

Creation (continued)

Since Genesis records historical fact, the creation account itself must tell us how long it took God to create the world. Genesis tells us that God created the world in six normal days: Genesis 1:5 (day 1), 8 (day 2), 13 (day 3), 19 (day 4), 23 (day 5), 31 (day 6). Each of these days are said to have an evening and a morning, which was the typical way in which the people of Israel reckoned a normal day. We cannot accept the six days of creation as long periods of time because each of these days had what is characteristic of a normal day, an evening and a morning.

In addition, the Lord Himself told us that the six days of creation were normal days. When He gave the Third Commandment to Israel, God said, *“For six days you shall labour and do all your work! ¹⁰ However, the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD, your God.... For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything that is in them but rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD has blessed the Sabbath day and has declared it holy”* (Ex. 20:9-11). The Lord compared the six days of creation with the six-day Jewish workweek. Israel was not to work for six million years and then rest for one million years. They were to work for six normal days and rest on a normal seventh day, since God created the world in six normal days and rested on a seventh normal day.

It is true that the word day (Hebrew *yom*) can mean something other than a normal day on occasion (cf. Is. 7:18-20). However, in Isaiah, the context clearly indicates that the meaning is other than a normal day. When we are told that the ‘days’ of creation had a normal morning and evening and are comparable to the six-day work week, we cannot but conclude that the six days of creation were six normal days.

The Bible records that God made the world and all in it in six days.

Day 1: God made the heavens and the earth, and light (Gen. 1:1-5). The earth was without specific form. It was empty of inhabitants. The earth was covered with water. God created light, which brought about day and night. The Holy Spirit was active in creation, as was the Son (John 1:3). God would more definitively shape the world over the next days. Concerning this creative act, the Lord Himself said to Job, *“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you know how to discern it! ⁵ Who determined its dimensions? Surely you know! Or who stretched a measuring line over it? ⁶ On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone?”* (Job 38:4-6).

Day 2: The expanse, ‘sky’ (Gen. 1:6-8). God separated the water on the earth from the water above the earth. He gave this expanse the function of being the sky. It is this special creation of God which gives us a planet that can support life as He created it.

Day 3: The dry land and vegetation (Gen. 1:9-13). God caused the waters to be gathered together to form seas. This also produced dry land, upon which God’s creatures could live. Concerning this, the Lord asked Job, *“Who shut off the sea with doors when it burst from the womb and came out... when I marked out My limits for it and set its bars and doors in place, ¹¹ and when I said, ‘You may come as far as this but no farther, and here your proud waves will meet opposition’?”* (Job 38:8, 10-11). God caused the ground to produce vegetation (plants and trees). God designed the vegetation so that it could reproduce itself (seed-bearing plants and trees). God built into the vegetation genetic blueprints so that it reproduced according to its own kind, that is, within the genetic blueprints God had built into it. There can be a variety of species of vegetation within the realm of the genetic blueprints God placed into the vegetation. The vegetation will not reproduce outside of these genetic blueprints. The creation account answers for us the question of what came first, the apple or the tree. God created the tree with the ability to produce more apple trees.

Day 4: The sun, moon, and stars (the heavenly bodies) (Gen. 1:14-19). God set the myriads of heavenly bodies in the expanse of the sky. They differentiate day from night. They mark seasons and days and years. They give light on the earth. The heavenly bodies are beyond our counting. Yet the psalmist declared, *“He counts out the number of stars. He gives all of them their names”* (Ps. 147:4). The Lord said to Job, *“Can you tie together the chains of the Pleiades or undo the fetters of Orion? ³² Can you bring out the constellations at their right times? Or can you lead out the Great Bear with its children?”* (Job 38:31-32). As we contemplate the vastness of the heavens, we are led to exclaim with the psalmist, *“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him?”* (Ps 8:3-4). And yet Jesus assures us, *“Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered”* (Matt. 10:30).

Day 5: Fish and fowl (Gen. 1:20-23). God caused the waters to teem with living creatures. A drop of water teems with life. The rivers and the oceans are filled with fish. God created the *“great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems”* (Gen. 1:21). God also created *“every winged bird”* (Gen. 1:21). In chapter 2 Moses adds the detail that God created the birds from the dust of the earth and gave them life (Gen. 2:19). God gave the fish and the birds the ability to reproduce according to the genetic blueprints he had placed into them by His creation (according to its kind). Concerning the creation of the birds, the Lord said to Job, *“Is it by your understanding that the hawk takes flight and spreads out his wings toward the south? ²⁷ Is it at your command that the eagle flies loftily and builds his nest high up?”* (Job 39:26-27). One side note: Were the insects created on the fifth day? The Bible does not give us the answer.

Day 6: Land animals and humans, man and woman (Gen. 1:24-31). God created the land animals on day 6. According to Genesis 2:19, the land animals were also created out of the dust of the earth. This included domestic animals (livestock), wild animals, and the creatures that move along the ground (reptiles). God also gave these creatures the ability to reproduce according to the genetic blueprints that He had placed into them at creation.

God also made humans, man and woman, as the crown of His visible creation. The triune God took counsel with Himself, “*Let Us make man in our image, in Our likeness*” (Gen. 1:26). The image of God in which man and woman were created (Gen. 1:27) was not a physical likeness. “*God is spirit*” (John 4:24), the Creator-Spirit. He does not have flesh and blood as we do. The image of God in which man was created consisted of a blissful knowledge of God and His will, holiness (Adam’s and Eve’s will conformed perfectly to God’s will, and they desired only what God desired) and righteousness (Adam and Eve had the ability to carry out God’s will perfectly).

To be continued...