

DID GOD CREATE THE WORLD IN 6, 24-HOUR DAYS?

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Yes, God did indeed create the world and everything in it in six, literal days of approximately 24-hours each. Consider the following evidence.

1. The Hebrew word for day (*yom*) is both **used and defined** in Genesis 1:5—“And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” *Yom* is used approximately 1,284 times in the Old Testament. There are a few occasions where it does not mean a literal, 24-hour day, but the context clearly indicates the meaning as being a period of time longer than just 24 hours. Examples in the Old Testament where *yom* is used in the context to mean a period longer than 24 hours are: Genesis 26:8, Genesis 4:3, Genesis 2:4, Psalm 95:8-9, and Jeremiah 46:10. In Genesis 2:4, *yom* has reference to the total of the six days of creation. In Psalm 95:8-9, the *yom* refers to the forty years of wandering by the Jews. In Jeremiah 46:10, the prophet uses the word to refer to the time when Egypt would be punished for her sins (this time of punishment was not limited to a single, 24-hour day, but rather a period of captivity).

In the context of Genesis 1, however, there is no support for the word meaning a long period of time. Sound principles of biblical interpretation and exegesis require that we accept this “day” as being an ordinary day. It is a general principle of biblical interpretation that a word should be taken in its everyday meaning unless there is compelling evidence that it must be interpreted in a different manner. The fact that God defined the day as a period of “evening and morning” leaves little doubt as to what these “days” actually were.

2. The use of the phrase “evening and morning” occurs over 100 times in the Old Testament with the word *yom*. Each time it is used in a non-prophetic passage, it refers to a 24-hour day. Henry M. Morris, in his book, *Biblical Cosmology and Modern Science*, made the following observation: “The Hebrew words for ‘evening’ and ‘morning’ occur over 100 times each in the Old Testament and **always** in a literal sense” (1970, p. 58fn). Should we then assume a different meaning in Genesis 1? Some have affirmed that the 24-hour day did not begin until the fourth day with the appearance of the Sun (Genesis

1:14). But the same “evening and morning” is used with the word “day” **before** Genesis 1:14 as **after**. Why would there be three long eras of time before the appearance of the Sun, and only 24-hour days after its appearance?

Insofar as the view is concerned that these could not be ordinary days because the Sun had not been created, I would like to point out that we humans measure time in terms of days even though the Sun does not appear and is not visible. For instance, north of the Arctic Circle and south of the Antarctic Circle, the Sun does not appear for periods of time up to six months at the poles themselves. We would not think of measuring time in terms of the appearance (or lack of appearance) of the Sun in these areas. No one would contend that at the north or south pole a day is the equivalent of six months elsewhere. Remember: the heavenly bodies were placed in the skies to **mark** the days, not to **make** the days.

3. When the Hebrew word *yom* is preceded by a numeral in a non-prophetic passage, it **always** carries the meaning of a 24-hour day. It occurs over 100 times in the Pentateuch alone in this manner, and the meaning of a 24-hour day **always** is conveyed (e.g., Genesis 8:3, Numbers 13:25, Exodus 20:11). Arthur F. Williams, writing in the *Creation Research Annual*, stated: “We have failed to find a single example of the use of the word ‘day’ in the entire Scripture where it means other than a period of 24 hours when modified by the use of the numerical adjective” (1965, p. 10). Why should our understanding of the word *yom* in Genesis 1 be any different from the rest of the Old Testament?

4. When the plural for *yom* is used in the Old Testament, it always has reference to (in non-prophetic passages) a 24-hour period of time. *Yamim* never refers to a long period of time. Henry Morris noted: “When the word ‘days’ appears in the plural (*yamim*) as it does over 700 times in the Old Testament, it **always** refers to literal days. Thus, in Exodus 20:11 when the Scriptures say that in ‘six days’ the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, there can be no doubt that 6 literal days are meant” (1970, p. 59).

5. The Hebrew word *olam* means a long period of time. Why did not Moses employ this term if he wanted to convey the meaning that the creation took place over long geological periods of time? Obviously, he did not want us to understand Genesis 1 in this manner. There are other words Moses could have used as well, but he did not. He used the Hebrew word *yom*.

6. How could these “days” of Genesis 1 be long periods of time when the plants were created on the third day, and the Sun was not created until the fourth day? If these were geological ages of millions of years, then how did the plants survive without the Sun for millions of years of total darkness? Remember that the phrase “evening and morning” is used after **each** of the six creation days, including day three. That would mean that there would have to be along period of “evening” and a long period of “morning.” This, of course, would be disastrous for the plant world (created on day three).

And consider another important fact concerning the botanical world. Numerous species of plants must have insects to reproduce, for these insects help cross-pollinate such plants (e.g.: the Pronuba moth and the yucca plant). How did these plants survive for millions or billions of years without their much-needed friends, the insects, which according to the Genesis account were not created until after day four?

7. If the six days of creation were long periods of time, then the seventh day would logically be the same. Since Exodus 20:11 states that God “rested” on the seventh day, since Genesis 2:1-3 states that God “finished” His creating and rested, and since advocates of the Day-Age theory say that we are now in the seventh day, then obviously God must still be resting. But Jesus Himself said just the opposite when He stated in John 5:17: “My Father worketh even until now.” Obviously, the seventh day was not a long period of time; thus, the other six were not either.

8. The creation days were 24-hour days because of plain statements made about them in Scripture. “In six days Jehovah made heaven and earth” (Exodus 20:11). “For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:9). Do these verses imply a long period of evolutionary processes? “Let them praise the name of Jehovah; for He commanded, and they were created” (Psalm 148:5).

9. God commanded the Jews in Exodus 20:8-11 to observe the Sabbath Day. He even told them why. God said they were to work six days and rest on the seventh because that was the pattern He had followed in creating the Universe. Question: How did the Jews, in Old Testament times, interpret this passage? Did they work for a long, indefinite period of time and then rest for a long, indefinite period of time? Of course not! They understood and practiced exactly

what God commanded. They worked six days and rested one day, because that is the pattern God had used in His creation of the world they inhabited.

10. From Genesis 1:16, we learn that God made the Sun and the Moon—the greater to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night. Since the days were divided into “evening and morning,” we would have to assume (if the days were eons of time) that the Sun came up but did not go down for millions or billions of years. Is this feasible?

11. Genesis 1:14 says that God created the lights to divide the day from the night, and that they were to be for “signs, for seasons, for days, and for years.” If the days are ages, then what are the years? If a day is an age, then what is a night? In other words, the whole passage becomes ridiculous when we begin to stretch or re-interpret the word “day.”

12. Genesis 2:1 reads, “And the heaven and the earth were **finished**, and all the host of them.” God finished His creation on the sixth day. If these were long geological periods and the means of creation were evolution, why does the Bible state that the evolutionary process **ended** with the sixth day?

CONCLUSION

The evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of the days of Genesis 1 being literal, 24-hour days. There is absolutely no evidence to support the theory that the days were “ages” of evolutionary time.

REFERENCES

- Morris, Henry M. (1970), *Biblical Cosmology and Modern Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker).
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