over. Hence it should not be made to refer to an unknown period of time as some have attempted to do.

### 15. Sudden Creation Is Taught In Scripture

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

It is also contended that the Scripture teaches that creation occurred suddenly. The Bible says the following:

The LORD merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born. He gave the sea its boundaries and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs. Let everyone in the world fear the LORD, and let everyone stand in awe of him. For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command (Psalm 33:6-9 NLT).

The implication is that creation came about in a sudden manner. There does not seem to be any long period of time from the commandment to the fulfillment.

We can point to the analogy that other miracles of God recorded in Scripture occurred instantaneously. For example, God caused the Red Sea to immediately part:

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided (Exodus 14:21 NKJV)

In addition, we find that Jesus changed water instantaneously into wine. The Bible explains what happened:

When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. "Usually a host serves the best wine first," he said. "Then, when everyone is full and doesn't care, he brings out the less expensive wines. But you have kept the best until now!" This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was Jesus' first display of his glory. And his disciples believed in him (John 2:9-11 NLT).

One moment it was water and the next moment it was wine.

Therefore, sudden creation is consistent with the way God has worked throughout the entire Scripture. It also fits well with the interpretation

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

that the days were twenty-four hours in length occurring only a few thousand years ago.

### **16. Symbiosis (Mutual Need) Necessitates A Solar Day**

Symbiosis is a scientific term for the “mutual need” that certain types of living things have for one another.

For example, many plants cannot reproduce without the help of certain insects or birds. This mutual need is strong evidence of the need for literal days in the Genesis creation account.

The Bible says that that plants were created on the third day (Genesis 1:9-13), birds on the fifth day (Genesis 1:20-23), and insects on the sixth day (Genesis 1:24-25, 31).

Plants can only survive a short period of time without birds and insects. It is impossible for them to exist for millions of years while waiting for birds and insects to come upon the scene.

In addition, many types of birds eat only insects. How could they have survived while waiting for millions or billions of years for the insects to arrive? Symbiosis between these living things speaks loudly for a twenty-four-hour day in Genesis 1.

### **17. The Testimony Of The New Testament To Solar Days**

The New Testament also provides evidence that the days were considered to be literal solar days. There are a number of passages that say the human race was created about the same time as the universe. Mark records Jesus saying:

But from the beginning of creation he made them male and female (Mark 10:6 NET).

If a considerable time elapsed between the creation of the material universe and of humanity, then this verse would be quite misleading.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Yet Jesus said that “from the beginning” God made them male and female. Therefore, the most likely conclusion is that creation must have taken place relatively recently.

### **Conclusion To The Arguments For Solar Days And A Recent Creation**

This evidence has led many people to believe that God meant for us to understand the days of creation in the normal sense of the word—literal days. These literal days of creation took place recently in earth’s history. Thus, the world is only a few thousand years old.

### **Difficulties With Literal Day/ Recent Creation View**

Though the twenty-four-hour day/recent creation view has been popular, it has not gone without criticism. Indeed, there are many Bible-believing scholars who do not think it was the intent of the author of Genesis to communicate that the days were normal solar days. They respond to the arguments in the following manner.

#### **1. The Text Is Not That Clear**

Those rejecting the literal day view contend that the text is not that clear as to the days being literal. On the contrary, they point out that the word “day” can and does mean more than just a solar day in the context of the creation account.

#### **Response**

This argument does not work. As we mentioned, there are too many modifiers in the text that indicate a solar day is in view. Of course, one could conclude that does not necessarily mean a recent creation—as these other theories will contend, but the idea that the word can mean anything but a normal day just won’t fit the facts.

#### **2. There Are Other Possibilities When Believing In Solar Days**

Even if one grants the idea that the days in Genesis are meant to be understood as normal, solar days, this does not necessarily mean that the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

creation of the earth was something recent. There are a number of different ways in which the term “day” can be understood. Therefore, one is not forced to assume that the creation was recent.

#### **Response**

True. But there has to be sufficient biblical evidence to support these contentions. We believe that when this evidence is weighed in the balances it is found wanting—as we will indicate as we evaluate other theories which believe the days are solar but do not necessitate a young earth.

#### **3. The Church Has Not Always Believed In Solar Days**

It is also contended that the church has not always believed in literal twenty-four days of creation. There was *not* a unanimous opinion among interpreters as to the length of the day. Many interpreters, before the age of modern science, advocated the days as indefinite periods of time.

#### **Response**

True. But the indefinite periods of time were not viewed as long ages. Again, we note, the great majority of people accepted the solar day/recent creation view. This must be reckoned with.

#### **4. The Age Of Earth Shows The Days Were Longer Than Twenty-Four Hours**

The main objection to the literal day/recent creation view is the seeming ancient age of the earth and universe. If the earth was created in six literal days only a few thousand years ago, then we should be able to see evidence of this. The consensus of scientists, both Christian and non-Christian, agree that the earth and universe are billions of years old.

Why, they ask, is there no scientific evidence for a young earth? Indeed, are there any examples of non-Christians scientists who conclude the earth is young based on scientific evidence alone? The fact that there are no non-Christian scientists who believe in a young earth shows that the scientific evidence demands an ancient earth.

## **Response**

There are a number of ways we could respond to this. First, non-believers start with the presupposition that the earth and universe are old and interpret everything in that light. Evidence brought to the contrary is explained as anomalies. In other words, an old earth is assumed to be true.

In addition, the various dating systems have not always given the testimony to an ancient earth. But this is not really the issue. The issue is what does the Bible want to teach us? This is where we should be doing our investigation.

### **5. The Arguments For A Young Earth Are Not Scientifically Credible**

It is also claimed that the evidence that some believing scientists bring forth for a “young earth” does not stand the test of scientific credibility. Most scientists, whether they are Christian or non-Christian, accept the idea of an old earth and universe.

## **Response**

Those who hold to the “young earth” viewpoint disagree with that scientific assessment and claim their scientific findings validate their position. They say it is not necessary to appeal to billions of years to explain the various geological stratas. A universal Flood can answer many earth-age discrepancies, but other factors should be considered also.

### **6. God Accommodated The Language To The People At That Time**

Many scholars, who believe that the Scriptures do speak of literal days, explain the so-called discrepancy between the Genesis and modern science by saying that God accommodated the information in Genesis to the limited scientific knowledge of that time.

Thus, the Scripture does speak of God creating the universe in six literal days, but this was only for the benefit of those living at the time. They could not understand any other concept.

### **Response**

It is, however, dangerous to assume that God told the people something that He knew was not true. If God accommodated Genesis to communicate to the non-scientific Hebrews living at the time, He may have done it elsewhere.

Indeed, how can we be certain that this has not happened with other biblical passages? How can we know the difference where God has told the entire truth and where He has not? Consequently, this view, which causes all sorts of problems, is not an interpretive option for the believer.

### **7. How Can There Be Solar Days Without The Sun?**

Another objection concerns the creation of the sun. It seems the sun was not created until day four. How can you have solar days without the sun? Since the sun was not created until the fourth day it is incorrect to speak of actual twenty-four-hour days until after that point in the program of the Creator.

### **Response**

Those holding the literal twenty-four-hour day respond in various ways. For example, the first three creative days could have been short periods of time anticipating the creation of the sun upon day four.

In addition, we assume that all six days were of the same length because the same descriptive phrases are used of each group of three days.

It is also argued that it is not necessary to assume that the sun was created on the fourth day. It is possible that it was created on day one and then made to appear on the fourth.

However, the easiest answer is that a day is defined by the earth rotating on its axis from a fixed light source. Such a light source was in existence on the first three days of creation. Thus, when the sun was created on "day four" the same solar, or calendar days, continued with a different light source.

## **8. The Events Of Day Six Cannot Fit Into Twenty-Four Hours**

The events of day six are said to have been impossible to complete in one twenty-four-hour period. The Bible says that after God created all the land animals on the sixth day, He then created human beings as male and female. God created Adam first and gave him the responsibility of tending the Garden of Eden. God then granted Adam the opportunity to name the animals that had been created earlier that day. Still later, God fashioned a wife for him by means of a rib removed from Adam during a “deep sleep.”

It is hard for many to imagine how all these events could have occurred in one twenty-four-hour period. This has led many to believe that the days represent stages of unspecified length, not literal twenty-four-hour days.

### **Response**

Those holding to the literal day theory respond by saying the events of the sixth day can be made to fit into a solar day. One need not assume that Adam had to name all the animals before he felt the need for a helper. Seeing a few of the animals with female counterparts would have been sufficient to create the need in Adam for someone to help him.

## **9. The Seventh Day Has Not Been Completed**

One final argument concerns the seventh day itself. It is contended that while the six days of creation are looked upon as events that took place in the past, the seventh day is not. The Bible says:

By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation (Genesis 2:2-3 NET).

The fact that there is no completion to the seventh day as far as the Bible is concerned, indicates that it is still ongoing. In other words, it has lasted longer than twenty-four hours.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Hence, if the seventh day was not a solar day, then neither are the previous six.

#### **Response**

The fact that the Scripture does not record the completion of the seventh day, as it did with the six previous days, does not mean that it is still ongoing. Indeed, creation is always looked at as something completed.

Furthermore, even if the seventh day is ongoing, it has only been so for thousands, not millions of years.

#### **The Objections Are Not Insurmountable**

In sum, these are the main arguments, as well as the main objections, to the literal solar day recent/creation view of Genesis. As we have noted, we believe that none of the objections are insurmountable.

Consequently, we feel that this particular understanding of the days of Genesis is the best position to hold.

Of course, we appreciate the fact that not every Bible-believer holds this interpretation.

#### **Summary To Question 3**

#### **What Is The Recent Creation View? (Six Literal Days Twenty-Four Hours In Length, The Calendar Day View)**

The literal day/recent creation theory is a very popular view among Bible-believing Christians. It holds that the earth was created in six literal twenty-four days a few thousand years ago.

The strength of this theory is that it takes the creation account at face value and is consistent with the rest of Scripture—namely God created the world in six literal days.

Indeed, it seems that if a person reads the Scripture without any preconceived ideas, as to what was meant by the word “day” in the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Genesis creation account, then this is the obvious conclusion they would reach.

However, objections have been brought forward against this view. One problem is that the age of the earth and universe seems to be much older—at least it is according to the conclusions of modern science. Since both cannot be true at the same time, many Christians believe that Genesis needs to be reinterpreted in light of the modern scientific view of the age of the universe.

As we have noted, the objections to a young earth, both biblical and scientific, can be answered. Therefore, it is not necessary to abandon this view simply because modern unbelieving science holds to an old earth and old universe.

#### **Question 4**

#### **What Is The Literal Solar Day/ Creation Not Dated View?**

There are some people who hold to literal solar days in the first chapter of Genesis but believe that the earth and universe may be very old. They contend that Genesis 1:1 simply states that “in the beginning” God created the universe, but that the creation is not dated.

In other words, the time of the creation of the heavens and the earth is left purposely vague. It may have been recent or it may have been billions of years ago. The phrase, “In the beginning” simply has no date attached to it. Since there is no date we cannot say when the universe was created.

#### **Genesis 1:1 Is Not Part Of First Day**

According to this view, Genesis 1:1 is not part of the first day of creation but a general statement that God made the universe at some time in the dateless past. In other words, the process with which God created the universe is not stated.

It could have been a recent creation, or it could have taken either millions or billions of years. The time is not stated in Genesis and we should not infer either a recent creation or an old earth. The text does not tell us.

#### **Difficulties With Literal Day/Dateless Creation View**

This view is attractive for a number of reasons. Indeed, it interprets the word “day” in its normal sense, and it harmonizes Genesis with the conclusions of modern science with respect to the age of the earth with the Bible. However, it is not without its difficulties. They are as follows.

##### **1. The Bible Says Creation Was In Six Days**

First, this view contradicts the statement in Exodus as to how long it took God to create the heavens and the earth. Exodus 20:11 says the following:

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it (Exodus 20:11 NET)

This verse seems to refer back to all the events in Genesis 1—including the first verse. If this be the case, then the Bible specifically says that the creation of the entire universe took six days.

### **2. There Was No Death Before Sin**

If there was a vast unknown period of time before God formed the Garden of Eden for humanity to live, then death occurred in the animal world. This would be in contradiction to the statements in Genesis 1:31 that God made things “very good.”

Indeed, how could God pronounce everything as “very good” if there had been animal death for millions or billions of years? This does not seem to make any sense.

Furthermore, the Bible is very clear to the fact that death came as a result of sin. Paul wrote:

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned (Romans 5:12 NIV).

Sin did not enter our world until Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden.

### **Genesis 1:1 Is Not A Title**

Finally, the first verse in Genesis should not be considered as a title to the chapter. It is argued that the best way to understand to interpret it is to assume that it is part of the first day of creation.

Therefore, this view, though attractive, does not really answer the question.

#### **Summary To Question 4**

#### **What Is The Literal Solar Day/Creation Not Dated View?**

The “literal solar day/creation not dated” theory holds the days in Genesis were literal twenty-four-hour days. However, this position also says that there is no attempt made to give the age of the earth or the universe in the first chapter of Genesis. It is argued that the statement of Genesis 1:1, “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” is not part of the first day of creation.

Rather it is a statement of God forming the universe sometime in the dateless past. The forming and filling of the earth is not recorded until Genesis 1:2.

Thus, there may have been thousands, or millions, of years between the time God originally created the universe and the time which He formed the earth and filled it with living things. Since the exact time between the original creation and the forming of the earth is not stated in the Genesis creation account it is unknown.

Consequently, this interpretation would allow the Bible, as it stands, to harmonize with current scientific theories as to the age of the earth.

Though this particular theory holds to a literal understanding of Scripture and of the days in Genesis it, like every other theory with respect to this tough question, it still has its problems.

For one thing, it seems to contradict what the author of Genesis, Moses, restated in the Book of Exodus—namely God created everything in six literal days. Everything includes the universe itself.

Furthermore, this particular point of view must assume that there was animal death before sin entered into the universe. This does not fit the facts as the Bible portrays them.

Indeed, God pronounced His finished creation as being “very good.” This seemingly would not be the case if animals had been fighting and dying for millions of years.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Also, Genesis 1:1 should not be considered as a title to the chapter but rather an explanation of what took place upon the first day of creation.

Consequently, this theory does not really help solve the problem of those who want literal days in Genesis as well as an old earth.

## **Question 5**

### **What Is The Local Creation View? (The Creation Account Only Deals With The Promised Land)**

Many theories have been put forward in an attempt to properly understand the meaning of “days” in Genesis and how it relates to the age of the earth.

One of these attempts is the “local creation view.” This particular view holds that the creation account in the Book of Genesis is geographically localized.

The idea is that the record in Genesis is limited to the specific land promised to the Hebrews and not the entire earth. In other words, it is not dealing with the issue of the creation of the entire earth. We can summarize this position as follows.

#### **The Promised Land Is What Is Emphasized In Scripture**

In the first verse of Genesis the author’s scope was the entire universe. In the beginning God created everything. When, however, we come to the second verse in Genesis, the author is now limiting his scope. His concern is not with the universe, or even the entire earth, but rather with the boundaries of the Garden of Eden which would later become the boundaries of the Promised Land.

Therefore, Genesis 1:2 begins by explaining how God was preparing the land for His people to inhabit. Thus, Genesis 1:2 concentrates not on the earth as a whole, but on the Promised Land and the preparation of it for humans to live. The emphasis of the writer of Genesis is on the land that God had prepared for His people to dwell.

Therefore, Moses is emphasizing that God is the One who created the universe, and who gave His chosen people the Promised Land.

#### **This View Is True To Scripture And Science**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

This view has the strength of being true to the literal understanding of Scripture as well as incorporating Genesis into the overall theme of the first five books of the Bible. Genesis was written from the standpoint of the Exodus.

In other words, its purpose was to explain to the people where they came from and why they are going to this particular land. Genesis 1 and 2, therefore, is an explanation of how God prepared that special land for His people and how He wanted to bless them in that Promised Land.

There is further evidence that this is what the author was emphasizing. Indeed, the Hebrew word *eretṣ* translated “earth” in Genesis 1, is the same word for “land.” The context must decide whether we are dealing with the entire earth or a particular part of it—the Promised Land.

In the great majority of its usages in Scripture, *eretṣ* refers to a particular land rather than the entire earth. This, it is argued, further supports the idea that we are dealing with a limited piece of land rather than the earth itself.

### There Is No Conflict Between Science And Scripture

If the days in Genesis are not days of the creation of the earth and the universe, but rather six days in which God prepared the Promised Land for His people in which to dwell, then we have no ultimate conflict between Genesis and modern science. This is simply because Genesis does not attempt to date the original creation of the earth and the universe.

In fact, we find that elsewhere in Scripture the “time of creation” is never what is emphasized by the writers but rather the “fact of creation.” In the ancient world, the issue was the identity of the Creator rather than how long the earth and universe have been in existence. This is what Genesis was addressing. Indeed, it is the Yahweh, or Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, who is the Creator of all things.

### Difficulties With The Local Creation View

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

While this theory may indeed solve some of the key issues between science and Scripture there are problems with this view. The main problem is that it makes the majestic creation account in the Book of Genesis refer to only a small portion of the earth. This certainly does not seem to be the way the Genesis creation account is to be read. The subject seems to be the entire earth, not merely the Promised Land.

Furthermore, it contradicts Exodus 20:11 and Genesis 2:4 which says that God created the heavens and the earth in six days—not just the Promised Land. This would make this particular theory highly suspect.

#### **Summary To Question 5**

#### **What Is The Local Creation View? (The Creation Account Only Deals With The Promised Land)**

The local creation view sees the Genesis account of creation as referring primarily to the Promised Land and not to the entire earth. It is pointed out that the word translated “earth” in Genesis 1:2 can also be translated as “land.” Indeed, this is how this word is most often translated.

Therefore, the account in Genesis is geographically localized and not meant to be an explanation of the creation of the entire earth and universe. This is in keeping with the teaching of the rest of Genesis. Indeed, we find that God was preparing a special land for His special people.

This means the Genesis account of creation has nothing to say with respect to the forming of the present world. Therefore, the age of the earth and the universe is not dealt with in this creation account. Consequently, we should not attempt to derive any scientific information from it.

This view nicely harmonizes Scripture with the conclusions of modern science. There is no conflict between them because the subject of this account is merely a certain part of the earth and not the entire globe.

The problem with this view is that the account reads as though it is referring to the entire earth. In addition, other portions of Scripture say

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

that God created the heavens and earth in six days and not just the Promised Land.

This being the case, the local creation view does not appear to be the best way to untangle the problems of Scripture and the age of the earth.

## **Question 6**

### **What Is The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View?**

One of the theories which assumes the days of Genesis are literal days but also sees the account as fitting with the conclusions of modern science, as to the age of the earth and universe, is what is known as the “Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View.”

#### **The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View Explained**

The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View says that God created a different world prior to what is mentioned in Genesis 1:1. This includes a pre-Adamic race of human beings or humanlike creatures. Genesis 1:1 describes the present creation of God—not the different world which He created in the past. Support for this view is allegedly found in two passages in Scripture.

In the Book of Isaiah, we read the following:

For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): “I am the LORD, and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:18 ESV).

This verse says that God did not for the heavens to become a waste. Therefore, it is concluded that the previous earth must have had a number of life-forms.

Support for this position is also supposedly found in Job. Scripture speaks of God making a joyful creation:

While the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:7 CSB).

This description of a joyous creation seems to be in contrast to the situation described in Genesis 1:2. It describes the earth as follows:

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep water. The Spirit of God was hovering over the water (Genesis 1:2 God's Word).

Consequently, it is assumed that something must have happened to bring the world into this chaotic state.

Therefore, according to the "Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View," Genesis 1:1 is a summary statement of what is recorded in the first chapter of Genesis—God's new creation.

Genesis 1:2 then begins to explain to us the remaking of earth from the formless and void state. This was necessary because of the judgment of God on the previous earth. Genesis 1:3 through the end of chapter two describes the re-fashioning of the earth which took place after this initial judgment.

### **The Bible Says That God Judged The Previous Earth**

Since the God of the Bible did not create the earth in either an unformed or wasteful state, something must have happened to bring this about. Some type of judgment is assumed. Often the fall of Satan is what is proposed.

In some way, Satan corrupted the previous world causing God to judge it. Since the formless condition of the earth described in Genesis 1:2 differs from the state of the earth as is described in Isaiah 45:18, the first verse of Genesis must be speaking of a previous creation.

### **The Human-like Fossils Are Evidence Of A Pre-Adamic Race**

The fossil record testifies to this previous creation. This includes fossils of dinosaurs as well as fossils of human-like creatures. They are tangible evidence of this previous creation. Indeed, they testify that creatures similar to humans existed in a previous creation.

### **This Is Not The Gap Theory**

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

We should note that the “Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View” is not the same as the Gap Theory. The Gap Theory says God’s initial creation is found in Genesis 1:1 but there was a gap of time between God’s original creation and what is spoken of in Genesis 1:2.

### **Difficulties With The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation Theory**

While this theory attempts to take the teachings of Scripture seriously and harmonizing them with the findings of science, there is not much biblical support for it. We can make the following observations.

#### **1. There Is No Evidence Of A Prior Creation**

To begin with, neither Job 38:7 nor Isaiah 45:18 refers to a prior creation. Indeed, in the context of Job, we find that God is speaking of His original creation:

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have such insight (Job 38:4 God’s Word).

This refers to everything which presently exists. In fact, God’s description to Job of His creation assumes that the things that Job could see testified to God’s original creative work—not something He re-fashioned.

#### **2. Genesis 1:2 Does Not Speak Of A Judgment On The Earth**

Furthermore, the idea of judgment is not found in Genesis 1:2. The words “formless and void” do not necessarily assume some type of chaos or judgment. Instead, it refers to the earth in its earliest stage—an unformed mass waiting to be filled.

#### **3. The Timing Of Satan’s Fall Is Not Stated**

While there is evidence for Satan’s fall, it is mere speculation that it occurred prior to Genesis 1:1. Indeed, this seems to contradict what God observed after the six days of His creation—everything was very good. The Bible says:

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

And God saw everything that he had made and that it was very good. There was evening, then morning—the sixth day (Genesis 1:31 God's Word)

Furthermore, even if the fall of Satan had occurred at this time, there is nothing whatsoever in Scripture which says that his fall resulted in the destruction of some previous world.

### **4. There Is No Evidence Of A Pre-Adamic Race**

The idea of a pre-Adamic race is not found in Scripture. In fact, everything in Scripture points to Adam as the first human being which God created.

Furthermore, the so-called pre-Adamic hominoids which have been discovered are not clear evidence of some type of sub-human man.

In sum, the Pre-Genesis 1 creation view does not have much going for it. It does not solve the problems of modern unbelieving science and its relationship to Scripture. A better answer needs to be found.

### **Summary To Question 6**

#### **What Is The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View?**

The “Pre-Genesis 1 Creation View” is a theory which holds to a creation prior to what is mentioned in Genesis 1:1. Those who accept this position argue that Genesis 1:2 pre-supposes some type of judgment of the world.

Certain verses in Scripture, Job 38:7 and Isaiah 45:18 are used to support the view that God originally created everything perfect. Therefore, something must have happened to cause the perfect creation to be desolate and waste. For some unknown reason, this creation was judged by God.

To summarize, Genesis 1:1 speaks of a new creation of God, Genesis 1:2 speaks of the desolate condition the world was in while the remainder of the first two chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:3-2:24, records the re-fashioning of the earth.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The various fossils of human-like creatures which have been discovered give evidence of this previous creation. Therefore, this view is true to both science and Scripture.

This position should not be confused with the well-known Gap Theory which argues for a gap between the first two verses of the Bible. Here we have a gap “before” the creation of Genesis 1:1.

While this view would certainly harmonize science and Scripture, there are a number of problems with this theory.

To begin with, there is absolutely nothing in Scripture which speaks of a previous creation of the world before God created our present world.

Furthermore, we do not have to assume that Genesis 1:2 assumes some type of judgment. Instead it speaks of a world in the earliest stages of creation. In other words, after God initially made the earth, He then formed its topography and filled with the various forms of life which He created.

In addition, we do not know exactly when the fall of Satan occurred. To assume that it was before Genesis 1:1 seems to contradict Genesis 1:31 where God said everything that existed was “very good.” Even if the fall of Satan occurred before the sixth day of creation, it does not mean that he infected some previous world which God created.

There is nothing in the text of Scripture that pre-supposes there has been a pre-Adamic race of human-like creatures. The biblical evidence is non-existent, and the fossil evidence is not conclusive.

Consequently, this view has a number of problems with it that make it difficult, if not impossible, to accept.

## **Question 7**

### **What Is The Gap Theory? (The Ruin And Reconstruction Theory)**

One of the most popular ways of understanding the creation account recorded in the first chapter of Genesis is known as the “Gap Theory” or the “Ruin and Reconstruction Theory.” Although there are some variations among those who hold to the Gap Theory, its basic teachings are as follows.

#### **First Perfection, Then Chaos**

Genesis 1:1 refers to God’s initial perfect creation. Everything that God made was beautiful. In other words, there was no sin or imperfection anywhere.

Verse two, on the other hand, assumes that a great catastrophe occurred that caused the earth to become in a chaotic state through the judgment of God.

According to the gap theory, this formless and void state, as recorded in Genesis 1:2, is in direct contrast to the perfect initial creation of Genesis 1:1. Something happened between the first two verses of Genesis to cause the earth to become desolate and uninhabitable after having been made perfect. Those holding the gap theory contend that this state of ruin could have possibly lasted millions of years.

#### **The Reconstruction Has Been Done Recently**

After this unknown amount of time between the first two verses, God began a re-creation or restitution which involved six successive literal days. The remainder of the first chapter of Genesis deals with the reconstruction of the earth, *not* the original creation. This re-creation is usually assumed to have occurred only a few thousand years ago and was accomplished in six literal twenty-four-hour days. Genesis 1:3-2:3, therefore, is speaking of a second creation.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Consequently, Genesis speaks of creation, judgment, ruin, and then re-creation.

### **Gap Theorists Hold To Literal Days And An Old Earth**

The individuals who hold to the gap theory want to accept the Bible literally as well as accepting the conclusions of modern science about the ancient age of the earth. Thus, they are not theistic evolutionists.

The gap theory provides a solution to two problems between the Bible and science—the time problem and the fossil problem. To reconcile the Bible and the conclusions of modern unbelieving science, the geological ages are placed between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2.

### **What Was The Judgment?**

The judgment is usually spoken of as a flood because of the statement of Genesis 1:2; the earth was covered by water. This judgment is also known as the Luciferic flood named after the supernaturally created being who became the devil. This flood is different from the one recorded in Genesis 6-8 in the days of Noah.

### **The Cause Is Usually Given As The Fall Of Satan**

The cause for the judgment is usually given as the rebellion of Satan or some pre-Adamic race that sinned. God judged all of the inhabitants of the earth. Fossil remains of this civilization have been left behind. They provide evidence of this past civilization as well as God's judgment upon it.

The gap theory also says that the present plants and animals living today have no genetic relationship with the fossil left behind by the judgment of God. Indeed, everything was re-created after God's judgment of the earth.

### **The Case For The Gap Theory**

Those who advocate the Gap Theory do so for the following reasons.

### 1. The Hebrew Conjunction “Waw” In Genesis 1:2

Gap theorists make part of their argument out of the Hebrew conjunction “waw” that begins Genesis 1:2. Although it is usually translated as “and” or “now,” they wish to translate it as “but.” The idea is that there is a contrast between what was stated in Genesis 1:1 and the statement of Genesis 1:2. The author is emphasizing that the earth was created perfect *but* then something happened that caused to become formless and void.

### 2. The Earth Became Void

The word translated “was” in Genesis 1:2 is the Hebrew verb *hayah*. It is possible to translate it as “became” or “had become.” Thus, the earth was created perfectly and then “became” without form and void. In other words, the world, though created perfect, became desolate and uninhabitable. What had previously been a perfect world was now ruined.

Those who argue for this translation point out that in other places in the creation account the verb *hayah* is translated “became” or “had become.” (Genesis 2:7,10; 3:22, etc.). Hence the translation of the verb in this manner is consistent within the context of the creation account in Genesis.

### 3. The Evidence From The Septuagint Translation

Some advocates of the gap theory point to the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, for support of their translation of *hayah* as “became.”

The verb *hayah* occurs 27 times in the first chapter of Genesis. The Greek translators of the Septuagint, rendered *hayah*, in 20 instances, by the Greek word *egeneto* which means “became.”

This, they contend, gives further support to the idea that the earth “became” desolate and uninhabitable after God’s judgment.

#### **4. The Words Formless And Void Indicate Chaos**

Genesis 1:2 describes the earth at the time of the creation as being “without form and void” or “desolate and uninhabitable” (Hebrew *tobu na bobu*).

Are we to assume that a perfect God created the world in a chaotic condition? The phrase “without form and void” seems to require some type of judgment.

#### **5. There Are Other Passages That Support The Gap Theory**

In addition, Isaiah 34:11 and Jeremiah 4:23-26, the only other instances the phrase “without form and void” is used, clearly refers to some type of divine judgment. They read as follows:

The desert owl and screech owl will possess it; the great owl and the raven will nest there. God will stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of desolation (Isaiah 34:11 NIV)

In this context, the words are translated as “chaos.”

Some see the following passage in the Book of Jeremiah as describing the judgment of the former earth with the same Hebrews words as found in Genesis 1:2 *tobu na bobu*:

I looked at the earth, and it was formless and empty; and at the heavens, and their light was gone. I looked at the mountains, and they were quaking; all the hills were swaying. I looked, and there were no people; every bird in the sky had flown away. I looked, and the fruitful land was a desert; all its towns lay in ruins before the LORD, before his fierce anger (Jeremiah 4:23-26 NIV).

This passage obviously refers to some type of divine judgment.

Hence, it is concluded that Genesis 1:2 must also be a reference to God’s divine judgment.

#### **6. Darkness Speaks Of Judgment**

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Genesis 1:2 speaks of the world in a state of “darkness.” Darkness is almost always used in Scripture as a sign of sin and judgment (Jude 13, John 3:19).

Furthermore, God did not say the darkness was good as He had said about the light (Genesis 1:3). If God originally created the world in light, then something caused the earth to become dark. Those who hold to the gap theory believe that it was God’s judgment upon the former world.

### 7. The Difference Between The Words Created And Made

According to the gap theory, the original creation was in Genesis 1:1. Thus, that which happened on the six days of Genesis was not creating of the universe but rather making it over—or re-creating it.

Some gap theorists make a distinction between the Hebrew verbs “create” *bara* and “made” *asab*. The verb *bara* is used with regard to God creating while *asab* means “refashioning” or “made to appear.”

They contend that there are only three creative acts of God are recorded in the first chapter of Genesis: (1) the heavens and the earth (verse 1) (2) animal life (verses 20-21) and (3) human life (verses 26-27). The first creative act, they believe, refers to the dateless past.

### 8. The Earth Was Not Created In Vain

Isaiah 45:18 clearly states that God did not create the world “in vain.” The Hebrew phrase translated “in vain” is *lo tohu*. *Tohu* is the Hebrew word translated “without form” in Genesis 1:2. Thus, if God did not create the world “in vain,” then it seems logical to assume that at some time in the earth’s past it “became” desolate.

Since it is unthinkable that anything chaotic and wasteful could come from a perfect God, we must assume that there was some type of judgment to put the earth in that condition.

### 9. Isaiah 24 Speaks Of A Ruined Earth

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Isaiah 24:1 is often cited as a verse that speaks of the earth being formerly in ruin. It says:

Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof (Isaiah 24:1 KJV).

This divine judgment is believed to have taken place on the previous earth.

### **10. Ezekiel 28 Records The Original Creation**

Many gap theorists point to Ezekiel 28:13-15 as describing the original creation before the desolation of Genesis 1:2. The passage speaks of Satan dwelling in Eden, the Garden of God, before sin had infected it.

We read the following in the Book of Ezekiel:

You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you (Ezekiel 28:13-15 NIV).

This is a description of the original perfection before God judged the world. It links this judgment with the fall of the supernaturally created being who became the devil.

### **11. The Angelic Fall May Have Occurred Between Verses One And Two**

Some gap theorists say that the time needed for the angels to rebel against God and be judged requires a gap between the first two verses in Genesis 1. They believe that there was not enough time after the completion of creation on day six, and the fall of humanity recorded in Genesis chapter

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

three, for the angels to rebel. Therefore, it must have occurred at some time previously.

Indeed, since Adam and Eve did not conceive any children before the “Fall of humanity,” there must have been a relatively short time between the completion of creation on day six and the events of Genesis three. This does not allow adequate time for the rebellion, judgment, and expulsion of evil angels.

### **12. The Bible Speaks Of The Downfall Of The World**

Some who hold to the gap theory advocate that Hebrews 4:3 should be translated “The works were finished from the downfall of the world.” The “downfall” it is argued, refers to the catastrophe of Genesis 1:2.

### **13. The Earth Needed To Be Replenished**

There are some gap theorists who cite Genesis 1:27 in the King James Version as a proof that the earth was formerly filled with people. It reads as follows:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Genesis 1:28 KJV).

You only “replenish” something that had been previously filled. This suggests that the earth was populated with human-like people before Adam and Eve.

### **14. There Were Pre-Adamic People**

This brings us to our next point. Almost all gap theorists adopt the view that human-like creatures existed before Adam. Although these people were not directly related to modern humans, they did have their own sinful history. The fossils that we find today testify to their existence.

### **15. There Are Gaps Found Elsewhere In Scripture**

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The principle of a gap between statements in Scripture is found in other places in the Old Testament.

For example, gap theorists point to Isaiah 61:1-2. Verse one finds its fulfillment in the First Coming of Jesus Christ while verse two refers to the Second Coming of Christ. Because the principle of a long period of time between two verses is found elsewhere in Scripture, it is possible that a gap existed between the first two verses of Genesis.

### **Summary To The Gap Theory**

These arguments have led people to assume a gap between the first two verses of Genesis. They believe this is the best way to deal with the biblical and geological evidence. The days in Genesis are literal days but our earth is ancient, not relatively new. Science and Scripture are now in harmony when an indefinite gap is placed between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2.

### **Difficulties With The Gap Theory**

Though there are many good Bible believing Christians who accept the gap theory, there are some serious problems with this point of view that make it difficult, if not impossible, to accept. They include the following:

#### **1. There Is No Mention Of The Original Creation**

To begin with, it is hard to imagine that the entire creation of the universe is passed over in only one verse and the bulk of the record deals with re-creation. According to the gap theory, there is no clear word from God concerning the original creation. Nothing is known as to the order of events or its history.

#### **2. It Is Not The Historical View Of Jews Or Christians**

Furthermore, the historical view of Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant interpreters is that Genesis is the account of God's "original" creation of the universe. The gap theory holds that only one verse, Genesis 1:1, describes the original creation. The Gap Theory dilutes the majestic account of God's creation as recorded in Genesis.

### **3. Genesis Is Not A Cryptic Account**

Genesis 1 is written as a straightforward account of God's creation. Indeed, it is not some cryptic record. If God had meant to inform us of a gap between the first two verses, He could have clearly done that. There is nothing in the Genesis creation account that requires, or even hints, at a gap. Something has to be read into the account that is not obviously there.

### **4. No Earlier Creation Is Taught Anywhere**

There something else which must be noted. There is not one verse of Scripture that teaches there was an earlier creation. If there were a creation before Genesis 1:2, there should be at least one verse that explicitly says that. But there is none. Why?

### **5. It Is Contrary To Scripture**

Not only are there no explicit verses about a previous creation, the Scripture argues against this idea. In fact, Genesis 2:3,4 which sums up the previous chapter of God's work, says:

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens (Genesis 2:3,4 NIV).

This is *creation*, not re-creation. Thus, the context itself speaks of God's creation of all things rather than some re-creation after His judgment.

### **6. The Work Was Also In Heaven**

Also mentioned in Genesis 2:3,4 is the creation of the heavens. What was completed in the six days was not just the work of God upon the earth but also His work in heaven. They were created during the six days, not long before it.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

In addition, we find that Exodus 20:11 records the following testimony:

For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; then he rested on the seventh day. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy (Exodus 20:11 NLT).

This passage does not say that God created the heavens and the earth *before* the first day as the Gap Theory teaches but rather *in* six days. All that is in heaven was created in six days. Everything.

### 7. There Is No Direct Statement Of Judgment

In addition, there is no direct statement anywhere in Scripture that a divine judgment occurred between the first two verses in Genesis. While Scripture, at various times, does speak of God's judgment on the angels and the earth, there are no passages that speak of it being before the creation narrative in Genesis 1:1-31. Those who hold the gap theory must read this into the passage.

### 8. God Made The World Very Good

At the end of creation account in Genesis we have the following comment:

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:31 NKJV).

In this verse we have two superlatives: "everything" and "very good." This could hardly be said if a part of the world had already been destroyed and if the angels had fallen into sin. The gap theory builds our present world on the ruins of a former one. How, we may ask, could it be "very good?"

In addition, the angels, as well as the rest of creation, were seemingly still in a state of perfection at the end of the sixth day. Everything was perfect everywhere.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

On the other hand, the Gap Theory says that millions of animals lived and died not only before Adam, but also before the fall of Satan. But how could there be death in a sinless world?

### **9. Death Was A Result Of Adam's Sin**

Scripture says that the human race was created to have dominion over God's creation (Psalm 8, Hebrews 2:5-8). It was not until the first humans, Adam and Eve, deliberately rejected God's commandment that sin first appeared on earth.

Thus, the judgment upon humanity as well as upon the animal kingdom was a result of Adam's sin. In other words, there was no death before this time of either humans or animals. The Bible explains where death originated:

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned (Romans 5:12 NRSV).

We must also emphasize that the Bible does not restrict death from sin to human death. Sin brought death to the animal world as well. The Bible is clear that creation was "made subject to futility." Indeed, it was *not* originally created that way. Paul made this clear in his letter to the Romans:

For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly but because of God who subjected it—in hope (Romans 8:20 NET).

Therefore, death did not come about until Adam sinned and judgment was pronounced upon the perfect world. It was only after Adam and Eve sinned that the world became in this fallen state.

### **10. Darkness Is Not Necessarily Evil**

The Bible does not teach that physical darkness is always equated with evil. In fact, we find the psalmist writing the following:

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

You make it dark and night comes during which all the beasts of the forest prowl around (Psalm 104:20 NET)

Here we are told that God made the dark and the night. This allows certain animals to thrive.

Genesis 1:2 records the darkened state of the newly created earth. This explains what the earth was like before the creation of the sun or perhaps before the light from the sun broke through the darkness.

Thus, we should not assume that it must refer to something evil. Indeed, there would have been darkness before there was light.

Furthermore, it was only later in Scripture that we find darkness being used as a symbol of evil. However, there is nothing evil suggested by the use of the word darkness in the context of Genesis.

Thus, we can conclude that the mention of darkness before the mention of light is a simply a way of showing that God's creation was "in progress."

In fact, the Scripture records that there was an evening, and thus darkness, at each of the six days of the original creation (Genesis 1:5,8,13, 18-19). Nothing is said about this darkness, or evening, being evil.

In sum, darkness can be used to symbolize evil in certain contexts in Scripture. Yet we find that darkness itself is never viewed as something inherently evil.

### **11. Plants And Animals Are Genetically Related**

The gap theory teaches that the plants and animals of the previous world were destroyed and fossilized. This means that they could not be genetically related to the plants and animals of the present world.

Yet the majority of the fossilized plants and animals are identical in form to their modern counterparts. How can this be without any direct line of descent?

**12. There Is Too Much Made Out Of  
The Hebrew Conjunction Waw**

The Hebrew word *waw*, usually translated “and,” is a simple conjunction. Gap theorists attempt to make it a word that indicates a strong contrast to that which was previously stated. Yet it is merely the simple term for “and.”

In fact, *waw* is used thousands of times in the Old Testament without emphasizing anything important. To make it important in Genesis 1:2 is inconsistent with its overall usage. A crucial doctrine should certainly not be based upon this one word.

Thus, instead of translating it as “but,” the verse should read something like “now the earth was unformed and unfilled.”

Consequently, there is no grammatical reason to have a break between these verses.

**13. Should It Be Translated “Was” Or “Became?”**

Those who attempt to translate the verb *hayab* as “became” in Genesis 1:2 do so without much justification. The normal rendering of the word is “was.” Most scholars testify that the translation of “became” in this passage is doubtful, if not impossible to uphold. Therefore, to base this theory on a suspect translation is wrong from the start.

There is something else which we must emphasize. Though in some instances the Septuagint translators rendered the verb *hayab* as “became” they did *not* render it such in Genesis 1:2. This demonstrates that they understood the word to mean “was” and not “became.” There should be a compelling reason for translating it “became” here.

However, nothing in the text suggests this translation. It only comes from a desire to harmonize modern unbelieving science with Scripture

Hence, the burden of proof is upon those who would make the word say anything different than how it is usually (or most often) understood.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

To summarize, according to the gap theory, the creation account in Genesis is made to hinge on a secondary meanings of these two Hebrew words *waw* and *hayah*. It will not do for gap theorists to merely indicate that in some cases *waw* may mean “but,” and that *hayah* may mean “became.” This is not what is at issue. What is at issue is the meaning of the words in the first chapter of Genesis.

### 14. Unformed And Unfilled Do Not Mean Chaotic

The phrase *tohu wa bobu*, translated “without form and void” does not necessarily assume some type of divine judgment as the Gap Theory supposes. The phrase can mean “unformed and unfilled.” It is a neutral term describing God’s unfinished creation.

What we find was the early earth was at a stage that was not ready for humanity and the rest of creation. That which was previously unformed was then formed and filled by the Creator. The words do not necessitate judgment as has been contended. Indeed, they merely describe the earth in an undeveloped state.

On the first day, the water was covering the land mass. There was no dry land and no people. The earth had been neither formed nor filled. It was on the subsequent days that the Lord formed and filled the world.

### 15. There Is No Context Of Judgment In Creation Account

Furthermore, the meaning of the expression *tohu wa bobu*, in Isaiah 34:11 and Jeremiah 4:23, often cited as proof for the gap theory, does not necessarily mean chaos as gap theorists argue. The details in the context of Isaiah 34 and Jeremiah 4, where the phrase *tohu wa bobu* is used, make judgment clear.

However, the context of Genesis is not one of judgment. Consequently, it is not proper to read the circumstances of judgment which are found in Isaiah and Jeremiah back into Genesis where no judgment is required, or even hinted at.

### 16. Jesus Did Not See Any Gap In The Beginning

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Jesus did not seem to believe there was any gap of time from the original creation to the creation of Adam. In fact, He said the following:

But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female (Mark 10:6 CSB).

According to Jesus, God made them male and female at “the beginning,” not after a gap of billions of years.

### **17. Isaiah 45 Does Not Give Evidence For Judgment**

Isaiah 45:18 is more of an argument against the gap theory. It says that God did not create the universe “in vain”. This means He considered His creation to be good as Genesis 1:31 states:

God saw all that he had made—and it was very good! There was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day (Genesis 1:31 NET).

Therefore, when God initially created everything it was very good.

### **18. Jeremiah 4 Does Not Speak Of The Original Creation**

The context of Jeremiah 4 has nothing to do with the original creation. In context, the passage is about the destruction of the Holy Land, not the entire earth.

Furthermore, the one looking at this judgment is Jeremiah the prophet. It is much more consistent to have him looking forward to the coming destruction, not looking back.

In addition, this passage speaks of “survivors” after the judgment. There would have been no survivors of the judgment that the gap theory proposes.

### **19. Isaiah 24:1 Does Not Speak Of The Original Creation**

The statement in Isaiah 24:1 does not deal with the original creation in Genesis. The previous verses referred to the destruction of the cities of

Babylon and Tyre, while the following verses refer to the destruction of the Holy Land. Creation is not in view.

## **20. There Is No Parallel Principle For Gaps In Scripture**

The gap principle that finds itself in other Old Testament passages is not parallel to Genesis. The other passages containing gaps are all prophetic. There are none that deal with what has already happened in history.

Thus, there is no parallel between the first two verses of Genesis and other portions of Scripture where a gap is clearly taught.

## **21. The Distinction Between Created And Made Is Not Valid**

The distinction between the Hebrew words for “created” and “made” is not valid. Contrary to the some who argue for the gap theory, these words can be used interchangeably.

Genesis 1:21 states that ‘God created [*bara*] the great sea-monsters while verse 25 states that God made [*asab*] the beasts of the earth. This is certainly not meant to teach us that the sea creatures were directly created on the fifth day, but land animals were merely “appointed” or “made to appear” on the sixth day!

Thus, the Hebrew words *bara* and *asab* can be used to describe the same kind of divine activity. Indeed, they are also used synonymously in Genesis 1:26,27 where both terms describe the same event:

Then God said, “Let Us make [*asab*] man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” So God created [*bara*] man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:26,27 NKJV).

Therefore, we should not attempt to make some distinction between these two words.

## **22. Ezekiel 28 And The Fall Of Satan**

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Ezekiel 28, rather than referring to the earthly Garden of Eden, more likely speaks of a heavenly place:

Indeed, the Eden which Ezekiel speaks of is not a garden of trees and flowers but rather it is a place composed of “precious stones” and “stones of fire” (Ezekiel 28:13,14,16). This is similar to the description of the Holy City in heaven (Revelation 21:10-21).

This text may have been a reference to the fall of Satan, but it is ambiguous at best. Thus, we should not attempt to build doctrines on difficult passages—particularly ones that are highly poetic.

Even if it did describe Satan’s original fall there is no reason to insert it between the first two verses of Genesis.

### **23. The Time Of The Judgment Of Angels Is Not Specified**

The passages in Scripture that speak of God’s judgment of the rebellious angels (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6) do not place the judgment before the creation account in Genesis 1:2-31.

In fact, no specific time is given for their rebellion. It is possible that the angelic fall occurred sometime after human beings were created.

### **24. There Is Enough Time For The Angelic Rebellion**

There certainly was time for the angelic rebellion to take place after day six of creation and before the “Fall of humanity” in Genesis chapter three. Even if only one day passed from the sixth day of creation and the Fall, it is enough time for the angels to rebel and to be judged by God. Indeed, God judgment would have been instantaneous.

In addition, angels live in an entirely different dimension than humanity. Time for them is not necessarily the same as what we experience on the earth.

Consequently, there was sufficient time, from our perspective, for them to fall.

**25. Hebrews 4:3 Does Not Refer To A Catastrophe**

The idea that Hebrews 4:3 refers to the “downfall” of the world, the catastrophe of Genesis 1:2, is not supported by the evidence. In fact, the Greek word *katabola* means “foundation” or “beginning,” not downfall.

**26. Was This God’s Failure?**

The gap theory must also assume there was a prior creation, lasting millions of years that closely resembled the present creation. This creation, however, ended in failure. The animals of the previous creation did not fulfill God’s original purpose.

Consequently, He destroyed them. In addition, in the second creation, God made the plants and animals exactly like the first ones.

Furthermore, since Adam and Eve were the first man and woman, this prior creation lacked God’s crown of creation—the human race.

Therefore, the gap theory would have God failing twice. First, His purpose was not accomplished in the animal and plant kingdom in the first creation.

Second, the Lord failed to crown His creation with the human race. This is inconsistent with God’s nature. Indeed, God always accomplishes His purposes.

**27. There Were No Pre-Adamic Human-like Creatures**

Although gap theorists contend that pre-Adamic human-like creatures existed, there is no biblical warrant for this. The Bible knows nothing about such people.

**28. Why Create Light Again?**

If the sun, moon, and stars were part of the original creation in Genesis 1:1, then why did God have to create light (Genesis 1:3). There would have been light for the entire time of the alleged gap.

**29. The Gap Theory Contradicts Modern Unbelieving Geology**

Although gap theorists attempt to harmonize Genesis with modern evolutionary geology, the proposed harmonization will simply not work. Modern geology is based upon the idea of uniformitarianism. This means that all processes that we observe today have continued at the same rate from the beginning.

Since the present rates are the same as the past, there is no room for a worldwide catastrophe. The geological ages cannot be separated from the theory of evolution.

**30. There Is No Connection Between Geology And Genesis**

Because Genesis involves a re-creation, and the present-day fossils belong to a destroyed world, there can be no correlation between Scripture and geology. The Bible, therefore, has absolutely nothing to say about this subject. Therefore, it is entirely in the hands of geologists, and we, of necessity, must believe what they tell us about the geological record.

**31. The Gap Theory Discounts The Genesis Flood**

If the present-day fossils are a result of a Luciferic flood that happened between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, then one must assume that Noah's Flood left no trace whatsoever. A flood in Noah's day can better explain the fossil evidence rather than a flood in which Scripture does not mention.

**32. The Hebrew Word Should Not Be Translated Replenish**

The word translated "replenish" in the *King James Version* is the Hebrew verb *maleh*. It basically means, "to fill." It is the same word used in Genesis 1:22 "fill the waters." While it can have the idea of replenishing, the context must determine this to be the correct translation.

However, there is nothing in the context which indicates this. Indeed, all modern translations render this word as "fill."

**33. There Is No Judgment On The Earth Because Of Lucifer's Sin**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

There is no passage in Scripture that teaches that God judged the earth because of the sin of the supernaturally created being who became the devil. Furthermore, why would God kill the inhabitants of the earth for some supernatural being who sinned? The Bible continually stresses that God is a righteous God. Indeed, Abraham gave the following testimony to God's nature:

Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Genesis 18:25 NIV).

Judging the inhabitants of the earth, for a sin of some supernaturally created being, who lived in the heavenly realm, does not make sense.

#### **34. The Gap Theory Is A Recent Idea**

Finally, it must be pointed out that the gap theory is a relatively recent idea. A man named Thomas Chalmers first popularized it in 1814 in an attempt to reconcile Genesis with long geological ages. The geological studies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were at odds with a recent creation. The gap theory gave the Bible the needed time that the geologists said was necessary for the earth to come to its present state.

In the twentieth century, the footnotes of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, advocating the gap theory, caused it to become enormously popular among the masses. Yet before this time interpreters of Genesis hardly ever considered it a possibility. It is only when modern science taught that the age of the earth was, at least, millions of years old, did the gap theory become popular.

When the new discipline of geology was claiming long ages for the earth, many Bible students, with no way of scientifically refuting these claims, accepted the long ages of the earth.

Rather than admitting that the Bible taught something different, the Genesis creation account was then reinterpreted in light of the claims of geology. Consequently, one of the ways that Genesis was reinterpreted was to find a gap between the first two verses of the Bible. However,

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

until modern geology came on the scene, no one proposed a gap between these verses.

### **35. The Gap Theory Is Self-Defeating**

There is a major dilemma for the gap theory. If the judgment of God with His “Luciferic Flood” rapidly created the entire fossil record that we now find, then there is no evidence for geologic ages as gap theorists believe. But if there were no geologic ages, there is no need to argue for large amounts of time as the theory of evolution, and the gap theory, proposes.

Thus, the original need for the theory—to fit the long geological ages into the framework of the Bible—is done away with.

### **36. This Is The Wrong Way Of Looking At The Subject**

The gap theory is an example of the wrong way to look at issues of the Bible and science. The Bible should be the source that we use to interpret the scientific data, not vice versa.

The gap theory arose when modern science began to argue for an ancient earth and universe. It was an attempt to harmonize the lengthy time periods, or ages, with Genesis. The gap theory did not arise merely from a study of Scripture. Instead, it arose to solve the problem of the Bible and time. This fact alone should make the entire theory suspect.

### **Summary To Question 7**

#### **What Is The Gap Theory? (The Ruin And Reconstruction Theory)**

One way of attempting to solve the major questions regarding the teachings of the Bible with the claims of modern unbelieving science, is known as the “gap theory” or the “ruin and reconstruction” theory. Simply stated, this theory teaches that Scripture is not giving an account of God’s original creation in Genesis but rather the re-creation of the earth after some terrible judgment which occurred. The re-creation took place in six literal days a few thousand years ago while the initial creation, recorded in Genesis 1:1 is dateless.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Though the Gap Theory attempts to solve the time problem and the fossil problem, it is beset with problems. First, something has to be read into the text that is not obviously there. There is not one verse in the Bible that explicitly teaches an earlier creation.

Also, the Gap Theory breaks the connection between the first two verses of the Bible where the text has no break. Furthermore, it builds our world on the ruins of a former world with no connection between the two. It leaves the original creation to just one verse.

All of these problems make the theory highly suspect. Although those who hold to the gap theory are well-meaning Bible believers, the facts, both biblical and scientific, do not justify this view. A better answer needs to be found.

### Question 8

#### **Could There Have Been Gaps Between The Days In Genesis 1? (Progressive Creationism)**

Some Bible-believers understand the days in Genesis were six twenty-four-hour periods, but they think that between these literal days there were vast amounts of time which elapsed—possibly billions of years.

In other words, they view the days in Genesis as literal and sequential but not consecutive.

Thus, according to this perspective, God's creative activity took place in a series of steps separated by long ages in between the days. This theory is also known as "progressive creationism."

The advantage of this view is taking the days in Genesis at face value, or as literal days, as well as harmonizing these literal days in Genesis with the findings of modern science.

#### **The Gaps Occurred Between The Days**

According to this view, the creative acts of God occurred largely *between* the literal days. Each day introduced a new creative period. Evidence for this viewpoint is that the Book of Genesis is organized on a genealogical scheme that involves life spans that are sequential but overlapping. Therefore, to apply this same scheme to the creation account is consistent with the remainder of the Book.

#### **The Earth Is Ancient, And The Days Are Solar**

This theory attempts to wed the twenty-four-hour literal day with the geologic ages. Both theories are true according to Progressive Creationism.

This position allows the earth to be ancient while still keeping to the interpretation that the term day in Genesis 1 refers to a solar day.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, we have six literal days in Genesis that are sequential but not consecutive. In between each of them are countless years.

### **Difficulties With “Gaps Between The Days”**

While the theory of Progressive Creationism accepts the days of Genesis as solar days, which they certainly appear to be, as well as reconciling the evidence of modern science with the Bible, it still has a number of problems. We can sum them up as follows.

#### **1. There Are Many Gaps Which Have To Be Assumed**

The “gap theory” argues for one gap between the first two verses of Scripture. Progressive creationism, on the other hand, argues for a number of gaps.

Indeed, supposedly there were huge gaps of time between each creative day. More gaps merely means that there are more problems to solve.

#### **2. The Gaps Have To Be Read Into The Text**

The main problem with this theory is that there is absolutely no evidence that there were any gaps between the days recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. This idea has to be read into the text to harmonize Genesis with modern unbelieving science.

If there were no problem reconciling Genesis with the age of the earth given by modern evolutionary science, then nobody would have ever come up with this theory. In other words, it does not naturally come from reading the text as it stands.

#### **3. There Are No Other Examples In Scripture Of Gaps Between Literal Days**

Furthermore, there are no other examples in Scripture where we find gaps between literal days. This would be the only instance where such a thing occurs.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

All of these factors make the theory highly suspect. It seems to be an obvious attempt to harmonize Genesis with the findings of modern evolutionary science.

#### **Summary To Question 8**

#### **Could There Have Been Gaps Between The Days In Genesis 1? (Progressive Creationism)**

Progressive creationism views Genesis 1 as speaking of six literal days in which the God of the Bible created all living things. However, this theory also holds that there were huge gaps of time between each creative day. It was during these gaps between the six literal days when God allegedly did much, if not most, of His creating.

Each of these gaps, it is supposed, could have been millions of years in length. This theory allows the six creation days of Genesis to be normal solar days while, at the same time, the earth can be millions of years old. Modern unbelieving science and Holy Scripture are thus harmonized.

While this view would harmonize modern evolutionary science with the Bible, at least with the age of the earth problem, there are a number of reasons as to why this theory should not be embraced.

The main problem with this view is that there is no evidence in the text for gaps between the days. None. Indeed, there is not the slightest hint anywhere in the Bible that such gaps existed. Consequently, something must be read into the text which is not there.

In addition, there are no examples in Scripture where this sort of gap of time occurs between literal days. If this theory is correct, then this would be the only instance of this taking place.

The truth of the matter is that this view was specifically developed to deal with an obvious problem—the seemingly clear teaching of Genesis that the days were solar, twenty-four hours in length, and that the earth, therefore, must be young.

Yet, we find that the conclusion of modern unbelieving science is that the earth is ancient. This theory was created to harmonize this difficulty.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

However, if the text clearly indicates that the days were solar as well as consecutive, then we must deal with it as it stands instead of trying to force a harmonization which is not there.

## **Question 9**

### **What Is The Revelational Day Theory? (Creation Was Revealed In Six Days)**

There is a theory that understands the days in Genesis as neither a literal twenty-four-hour creative period nor long periods of time which it took the Lord to create. Instead, this view teaches that God revealed His creative work to Moses in a series of visions over a six-day period. This is known as the “Revelational Day” theory.

Thus, the Genesis creation account is not a record of what God performed in six literal days but rather records the six literal days in which He revealed His creative acts to the writer of Genesis, Moses.

Consequently, what was revealed to Moses in six days could have taken millions or billions of years to accomplish. In other words, there is nothing in the account that tells us the time which it took for the Lord to create.

#### **1. They Are Days Of Revelation Not Creation**

According to this theory, each day recorded in Genesis would not constitute that which God created, but that which God revealed to Moses in some sort of vision.

Therefore, there is no chronology of creation in the Genesis account. This would not put the Genesis account at odds with science since nothing is revealed about the time which God took to create the world.

#### **2. The Days Are Topical Not Chronological**

There is something else which this theory states about the nature of the account in Genesis. It sees the arrangement of God’s creative works in Genesis as topical rather than chronological. Therefore, we do not even know the order of events in God’s creative work.

Indeed, for a long time it has been observed that the six days of creation in Genesis chapter one are placed into two distinct groups. Usually they

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

are divided into the “days of forming” and the “days of filling.” To many, this is evidence of a topical rather than a chronological description of the creative work of God.

### **3. The Earth Could Be Old Or Young**

The attractiveness of this view is that if the days are only revelatory, then we have no indication of time in the Genesis creation account. Therefore, the earth and the universe could be millions of years old or relatively young. The text simply does not comment on the matter. Thus, it is argued, that the Genesis account can now be harmonized with modern evolutionary science as to the age of the earth and the universe.

### **Difficulties With The Revelational Day Theory**

Though this view nicely avoids all the problems of attempting to ascertain whether the days of Genesis were literal or symbolic, and thus trying to reconcile it with modern evolutionary science, it does have a number of weaknesses. They can be listed as follows.

#### **1. It Is Not The Natural Reading Of The Text**

To begin with, it is unlikely this view would have been set forth had there not been a problem with harmonizing the text of Genesis with the theories of modern science which call for an ancient universe. A natural reading of Genesis would not make one think of these days as being revelatory, but rather one of historical narrative.

Furthermore, there is nothing in the text that gives any hint that this theory is true. Nowhere do we find God saying to Moses that He is showing Him what happened on six consecutive days. Each day in Genesis is a day of creation—it is not a day of revelation.

#### **2. Genesis Is The Language Of Narration**

The language of Genesis is that of historical narration, not of dramatic vision. There is nothing in the context to suggest that the days were revelatory days rather than literal days, of whatever length, in which God

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

actually created. If Moses wished to say that these were days which God revealed His creative acts to him, he was certainly capable of saying it.

### 3. Exodus 20 Contradicts This Theory

Exodus 20:11 opposes the idea of revelatory days by stating that God “made” or “created” the heavens and the earth in six days. Scripture says:

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Exodus 20:11 NIV).

Those holding the “Revelational day” view translate the Hebrew verb *asah* in Exodus 20:11 as well as in Genesis 1 and 2, as “showed” rather than “made.” Therefore, the text itself says that God *showed* Moses what He created in six days.

However, nowhere in the context of Genesis 1 and 2 does this verb have the clear meaning of “reveal” or “show.”

For example, this verb, *asah*, is used in Genesis 1:26:

Then God said, “Let us make [*asah*] man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis 1:26 ESV).

Obviously in this context the word does not mean “show.” God says He is going to make humankind in His image. In the next verse, Genesis 1:27, it speaks of God doing just that—creating humans as male and female. In this verse, the verb “*bara*” is used.

Thus, the verbs *asah* and *bara* are used interchangeably. In other words, each of these words means the same thing.

Since we know that *bara* never has the idea of “showing” but rather “creating,” the word *asah* must also mean “create,” not “show.” This

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

provides further evidence that Genesis speaks of God creating all things in six days not revealing everything in six days.

### **4. This Is Not The Usual Way Of Recording The Past**

The use of visions to record what has happened in the past is not the usual way in which the Bible speaks about these matters. In fact, Daniel chapter seven would be the *only* other example of God using this method.

In this instance, we are specifically told that this is what Daniel is doing. Nothing in Genesis 1 or 2 gives us the idea that God is merely giving a vision to Moses over a period of six days.

### **5. The Fourth Commandment Seems To Indicate Some Type Of Chronology**

The fact that God told people to rest upon the seventh day because He rested after six days of work assumes some type of chronological sequence of creation. This better fits the idea of creation in six days rather than revealing the work in six days.

Therefore, when everything is considered, the Revelational day theory does not solve the problem between Scripture and the conclusions of modern evolutionary science. The solution lies elsewhere.

### **Summary To Question 9 What Is The Revelational Day Theory? (Creation Was Revealed In Six Days)**

Like many other theories, the “Revelational day theory” holds to six literal twenty-four-hour days in the Genesis creation account. However, the days of Genesis are days of revelation, not six days of creation. All that Genesis reveals is what Moses was told on six literal days.

For example, on day one Moses was told about light coming into being, on day two he was told about the separation of the waters above and below, etc.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, the Genesis account has nothing to do with the time it took the earth to be created. Consequently, the time it took to create the heavens and the earth could have been millions or billions of years. Genesis simply does not tell us.

If the revelatory day theory were true, then it would solve several problems facing us in the Genesis creation account. We could understand the Hebrew word *yom* to mean literal days in Genesis 1, but still have an ancient earth and universe. This would nicely harmonize the Bible with modern evolutionary science as to their conclusions about the age of the earth.

Though this view is certainly possible, the evidence is scanty. Indeed, there is nothing in the account that would lead us to believe we are talking about days of revelation rather than days of creation. In fact, it reads like a straightforward narration of what the Lord did on six separate creative days. To see them as days of revelation is something which has to be read into the text.

Furthermore, in the Book of Exodus, another book written by the same author Moses, it says that God created the earth in six days—it does not say that He revealed the creation in six days. This provides further evidence that we are dealing with days of creation rather than days of revelation.

Add to this the fact that there is only one other example of God revealing the past in this fashion. In that instance, found in Daniel chapter seven, we are told that this is what is taking place. However, nothing in the Genesis creation account even hints that it is recording a series of visions about past events.

All in all, the Revelational day theory, while not impossible, is not very convincing.

### Question 10

**Was The Account Of Creation Written On  
Six Tablets Long Before The Time Of Moses?  
(The Creation Account Was  
Possibly Written By Adam)**

This particular theory is similar to the “revelatory day theory” which understands the days in Genesis as being neither six literal twenty-four-hour creative days nor long periods of time. Instead, the revelatory theory argues that Moses received visions for six consecutive days telling Him what God did in the beginning.

In other words, the days in Genesis were days of “revelation” rather than days of “creation.”

However, as an alternative of Moses receiving visions on six consecutive days, this particular theory we are now looking at says that Moses already had the creation account in his possession before he began to write Genesis.

In fact, the description of God’s creation had been recorded on six clay tablets. These tablets explain God’s creative process, but it does not inform us of the time it took Him to create.

Therefore, this theory says that God revealed the six days of creation not by means of a vision, but rather by means of a historical narrative written on six tablets. P.J. Wiseman details the way this theory is usually presented:

- (1) The six days divided from each other by an evening and morning, do not refer to the time occupied by God in his acts and the duration of the process of Creation.
- (2) The six days refer to the time occupied in revealing to man the account of creation.
- (3) God rested (lit. ceased) on the seventh day not for his own sake but for man’s sake, and because this revelation about Creation was finished on the sixth day, not because of that day (or period) the creation of the world was finished.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

(4) The narrative of Creation was probably written on six tablets. Later, it also appears to have become the custom in Babylonia to write the story of Creation on six tablets.

(5) There is good and sufficient evidence to show that the first page of the Bible is the oldest document which has come down to us (P.J. Wiseman, *Clues To Creation In Genesis*, London, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1977, p. 110).

Consequently, the six days refer to the time God originally revealed His creative acts. Each day, for six days, a new tablet was written describing God's creative acts.

### **Did Adam Write This Account?**

Among other things, it has been contended that the written account of creation which Moses received may have actually been written by Adam himself.

Indeed, since the account goes back to what happened in the beginning it would make sense for the person who had been there, Adam, to compose the Genesis creation account.

### **The Phrase “These Are The Generations Of” or “This is the Book of the Genealogy Of” Hint At The Identity Of The Author**

It is argued that one of the evidences for the early chapters of Genesis having been written by someone before the time of Moses is the phrase “these are the generations of” also translated, “this is the book of the genealogy of.”

This particular phrase is found some ten times in the Book of Genesis.

It is claimed that each time we find this phrase it refers to the person who wrote the account. For example, in Genesis 5:1, it refers to the writer, Adam:

This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God (Genesis 5:1 NKJV).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

It is contended that we find the same pattern throughout Genesis. The name of the author of a particular section is given to us at the end of that section with this phrase “this is the book of the generations of” or “these are the generations of.”

#### **Response To Idea That The Creation Account Was Written On Six Tablets**

It is possible that the Genesis creation account was handed down to Moses on written tablets. However, it does not necessarily mean that the six days of creation represented six different days in which God merely revealed to the writer what happened in the beginning.

In truth, there is no reason whatsoever to come to this conclusion. Indeed, one can also argue that the six tablets, if that was the number of them, represented six literal creative days when God made the earth and all things in it.

In fact, nowhere do we have the slightest hint that these six days recorded in Genesis chapter one were anything but days of creation. To assume otherwise must be done without any evidence.

Furthermore, we have the statement by the author or compiler of Genesis, Moses, that God created the world in six days. We read in Exodus:

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Exodus 20:11 NIV).

This statement comes from the same person who either wrote, or compiled, the Genesis creation account. It is clear that he understood it to mean that the six days in Genesis were days of creation.

Consequently, this particular theory, that the creation account in Genesis was revealed to the author in six days, is built on a number of unprovable assumptions.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

In addition, the evidence seems to speak directly against it. Therefore, another solution should be found.

#### **Summary To Question 10:**

#### **Was The Account Of Creation Written On Six Tablets Long Before The Time Of Moses? (The Creation Account Was Possibly Written By Adam)**

There is viewpoint that Moses, the compiler of the Book of Genesis, received the creation account in written form. It is possible that it was composed on six clay tablets.

If this is true, then Moses did not personally compose the account but merely edited or incorporated that which was previously written by someone else.

It is further argued that the six “days” of Genesis chapter one merely refers to the six time periods which God revealed His creative work to the original author.

Thus, in six separate days, God told the author of the creation account, possibly Adam, what He had done in the beginning. This would mean that the days of Genesis have nothing to do with the time God originally created all things.

Evidence of these previous written records can be found by the words, “these are the generations of.” This particular phrase is found some ten times in the Book of Genesis. Each time this phrase is used a different person is named. It is argued that the person named was the actual author of the previous section.

If this is the case, then it is possible that the Genesis creation account, as we now have it, was in reality, written by Adam himself. This would make it the oldest document ever written.

While this theory would nicely reconcile Genesis with the views of modern evolutionary science with respect to the age of the earth, there are a number of problems with it.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

For one thing, we do not know that Moses received the creation account in pre-written form. He may have, he may not have.

Furthermore, even if he did receive a written account, it does not mean that creation was merely revealed in six days rather than being accomplished in six days. Indeed, in Exodus it clearly states that God created the world in six days—not that God took six days to reveal it to whoever compiled the account.

In sum, there are too many assumptions which must be made for this theory to explain the facts. We should look for a better way to understand the meaning of the days of Genesis.

## Question 11

### What Is The Age/Day Theory?

Though many Bible scholars believe that the days spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis were solar days, twenty-four hours in length, there are other qualified scholars that feel that the days are not to be taken as literal twenty-four-hour periods but rather are representative of long periods of time, perhaps millions of years.

Many who hold this view are known as “progressive creationists” because they believe that creation was accomplished by God’s power through a series of creative acts separated by vast periods of time. Each period of creation was not necessary of the same length, but they were longer than twenty-four hours. This is known as the age-day theory.

The arguments for the age-day theory are as follows.

#### 1.      **The Word Day In The Genesis Creation Account Is Not Always A Solar Day**

The Hebrew word for “day” (*yom*), does not strictly translate into the literal twenty-four-hour sense of “day” whenever we find it in the Old Testament. In fact, within the context of the first two chapters of Genesis we discover the word day used in three different ways.

In Genesis 1:14, it is used of solar day:

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years” (Genesis 1:14 NIV)

It is obvious that a solar day is in view in this verse because of the comparison between days and years.

The word *yom* is also used to refer to daylight as opposed to night in the Genesis account. Scripture says:

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” There was evening, and there was morning, marking the first day. . . God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs to indicate seasons and days and years, and let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” It was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. He made the stars also (Genesis 1:5,14-16 NET).

In these verses *yom* refers to the daylight period, not the time of night.

Finally, this word makes reference to the entire creative period. Scripture says:

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heaven (Genesis 2:4 NRSV).

Here the word “day” is used of the time it took for the Lord to create all things.

Hence, the context does not demand that we understand the word day in a strict literal sense of twenty-four hours for each time which we find it.

## **2. There Are Metaphorical Uses Of The Word Day In The Old Testament**

There is something else which we must appreciate. The Hebrew word for day, *yom*, is used metaphorically a number of times in the Old Testament. We can list the following examples.

In the Book of Job, it says:

A flood will carry off his house, rushing waters on the day of God’s wrath (Job 20:28 NIV).

The “day of God’s wrath” is speaking of an extended time period rather than one specific twenty-four-hour day.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

In Proverbs we also read about the day of wrath:

Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death (Proverbs 11:4 NIV).

This is certainly not limited to one solar day.

Again, in Proverbs, we find the word day used metaphorically:

The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD (Proverbs 21:31 NRSV).

The “day of battle” refers to the time of battle.

There is one further reference in Proverbs:

If you faint in the day of trouble, your strength is small (Proverbs 24:10 NET).

The “day of trouble” is a metaphor for a period of time.

In Ecclesiastes, we find another example of this type of usage:

In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity, consider: God has made the one as well as the other, so that no one can discover anything that will come after him (Ecclesiastes 7:14 CSB)

The “day of prosperity” and the “day of adversity” each refer to a time period—not merely a single twenty-four-hour day.

Each of these passages uses the Hebrew word “yom” for day. This is the same word used in the Genesis creation account.

### **3. There Are Other Biblical Texts Where Yom Is Used For A Long Period Of Time**

Furthermore, the word day is used in other biblical texts for a long period of time. The psalmist said:

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night (Psalm 90:4 NIV).

In the New Testament, Simon Peter cited this passage and made the following comment:

Dear friends, don't overlook this one fact: With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day (2 Peter 3:8 CSB).

Also, the future "day of the Lord" that the Bible talks about is not one particular day, but rather it refers to a long period of time.

Thus, the Hebrew word "day" in Genesis must be understood by its context—not how it is usually or normally used. Since the term day has a secondary usage of a long period of time in Scripture, it is possible that it means this in Genesis 1.

The context must be the determining factor.

### **4. Modern Science Shows The Need For A Long Period Of Time**

This brings us to our next point. If the context of Genesis allows the word day to be understood as an indefinite period of time, then evidence from science confirms that this is the proper way in which we are to interpret the word.

Indeed, for many people, modern science has ruled out the possibility of a recent creation of the earth.

With the great majority of scientists, believers and unbelievers alike, accepting the idea that the earth is at least four billion years old, it seems that long periods of time are required to harmonize the Bible with the conclusions of modern geology.

Those who hold the age/day theory make other observations about this issue.

## **5. Animal Death Could Have Occurred Before The Fall Of Humanity**

Before God created humanity, He certainly could have created an animal kingdom that was subject to death. We know that there was death in the plant world before the Fall of humanity because Adam and Eve were told that the plants were given to them for food.

Scripture records God saying to them:

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food" (Genesis 1:29 NIV).

Therefore, we know that plants died before the Fall of humanity.

There is something else we must consider. If there was no death in the animal kingdom before sin entered the world, then we must believe that the animals would reproduce and live forever. If this is the case, then the earth would soon become overcrowded.

Furthermore, the warning to Adam is that *he* would die, not that animals would begin to die.

The Bible says:

But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die (Genesis 2:17 NIV).

In addition, Romans 5:12, which speaks of Adam bringing sin into the world, refers to human beings, not plants and animals:

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned (Romans 5:12 NKJV).

Animal death before the Fall of humanity is biblically possible.

**6. The Terms Morning And Evening  
Are Not Used For The Seventh Day**

Proponents of the age/day theory also point out that there is no use of the term evening and morning with regard to the seventh day. It merely says God rested:

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done (Genesis 2:2-3 NIV).

They contend that the seventh day is something that has *not* been completed. The first six ages of creation have been finished while the seventh remains incomplete. God is still resting from His creation.

Therefore, the six days cannot be solar days because the seventh day is not. If the seventh day is ongoing, then God's rest from creation has gone on for thousands of years, up until the present. Thus, from the length of the seventh day we have a clue to the age of the earth.

**7. The Events Of The Sixth Day  
Demand A Long Period Of Time**

There is also the issue of what occurred on the sixth day of creation. Indeed, the events that the Bible says took place on that sixth day do not seem to be able to be fit into a twenty-four-hour period. Scripture says the following things happened upon the sixth day.

God created all the land animals and then He created Adam. After He created Adam, God put him into the Garden of Eden to take care of it. He then gave Adam directions about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. After this, God then brought all of the animals to Adam to be named. After naming the animals, Adam realized that he was alone without a helper. God then put Adam into a deep sleep and then created Eve.

It is argued that even a perfect human being in an unfallen state, such as Adam, could not have named all the existing animals in a few short hours

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

of one day. This being the case, we must ask ourselves what a normal reading of this passage would cause the reader to assume.

Would any reader of this account assume that all these events transpired in one twenty-four-hour period? No, they would not.

Thus, it seems logical to believe that a natural reading of this passage would cause everyone to presume that all these events took place in more than one day.

In sum, if the sixth day was not limited to twenty-four hours in length, then neither were the other days. Consequently, from the sixth day we have a clue as to the length of the other days.

#### **8. The Evidence From Scripture Of The Antiquity Of The Earth**

It is also pointed out that Scripture itself speaks of the earth being very old. The prophet Habakkuk wrote:

He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed. His ways are eternal (Habakkuk 3:6 NIV).

From his words, it seems that we can assume that the earth has been around for a long time—perhaps millions of years.

Peter wrote about the heavens which existed long ago:

They deliberately overlook this: By the word of God the heavens came into being long ago and the earth was brought about from water and through water (2 Peter 3:5 CSB).

“Came into being long ago” has the idea of an old earth.

These passages speak of the earth being very ancient, not merely a few thousand years of age.

**9. Evening And Morning May Mean  
The End Of One Creative Period**

Although the phrase “evening and morning” normally implies a solar day, it may simply mean the end of one creative period and the beginning of another. Therefore, it could signify the end of a period of time—not necessarily a solar day.

In addition, this particular phrase “evening and morning” is used nowhere else in the Old Testament. Therefore, it was not a common way of speaking of a solar day.

**10. There Was No Sun Before The Fourth Day**

If the sun was not created until the fourth day, there could not have been evening and morning in the normal sense of the term. Therefore, the days were not normal days.

**11. The Passage In Exodus Does Not Solve The Issue**

While it is true that Exodus 20:10 speaks of six literal days that people are to work, based upon a six day plus one pattern in Genesis, it does not necessarily follow that God’s days are the same as ours.

Remember that there was no human observer when God created the heavens and the earth in six days. Therefore, we should not assume that God’s days are necessarily “solar days.”

**12. The Hebrews Understood Many  
Meanings Of The Word Yom**

While it is true that there were other, more specific, Hebrew words available for the author to use if he wanted to indicate a long period of time, if his original readers knew that *yom* could also have this meaning, then it would be appropriate to use it in Genesis.

This is particularly true because of the emphasis of the six successive periods of work and then a time of rest. This six plus one pattern was set for the people to work six days and then rest on the seventh.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, from the context of Genesis, and the common usage of *yom*, the term could mean something other than a literal day.

### Conclusion To Day Age Theory

The word Hebrew word translated “day” does mean period of time in parts of the Old Testament. This includes the context of Genesis. Since science has shown the earth and universe to be billions of years of age, this is the best way to understand the term in Genesis 1.

These arguments have convinced many that the best way to look at the “days” in Genesis are long periods of time, not solar days. They believe creation took millions of years, not 144 hours of one week.

### Difficulties With The Age Day Theory

The arguments for the age/day theory have met with strong opposition among those who hold other views as to the meaning of the “days” of Genesis. We can cite them as follows.

#### 1. It Is Not The Natural Reading Of The Text

Proponents of the calendar day theory are always quick to point out that the age/day view has to be read into the text. Indeed, it is not the natural way to read Genesis 1, or the statements in Exodus that God created the world in six “days.” If God wanted to inform us that the creation occurred long ages ago, there are a number of ways in which He might have clearly said it.

Furthermore, those who hold that the days in Genesis represent ages admit that the traditional view has been that of solar days. In fact, until the eighteenth century, Christians were virtually unanimous in the belief that the earth was about six thousand years old according to the teaching of Scripture.

However, with the advent of the theory of evolution and its growing popularity, pressure was brought to bear upon Christians to reevaluate the question of the age of the earth.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, the age/day theory became popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the science of geology, based upon evolutionary concepts, argued for an old earth. As a point of fact, it was not because of further study of the Bible.

There is something else which much be noted. Although the term “day” can indicate a long period of time, it should not be understood in that particular way unless the context makes it very clear.

Yet there is nothing in the context in Genesis that would even hint that the days are anything other than twenty-four hours. It is not the natural reading of the text.

### **2. There Is No Long Period Of Time In Genesis 2:4**

There is also the issue of making the term *yom* “day” in Genesis 2:4 referring to the entire creative period in chapter one.

The great Hebraic scholar C.D. Ginsburg comments on the use of the term in chapter one and two of Genesis:

There is nothing in the first chapter of Genesis to justify the spiritualisation of the expression “day.” On the contrary the definition in verse 5 of the word in question demands that *yom* . . . should be understood in the same sense as we understand the word day in common parlance, i.e. a natural day . . . The arguments generally produced by those who ascribe to the word “day” here an unlimited duration of time are untenable. They say that the word “day” is not to be taken here in its literal meaning is evident from chapter 2:4, for the portion of time spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis as six days is spoken of in the second chapter as one day. But the word used in the first six days is the simple noun, whereas in chapter 2:4 it is a compound of “the day of” with the preposition “in.” which, according to the genius of the Hebrew language, makes it an adverb, and must be translated, “when,” “at the time of,” “after” (C.D. Ginsburg, cited by P. J. Wiseman, *Clues To Creation In Genesis*, London, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1977, p. 123).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

*The New International Version* brings this out in its translation. It reads as follows:

This is the account of the heavens and earth when they were created. When the Lord God made the earth and the heavens (Genesis 2:4 NIV).

Notice the NIV brings out the sense of the word *yom* as an adverb and thus translates it “when.”

Furthermore, we see the same Hebrew phrase used in 2:17:

But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die (Genesis 2:17 NIV).

The New International Version clears up any ambiguity by correctly translating the Hebrew “for *when* you eat of it, you will surely die.”

There is no thought here of any indefinite lengthy period of time. On the contrary, it refers to a momentary point in time. Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden immediately after they sinned.

The same phrase “in the day that” is also repeated in Genesis 5:1. The English Standard Version translates it in this same manner as “when.” We read:

This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God (Genesis 5:1 ESV).

Therefore, in the creation narrative, the word “day” is not clearly used for a period of time longer than a normal day.

### 3. The Admission Of Those Who Hold To An Old Earth

Furthermore, there are many who hold to the view that the earth is old who admit that the term *yom* cannot be stretched to mean a long period of time. Their attempt to find an old earth in Genesis is based upon reasons other than the clear meaning of the text.

#### **4. There Is A Problem With The Plant Kingdom**

Another problem with the age/day theory concerns the plant kingdom. If the plant kingdom was created on the third day, it would have existed for a long time until the sun was created on the fourth day (if the sun was created on the fourth day). But how could the plants have existed for thousands, or millions of years without light from the sun? Indeed, as we all know, the plants need the sun to exist.

In addition, what should we conclude about the symbiotic relationships between plants, (created on the third day), birds (created on the fifth day), and insects (created on the sixth day)? They need each other to exist.

Those who hold the age/day interpretation respond in several different ways. Some believe that the days in Genesis are not in chronological order but are given topically. This will explain why the sun, moon and stars are not supposedly created until the fourth day as well as the problems with plants and animals.

However, once you change the chronology, and make the six days overlap, then the text tells us nothing about the age of the earth.

Furthermore, having light without the sun is not really a problem. Indeed, the earth still could have been rotating on its axis at a fixed speed anticipating the creation of the sun with some temporary light source illuminating the earth.

Another source, perhaps, God Himself, could have been the light source for the first three days. We simply do not have enough information to make a firm conclusion.

#### **5. The Scripture Does Not Say The Earth Is Millions Of Years Old**

The testimony of Scripture that the earth is ancient does not mean it is millions of years old. "Old" to the Hebrew mind could well be hundreds, or thousands of years. Indeed, it was not necessarily millions of years.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

To appeal to Scripture as to the ancient age of the earth, meaning millions of years, is assuming what one should be proving.

### **6. The Bible Does Not Speak Of Thousand Year Days**

Scripture does not say that the Lord's days last a thousand years each. A day with the Lord is *as* a thousand years. It is a statement of the power of God, not the length of a day according to Scripture. In fact, the reference to Gods' years only makes sense if the days are used in their normal sense.

Consequently, the statement in Second Peter 3:8 should not be considered as a mathematical formula. The context is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. Although Jesus had promised to come quickly, He had not returned by the time Peter wrote his second letter.

Indeed, there were many people who were ridiculing the idea of His return. Thus, Peter encouraged his readers that the coming of Christ was indeed certain. He used the analogy of God's perspective of time compared to ours—one day to the Lord is the same as one thousand years. In other words, He will come in His own time.

Once we understand the context of Peter's statement, the Second Coming of Christ, we understand that this verse says nothing about the length of the days in the Book of Genesis. In point of fact, this is not the subject under discussion.

Even if we grant the days in Genesis 1 were one thousand years in length, it is still not enough time for the Genesis account to fit with the modern evolutionary time scale.

It was approximately six thousand years from the creation of Adam until today. This does not allow the Bible to harmonize with present-day estimates of the age of the earth from those who hold an evolutionary perspective.

**7. Time References In The Old Testament  
Are In The Normal Sense Of Days**

We should also note that in the Old Testament that time references, with respect to the Lord, are always used in the normal sense. The psalmist said:

So I said: "Do not take me away, O my God, in the midst of my days; your years go on through all generations . . . But you remain the same, and your years will never end" (Psalm 102:24,27 NIV).

Here the words "days" and "years" are used in their normal sense. Again, we emphasize, this is the normal way in which these words should be understood unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary.

**8. Evenings And Mornings Speak Of Solar Days**

Another problem concerns the phrase "evenings and mornings." Advocates of the age/day theory have not come up with any convincing explanation why these terms should not be used in anything but their normal sense. The same phrase appears in Daniel 8:26 where it simply cannot refer to long, indefinite periods of time.

**9. Was Each Of The Nights Millions Of Years In Length?**

If the days in Genesis one are assumed to be millions of years in length, then what should we conclude about the nights? Was each night as long as the geological day? Was each night without any light whatsoever?

An evening and a morning are the natural way to separate one solar day from the next. It seems most unnatural to use this phrase to separate one geological age from the next.

**10. Adam Could Have Named The  
Animals In A Short Period Of Time**

Contrary to what some have argued, the events of the sixth day could have occurred in twenty-four hours. We can make the following observations.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The creation of the animals could have happened instantaneously. We should not assume that God needed any time to accomplish this. Furthermore, Adam's creation could have taken place directly after that of the animals.

Adam was created as a fully functioning human being. He did not have to learn a language. When God gave Adam commandments he immediately understood.

Adam's mind was at a place where it was not affected by sin or any genetic defect. In other words, in contrast to ours, it was operating at its full capacity. His extreme intelligence would have allowed him to quickly name the animals.

Additionally, the purpose of naming the animals was to show Adam of his need for a helper—it was not merely to give them particular names.

Consequently, Adam would not have required much time to realize the need for a helper. Seeing just a few of the animals would show him his need.

All of this could have happened in a short period of time. Therefore, we should not insist that a long period of time was involved.

### **11. Adam Was Created At Extreme End Of The Sixth Day**

Adam lived 930 years according to Genesis 5:5. If he were created in an age-day—thousands or millions of years in duration—he would have had to have been created at the extreme edge of the sixth day to still be living in that age. This appears to be out of harmony with the fact that man was the highlight of the creative acts of God.

### **12. The Length Of Seventh Day Is Not Millions Of Years**

The length of the seventh day, if it is understood to be a period of time, argues against the days in Genesis of being long ages. If the first six days are interpreted to be millions of years, the seventh day certainly has not lasted an equivalent amount of time. At most it is only a few thousand years old.

**13. The Sabbath Day Was A Definite Period Of Time**

Exodus 20:8-10 speaks of humans working six days and then resting on the seventh day—the Sabbath day. The stated reason for this is that God worked six days and then rested, or ceased working, on the seventh day.

However, if the seventh day, the day God rested, has been an indefinite period of time then this commandment would have been meaningless to the Hebrews.

**14. It Is An Unfair Comparison To The Prophetical Days**

The days in Genesis cannot be compared to the uses of the word “day” in prophetical passages of the Old Testament. The prophetical passages in which day is used for a long period of time are in an entirely different context.

Indeed, they speak of future events, not of past history. The account in Genesis is clearly a narrative of past history. Consequently, one should not be compared with the other.

**15. The Age/Day Theory Does Not Fit The Geologic Time Scale**

Even if we assume that the “days” of Genesis refer to geological ages it still does not fit the evolutionary time scale. Indeed, the creation of the sun, moon, and stars follows the creation of light by three ages!

In addition, Genesis records that fish and birds are created on day five, reptiles on day six. However, current evolutionary theory has birds later than reptiles.

Therefore, the age/day interpretation does not harmonize with the modern evolutionary theory.

**16. The Hebrews Had Words To Express Ages**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

It must also be pointed out that the Hebrews had words they could use that would express periods longer than a day. In fact, Moses, the writer of Genesis through Deuteronomy, used these words on other occasions.

For example, there is the Hebrew word *moed* translated “seasons” in Genesis 1:14:

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years” (Genesis 1:14 NIV).

The word *olam* is translated “forever” in Genesis 6:3:

Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years” (Genesis 6:3 NIV).

The phrase *olam dor* is translated as “all generations” in Genesis 9:12:

God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations” (Genesis 9:12 NRSV).

*Tamid* is rendered “continually” in Leviticus 24:2:

Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning continually (Leviticus 24:2 NIV).

The Hebrew word *ad* is translated “forever” in Numbers 24:20:

Then he looked on Amalek, and uttered his oracle, saying: “First among the nations was Amalek, but its end is to perish forever” (Numbers 24:20 NRSV).

The phrase *yom orek* means the “length of days” in Deuteronomy 30:20:

That you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.” (Deuteronomy 30:20 NKJV).

The New Living Translation puts it this way:

Choose to love the LORD your God and to obey him and commit yourself to him, for he is your life. Then you will live long in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deuteronomy 30:20 NLT).

*Yom olam* is translated “days of old” in Deuteronomy 32:7:

Remember the days of old, consider the years long past; ask your father, and he will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you (Deuteronomy 32:7 NRSV).

If “ages” were meant in the Genesis creation account, why was the word *yom* used rather than the other Hebrew words that could indicate longer periods of time?

#### **17. Why Did God Delay His Creation?**

What purpose would it serve for God to delay His creation? We know that He has the power to speak and then things immediately appear. Indeed, when Jesus fed the five thousand this was accomplished by instantly creating fully mature fish as well as ready-to-eat bread.

Since the Lord has exhibited this power, why would He wait thousands or millions of years to create Adam and Eve? This does not seem to make any sense.

#### **18. The Age/Day Theory Contradicts The Promise Of A Future Blessing**

The main problem with the age/day theory is that it is hard to reconcile with the Biblical promise of a future, ideal age. In fact, the Bible promises a future restoration of all things. In the Book of Acts, we read the following:

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

For he must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things, as God promised long ago through his prophets (Acts 3:21 NLT).

There will be a final restoration of all things.

The Bible also says that in the future the animals will all be vegetarians. We read:

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD (Isaiah 65:15 NRSV).

This is restoration to the “original perfection.” It is not to some world that contained animal death and other types of imperfection. However, there is no original perfection with which to return if the age/day theory is correct.

### Evaluation Of The Age/Day Theory

The age/day theory does not view the days in Genesis in a literal sense but rather sees them as indefinite periods of time. The strength of the age/day theory is that it harmonizes Genesis and modern evolutionary science which says that the earth and universe is ancient.

The weakness of this theory is that it is a forced interpretation of the text—it is not something that is obviously there or even a possible interpretation of the biblical data.

Indeed, the age/day theory stems from the desire to harmonize Genesis and geology rather than from a close study of the biblical text.

There is something else we must note. Though the age/day theory does not necessarily lead one down the path to deny the historical truth of Genesis, it can be the first step toward that direction.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

This has caused many to be cautious about accepting this as the proper understanding of the days in Genesis 1.

#### **Summary To Question 11**

#### **What Is The Age/Day Theory? (The Days Represent Long Ages)**

While most interpreters view the days of Genesis as solar days, twenty-four hours in length, there are some who think that long periods of time are in view. Thus, the age/day theory sees the days in Genesis as “ages” or long periods of time rather than solar days. It has become a popular way to view the days in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis.

Indeed, those who advocate the age/day theory believe that the conclusions of modern secular science can be harmonized with the Scripture if one takes this approach.

Whereas this approach has been admired by some Bible students, it is questionable as to whether this is the correct way to understand the word “day” in Genesis 1.

Indeed, it does not seem likely that the original readers of Genesis would have understood the word day to represent a long period of time in the context of the creation account. In fact, there is nothing whatsoever in the context of Genesis, or the rest of Scripture for that matter, which would indicate the days are representative of long ages.

Therefore, another answer needs to be found.

## Question 12

### **What Is The Literary Framework View?**

One way of looking at the Genesis creation account is what is known as the “literary framework view” or the “framework hypothesis.” This position holds that the days in Genesis are not meant to be understood chronologically but rather logically. The days are not sequential, they did not occur one directly after the other, but are rather written in a literary framework for which no specific details are given.

Thus, the writer of Genesis was not intending to tell us about either the length of a day, or the order of creation.

While the framework hypothesis recognizes that the days of Genesis are ordinary solar days, it understands them as well as the entire account, in a figurative or literary sense. By doing this, it eliminates certain problems which we find in the creation account. This includes differences in order between the first account of creation, Genesis 1:1-2:4a, and the so-called second account of creation Genesis 2:4b to 2:25.

No longer do we have to try to harmonize the sequence of events. Furthermore, there is no need to explain the delay of the creation of the sun, moon and stars to the fourth day of creation since the Genesis account is not a chronological account of what occurred. It also removes the possibility of conflict between the theories of modern scientists and the Bible.

### **The Evidence: The First Three Days Correspond To Days Four, Five And Six**

The evidence that Genesis is written in a literary framework rather than a strict chronological framework, is seen as follows. The first three days of creation directly correspond to days four through six. This cannot be coincidental. The first three days are days of forming while the next three days are day of filling.

The comparison is as follows.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

|                                |                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 1 (Forming)                | God separated the light from the darkness.                                       |
| Day 4 (Filling)                | God placed the sun, moon, and stars in heaven.                                   |
| Day 2 (Forming)                | The sky and the waters were separated.                                           |
| Day 5 (Filling)<br>with birds. | God filled the water with the fish and the sky                                   |
| Day 3 (Forming)                | The dry land and the seas were separated. God<br>also made the plants and trees. |
| Day 6 (Filling)                | God made the land animals and man and<br>woman.                                  |

Consequently, the arrangement of the six days is not a chronology of what happened but rather a literary device that teaches God created all things.

### There Is Disharmony In The Sequence Of Events

The literary view also sees problems in the chronology in the Genesis account. They see a disharmony in the sequence of events in Genesis.

For example, Genesis 1:26-27 says that God made man *after* He made the plants and animals while Genesis 2:19 seems to say that he made man *before* the animals.

Consequently, the events described in Genesis 1 and 2 are not meant to be understood as a detailed report of God's creative work in consecutive order but rather are given in a literary framework describing the fact that God created; nothing more.

### Difficulties With The Literary Framework View

There are numerous problems with this view. They are as follows.

## **1. It Is Not The Natural Reading Of The Text**

The main problem with this theory is that the natural reading of Genesis is that of a chronological sequence. There is a natural build up in the account moving from the simple things to the more complex. The dry land, waters, and sky are first made and then filled with fish, birds, animals, and finally humans. This is a natural chronological progression.

In fact, there is nothing in the account which would have us think it to be either a poetic or literary account. There is nothing unique about the vocabulary and grammar which is used in this passage. Indeed, it is in a similar form as other parts of the Old Testament where actual events are reported.

Furthermore, we find that Genesis 1 and 2 also gives a series of numbers with each day (Day 1, Day 2, etc.). The natural reading of this would be consecutive days. To understand the days of being in some type of literary framework where they are not chronological is something which has to be read into the text.

Therefore, we find no hint that it is merely a literary device that lists creation in logical rather than chronological order.

## **2. The Sabbath Pattern Was Six Days Of Work And One Day Of Rest**

When God commanded humanity to work six days and then rest upon the seventh it was based upon *His* pattern of work in creation. The nation of Israel was told the following:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Exodus 20:8-11 ESV).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The people of Israel were supposed to imitate God by working six days and then resting upon the seventh.

To make any sense of this commandment, God Himself must have worked six days and then ceased working on the seventh. Therefore, God set the precedent of the weekly cycle of work when He created the earth. Israel was to follow that precedent.

Consequently, this passage becomes a problem for the framework theory. It argues that the six days of creation are not to be understood literally but are merely a reporting of the events in a literary framework; not a literal or chronological framework.

While it has been argued by those holding the framework view that God's creative activity is described in terms of a human work week, the commandment to remember the Sabbath day teaches just the opposite. God's activity is not described in human terms—rather the work week of humans is based upon *God's* activity in creation. Our work week is patterned after His six-day week.

Therefore, from the first two chapters of Genesis we learn that God's activity in creation is something which human beings can imitate. God's work is represented by a pattern of six days of work and one of rest. We are to do likewise.

Yet here is where the framework theory breaks down. It claims that the seven days of Genesis 1 and 2 are merely a framework to describe God's creative activity. In reality, His creative work did not have that same form—six days of work and one day of rest.

If so, then this brings up the obvious question, "How then could human beings imitate God's activity in a weekly cycle of work and rest, if His original activity was not the same six days of work and one day of rest as the first two chapters of Genesis describe? The obvious answer seems to be that we could not.

### **3. Other Scripture Passages See This Account As Factual**

Apart from Genesis 1, the Bible interprets the creation account as describing events which actually occurred. For example, Paul refers to the creation of light as a specific creative act:

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6 ESV).

Peter refers to the specific event which occurred on the third day of creation. He wrote:

For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God (2 Peter 3:5 ESV)

This assumes a logical and factual account of what happened. There is nothing to indicate that it is merely a literary account of what occurred.

### **4. The Days Do Not Exactly Correspond**

There is another problem with this view—the days do not exactly correspond as the theory is stated.

For example, there is no exact parallel between Day 1 and Day 4. The lights created on Day 4 (the sun, moon, stars) are placed in the expanse that was created on Day 2, not Day 1. The expanse is not even mentioned on Day 1, but it is stated five times on Day 2 (Genesis 1:6-8).

Therefore, there is no parallel between Day 1 and Day 4 with respect to creating the expanse and then filling it.

The parallels between Day 2 and Day 5 are also a problem. The preparation for the fish and birds comes on Day 3, not Day 2. It is on the third Day of creation when God gathers the waters together and calls them seas (Genesis 1:22). On Day 5 He fills the seas with fish.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Likewise, there are problems with the parallels between Day 3 and Day 6. Nothing was created on Day 6 to fill the seas that were gathered together on the third Day of creation.

Consequently, there is no precise correspondence between the first three days of creation and the last three. The “literary framework” is not there.

### **5. This Theory Tries To Accord The Bible With Modern Science**

This theory, like so many others, seems to be an attempt to harmonize the Bible and the claims of evolutionary science. Like other theories, it is held because of a belief in an ancient earth and universe, not because the Bible clearly says the earth is old. One wonders if this theory would have ever been proposed if there had not been a problem harmonizing Genesis with the views of modern evolutionary science.

### **6. The Text Of Genesis Does Harmonize Without Resorting To This Literary Framework Idea**

This theory assumes the account of creation cannot be harmonized as it stands. However, if Genesis 1 is understood as a general account of creation, while chapter two is seen as filling in the details of this general account, then there is no disharmony in the text. Genesis two does not say that man was created before the plants and animals—it is merely filling in the details previously revealed.

If chapter two is understood as supplementing the information already revealed in chapter one, and not as a separate creation account, then there is no contradiction between the two chapters and no need to find some literary answer.

### **7. A Literary Structure Does Not Rule Out A Chronological Factual Account**

Finally, the fact that Moses used a literary structure in stating that God created everything does not force us to the conclusion that we are dealing with a narrative that is non-sequential.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

In sum, the literary framework view is not the best answer as to understand the Genesis creation account.

#### **Summary To Question 12: What Is Literary Framework View?**

The framework hypothesis asserts that Genesis 1 is not to be taken as a literal, chronological account of God's original creation, but rather a topical account which merely asserts the Lord created all things.

Therefore these "days" of creation are given in a literary framework which is designed to teach us that God alone is the creator of an orderly universe.

It sees days 1 to 3 in the Genesis creation account corresponding to days 4 to 6. Consequently, the account needs to be seen as a literary work describing God's creation—it is not necessarily a listing of chronological events. Interpreting Genesis this way allows it to harmonize with modern scientific theory while still doing justice to the text.

While the literary framework view allows the Bible to correspond with the present views of modern evolutionary science with respect to the age of the earth, there are too many problems with the theory to make it acceptable. Indeed, the harmonization appears to be rather forced. Furthermore, the days do not match up as nicely as the theory claims.

In fact, the framework theory raises more problems than solutions. A sequential approach to Genesis 1 looks to be the most consistent and obvious way to deal with the data of the text.

### **Question 13**

#### **What Is The Religious Only View Of Genesis?**

A popular way to view the days in Genesis is the “religious only” approach. According to this view, it was not the intention of the author of Genesis to provide us with any information of a scientific nature.

Therefore, many questions regarding the Bible and science are the result of attempting to find scriptural answers to questions which the Bible does not address.

It is contended that the Bible has no interest in giving us any information about when God created the universe or the length of the days of creation. Genesis was not meant to describe a process that is scientifically explainable. It presents a doctrine of the Creator but not of the creation. In other words, people are asking the wrong questions.

The religious only perspective allows the possibility for taking the word “day” either literally or nonliterally. It places the Book of Genesis in its historical context. This is a word from God addressed to a group of people who are surrounded by nations who believed in the existence of many gods as well as the mythology which grew out of this belief. The concern of Moses, the writer of Genesis, was to explain what happened and why it happened—not how long it took to happen.

Therefore, some scholars see questions about the length of the days in Genesis as irrelevant because it is not the Bible’s intent to reveal this type of information. They contend that Genesis speaks in religious terms—science has the job of explaining how it happened.

#### **It Is Wrong To Look For Scientific Answers In Genesis**

Those holding this point of view assert that it is wrong to attempt to discover scientific information in Scripture. They believe that every attempt at reconciling Genesis with the exact requirements of modern sciences has been doomed to failure. Only a forced interpretation of the text can make Genesis conform to modern science.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Among those who hold this position are Christians who adopt the theory of evolution.

#### **Difficulties With The Religious Only Interpretation**

This approach attempts to remove the tension between science and Scripture by making it a non-issue. The problem is that it undermines the authority of Scripture while giving all authority to modern evolutionary science. It makes the statements of Genesis regarding science and nature as basically irrelevant.

It also raises an important question—if the scientific matters in Scripture are not to be considered as a true explanation of what occurred in the beginning, then why are they recorded and given so much emphasis?

Indeed, why is the account recorded at all? The Genesis account of creation must mean something. Furthermore, why is it repeated elsewhere in Scripture.

All in all, the religious only view of the Genesis creation account causes more problems than it solves.

#### **Summary To Question 13: What Is The Religious Only View Of Genesis?**

The religious only interpretation of Genesis sees the creation account as not attempting to give any information with respect to the time in which God created the heavens and the earth. The author merely states that God is the Creator but does not give any details of fact. Consequently, there is no reason to harmonize Genesis and science because Genesis is not attempting to teach us anything about science.

If this is the case, then the defenders of the accuracy of Scripture can turn their attention elsewhere.

However, the religious only theory, while attractive, does not seem to answer a number of important questions. While the main purpose of Genesis is indeed to emphasize God as the Creator there are details in the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

account that must be taken seriously. The creation account obviously means something.

In addition, other parts of Scripture assume that the creation account contained in Genesis is an actual report of what occurred in the beginning.

Therefore, the religious only theory, has many unanswered questions. Indeed, it does not provide us with a satisfactory explanation of why we find the Genesis creation account recorded in Scripture.

## Question 14

### **What Is The Analogical Day View? (Days Of God, Not Human Days)**

The analogical day view sees the days of creation not as literal days but as “days of God.” Simply stated, the days are not days, as we understand the term, but rather days of God’s activity or “divine days.”

If this is a correct view of the Genesis account of creation, then it tells us absolutely nothing about the time God took to create the heavens and the earth. It may have been recent—it may have been accomplished over millions or billions of years. We are simply not told.

#### **The Days Are God’s Workdays**

According to the “analogical view,” each of the days in the Genesis creation account are God’s own workdays. These days are analogous to human workdays, but they are not necessarily identical.

In God’s workdays, each particular day represents an indefinite period during which God performed some major creative activity. Therefore, the creation days in Genesis are six successive periods of unknown and unspecified length—God’s days, not human days.

Some advocates of the analogical day view see these days of God as possibly overlapping in part. They also believe that the days may be reflecting more of a logical rather than chronological order of God’s creative acts. However, other advocates see these days as six sequential days of creation ending with God’s resting on the seventh.

The fact that God’s creative work took six divine days is for instructional purposes to believers. Since God worked for six consecutive days when He created the heaven and the earth, He set a pattern for humans and our work.

As God worked six days and then rested, or ceased working, on the seventh, humans are to work six days and then rest on the seventh, the Sabbath.

### **The Necessity Of The Sun For Literal Human Days**

One of the arguments given for the analogical day is the necessity of the sun in defining the meaning of a “day.” They believe the days in Genesis are not identical to the days which we human beings experience? Our human days are characterized by the rising of the sun in the morning and the setting of the sun in the evening.

A “day” may be defined as that period of time between one sunrise and the next. Therefore, from our perspective, the *nature* of our days is entirely bound up with the existence of the sun.

However, according to Genesis 1, during the first three days of creation, there was no sun! Consequently, the nature of those first three days was essentially different from our days. They are not identical to our human days but rather they are analogous.

There is more. Since Genesis does not make any distinction between days 1-3 of creation and days 4-6. The first three days, without the sun, have evenings and mornings and the last three days, 4-6, have evenings and mornings with the sun.

Hence, since the sun did not exist until the fourth day, the terms evening and morning cannot be seen as identical to our evenings and mornings.

### **Evening And Morning Does Not Mean Twenty-Four Hour Day**

It has also been argued that the phrase in Scripture, “evening and morning,” means a 24-hour day. Those who hold to the analogical day view say that *nowhere* in the Bible do the Hebrew words for evening and morning mean a full 24-hour day.

In fact, each time the words evening and morning are used in the Old Testament, in that order, the only time referent is the period of darkness from just before sunset to just after sunrise. Evening and morning refers to that period when man does not labor. Therefore, it is not speaking of a literal day.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Indeed, when Psalm 55:17 wishes to speak of a 24-hour day, it says, “evening and morning and noon:”

Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan,  
and he hears my voice (Psalm 55:17 ESV)

Therefore, since the psalmist understood that evening and morning does not include the daylight hours, he made reference to noon to speak of a full day.

### **The Seventh Day Has No End**

Another argument given by those who hold to an analogical day is that the seventh day of creation has no end to it—there is no record of an evening or morning on day seven. God is still in His seventh day of rest.

Therefore, it cannot be a day like that we ordinarily experience. Consequently, if the seventh day is not a twenty-four-hour day, then neither are the first six days.

These are the arguments usually addressed in favor of the analogical day view.

### **Response To The Analogical Day View**

The advantage of the analogical view is that it allows Scripture to harmonize with modern evolutionary science. Since these days of God can be of indefinite length, there is no necessary conflict between science and Scripture.

The problem is that nothing in the text of Genesis, or anywhere else in Scripture for that matter, indicates these are anything but ordinary days. In the Book of Exodus, we read the following:

Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed (Exodus 31:16,17 ESV).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

There is nothing in this description of God's creation which would indicate the days are other than the normal solar, or calendar, days which we experience.

Furthermore, the definition of a day, scientifically speaking, is not bound up with the existence of the sun. A day can be defined as the earth making one revolution in a twenty-four-hour period. Indeed, the fact that the sun does not shine at all for a particular day does not mean that the day did not exist!

Using this line of argumentation, we would have to say that each time that a certain geographical area experiences darkness during the normal daylight period then the day did not really occur. The point is that we cannot equate day with sunlight as the analogical day argument seems to do.

As for the idea that an evening and morning only refer to the hours of darkness and not a complete day, this is not necessarily the case.

Like so many other options, the analogical day view does not provide satisfactory answers to the questions surrounding the Genesis creation account.

#### **Summary To Question 14: What Is The Analogical Day View? (Days Of God, Not Human Days)**

The analogical day view sees the days of Genesis as days of God, not days of humans. While these divine days may be somewhat analogous to human days, it is not necessary to see them as identical. Support for this viewpoint comes in a couple of ways.

First, advocates of this theory make the point of the sun having been created on the fourth day. The same word day is used for the periods before and after the fourth day.

Yet, how can there have been days, in the normal understanding of the term, without the sun?

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Consequently, if the first three days could not have been solar days without the sun, then neither could the remaining three days be solar days.

Another point made is that the seventh day is still continuing; there is no conclusion to it. Therefore, the first six days cannot be solar days if the seventh day is not.

This is an attractive theory. It is possible that the children of Israel did not understand God's six creative days in the same sense in which they understood the six days they were to work. They certainly realized that God's work was different than their work.

The main problem with this view is that nothing is specifically stated anywhere in Scripture that indicates the days are to be considered "divine days." While the references to the days in Genesis are few, they seem to assume God work consisted of six solar days.

This, of course, does not disprove the theory but it certainly does undermine it.

## Question 15

### **What Should Be Our Conclusion About What The Bible Says Concerning The Days Of Genesis?**

As we have considered the various options on how the term “days” in Genesis should be interpreted we discover there are various possible answers to these questions. What are we to make of the various answers?

We can summarize them as follows:

#### **1. Literal Day—The Recent Creation View**

This is the view that God created the earth in six literal days a few thousand years ago.

**Strength:** This theory is consistent with Scripture taking the word day in its normal sense.

**Weakness:** The young age of the earth contradicts many modern scientific conclusions. Yet, modern science is in a constant state of flux so we should not give too much weight to this objection. Furthermore, many reputable scientists reject the old earth idea.

#### **2. Literal Day/ Creation Not Dated**

Genesis 1:1 is not part of the first day of creation. The days of creation started with Genesis 1:2.

**Strength:** Genesis can harmonize with modern science about the age of the earth.

**Weakness:** Genesis 1:1 does not seem to be a summary statement about God’s creation.

#### **3. Local Creation**

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Genesis 1:1 refers to the creation of the universe while Genesis 1:2 speaks of the making of the Promised Land, not the entire earth.

**Strength:** This fits with the emphasis in Genesis of the land God gave to His people.

**Weakness:** This leaves the Bible saying nothing specifically about the original creation of the heavens and the earth.

### 4. The Pre-Genesis 1 Creation Theory

Genesis 1:1 refers to a re-fashioning of the earth—there was at least one previous creation which God, for some reason, judged. Genesis 1 and 2 refer to the present creation not the former creation.

**Strength:** The view allows Genesis to harmonize with the findings of modern science

**Weakness:** There is no real evidence that there was a previous creation before the one recorded in Genesis 1:1.

### 5. The Gap Theory

Genesis 1:1 describes the original creation while Genesis 1:2 assumes a gap of time has occurred when God judged the first creation. The remainder of Genesis records God's re-creation of the earth in six literal days.

**Strength:** It takes the days of Genesis literally and also allows Scripture to harmonize with the long ages of science.

**Weakness:** Neither Scripture nor science supports this theory.

### 6. Gaps Between The Days (Progressive Creationism)

The days in Genesis are consecutive but not sequential. Between each creation day millions of years could have elapsed where God created. God progressively created most things between the literal days.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

**Strength:** Takes the days of Genesis literally and harmonizes the age of the earth with modern science.

**Weakness:** It adds a number of gaps in the biblical record that are not there.

### 7. The Revelational Day Theory

Creation was revealed to Moses in six days—not completed in six days. The days in Genesis are days of revelation not creation.

**Strength:** Takes the days literally and allows Genesis to harmonize with science.

**Weakness:** Genesis account reads like a chronology of creation, not of God's revelation.

### 8. Creation Recorded On Six Tablets Possibly Written By Adam

This is similar to the Revelational day theory. The creation account was written on six tablets long before the time of Moses. Each day was represented by one tablet. Therefore, the days are not days of creation but rather of revelation.

**Strength:** It takes the days as literal and allows Genesis to harmonize with science.

**Weakness:** It is not certain Moses received creation account on six tablets or that the days are days of revelation, not creation.

### 9. The Age/Day Theory

The age/day theory understands the days as long periods of time rather than solar days.

**Strength:** This allows Genesis to harmonize with the consensus of modern science that the earth is old.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

**Weakness:** The idea of day representing a long period of time is not the natural way to understand the word “day.”

### 10. Literary Framework

This position understands the days in Genesis to be more logical than chronological. No order of creation is given in the account.

**Strength:** Understands Genesis has a distinctive framework to its composition.

**Weakness:** The account reads like a chronology.

### 11. The Religious Only View Of Genesis

This view says that Genesis is not meant to be read scientifically but rather religiously. There is no attempt to give the reader any scientific information about the creation, or the age, of the universe.

**Strength:** There is no need to harmonize Genesis with science since it was not the intent of the author to do so.

**Weakness:** It makes the entire account meaningless with all its specifics.

### 12. The Analogical Day View

The days in Genesis are “days of God” not human days. They are similar or analogous to our days but they not the same.

**Strength:** Scripture is not in conflict with science since the days could represent long periods of time.

**Weakness:** The account reads like they are ordinary solar days not days of God.

### **Observations And Conclusions**

There are a number of observations and conclusions which we should make about the days recorded in the Book of Genesis. They are as follows.

#### **1. The Days Are Not Mentioned That Often**

It must be appreciated that the idea that God created the earth in six days is not mentioned that often in Scripture. Apart from Genesis 1 and 2, the only other references to days are found in Exodus (twice) and in the Book of Hebrews.

#### **2. Every Position Has Its Problems**

Whatever position we embrace on the issue of the days in Genesis, there will be problems. No viewpoint is free from difficulties. This must be appreciated.

Indeed, the fact that Bible-believers have come up with twelve different explanations of the meaning of “day” makes this abundantly clear. Having said this, we believe that the literal day/recent creation view best fits the facts.

#### **3. Good People Differ On How To Interpret The Days Of Genesis**

As we have seen, this is a case where godly people differ on their interpretation of this issue. Bible-believing Christians, using the same information and having the same commitment to discovering what Scripture says on this matter, do not come to the same conclusion. This should make us careful not to assume that we have all the answers.

#### **4. This Doctrine Should Not Cause Division**

Since there are godly people who differ over their interpretation of this issue, we should have a charitable attitude toward everyone in this matter.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The key thing that all people must remember is that the Scripture teaches that God specifically designed and created the heavens, the earth, and humanity for a specific purpose. We should never lose sight of that fact.

Consequently, we should be charitable toward all efforts of Bible-believing Christians which try to clear up the problems of the early chapters of Genesis. We all need to be gracious when discussing this issue.

### **5. We Must Make Certain We Are Fighting The Right Battle**

Above all, we need to make certain we are fighting the right battle in the Bible/science debate. We do not want to say more than what the Bible says; neither do we want to say less. This means we have to understand exactly what the Bible is trying to tell us. We can only do this from a serious study of Scripture.

As we have already emphasized, the biblical writers were not that concerned about the time of creation as much as they were about the fact of creation. This is where the battle should be fought. We are here by God's intelligent design—not by blind chance.

In addition, Scripture makes abundantly clear the identity of this Designer!

### **Summary To Question 15: What Should Be Our Conclusion Concerning What The Bible Says About The Days In Genesis**

We have listed twelve different views of the understanding of the word “day” in the first chapter of Genesis.

A number of theories sees the days in Genesis as actual solar days.

The recent creation view sees the days of Genesis as solar days with the world created a few thousand years ago. The literal day/creation not dated view sees the days as literal, but the date of creation is not stated. Some advocate a local creation where the entire account is centering upon the Promised Land and not the entire earth.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

There are two views which see judgment in Genesis 1—the pre-Genesis 1 creation view and the gap theory. Each of these theories believes what we have in the first two chapters of Genesis is an account of a re-creation of the heaven and the earth.

The Progressive Creationism theory believes that the days are literal days but that they are not consecutive—there could have been gaps of millions of years between the days.

There are two theories which view the days in Genesis as days of revelation and not of creation. One theory believes Moses received six days of revelation informing him about God’s original creation while the other theory believes Moses had the creation story already written on six tablets.

The day/age theory is the only one which comes out and directly says the days in Genesis are geological ages rather than solar days.

A few theories understand the days to be non-literal or symbolic. The Framework hypothesis sees the days as literary and non-chronological. The religious only theory views the days as merely symbolic of God creating; nothing more. The analogical day sees the days as days of God rather than solar days.

Each of these views finds advocates among Bible-believing Christians. Thus, the question as to the meaning of the term “day” in Genesis and its implications is an issue that continues to divide Bible-believers and will continue to divide them. Whatever particular position one may take, it should be held with humility.

Finally, there is certainly room for vigorous discussion on this issue among those who accept the authority of the Bible.

Yet as we study the Scripture, there seems to be sufficient evidence that the earth is relatively young and that the days of creation are literal solar days.

The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

## **Part 2**

### **The Bible And The Age Of The Earth**

The subject of the age of the earth is one of continuing controversy among Bible-believers. In this section of our book, we will discover what the Bible does say, and does not say about this issue.

We will discover that there are some definite clues from Scripture with respect to whether the earth is relatively young or millions, or perhaps, billions of years old.

## Question 16

### **Do Christians Believe The Earth Is Old Or Young?**

One of the most important questions in the Bible/science controversy concerns the age of the earth. How old is it? What do Christians believe about the age of the earth? Do they believe the earth is billions of years old or do they believe it is relatively young? Is there a Christian position on the subject?

A number of points need to be made.

#### **Where Do We Find The Answers?**

This is a crucial question that one we cannot emphasize enough. What are we going to use as our authoritative source to answer these questions?

We have two basic options—the unchanging Word of God or the conclusions of modern unbelieving science. There is really no third option.

If we are going to let the latest results of modern science dictate what we believe about the nature of the earth and universe, then we will *never* get to the place where we have answers.

However, if we go to the Word of God, then we have an authoritative source from the eyewitness to creation—the Creator Himself! So, for the Bible-believing Christian it should be obvious where we go to discover answers about our beginnings.

#### **The Arguments For An Old Earth**

Today the near unanimous consensus of scientists, who are not Christians, assume that the earth is approximately 4.6 billion years old while the universe is believed to be at least 10 to 15 billion years of age. For the theory of evolution to be true, it is necessary that the earth be very old.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

For life to spontaneously develop from an original single cell to our present complex universe, billions of years are needed.

The scientific arguments for an ancient earth basically fall into three main categories.

### **1. The Length Of Time Necessary For The Earth To Form**

First, there are the arguments involving the length of time required for the earth to form from interstellar matter. For the earth to form itself after the initial “Big Bang” it would have taken billions of years.

### **2. The Time Needed For Geological Processes To Occur**

The second category of evidence concerns the rates of formation of sedimentary rocks and other geological processes such as mountain building and continental drift.

### **3. The Results Of The Various Dating Methods**

The third type of evidence is that from the various dating methods that are employed to measure the age of things. These methods consistently show that the earth and the universe is ancient.

To most people, both Christians and non-Christians, arguments such as these confirm the theory that the earth is old.

Yet we should notice that these arguments are not biblical but rather the results of conclusions made by non-believing scientists. In fact, there are certain assumptions in each of these points to which Bible-believing Christians would object.

## **What Do Christians Believe About The Age Of The Earth?**

While almost all non-Christians accept the idea that the earth is ancient this is not true for all Christians. With respect to the Bible and the age of the earth, Christians are divided on this issue. Some believe the earth is old while others believe in a young earth. We can make the following observations.

### **Many Christians Believe The Universe Is Old**

There are many Christians, both scientists and theologians, who accept the idea of an ancient universe. They believe that the record from geology conclusive—our earth is ancient. While diligent searches have been made to find evidence of a brief earth history, the geologic evidence does not reveal this.

Again, while many believers hold this position, it must be emphasized that it is derived from the wrong starting point. Indeed, it begins by assuming the conclusions of modern geology are irrefutable. Once this perspective is assumed to be true, then the person goes to the Bible to find support.

Therefore, those holding this particular outlook assume that the evidence from the rocks—geology—*requires* us to believe that the earth is ancient. Armed with this knowledge they then go to the Bible to find support. They discover that many people teach that the Bible *permits* us to embrace the idea that the earth has a long history to it.

Thus, they conclude that the earth as well as the universe must be ancient because geology requires it and the Bible permits it.

Christians who believe the earth is ancient, either millions or billions of years old, interpret the first chapter of Genesis in a variety of ways (as we have noted in our previous section).

While Christians who hold to an old earth embrace a number of different views with respect to the Genesis creation account, they are united in insisting that Genesis does *not* force us to accept a recent creation of the earth. This allows modern science alone, rather than the Bible, to give us the authoritative information concerning the age of the earth and universe.

### **Other Christians Believe The Earth Is Young**

While there are Christians who believe that the evidence is overwhelming that the earth, as well as the universe, are ancient there are many Christians who do not accept this. In fact, they believe that both the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Bible, as well as the scientific evidence, shows that the earth is relatively young. Instead of being billions of years of age the earth is only a few thousand years old.

Yet, while they believe the scientific evidence supports this idea of a relatively young earth, their starting point is not the evidence from modern science. Instead, it derives solely from the Bible itself.

In other words, they first go to Scripture to determine if there are any authoritative answers to this question of the age of the earth and the universe. Once this is determined from a serious study of the Word of God, they then turn to the scientific record which, they truly believe, will ultimately vindicate what Scripture says.

This viewpoint, that the earth was created thousands, not millions of years ago, is still very popular with the masses of Christians.

### **Some Believe That We May Be Unable To Discover The Answer**

There is another perspective which some Christians hold—we are unable to discover the answer. In fact, some people contend that the Bible may hint that we may not be able to resolve this issue. We read the following in the Book of Ecclesiastes:

It is beautiful how God has done everything at the right time. He has put a sense of eternity in people's minds. Yet, mortals still can't grasp what God is doing from the beginning to the end of time (Ecclesiastes 3:11 God's Word).

The New Living Translation translates this as follows:

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT).

To some, this passage may indicate that the issue of the age of the earth may be beyond our finding out. If this is the case, then all attempts at dating it, as well as the universe, will be useless.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

However, this is certainly not the only way to interpret this passage—or even a likely way of understating it. In fact, it actually says nothing about humans being able to come to any conclusions in the area of the Bible and science.

Furthermore, the fact that God has revealed a number of details about the creation of the heaven and earth, and of the human race, tells us that there are certain things which we can know.

Whatever the case may be, we know that nobody can exactly date the age of the earth and the universe. There are too many factors which we do not know with certainty.

### **There May Have Been A Different Quality Of Time Before The Fall**

There is another factor to be considered—the conditions which existed before humanity fell into sin. Some scientists believe that there was a different quality to time before the fall. Scientist Lambert Dolphin makes the following perceptive observation:

I personally think time as we know it now began with the fall of man and that time had different qualities before the fall . . . The fact that the creative activity of God took place in a time sequence from Day One through Day Seven indicates that time was “flowing” in its usual sense through the present towards the future. Yet . . . there is an eternal dimension also present all through creation week. Neither Satan nor Adam had fallen, there was yet no sin. “Perfect physics” prevailed, and the spiritual dimension of the universe was “in tune” with the physical in a way we cannot now exactly understand (Lambert Dolphin, *Jesus: Lord of Space and Time*, Green Forest, Arizona: New Leaf Press, 1988, p. 70).

This certainly has to be taken into consideration.

### **There Is Evidence From Scripture Of A Recent Creation Of Humans And Animals**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Though Scripture gives us no clear evidence as to the precise age of the earth, there are a number of factors that seem to compel us to accept a relatively young earth. The idea of an earth that is billions of years old is nowhere taught in Scripture.

Furthermore, from a number of different factors, we will observe how the Bible seemingly demands that humans, as well as animals, have been on the earth for only a short period of time.

### **There Is No Unequivocal Evidence For An Ancient Earth**

One more point needs to be stressed. Contrary to popular belief, there is no certain or unequivocal evidence that the earth is older than a few thousand years. Written records only take us back a few thousand years.

Anthropologist and archaeologist Colin Renfrew writes.

The Egyptian king lists go back to the First Dynasty of Egypt, a little before 3000 B.C. Before that, there were no written records anywhere (Colin Renfrew, *Before Civilization*, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1973, p. 25).

Since writing goes back a little over five thousand years, whatever happened before this time is based on conjecture and inference. We have no way of knowing whether these conjectures and inferences are correct. They may be, they may not be.

Concerning the age of the earth, the American writer Mark Twain wryly commented.

In the space of one hundred and seventy-six years the lower Mississippi has shortened itself two hundred and forty-two miles. This is an average of a trifle over one mile and a third per year. Therefore, any calm person, who is not blind or idiotic, can see that in the Old Oolitic Silurian period just a million years ago next November, the lower Mississippi river was upward of one million three hundred thousand miles long and stuck out over the Gulf of Mexico like a fishing rod. And, by the same token, any person can see that seven hundred and forty-two years from now, the lower

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Mississippi will be only a mile and three-quarters long, and Cairo and New Orleans will have joined their streets together, and be plodding comfortably along with a single mayor and a mutual board of Alderman. There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns out of such a trifle investment of fact (Samuel L. Clemens, *Life on the Mississippi*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1874, p. 156).

Well said indeed!

### **A Crucial Issue: Chance Or Design**

While the age of the earth is debated among Christians, we must never lose sight of a crucial issue in this debate—chance versus design. Bible-believers, no matter what their position on the age of the earth, are united in the belief that the earth is here as a result of the design rather than by blind chance. Design means a Designer and this Designer has revealed Himself in Scripture.

Indeed, this Designer loved His creation so much that He became a human being to show us what He is like. John wrote:

No one has ever seen God. The only one, himself God, who is in closest fellowship with the Father, has made God known (John 1:18 NET).

So, lest we forget, the main thrust of the Scripture is that God loves His creation, as rebellious as humanity may be. The Lord has demonstrated His love to us by becoming a human being to explain what He is like and to take the penalty of our sins upon Himself.

### **Summary To Question 16**

### **Do Christians Believe The Earth Is Old Or Young?**

This is a question which Christians continually deal with; is the earth old or young? What should we believe? Is there a “Christian” answer?

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

However, a preliminary question needs to be answered; where is our authoritative source to solve this issue? Is it the Bible or the latest results of modern science?

For the Christian, God's Word should be our only authoritative source. While we certainly do not ignore the scientific record, we cannot elevate it to the same status as the Scripture.

Indeed, the Bible records what the living God has to say about what *He* did in the beginning! This should be our final source.

As far as this question goes, Christians fall into three basic categories with respect to the time humans and animals have been here on this planet and the age of the earth and universe.

The theory of evolution demands that the earth and universe be old. There are a number of Christians who hold this perspective.

Indeed, they argue that the assured results of modern science make it clear that we are living on an earth that has been around for millions, if not billions of years. The Bible, it is claimed, permits us to accept what science forces us to believe.

Other Bible-believers reject this idea. They contend that Scripture gives a number of indications that the earth is relatively young, and that humanity has been here for a very short period of time—on the order of thousands of years, not millions.

Furthermore, they do not put science ahead of, or on an even par, with Scripture. The Bible alone is our guide and the Bible is consistent about what it says.

There is also the viewpoint that God doesn't want us to know the answer to this question and thus has purposely made the matter unclear. Yet the fact that He has revealed so many things in Scripture about this issue seems to say otherwise.

When the biblical evidence is considered in its totality, it seems to force one into believing that the human race, as well as the animal kingdom,

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

have been here for a relatively short period of time. We will examine much of this evidence in this part of our book.

However, we must remember that a key issue in the Bible/science debate is chance versus design. The fact we are here by God's special creative design is a crucial truth. We are not the product of blind chance. To the contrary, humanity exists because an infinite personal God created us in His image according to His likeness.

Furthermore, each of us can have a personal relationship with the Designer through Jesus Christ. This is the main message of Scripture!

Thus, while we discuss the different aspects to the creation account in Genesis, we must always be aware of the ultimate purpose of the Bible—to make us aware of who we are, who God is, and how we can have a relationship with Him.

### **Question 17**

#### **Why Do Some Bibles Say The Date Of Creation Was 4004 B.C? (Ussher's Chronology)**

There is the viewpoint that Christians still believe that the date of the creation of the world was 4004 B.C. How are they able to pinpoint the date with such exactness?

#### **The Work Of Archbishop James Usher**

This dating of creation is usually associated with the work of James Ussher (1581-1656) who was the archbishop of Armagh in northern Ireland.

However, there were others in Ussher's day that independently arrived at the same figure. Indeed, Bishop John Lightfoot, the great Hebrew scholar, actually published similar findings two years before Ussher. Yet the 4004 B.C. date is normally linked with the calculations of Ussher.

Ussher, working with the genealogical tables in the Book of Genesis and assuming them to be complete, deduced there were 4004 years from the creation of the world to the birth of Jesus Christ. In 1650, Ussher published his calculations where he believed the world was created Sunday October 23, 4004 B.C. at sunset!

#### **How The Date Made Its Way Into Some Bibles**

Ussher's chronology eventually made its way into the margin of various English translations of the Bible. We can summarize the story behind how this happened as follows.

In 1701, the date 4004 B.C. for the year of creation was inserted as a marginal commentary in the English edition of the Great Bible by a certain Bishop Lloyd. The fact that it was placed in the margin of Scripture associated it with the beliefs of the church.

By the nineteenth century almost every Bible published had Ussher's date appended to the first page of Scripture. This was followed by the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

sequential dates throughout the time Old Testament history until the birth of Christ. Interestingly, every educated person of that era assumed the earth was approximately six thousand years of age. This, however, was not to last for long.

In fact, as science began to accept the idea of a much older earth, these dates began to be dropped from the Bible. Yet, some Bibles still have this dated printed in the margin of Genesis 1.

While the date of 4004 B.C. has been printed in the margin of the Bible for a number of years, there is nothing in the biblical text which says the earth was created about four thousand years before the birth of Christ. Indeed, there is nothing in Scripture that gives any date to the creation of the earth!

### **The Date Of Creation Is Unknown**

The truth of the matter is that we do not know exactly when the earth was created because the Bible does not tell us. Though this idea, that the Bible teaches Adam was created in 4004 B.C., is still brought up by some, it is not what the Bible teaches.

Even those who advocate the recent creation view do not accept Ussher's chronology as the exact date of creation.

Therefore, it is wrong to say that the Bible teaches, or that Christians believe, that Adam was created in 4004 B.C.

### **Summary To Question 17**

#### **Why Do Some Bibles Say The Date Of Creation Was 4004 B.C? (Usher's Chronology)**

In the seventeenth century Irish Archbishop James Ussher calculated the creation of Adam in the year 4004 B.C. He did this by adding up the years in the various genealogies that are contained in Scripture.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century his dating of Adam's creation found its way into English Bibles. It remained this way until the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

beginning of the twentieth century when these dates were removed from the margin.

Yet hardly any Bible scholar takes this date seriously. Indeed, those who advocate that the earth is young do not accept Ussher's exact dates.

Consequently, the Bible does not specifically teach that the Adam was created exactly 4004 years before the time of Christ.

### Question 18

#### **Does The Bible Give Us Clues With Respect To The Age Of The Earth?**

We believe that the statements in Scripture regarding science and nature should be taken seriously. The God who created all things has decided to place in His Holy Word certain references to our visible world. They are *not* there by accident.

In fact, God has provided us these references to teach us truths about Himself and the world that He alone created. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we discover what God has told us about these matters.

#### **Remember He Was There!**

It is essential that we remember that the Lord, the God of the Bible, is the Creator of all things. God's response to Job puts the matter into proper perspective. He said:

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you possess understanding! (Job 38:4 NET)

Indeed! God, the Creator, was there. There were no human witnesses. Therefore, we need to listen to the testimony of the only One who can give us a firsthand account of what actually took place.

So, it is crucial that we pay attention to the teaching of Scripture. In fact, it is the only place to where we can go to find authoritative answers on these matters.

#### **The Case For Young Earth Creationism**

So, what does the Bible teach us? While we know that good Christians do disagree on the issue of the age of the earth, we discover that an excellent case can be made from Scripture itself that the earth is relatively young. This is the view of "Young Earth Creationism."

### **The Chronological Clues Are There**

Indeed, there are a number of “chronological clues” given to us in the Bible that would cause us to believe that all life on this earth, animal and human, has not been around for more than a few thousand years.

We find this in the form of eight chronological clues found in Scripture.

Clue 1: The Days Of Creation, Recorded In Genesis Chapter One, Were Normal Solar Days Indicating A Recent Creation.

Clue 2: The Genealogies In Scripture Show Humanity Has Lived On Earth For Only Thousands, Not Millions Of Years.

Clue 3: Animal Death Did Not Take Place Until After The Fall. Therefore, The Earth Cannot Be That Old.

Clue 4: God Has Demonstrated That He Can Instantaneously Create People And Other Things Fully Mature With A Superficial Appearance Of Age. The Entire Universe Could also Have Been Created In This Manner.

Clue 5: If There Were People Living Millions Of Years Before Adam And Eve, Why Didn't The Loving God Of The Bible Reveal Himself To Them?

Clue 6: Jesus Christ, God The Son, Testified That Adam And Eve Were Created, “In The Beginning;” Not Millions Of Years After Everything Else.

Clue 7: The Character Of God, Who Does Everything For A Purpose, Is Consistent With A Recent Creation; Not Countless Years Of Dying, Destruction, And Death.

Clue 8: The New Heavens And New Earth Will Be Instantly Created.

We will look at each of these clues, one by one.

**Summary To Question 18**  
**Does the Bible Give Us Clues With Respect**  
**To The Age Of The Earth?**

It's important that we let the Scripture tell us what happened in the beginning. To the point, God the Creator alone was there and clearly there were no human observers before humanity was created! This being the case what, if anything, does the Bible attempt to tell us about our origins?

After examining all the options, it seems that the best way to interpret the references in Scripture to science and nature is to take them at face value. In other words, we are to interpret the accounts in their natural sense. We should not try to read into them things that are not there.

When we approach the Scripture in this manner it seems that the traditional view of Genesis, that the earth was created recently, best fits all the biblical facts. We can observe this in the form of certain chronological clues that Scripture has given to us.

First, there is the evidence from the word *day* as used in the first chapter of Genesis. The natural reading of the text certainly implies solar days that took place in sequential order.

The second chronological clue concerns the genealogies in Scripture. They do not allow for an ancient age of humanity or the earth. Indeed, from the Scripture we find that humanity has not been on the earth for more than ten thousand years.

A third chronological clue from Scripture is animal death. The Bible clearly teaches that animal death occurred after the Fall in Genesis 3. It was the sin of Adam and Eve that caused every single thing on the earth to decay. This includes human beings, animals, and plant life. Indeed, everything on the earth was affected by the Fall.

The fourth chronological clue concerns the question of so-called humanoids living before Adam and Eve. If there were humanoids or humans living before the Fall, why didn't they receive any divine

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

revelation? Are we to assume that God did not love them or that they were not made in His image?

Calling for any type of humans, or proto humans, before Adam and Eve causes enormous problems with the biblical text.

The fifth chronological clue we find from Scripture, is that we discover that the Lord has the power to instantly create people and things in a way in which they are fully mature.

In fact, Adam and Eve were created fully mature as was the entire Garden of Eden. When Jesus fed the five thousand, He created fully mature fish for the people to eat and bread that had never previously existed in any form. Thus, it is possible that He could have created the entire universe along this same order.

Another chronological clue is found in the testimony of Jesus Christ, God the Son. From Jesus' testimony, we can conclude that He believed the Genesis account of creation as literally stated.

Furthermore, He confirms some of the events in the early chapters of Genesis. One particular thing He confirmed is that Adam and Eve were created "in the beginning." This means that it is impossible for there to be millions of years from the creation of the earth, the plants and animals until the creation of Adam.

Jesus' testimony is that they were all created at the same general time frame—in the beginning. Thus, He gives us another line of evidence of the recent creation of everything.

There is also the nature of God Himself. Since He has demonstrated His love for humanity, as well as His ability to create a fully mature universe, it seems inconceivable that He would allow the earth to exist for millions of years in a state of struggle for survival.

Long ages, which existed without divine revelation with morally innocent animals killing each other, seem inconsistent with the God revealed in Scripture.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Our final chronological clue is what will happen in the future—God will instantly create a new heaven and a new earth. If He is going to do this in the future, then why would He have taken millions of years in the past? The answer is, “He did not!”

Therefore, if we interpret the Bible in its natural sense, we find that the idea of the earth having been recently created.

Furthermore, if we reject this idea of recent creation, then it seems to imply that the God of the Bible is a very poor communicator—since everything which we read in His Word is consistent with a young earth and a recent creation.

We will now look at each of these clues, one by one, in detail.

### Question 19

#### **Do The Days As Revealed In The First Chapter Of Genesis, Help Us In Dating The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 1)**

The first clue we have with respect to the age of the earth can be found in the opening chapter of the Book of Genesis. Indeed, the creation account emphasizes that God formed and fashioned the earth in six successive days. These days occurred relatively recent in the history of our world—meaning on the order of thousands, not millions of years.

Several things in the text seem to make this clear.

#### **The Hebrew Word Yom Usually Means Solar Or Calendar Day**

As we have emphasized in our previous section, the Hebrew word *yom* basically stands for a solar or a calendar day. This is the normal way in which it is used and there is certainly nothing in the context of the first chapter of Genesis that would preclude us from believing that is what the author had in mind here.

We may refer to these days as either solar or “calendar days.” The reason for this description is the objection that the first three days of creation could not have been solar days because the sun had not been created.

However, there is nothing in Scripture that makes it impossible for God to create the earth on day one in anticipation of the sun on day four. This being the case, calling them calendar days may cause lesser problems or less explaining to do.

In fact, the only thing necessary for a literal day is for the earth to rotate once on its axis in a twenty-four-hour period. It is certainly not the sun which causes a day to be called a day!

Indeed, among other things, the purpose of the sun is merely an instrument that measures the passage of twenty-four hours of the rotation of the earth.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

However, a different light source, which we know from Scripture did exist, could also be used to determine days one, two and three. Again, we emphasize that light source was created on day one according to Genesis 1:3.

God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light! (Genesis 1:3 NET).

### The Days Are In A Numbered Sequence

Not only do we find the normal word for day used in Genesis 1, we also find these days listed in a numbered sequence. This certainly gives one the idea that we are dealing with actual solar days that take place one after another—like the same days we experience now. Indeed, it seems that this numbering of the days clearly defines what type of days we are talking about.

### The Repeated Use Of Evening And Morning

There is a further way in which the word day is defined in the Genesis creation account—by the repeated use of the phrase “evening and morning.

Again, the normal way that we would understand the word with these two modifiers, a numbered sequence and evening and morning, is a solar day, twenty-four hours in length.

### It Has Been Understood Historically To Refer To Solar Days

We also note that the church, almost universally, has understood the account to refer to God creating everything in six solar or calendar days and then resting on the seventh. In other words, a recent creation of all things is how this chapter has been viewed throughout history.

There is something else. Hebrew scholar Andrew Steinmann explains Genesis 1:5 how the unique grammatical construction demonstrates that a solar day is in view:

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Therefore, by using a most unusual grammatical construction, Genesis 1 is defining what a day is. This is especially needed in this verse, since “day” is used in two senses in this one verse. Its first appearance means the time during a daily cycle that is illuminated by daylight (as opposed to night). The second used means something different, a time period that encompasses both the time of daylight and the time of darkness.

It would appear as if the text is very carefully crafted so an alert reader *cannot* read it as “the first day”. Instead, by omission of the article it must be read as “one day”, thereby defining a day as something akin to a twenty-four-hour solar period with light and darkness and transitions between day and night, even though there is no sun until the fourth day. This would explain the lack of definite articles on the second through fifth days. Another evening and morning constituted “a” (not “the”) second day. Another evening and morning made a third day, and so forth. On the sixth day, the article finally appears. But even here, the grammar is strange, since there is no article on יום as would be expected. This would indicate that the sixth day was a regular solar day, but that it was also *the culminating day of creation*. Likewise, the seventh day is referred to as יום השביעי (Gen 2:3), with lack of an article on יום. This, also, the author is implying, was a regular solar day. Yet it was a special day, because God had finished his work of creation (Andrew Steinmann)

While this explanation is a little technical, it reveals that the author of Genesis was clear to state that a solar day was in view.

### The Biblical Commentary On The Creation Account

In the Book of Exodus, Moses, the same author as Genesis, explained God’s creation in this manner:

For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day (Exodus 20:11 NET)

The natural way to understand this verse is that he was speaking of actual solar days when he penned the creation account in Genesis.

### **Answering Objections**

We realize that people have raised a number of objections to this interpretation. We have dealt with them in detail in the first section of this book.

To sum up, when all the evidence is in, it seems more natural to read and understand the text of Genesis to be referring to God creating the universe in six solar, or calendar, days, and then He ceased creating on the seventh.

### **Is God A Bad Communicator?**

There is something else that must be considered. The Bible is God's divine revelation to the human race. Indeed, it was given to explain who God is, what He is like, who we are, and how we can have a relationship with Him. It is written in a straightforward manner so that the masses can understand the message. This being the case, it should not go unnoticed that in the history of the church the idea of six literal days and a recent creation was held almost universally by believers.

Now if God did not mean the creation account to be understood in this natural way then we may ask, "Why did He state it in this manner?" Are we going to accuse Him of being a bad communicator? Of not saying what He meant? Do we really want to make this judgment about God's ability to give divine revelation?

Furthermore, if He wanted to state that He created the earth and all that is in it in six successive days, then how could He have stated it clearer?

We freely admit that, by itself, this does not solve the issue as to the age of the earth. However, it certainly should be considered when we are attempting to discover what God has to say to us, if anything, about how long humanity has been here upon our planet.

### **Summary To Question 19**

**Do The Days As Revealed In The First Chapter Of Genesis,  
Help Us In Dating The Age Of The Earth?**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

We are told in the first chapter of Genesis that the Lord God, the Creator, made the heaven and the earth in six days. The most natural way of understanding these “days” is as days of twenty-four hours in length. There are a number of reasons as to why this is so.

For one thing, the same human author, Moses, repeated the fact in the Book of Exodus that God created the heaven and earth and all that is in them in six “days.” The natural way of reading the text is that God created everything in six successive calendar days of twenty-four hours in length.

In fact, the word day in the first chapter of Genesis is used with two modifiers—they are numbered sequentially from one to seven and each day, apart from the seventh, has the phrase, “and there was evening and there was morning.” These modifiers give further testimony that literal days are in mind.

As we also noted, biblical scholar Andrew Steinman demonstrated that the unique grammatical Hebrew construction in the Genesis creation account strongly implies that a solar day is in view.

Indeed, in defining the meaning of the terms evening and morning the Hebrew defines it as “one day.” In other words, an evening and a morning are equal to one day.

Not only is this the normal reading of the text, with few exceptions, this has been the view of the church throughout its history. The fact that the masses of Christendom have understood the creation account in this manner should not be ignored.

Indeed, the God of the Bible is a communicator and unless one wants to accuse Him of being incompetent the fact that the creation account seems to clearly speak of twenty-four-hour days in successive order cannot be brushed off lightly.

Thus, the way the days are listed in the first chapter of Genesis gives us the impression of a recently created earth.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Hence this is one of the clues that the Lord provides us with respect to the time humans have been here upon the earth.

Yet, this was not the only clue that the Lord has provided for us to indicate the meaning of the word translated “day” in Genesis.

## **Question 20**

### **Do The Genealogies In The Bible Give Us A Complete Chronology? Can We Date The Time Of Creation From The Genealogies Alone? (Clue 2)**

One of the strongest clues that we have for the Bible teaching that the earth is relatively young are the various genealogies which are contained in Scripture. Indeed, when the totality of the evidence from these various genealogies is considered, it become apparent that humankind has only been here upon the earth for merely thousands, not millions, of years.

We can make the following observations.

#### **The Genealogies In Genesis Chapter 5 And 11**

The Book of Genesis records a number of genealogies. Two of the most important of these are found in chapters five and eleven. Genesis five records the genealogy of ten men—Adam and nine of his descendants. The list ends with the important figure of Noah.

Genesis eleven contains the genealogy of Shem—one of the sons of Noah. It takes us up to another important biblical figure—Abram (whose name was later changed to Abraham).

#### **The New Testament Genealogy Recorded In Luke**

Add to this, the genealogy of the Lord Jesus as contained in the gospel of Luke. It contains the family line of Jesus all the way back to the first human—Adam.

When we consider these three genealogies we arrive at a number of interesting facts. The situation can be summed up as follows:

#### **There Are Uniform Elements In The Genealogies of Genesis**

To begin with we discover that the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 have a number of uniform factors.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

First, we find the name of a prominent person mentioned in the genealogy.

Next, we have the number of years that this important person lived until he fathered the son who will be the next prominent figure in the genealogy. The name of the next person is then given to us.

Then, we have the total number of years that the father lived after he fathered this next important man.

This is followed by the statement that this prominent person fathered many sons and daughters.

We are then told how many years this person lived. Finally, we are told that the person died.

### Calculating The Years From Adam To Noah

If we calculate the number of years from Adam to Noah, using the genealogy in Genesis five, we will come up with a total lifespan of humanity in the thousands of years.

When the traditional Hebrew text is used, called the Masoretic text, the total number of years is 1,656 for a date of 4004 B.C. for Adam's creation.

If we assume the genealogies are complete, then Adam would have lived all the way until the ninth patriarch—Methuselah. Methuselah himself would have died the year of the Flood.

However, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament—the Septuagint, is slightly different. Indeed, the total number of years is slightly larger. Still, we are only in the thousands of years that humans have been upon the earth.

### Genesis 11

We also have the same pattern in the genealogical list in Genesis chapter eleven. Ten names are also mentioned in that genealogy and it also ends with the name of an important person—Abram.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

So, the question before us is this: “How are we supposed to understand these early genealogies?” Should we assume that they are complete?

### **Those Who Believe In Gaps Do Not Reach The Same Conclusion**

This is an issue where biblical scholars agree with each other with respect to there being gaps, although they may hold different positions with regard to the time element in Genesis.

For example, a person can believe there were some gaps in the genealogy of Genesis five and be a believer in calendar days in Genesis one and a relatively young earth.

However, others who believe in these same gaps, could accept that the gap theory is the best answer to the issue of the days in Genesis and the age of the earth. Furthermore, still others may embrace the Revelatory Day Theory or even accept the Age-day view of creation, while believing in these same gaps.

However, with respect to the length of the time between the gaps in Genesis 5, there is a wide difference of opinion.

Some argue that the time between the gaps could total 20,000 years or more. Others believe the gaps were much shorter consisting of a few thousand years at the most.

### **Option 1: The Case For Gaps In The Genealogies**

Those who argue that there are gaps in the genealogy in Genesis 5 usually offer the following reasons as to why.

#### **1. There Are Gaps In Other Genealogies**

To begin with, it is noted that there are obvious gaps in other biblical genealogies.

The Gospel of Matthew, for example, contains a genealogy of the Lord Jesus. However, when one compares this genealogy with the genealogies

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

in the Old Testament, we find that Matthew is selective in the names that he records.

For example, in Matthew chapter 1 we read of the following people in the genealogy of Jesus.

Asa fathered Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat fathered Joram, Joram fathered Uzziah, Uzziah fathered Jotham, Jotham fathered Ahaz, Ahaz fathered Hezekiah (Matthew 1:8,9 NLT).

After Uzziah (or Ahaziah) we have Jotham.

Yet, when we read 1 Chronicles 3:10-12, we discover that there are three generations that are omitted by Matthew—Joash, Amaziah, and Azariah:

Solomon's son was Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, Jehoram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son (1 Chronicles 3:10-12 NIV).

Although Matthew lists Jotham after Uzziah (or Azariah) the writer of 1 Chronicles adds three other names.

Therefore, Matthew's genealogy is selective—it is not a complete list of everyone in the line of Jesus.

### The Genealogies Are Incomplete In First Chronicles

There is another example in 1 Chronicles 26:24 that demonstrates that some of the biblical genealogies are incomplete.

The writer provides a list of the officers that were appointed when David made Solomon king in his place. This took place in approximately 970 B.C. In the list we read the following:

Shebuel son of Gershon, the son of Moses, was the supervisor of the storehouses (1 Chronicles 26:24 NET).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Gershom was one of the actual sons of Moses (Exodus 2:22). He was born before the children of Israel left Egypt. This occurred approximately 1445 B.C. Yet Shebuel, who lived in 970 B.C., is called Gershom's son!

Hence, there are approximately ten generations that would have existed between Gershom—before 1440 B.C.—and Shebuel in 970 B.C. This is an example of a biblical genealogy being selective in the names that it records.

Therefore, the Hebrew terms which we find in the Old Testament genealogies do not necessarily indicate an immediate descendant. Indeed, the terms, “was the father of,” and “son,” are used with great liberty.

Hence, they may involve either a distant relative or possibly an immediate descendant. We simply do not know.

Thus, the word translated “fathered” in these genealogies can refer to ancestral links rather than to direct father-son relationship.

### The Genealogies In Genesis May Contain Gaps

Since we know that other biblical genealogies, in both testaments, contain gaps, it is argued that the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 may also contain some gaps.

For example, the ten generations listed from Adam to Noah, as well as the ten generations listed from Noah to Abraham, are possibly selective. In other words, we should not assume that there is unbroken father-to-son relationship in each of the names mentioned in these genealogies.

If this is the case, then it would be impossible to calculate the precise number of years from Adam to Abraham. Indeed, there is no way that we would know how many people lived between the various people mentioned, as well as how much time occurred between the creation of Adam and the time of Abraham.

Consequently, the exact time in which Adam lived can never be known.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Again, we emphasize, from the genealogies alone, it is impossible to precisely date the creation of Adam.

### **2. The Genealogies Are Deliberately Arranged**

There is something else which we need to take into consideration; the lists in Genesis 5 and 11 are symmetrical and seem deliberately arranged.

This may have been done as an aid to memory. Indeed, both lists have ten names and each list ends with a key figure that had three sons. Genesis 5 ends with Noah and Genesis 11 finishes with Terah the father of Abraham.

### **The Date Of Flood Would Have To Be Pushed Back**

The allowance of gaps in the genealogies after the Flood would push the event back hundreds and perhaps thousands of years. It is contended that this would better harmonize with archaeological data for an earlier Flood date.

### **The Purpose Of The Genealogies: Humans Lived Long In Those Days**

Some who hold to gaps in the genealogies argue the object of the genealogy is not to give us a complete chronology of ancient humanity. Instead, it is recorded to show us that humans lived a long time after the Fall and in some cases, lived a very long time. Consequently, it was never meant to be a complete list of the descendants of Adam to Noah.

### **There Is A Word Of Caution**

Even if the genealogies in Genesis are filled with gaps there must be a couple of things remembered.

First, the other gaps in Scripture are not thousands of years long. For example, in Exodus 6:20 the longest possible gap is about 300 years. In 1 Chronicles 26:24, only a 400-year period is not mentioned.

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Furthermore, while Matthew 1:1,8,11 has gaps, they do not cover a large amount of time. In fact, only one out of every three names mentioned in the genealogy has a gap in it.

The evidence is as follows: We find forty-two names, from Abraham to Jesus Christ, that are listed in the first chapter of Matthew. These names cover a period of about two thousand years.

In this genealogy, there are only three kings who are missing from the (Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah). The total amount of years of their reigns adds up to about seventy years. Therefore, any gap of time in this particular genealogy would be relatively small.

### **The Gaps In Other Genealogies Compared To Genesis**

How does this relate to the genealogies in Genesis? If we insist that there are large gaps of time in Genesis 5 this would be the exception to the way in which we find them in Scripture.

In fact, as we look at the totality of Scripture, it seems impossible to arrive at a date at more than twenty thousand years for humanity to have been here on the planet—even with a certain amount of time between those listed in the biblical genealogies. Indeed, one can make a biblical case for humanity existing for less than ten thousand years.

Therefore, while it is impossible to fix an exact date to the creation of Adam, one need not give up the idea of discovering whether the earth is relatively young, or ancient, based upon the biblical genealogies.

### **Option 2: The Case For Complete Genealogies Without Gaps**

On the other hand, there are those who argue that Genesis 5 is a complete genealogy, from Adam to Noah, without any gaps. They offer a number of reasons as to why they hold this view.

#### **1. There Is The Natural Chain**

First, the years of each man's life are specified for us in this genealogy. We are told his age, both at the time he fathered the next important man,

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

as well as the exact number of years he lived after that birth took place. Therefore, it seems difficult to insist upon the insertion of gaps.

### **2. These Are Direct Sons Mentioned In Genesis Five**

Furthermore, we should not miss the fact the genealogy in Genesis five begins and ends with direct sons: Adam and Seth (5:3), Noah and Shem (5:32). This provides us with a strong indication that the others listed should also be understood in this immediate father/son relationship.

### **3. Genesis Chapter 11 Does The Same Thing**

The same holds true in Genesis 11. That particular genealogy closes with Terah fathering three sons, Genesis 11:26, including the important person Abraham. We know that these three are all his biological sons.

Again, we emphasize, in light of these obvious father-son links, it seems to be arbitrary to assume that there are long gaps between the some of the other names that are mentioned in the list.

### **3. This Is A Different Kind Of Genealogy**

There is something else that we should note. While it is true that gaps exist in other biblical genealogies, they are in a different class from the Genesis 5 list. Indeed, this list in Genesis is unique in that it states the years, both at the time the son was born, and also the time afterward until the death of that person.

Therefore, since the gaps found in other genealogies are of a different nature, they do not provide for us a valid reason for assuming there are gaps in the genealogy in Genesis 5.

Therefore, it is highly likely that the genealogies in Genesis are complete.

### **Biblical Genealogies Are Fatal To The Theory Of Evolution**

There is one more thing that we should mention with respect to the genealogies found in Genesis 5 and 11. If they are indeed accurate, with

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

little or no gaps between the various names listed, then this spells the end for the theory of evolution as Donald Crowe noted:

Biblical chronology is obviously fatal to the evolutionary worldview. Scholars of an evolutionary worldview were obsessed with dismissing it. Most conservative scholars, failing to think in terms of a biblical worldview, easily agreed to postulate many gaps in the Genesis genealogies to accommodate evolution's imagined millions of years. The historical issue of what happened at the beginning of the earth was transformed into a "scientific" question. Evolutionists were permitted to do "history" without any historical documents, and to practice a brand of "science" without real-time empirical observations (Donald Crowe, *Creation Without Compromise*, p 15).

Tragically, as Crowe relates, too many Bible-believing scholars surrendered the literal understanding of these genealogies to the evolutionists and began to view them as having huge gaps. This led these theologians to harmonize Scripture with modern science and its belief of millions of years.

As we have consistently emphasized, this is the wrong way of going about determining what the Bible intended to say on the matter. Instead of looking at the biblical evidence, which indicates little or no gaps between the various names mentioned in Genesis 5 and 11, compromise was made with atheistic evolution.

### **Luke's Genealogy May Be Complete**

There is something further that we can add to this—the genealogy of Jesus, as Luke records, may indeed be complete.

Here we find Jesus' ancestry all the way back to the first human being—Adam. It reads as follows.

So Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years old. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli ... the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God (Luke 3:23,38 NET).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

It has been contended by some, that this genealogy of Jesus, contrary to the one found in Matthew, is complete.

Again, we stress even if this particular genealogy is not complete, it does presuppose that Jesus' ancestry back to Adam can be counted in the thousands, not tens of thousands, or millions of years.

Consequently, while the genealogies do not seem to allow us to give a precise date to the age of the earth, they certainly do tell us that humanity has *not* been on the planet for an extended period of time.

Therefore, the listing of the genealogies in Scripture is a strong clue of a relatively short time that human beings have been on this planet. This, of course, testifies to a recent creation of the earth.

#### **Summary To Question 20**

#### **Do The Genealogies In The Bible Give Us A Complete Chronology? (Can We Date The Time Of Creation From The Genealogies Alone?) (Clue 2)**

One of the unique features of the Bible is the various genealogies in which it lists. Among them, the Scripture gives us a genealogical list of individuals from Adam, the first man, until the time of Jesus. We also have a list of ten names from the time of Adam until the time of Noah.

This being the case, is it possible to add up the years in the various genealogies and come to a conclusion as to exactly when Adam was created?

In fact, many have added up the years in the genealogies to date the creation of Adam and the age of earth. When the genealogies are added up, the creation of Adam is assumed to be about 4000 years before the time of Christ.

The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, the Septuagint, has a few more years than what is found in the traditional Hebrew text. However, we are still talking about only thousands of years, not millions.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The problem with doing this is that some of the genealogies are not complete. As we examine them carefully, we find that the writers of Scripture were selective in that which they recorded. This being the case, it is not possible to determine with exactness the number of years from Christ back to the time of Adam.

However, we may have a complete genealogy of Jesus listed for us in Luke. He begins his genealogy with Jesus and then traces it all the way back to Adam. There are those that contend that the genealogy found in Luke is complete. In other words, contrary to Matthew who is selective in his genealogy, Luke is not.

If this is the case, then we are forced to assume that humanity has only been around for a few thousand years on our planet.

In fact, the genealogies demonstrate that humanity has been on the earth for only a few thousand years—not tens of thousands or millions as some suppose.

Therefore, we can conclude from the genealogies in Scripture that it is highly likely that the creation of the heaven and the earth was relatively recent—on the order of ten thousand years or so.

Hundreds of thousands or millions of years of humans living on the earth is ruled out by a close inspection of the biblical genealogies.

## **Question 21**

### **How Does The Issue Of Animal Death Help Us Date The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 3)**

One of the central areas of controversy in the Genesis creation account concerns the entrance of sin into the world and its affect upon the animal kingdom.

We know that humanity and the earth were cursed as a result of the Fall. But what about the animal kingdom? Did the Fall have any effect on them? Was there struggle and death among animals before the Fall? What does the Bible say?

#### **Why This Is So Important**

This is a crucial question when it comes to dating the age of the earth. Simply put, if there was animal death before the fall, then for millions of years animals may have lived and died before sin entered into our world. Thus, the earth could be ancient as modern evolutionary science contends.

However, if animals did not die until the Fall of humanity occurred, then it has enormous implications for the dating of the earth—for all the biblical evidence leads us to the conclusion that humanity has only been upon the earth for thousands of years—not millions or billions.

We will examine the case that each side presents.

#### **Option 1:      The Case For Animal Death Before The Fall**

Support for this view comes from a number of specific claims. They are as follows:

##### **Claim 1              There Was Perfection In Eden Alone**

Many who believe that there was animal death before the fall claim that the perfection in God's creation was limited to Eden. Outside of the

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

boundaries of this unique God-created paradise there was a world of death, dying, and destruction.

Sin had already entered into our world by means of the fall of the supernatural being who became Satan, the Adversary. The earth was now subject to his control.

### **Good Doesn't Always Mean Perfect**

Though the Bible says that everything was “very good” after the six days of creation, (Genesis 1:31), this has been understood to mean only “relatively” good. Consequently, we should not assume that perfection was everywhere upon the earth. It was not.

### **The Human Race Was To Win Back Dominion**

With the earth already tainted by sin because of the fall of the devil, it was now the responsibility of the human race to win the dominion back from him. Supposedly, if humanity had remained obedient to the Lord, then they would have redeemed the entire earth from the curse that was already upon the animal kingdom.

### **Adam Was To Guard The Garden**

The biblical support for this view is the statement that the first man—Adam—was commanded to “guard” the Garden of Eden. This hints that there must have been some danger present outside of Eden.

To sum up, the only perfect place on earth after God’s creation was the Garden of Eden. Outside of Eden there was both sin and death. The term “very good,” when referring to God’s finished creation, only means relatively good—not necessarily perfect.

### **Claim 2      Animals Had Defense Mechanism’s, Claws, Sharp Teeth**

Those who hold this position ask the following question: If there was no animal death before the Fall, and animals were not carnivorous, then how

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

do we explain the defense mechanisms that they have? Obviously, this was created for them to protect themselves from predators.

In fact, it seems dubious to claim that all animals were originally vegetarians. What would be the purpose of their huge teeth and their sharp claws if they were not meat-eaters?

In addition, how could large fish survive without eating other smaller fish?

Therefore, when all the evidence is considered, it seems impossible that all animals were vegetarians before the Fall.

#### **Claim 3            Animals Had To Eat Plants**

There is something else. Animals would have had to eat plants before the Fall. So, there was indeed death and dying in the plant kingdom.

#### **Claim 4            Only Humanity Was Affected By Adam's Fall**

Paul in his statement, about death spreading to everyone from the sin of Adam, could not have been referring to sin affecting the entire world. In fact, he mentioned that it only affected humanity:

Sin came into the world through one person, and death came through sin. So death spread to everyone, because everyone sinned (Romans 5:12 God's Word).

Notice Paul does not say that death spread to animals. On the contrary, he makes it clear that it spread to only humans.

Thus, it is contended that there is no physical connection between Adam's sin and the animal kingdom. The sin of Adam and Eve only affected humanity, not the animals.

#### **Claim 5            Animals Had No Sinful Nature**

It is also argued that animals could not have inherited Adam's sin nature since there is no physical connection between humans and the animals.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Present day animals, therefore, are not under the curse of Adam's sin, they died before the fall as well as after it.

#### **Conclusion: Only Humanity Was Affected By The Fall—Not The Animal Or Plant Kingdom**

It is thus concluded that only humanity was affected by the Fall and not the animal or plant kingdom. Death spread only to the human race—not to all living creatures. Animals and plants had already died before this time and were unaffected by the Fall of Adam and Eve. The only perfection, in the world was in Eden, and in it alone.

These points have convinced many that animals did indeed die before the Fall. They believe this is the correct understanding of Scripture and the proper observation of nature.

#### **Option 2: The Case Against Animal Death Before The Fall**

Though many good Bible interpreters believe that animal death did exist before the Fall, Scripture clearly indicates that this was not the case. This can be outlined in the following way.

#### **Perfection Was Not Limited To Eden**

To begin with, perfection was not limited to Eden alone. The command of Adam to “tend” or “keep” the Garden does not imply guard it from danger. Note how the following translations read:

The Lord God took the man and placed him in the orchard in Eden to care for it and to maintain it (Genesis 2:15 NET).

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it (Genesis 2:15 ESV)

The idea behind the Hebrew word means “to serve God in worship,” “to maintain and care for” rather than protect the Garden from evil forces.

In fact, there are no English translations that use the word “guard” to explain the role of Adam before the Fall.

### **Very Good Means Perfect Not Relatively Good**

In addition, after each act of creation, God pronounced it good. We find that happening six times in the creation account. When God finished creating, the heavens and the earth were perfect:

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:31 KJV).

We find two superlatives in this verse—"everything" and "very good." Most take this phrase "very good" to mean "perfection."

In fact, when the Lord looked upon the completed result of His creative acts, He expressed His delight and satisfaction at the perfect world which He had made. Consequently, everything in His created universe, from the biggest star to the smallest particles, invisible to the human eye, was perfect.

In sum, Scripture says that there was no imperfection in God's original creation. Imperfection eventually entered our world as a result of humanity's sin rather than God's design.

Therefore, the universe, as it presently exists, is not the same as when God originally created it. Sin has made it abnormal and imperfect. This imperfection occurred after the fall of the human race.

### **Death To Humanity Was The Result**

Adam and Eve died as a result of their sin. The Scripture is clear on this. Paul wrote the following to the Romans:

Sin came into the world through one person, and death came through sin. So death spread to everyone, because everyone sinned (Romans 5:12 God's Word).

There is no question that death to humanity was a result of sin.

### **Plant Death, But Not Animal Death, Occurred Before The Fall**

God, however, did not place the “life-principle” to plants. Indeed, the Bible makes the distinction between animal and human life with that of plant life.

Therefore, Adam and Eve eating fruits and plants would not mean death in the biblical sense. Before the Fall, death did not affect creatures that had self-conscious life such as animals and human beings. Plants have no “self-conscious” life.

### **Creation Was Made Subject To Futility**

There is a passage found in the Book of Romans that further establishes what the Fall meant to humanity, the animal kingdom, as well as the earth itself. Everything was originally created perfect. Thus, when God said that everything was very good, He meant exactly that.

However, as Paul wrote, creation was subjected to futility:

For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to God's curse. All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay (Romans 8:19-21 NLT).

Several things seem clear from these verses.

First, they inform us that sin warped not only humanity but also *all things* upon the earth. Indeed, note that it says that *everything* was subjected to God's curse.

Creation, in this context, refers to the animal kingdom, nature, and possibly humanity. The Bible make it clear that creation was not willingly made subject to futility, decay, and vanity. It did not subject itself. In other words, something caused creation to become cursed.

Moreover, Scripture teaches that the time in which creation as made subject to vanity was *after* the original creation:

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Genesis 1:31 ESV).

This passage in Romans presumes that there was a previous state of perfection upon the earth that it had not been made subject to vanity at this time.

To the point, the three expressions in these verses in Romans—creation “was made subject,” “vanity,” and “not willingly”—without any fault or choice on their own part—speaks of the physical world itself, including the animal kingdom, before the Fall.

### **The Problem Of God Creating An Imperfect World**

If one argues that all creation was subjected to vanity at the time of creation, then the logical conclusion is that God created a world of death and suffering where animals would have had to kill each other to survive.

This brings up a huge problem: What answer does the Christian have for the problem of evil? If death and destruction, pain and suffering were all part of the Creator’s original design, then God can be blamed for the evil that is in the world.

The good news is that we do not have to accept this position! Everything was indeed created perfect.

### **There Is Hope For Deliverance**

There is something else to consider. As we mentioned, the promise of Scripture is that creation will someday be delivered from the curse. Even with this subjection of nature, there is hope that it will someday be changed. The creation that is in bondage will someday be set free. Until that time, creation groans, waiting to be delivered from this bondage.

### **The Curse Will Continue Until Christ’s Coming**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

This curse, however, will continue until the Second Coming of Christ. The Bible says:

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:22,23 NRSV).

This judgment upon the earth sets the stage for another of the great themes of Scripture—that God will someday create a new heaven and new earth. The Book of Revelation testifies to that eventual reality.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more (Revelation 21:1 NRSV).

The prophet Isaiah wrote:

Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briers the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed (Isaiah 55:13 NIV).

The curse will continue.

### **The Curse Will Then Be Removed**

During the Millennium, the thousand-year-reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth, the curse will be removed from the earth as well as from the animal kingdom. Peter spoke of that time:

This one heaven must receive until the time all things are restored, which God declared from times long ago through his holy prophets (Acts 3:21 NET).

Isaiah again wrote:

Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves, young lions, and year-old lambs will be together, and little children will lead them. Cows and bears will eat together. Their

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

young will lie down together. Lions will eat straw like oxen. Infants will play near cobras' holes. Toddlers will put their hands into vipers' nests. They will not hurt or destroy anyone anywhere on my holy mountain. The world will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD like water covering the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9 God's Word).

Death and suffering will be removed when Christ returns. Animals will return to their vegetarian state—they will not eat other animals. This makes it clear that there was no death in the animal kingdom before the fall.

### **Animals Were They Vegetarians In The Past And Will Be In The Future**

There is also evidence that both humans and animals were vegetarians before the Fall. God said to Adam and Eve and to every living creature the following:

God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so (Genesis 1:29,30 NRSV).

They were to eat plants, not other animals. This seems to be the clear teaching in this passage.

This is confirmed by the covenant God made with Noah after the Flood. God said:

The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Only, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood (Genesis 9:2-4 NRSV).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

This passage indicates a new relationship of humanity with animals. After the Flood, God told Noah that animals would now be a threat to humanity. If one of these animals killed a human being, then the life of the animal would be taken.

Furthermore, the Lord said that these animals will now become food for humans. Of course, this infers that previous to this time the animals were not to be eaten for food.

Therefore, it seems that animals were vegetarians—at least until after the Fall.

### **The Animals Were Tame In The Beginning**

The fact that the animals were vegetarian's means they were tame as compared to what animals are today. This is another indication that sin caused them to become wild.

### **The Explanation For The Animal's Defense Mechanism**

As far as explaining the defense mechanisms of animals, there are several ways of looking at the situation. They include the following.

#### **Option 1:       The Mechanism Was For Another Purpose**

Some have argued that the defense mechanism in animals was originally for another purpose. This all changed after the Fall when animals would become afraid of one another, as well as being fearful of man.

#### **Option 2:       It Was Latent**

Others believe that it was latent in each creature only to be operational after the Fall. God, therefore, placed the potential within each animal. When the Fall occurred, this potential became a reality.

### **There Is Not Enough Information To Give A Complete Answer**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Ultimately, we do not have enough information to decide when and how animals received their defense and attack mechanisms. Scripture does not tell us.

#### **Conclusion: There Was No Animal Death Until After The Fall**

These points make the case that animal death and suffering was something brought on by the fall of Adam and Eve. This is not the way God originally created the animal kingdom.

#### **Summary To Question 21**

#### **How Does The Issue Of Animal Death**

#### **Help Us Date The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 3)**

There remains a controversy among Bible-believers as how Adam's sin affected the animal kingdom. Some take the position that death and suffering were part of the animal kingdom before the Fall.

There are many Bible believers who assume that animals died before the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. They put forth a number of arguments to support this idea.

For one thing, they believe that perfection was limited to Eden alone. Outside of Eden was a world of death and destruction. God kept Adam and Eve from this world by placing them in a perfect environment.

It is argued that the word "good" does not have to refer to perfect. Good can mean relatively good.

There is also the issue of the physical makeup of animals. Why did they have such things as claws and sharp teeth if they were merely vegetarians? Also, what about their defense mechanisms?

The Scriptures, however, seem to clearly teach that animals were affected by the Fall. There are many reasons as to why this is so. We can state them as follows.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

First, the world was created “perfect;” not merely relatively good. To argue that perfection was limited to Eden finds no support in the biblical text.

Sin affected the entire earth—not merely humanity. The animal kingdom, the human race, along with everything else fell from its original perfection. Thus, there was no death among humans or animals until the time of the Fall.

Scripture makes it clear something acted upon the world to put it in the fallen place it is in today. This could only refer to the Fall of humanity.

In addition, we find that there is hope that the earth will return to its original pristine condition.

The new heavens and new earth will be free from all sin. This testifies to the original state of all creation—it was without sin and death.

The logical conclusion is that the earth is relatively young. All the fossils that we find that contain animals are fossils that were formed after the Fall of humanity. Therefore, they testify to a fallen world; not the world God originally created.

## Question 22

### **What Is The Idealized View Of Time? (Mature Creationism) How Does It Affect The Way Things Are Dated? (Clue 4)**

A further clue we find in Scripture, as to the age of the earth is the found in the theory known as the “idealized view of time.” This is also known as “mature creationism.” The idealized view of time makes the distinction between actual time, and ideal, or perceived time.

#### **Mature Creationism Means Creation With The Appearance Of Age**

This theory recognizes that God created Adam and Eve with the superficial appearance of age. In other words, when Adam was thirty seconds old, he looked like a full-grown adult. The same was true of Eve. Neither of them had to grow up or learn a language—they were created fully mature. The evidence is as follows.

#### **Adam’s Creation**

The Bible says that Adam was created as a fully formed mature human being. We read:

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (Genesis 2:7 NIV).

We then read that Adam immediately was able to name the animals as well as have a need for a wife. Consequently, he was never a child—the Lord created Him as a fully formed mature man.

#### **The Creation Of Eve**

Likewise, Eve was created fully mature. We also read about this in the second chapter of Genesis. The Bible says:

The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found who was like him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. Then the LORD God made the rib He had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man (Genesis 2:20-22 CSB).

Upon her creation Eve was brought to Adam as his wife. Obviously, she was created as a mature woman because they were immediately commanded to be fruitful and multiply.

### **The Garden Of Eden**

Not only were Adam and Eve created fully mature, we find that the entire Garden of Eden was created in the same way.

Indeed, upon his creation, Adam was told that he could eat the fruit of any tree in the Garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This assumes that there was mature fruit on the mature fruit trees. So, everything in Eden was created with a superficial appearance of age.

### **Was The Rest Of The Universe Created The Same Way?**

It is clear that Adam and Eve were created as fully mature adults. The same is true of the Garden of Eden. If God made the remainder of the universe along this same line, then the actual age would not be the same as the age that things appear to be. Trees would have been created fully mature, animals did not have to grow up, and the stars were already shining in the sky.

If this is the case, then the universe could look millions or billions of years old but actually be relatively young. Therefore, there is no conflict between the Bible and science because God made the universe to look old when He created it a relatively short time ago.

### **Another Biblical Example Of Mature Creationism: The Feeding Of The Five Thousand**

From Scripture, we find another example of God creating things fully mature—the feeding of the five thousand.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

The Bible describes the miracle of the Lord Jesus in the following manner:

Then He commanded the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them. He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples [gave them] to the crowds. Everyone ate and was filled. Then they picked up 12 baskets full of leftover pieces! Now those who ate were about 5,000 men, besides women and children (Matthew 14:19-21 CSB).

Here we have an example of God creating something fully mature—it looked older than it actually was. There were five thousand men, as well as a large number of women and children, who were hungry. The entire multitude was fed with these five loaves and two fish.

After giving thanks, Jesus gave the five loaves and two fish to the disciples and they distributed them to the multitude. Every person in the crowd ate and was satisfied. Then the disciples collected twelve baskets of fragments that were leftover. This was indeed a miracle!

We note that the bread and the fish that were provided for this miracle were created fully mature. The bread never grew in the field, never had to be harvested, and never had to be baked. It was created fully mature and ready to eat.

The same is true with the fish. The fish never started out as eggs. They were never young fish who grew to be larger fish. These fish were created fully mature and ready to eat.

Both the bread and the fish were created with a superficial appearance of age. The people eating them were not able to tell the difference between these loaves of bread and these fish from regular bread and regular fish. Yet the bread and fish that Jesus created was only minutes old.

However, they looked fully mature.

### **Important Lessons Learned From This Miracle**

This miracle tells us a couple of important things.

First, God has the *ability* to create things that look older than they actually are. The fish and bread appeared to be older than a few minutes.

Second, God is *willing* to create things with a superficial appearance of age. He had no problem with creating something that looked older than it was.

Since God has demonstrated the ability and willingness to create things with a superficial appearance of age, it is not impossible that this is what He did at the beginning. He may have created the entire universe along the same line. He created everything in six days only a few thousand years ago with a superficial appearance of age.

However, the universe was created fully mature. Consequently, the idea of a mature creationism by God is certainly within the realm of possibilities.

### **Difficulties Raised With The Idealized View Of Time**

It is true that all creation would have to have some appearance of age. The problem with this view is that it makes it impossible to detect any age of the earth. All scientific attempts at trying to date the earth are futile because the appearance of age has been built-in into God's creation.

Some argue that this theory makes God a deceiver. On the one hand, the universe gives the impression of being very old, while, in actuality, it is only a few thousand years old with age built-in to the creation.

However, this would not be the case if He has told us that this is exactly what He has done. There is no deception on God's part if He created everything "fully mature" and then revealed that fact to humanity.

To many Bible-believers this is exactly what He has done. Consequently, we have no deception whatsoever on the part of God.

### **Summary To Question 22**

#### **What Is The Idealized View Of Time? (Mature Creationism)**

#### **How Does It Affect The Way Things Are Dated?**

The idealized view of time holds that God created the earth relatively recently but with the superficial appearance of age. The fact that there is built in age in all things that God created makes irrelevant any attempts to date the earth the way it is now. The actual age is not the same as the perceived age.

We find biblical examples of this. First, we have the creation of Adam and Eve. The Bible says that when God created them, He made them as fully mature human beings.

In other words, the age that they appeared to be was not their actual age. They had a superficial appearance of age which did not reflect their real age.

The Garden of Eden, in which they were placed, was also created fully mature. We know this because Adam was told that he able to eat any fruit from any tree, except one. This assumes that these trees had mature fruit on them. Like Adam and Eve, they had the superficial appearance of age.

The miracle of Jesus feed the five thousand also demonstrates the ability and willingness of God to create with a superficial appearance of age. The fish and the bread that were eaten by the people appeared to look mature. However, Scripture is clear that Jesus miraculously created them on the spot.

Consequently, the Bible provides us with three examples of God creating something which had the appearance of age but, in actuality, was not old.

Therefore, it is highly possible that the Lord created the entire universe the same way. In other words, the age which things appear to look is not their actual age.

There are Bible-believers who think that this would make God a deceiver. He creates a universe that appears to be one way but is actuality different than what it appears to be.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

However, this would not be a problem if the Lord tells us that is what He has done. Indeed, it would only be a deception if He did not inform us about this.

Did God create the universe relatively recently with the appearance that it is millions of years old, or did He really create everything millions of years ago?”

Or is it possible that the earth really is relatively young and those modern dating methods are irrelevant?

These are the questions that continue to divide Bible-believers.

### **Question 23**

#### **Why Would God Not Have Revealed Himself To Those Who Lived Before Adam And Eve? (Assuming Such Personages Existed) (Clue 5)**

There are some Christians who argue that Adam was not a special creation of God but merely one of the many humans, or human-like creatures living at that time. It is further contended that God took Adam and put in him a unique spirit.

Consequently, at that time, Adam became fully human—one who was made in the image of God.

Thus, Adam was not a special creation by God but rather a human, living among other fellow humans, at that time. Eve was also living among the other human creatures at the time and she too was given that special “image of God” that makes humans unique.

There are some well-respected Christians who hold this as well as similar views. Is this a problem?

#### **This View Causes Enormous Problems?**

If humans, or human-like personages, lived for untold thousands of years, before God created Adam and Eve as recorded in the Book of Genesis, then huge problems emerge. They are as follows:

##### **1. The Genesis Creation Account Of Adam And Eve’s Creation Never Happened**

The creation account in Genesis specially tells us that Adam and Eve were created by God:

The Lord God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (Genesis 2:7 NET)

Eve, we are told, was made from part of the body of Adam:

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he was asleep, he took part of the man's side and closed up the place with flesh (Genesis 2:21 NET).

If Adam and Eve were living among other human or humanlike creatures at this time, then the account in Genesis is not factual. One would have to call it myth, allegory, or something else. Whatever a person may wish to call it, they cannot call it historical or factual if this is what they believe happened.

As we have documented elsewhere, this perspective robs the Bible of all its meaning. Without a literal Adam and Eve, without the Fall of humanity, without the Garden of Eden, the entire foundation for the rest of Scripture crumbles.

## **2. Why No Divine Revelation To These People**

There is another huge problem in assuming some type of human like people lived before Adam and Eve. Why would God not reveal Himself to these creatures? Why would a loving God create these people and then let them live for countless years, perhaps millions, without any divine revelation? This seems incredible. Didn't He love them?

Furthermore, why did He create them in the first place? We do not know because we know nothing of them.

## **Conclusion: There Were No Pre-Adamic People**

Scripture makes it clear that Adam and Eve were the first humans. Not only is this the testimony of Genesis, it is also the belief of the rest of the Bible—including that of Jesus.

Is the Bible wrong? Was Jesus wrong? Somebody must be wrong! It is either the atheistic theory of evolution or the biblical account of special creation. Indeed, they both cannot be right.

For the Christian it should go without saying that we must accept what the Bible says took place with respect to the creation of Adam and Eve. If we do trust the testimony of the Bible on the supernatural creation of

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Adam and Eve, then we have another line of testimony for a recent creation of humanity.

As we have emphasized, the genealogy of humanity, from the time of Adam until the time of Jesus is given to us in Scripture. The total number of years adds up only in the thousands.

Even if there are some gaps in the genealogies we are still dealing with a relatively young earth. This is in contrast to the atheistic evolutionary viewpoint that the human race has been on planet earth for millions of years.

Therefore, when a person accepts the Genesis account of creation, as did the Lord Jesus, to be consistent, it seems like they have to accept the fact that the earth is relatively young.

#### **Summary To Question 23**

#### **Why Would God Not Have Revealed Himself To Those Who Lived Before Adam And Eve? (Assuming Such Personages Existed)**

Some Bible-believers think that humans lived long before Adam and Eve. They assume the fossils of cavemen as well as other sub-human creatures testify to the existence of people before they became modern humans. This being the case they do not accept the creation account of Adam and Eve, as recorded in Genesis, as having literally taken place.

This perspective causes enormous problems—not the least of which it contradicts Jesus’ own view of what happened in the beginning. Indeed, He believed that God literally “made” or “created” Adam and Eve in the beginning.

There is another problem. If there were people living for hundreds of thousands, or perhaps, millions of years before Adam and Eve, then why didn’t God reveal Himself to them? Why would He allow all of these human-like people to live and die without any chance of knowing Him in a personal way? There is no satisfactory answer to this question.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Indeed, the evidence speaks to the contrary. There were no human-like creatures before Adam and Eve. They were the first humans and the loving God of Scripture revealed Himself to them.

The fact that this happened is further evidence that God created the first humans a relatively short time ago—on the order of a few thousand years.

## Question 24

### **Do The Teachings Of Jesus Provide Us With Any Information About The Genesis Creation Account And The Age Of The Earth? (Clue 6)**

Another biblical clue that helps us date the time humans have been here upon the earth comes from the teachings of the Lord Jesus Himself. In fact, in a number of specific instances, Jesus confirmed that He believed the biblical account of creation and also believed that humans were created at the very beginning—not millions of years after the earth was formed and countless animals lived and died. The evidence is as follows.

#### **1. Humans Were Created In The Beginning**

Jesus said that God made Adam and Eve at the very beginning of creation:

But from the beginning of creation he made them male and female  
(Mark 10:6 NET)

Notice Jesus believed that humanity was created at the “beginning” of God’s creation. In other words, humans did not come along millions of years after God initial made the heavens and the earth.

#### **2. There Has Been Suffering Since The Beginning**

In another instance Jesus spoke of the suffering that happened at the beginning of creation:

For in those days there will be suffering unlike anything that has happened from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, or ever will happen (Mark 13:19 NET).

Again, our Lord refers to the beginning of creation which God created. Obviously, He accepted the Genesis creation account in a literal sense.

### **The Murder Of Abel Took Place At The Beginning**

Luke records Jesus saying that the murder of Abel took place at the beginning of the world:

So that this generation may be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary (Luke 11:50-51 NET).

Abel was killed in the “beginning of the world.” He was not killed millions of years after God created the world, after millions of animals died through struggling for survival.

No, according to the Lord Jesus Abel was murdered after the Fall of humanity in the very early years of all life on this planet.

### **Conclusion: Jesus Seemed To Confirm A Young Earth**

Therefore, from the teachings of Jesus we can conclude that He not only believed the creation account in Genesis to be factual, He also taught that Adam and Eve were created “in the beginning.”

This is further evidence from Scripture of a recent creation. And this evidence is particularly valuable because it comes from God the Son.

### **Summary To Question 24**

#### **Do The Teachings Of Jesus Provide Us With Any Information About The Genesis Creation Account And The Age Of The Earth?**

Another clue from the Bible, with respect to the age of the earth, comes from the teachings of the Lord Jesus. In three different passages He made comments about God’s original creation as recorded in the Book of Genesis. From His words we can arrive at a number of conclusions.

To begin with, we know that He believed the account to be factual. In other words, He confirmed what is taught in the early chapters of Genesis—Adam and Eve were actual people whom God created. In other words, they did not come about through millions of years of

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

evolution neither were they full grown humanoids whom God put His spirit in.

In addition, Jesus spoke of them being created “in the beginning.” This is important. The fact that He stated it this way indicates that they did not come along millions of years *after* God’s original creation. To the contrary, His statement indicates that He believed they were created on Day 6 of creation week.

Jesus also stated that Abel was killed at “the beginning of the world.” According to the account in Genesis, Abel was killed by his brother Cain in the early years which humanity was upon the earth. Jesus confirmed this.

This murder did not take place millions or years after God created everything but rather within a few hundred years.

Therefore, from the teachings of God the Son, we find further confirmation that humanity has not been on the earth for long periods of time but rather for only a few thousand years.

## Question 25

### **How Does The Nature Of God, As Revealed In The Bible, Help Us Determine How Long Humanity Has Been On This Planet? (Clue 7)**

Another clue that we will look at, to determine what the Bible says if anything about the age of the earth, is the nature of the God who is revealed in Scripture. This certainly has to be taken into consideration when exploring this matter.

Indeed, there are several truths about God which the Scripture reveals that should help us in coming to some sort of answer on this matter.

#### **God Has Revealed Himself To Humanity**

First, we must recognize that the living God has revealed Himself to the human race. This revelation is found in the Bible and the Bible alone. The Scripture is God's revelation to the human race about who He is, who we are, as well as how we can have a relationship with Him. This is the first point that we must note—God exists, and He has spoken to us.

#### **God Expects Us To Interpret His Revelation Literally**

As we study the Scripture, we find that God wants us to understand what He has revealed in a literal, straightforward manner. Indeed, we find that the Lord held the people responsible for understanding and obeying His Word in a literal straightforward sense.

Of course, that's not to say the Bible does not contain poetic sections, figures of speech, etc. It does. However, the context usually makes plain whether the passage or verse is to be interpreted in its natural sense or rather in some symbolic or poetic sense.

When Jesus arrived on the scene, He expected that the people of His day were to understand the predictions about the coming Messiah in a literal sense. In fact, on the day of His resurrection, He said the following to two disciples on the road to Emmaus:

## The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

So he said to them, “You foolish people—how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Wasn’t it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things written about himself in all the scriptures (Luke 24:25-27 NET).

Here we find Him denouncing these two people because they did not interpret the Old Testament predictions about the suffering of the Messiah in a plain, literal sense. Thus, when God speaks to us, He expects us to interpret what He says in a straightforward sense.

### **A Literal Interpretation Tells Us Much About God’s Nature**

When we examine the Scripture and interpret it in a literal sense, we discover a number of important truths about the nature, or character, of the God of the Bible.

#### **He Is A God Of Purpose And Precision: Not Of Waste**

One thing that becomes evident is that the God of Scripture is a purposeful God. In other words, waste is not something that is part of His character. Everything that He has designed has a purpose. Indeed, He is a God of precision, not of waste.

#### **He Is A God Of Justice And Righteousness**

Another thing we discover about the God of the Bible is that He is a God who is righteous and fair. In other words, He does not unjustly condemn or punish the innocent.

### **What This Teaches Us About The Age Of The Earth**

The fact that we do know a number of things about God’s nature actually helps us with the question of the age of the earth. Indeed, we can ask make the following observations.

**Why Would A God Of Precision Create Animals  
To Live And Die For Millions Of Years?**

Since God is a God of precision, and not a God of waste, we would not expect Him to create an animal kingdom that would exist for millions of years characterized by disease, destruction, and death. There is no purpose whatsoever in Him doing this. Why would He do such a thing?

**God Can Instantly Create**

This is particularly true when we realize that the Lord has demonstrated that He has the willingness as well as the ability to living beings in a fully mature condition.

As we previously noted, we find that Adam and Eve were created in such a manner. And, if the days of Genesis are solar days, then the entire animal kingdom was created this way—birds and fish on Day five and land animals on Day six.

**Why Would He Condemn Morally Innocent Animals?**

There is something else. Why would God create millions of animals to live and die for no real purpose; animals that are morally innocent! Certainly, there is no reason for animals to be judged—they did not sin against God. Why should they suffer needlessly? The answer is seemingly obvious—they should not have to and they did not have to.

In other words, there were not millions of years of needless, wasteful animal suffering before the Lord got around to creating Adam and Eve in a fully mature manner.

Thus, along with all the other reasons we have noted, the nature of the God who is revealed in the Bible gives another indication that the earth that He has made has not been here for millions upon millions of years but rather it is actually relatively young.

**Summary To Question 25**

**How Does The Nature Of God, As Revealed In The Bible, Help Us Determine How Long Humanity Has Been On This Planet?**

There are actually a number of inferences we can draw about the age of the earth by considering the nature or character of the God of the Bible.

We start by realizing that the God of the Bible has revealed Himself to us in Holy Scripture. We also discover that what He has told us is meant to be understood literally; in the normal plain sense. This straightforward understanding of the text is what we find throughout Scripture. Indeed, many examples can be given where God expects the people to literally obey what He said.

This being the case we can discover a number of things about God's character from the Bible. For one thing, we find that He is a God of precision and purpose—not a wasteful Deity.

In other words, everything He does, whether it be creating or sustaining the universe He always does with a specific purpose in mind. In fact, everything He has created has a purpose for it.

This being the case then it is utterly against the character of God to create animals which would live, struggle, fight and die for untold millions of years without any purpose whatsoever. Such an idea is completely contrary to the character of God who always has a plan and purpose for everything that He does.

We can add to this the fact that animals are morally innocent—they have done nothing to deserve the judgment of God.

Therefore, from what we know of the character of God, as it is clearly revealed in the Bible, the idea that animals would live and die for millions of years without any purpose whatsoever contradicts everything we know about Him.

Consequently, we conclude that He did not do this. Animal death was something that came as a result of the sin of humans—Adam and Eve. Their sin affected everything. Previous to this, animals did not die.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

So, we conclude that the earth has to be relatively young since the animals would not have died until humans began to die. And from the Bible we know that this took place recently in the history of the earth.

### Question 26

#### **How Does The Future Creation of the Heavens and the Earth Help Us Date The Original Creation? (Clue 8)**

There is something else which we need to mention. We know that the Lord will one day create a new heaven and a new earth:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more (Revelation 21:1 NET).

This new universe will be created instantly.

Well, if God will create the new heaven and earth instantly then, why, we may ask, would He have taken millions of years to create the first heaven and earth? The obvious answer is He did not! He created the first heaven and earth instantly.

Indeed, the psalmist wrote about the immediate creation of God in the beginning:

By the Lord's decree the heavens were made by a mere word from his mouth all the stars in the sky were created. . . . For he spoke, and it came into existence, he issued the decree, and it stood firm (Psalm 33:6,9 NET).

Notice the Lord spoke, and it came to pass. He did not need millions of years!

#### **A Question That Needs To Be Answered: Is God A Bad Communicator?**

With these above eight clues, it seems that the Bible wants us to believe that God created the heavens and the earth a relatively short time ago—in the thousands of years, not millions.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

In fact, there is not one verse in Scripture which either explicitly or implicitly says that the earth is ancient. To the contrary, all the clues would have us believe that the earth is young.

If we reject what seems to be the clear intent of Scripture, then it appears that we are assuming that the living God is a bad communicator. In other words, He did not really mean what He said.

Of course, the question we should then ask is this, "If God didn't mean these truths to be understood this way, then why did He say it in the manner in which He did?" Or we could ask, "If the Lord wanted to tell us that the earth is relatively young, then how could He have made it any plainer to us?"

Or, should we hold the view that God hid His truth from the great majority of the population and made it accessible to only a select few scientists and theologians?

In fact, the entirety of Scripture makes it clear that the God of the Bible has communicated His truth to the human race and that He holds us responsible to accept His truth in a straightforward, literal manner.

### **Conclusion: God Has Given Us An Answer As To The Age Of The Earth!**

When we consider all the biblical evidence, we can come to the following conclusions.

1. The God Of The Bible Has Communicated Certain Truths To Humanity And They Have Been Recorded In Scripture.
2. These Truths Are Expected To Be Understood In A Straightforward Literal Sense.
3. The Lord Was There At The Original Creation: No Humans Were.
4. As The Creator, He Informs Us What Took Place In The Beginning.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

#### 5. From His Communication To Us, We Have Evidence Of A Relatively Young Earth.

In sum, when all the evidence is considered, the clues from biblical chronology, along with other factors, consistently make the case for the earth to be relatively young. As we again stress, there is no verse that either explicitly or implicitly teaches an old earth.

While the age of the earth may not be a test of Christian orthodoxy, the implications of holding other viewpoints, as we have seen, can be rather profound.

### **Question 27**

#### **Does The Fall Of Humanity And The Genesis Flood Have To Be Considered When Dating The Earth? (Uniformitarianism)**

There is the mistaken idea that the earth can be reliably dated because all things have continued the same since the beginning. This is known as “uniformitarianism.” Basically, uniformitarianism states that things have decayed at a rapid or uniform rate. Since we know this rate of decay, we are able to reliably date things.

#### **Uniformitarianism Predicted In Scripture**

Interestingly, the Bible predicts that the idea of uniformitarianism will be popular at the time of the end. Peter wrote the following:

First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts 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!” (2 Peter 3:3,4 NRSV).

This sums up the view of modern science—everything has been the same since the beginning.

#### **The Fall And The Flood**

There is the matter of two events that would have reshaped the earth in the past—the fall of humanity and the flood in Noah’s day. While Christians debate the extent of the Flood, whether it was worldwide or localized, there is no debate as to the effects of the Fall of humanity. Everything on the earth was affected—everything was changed from perfection to imperfection. The Bible says that God created everything very good:

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:31 KJV).

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

However, when sin entered the world, all things became subject to death and decay. The Bible says the ground was now cursed:

To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:17-19 NIV).

The present world is totally different than the world that was initially created. Therefore, when one tries to date the world as it now is through scientific measurements these two great events must be taken into consideration.

### **Flood Geology Assumes A Universal Flood**

Flood geology assumes that the Flood recorded in Genesis 6-9 was universal—the entire globe was covered with water. The geological upheaval caused by the Flood would change the entire structure of the earth.

The mountains would have been pushed up and the sea beds lowered. The world after the flood would have been radically different from the world before the flood.

Therefore, any attempt to date the earth by geological formations would be futile for nothing of the original earth would have been left.

These two events certainly need to be taken into consideration when one tries to determine the age of the earth by looking at the physical evidence in the world which we now live in.

### **Summary To Question 27**

### **Does The Fall Of Humanity Have To Be Considered When Dating The Earth? (Uniformitarianism)**

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Without divine revelation humanity would assume that the earth has been developing at a consistent rate from its beginning. Uniformitarianism is the idea that all things continue on at basically the same rate.

Peter warns us that one of the sins of the last days is this doctrine of the uniformity of all things.

However, the fall of humanity would have drastically altered the earth. From its original perfection came death and dying. Everything changed after the Fall of the human race.

In addition, a worldwide flood would certainly alter the terrain in the earth in an unmistakable manner where very little, if anything, of the original landscape would be in place.

Therefore, we cannot know the extent of the changes that were made. This makes dating the past something near impossible.

## **Question 28**

### **What Conclusions Can We Make About The Age Of The Earth And The Universe?**

After considering what the Bible says about the age of the earth and the universe, as well as other factors which need to be considered, we can make the following observations and conclusions regarding this difficult subject.

#### **The Age Of The Earth Remains An Unsettled Issue Among Christians**

The age of the earth is not an issue that has been settled among believers; nor is it likely that it will ever be settled. There are a number of reasons as to why this is so.

#### **What Is Our Starting Point?**

Part of the problem has to do with the proper starting point to answer this question. Many Christians believe that science has proven, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the earth and universe is old. This being the case, they go to the Bible to see if it permits an old universe.

Consequently, there are a number of different ways in which Genesis is interpreted to come to the conclusion that the Bible teaches, or at least allows for, an old earth. Numerous Christians have taken this approach and are satisfied that Scripture and science each allow for an old earth.

#### **The Christian Should Start With The Bible**

However, as we have pointed out, this is the wrong way in which to go about answering this question. If the Bible is what it claims to be, God's authoritative Word, then we go to it first to see if there are any specific answers to questions about how our universe, earth, and humankind came about.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

We have found that there are. Indeed, we mentioned eight specific clues from the Bible that would indicate the earth has been recently created with humanity on the scene for only a few thousand years.

The fact that the Bible gives a variety of different clues which would cause us to believe the earth is relatively young should not be treated lightly.

Indeed, if God placed these truths in His Word, then He placed them for a purpose. Consequently, the first order of business is to make a serious study of the Word of God to see if we can come up with any conclusions on this matter. We have done this. What we have found is that the Bible consistently indicates that the earth is relatively young and that humanity has not been on the scene for very long.

### **The Creationist Does Not Need Millions Of Years**

Again, we emphasize that the evolutionist needs a very old earth or their theory will not work. The creationist, on the other hand, does not need millions or billions of years to make the theory work.

The God of the Bible has demonstrated that He has the ability to instantaneously create animals, people, and everything else in a way which it looks and acts fully mature. This is in spite of the fact that they were only recently created.

### **Different Questions Are Posed About This Issue By Creationists And Evolutionists**

To sum up, when examining the subject of the age of the earth, the believer asks different questions than the evolutionists. The Bible-believer wants to know what the Scripture has specifically to say about the date of creation. Does the Bible, when it is properly interpreted, lead us to believe that the earth is old or young? As we have noted, Scripture gives a number of clues that the earth is indeed young.

The second question concerns how the Scripture accords with the facts of science. Does our conclusion concerning what the Bible says about the age of the earth fit with the evidence of science? If not, is there

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

something wrong with our interpretation of Scripture or is there something wrong with the interpretations of scientists? The Bible-believer wants to know the answers to these questions.

Ultimately, we know that the facts of science will not contradict but rather be in line with the teaching of the Word of God on this issue.

Indeed, the Christian has no need to fear because we serve a God of truth.

#### **Summary To Question 28 What Conclusions Can We Make About The Age Of The Earth And The Universe?**

As we look at the subject of the age of the earth and what the Bible has to say about it, we can make the following observations.

The age of the earth is not a question where Bible believers have come to a unanimous conclusion. There are a number of reasons for this.

Basically, they have to do with our starting point. Do we start with what modern science has concluded about the age of the earth and universe or do we start with the Bible, and, from it, determine our conclusions?

While many Christians opt to start with the latest conclusions from science this is not the proper way to go about it. In fact, if the God of Scripture has revealed truth to us in His Word about creation—truth we would not otherwise know, then we should take seriously what He says.

As we have noted in this portion of the book there are a number of clues that the Bible gives with respect to the age of the earth. Each of them point to the same thing—the earth was created relatively recently. These biblical clues should not be ignored. Indeed, God has placed them in His Word for a reason.

If the Bible teaches that the earth is relatively young, then the facts of science will ultimately agree with what Scripture says. Since the results of scientific study are constantly changing, we cannot make any final conclusions on the matter from science alone.

### The Days Of Genesis And The Age Of The Earth

Indeed, the only unchanging source to which we should go is the Word of the living God—the Bible. It alone is the ultimate authority on all matters of belief and practice.

### About The Author

Don Stewart is a graduate of Biola University and Talbot Theological Seminary (with the highest honors).

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