

Lesson 13

Creation: Days and Kinds

The Bible tells us how God created the universe.

Overview

Lesson Focus

The context of the Hebrew word *yom* in Genesis 1 confirms that the days of creation were normal 24-hour days. God created specific types of plants on day three to reproduce according to their kinds.

Key Passage

Genesis 1:1–19

Objectives

Students will be able to:

Define the meaning of the word day (*yom*) as used in Genesis 1.
Explain what it means that God created plants to reproduce according to their kinds.

Memory Verse

Psalm 8:3–4 When I look at 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, and the son of man that you care for him?

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

Through the book of Genesis, God intended for us to know specifically what he created and how long it took him to create. The creation account allows us just a small glimpse of the power—the omnipotence—of our mighty God as he speaks, by the power of his Word, the entire universe into existence. Our lesson this week will include Days 1–4 (Genesis 1:1–19).

Day One includes the creation of the heavens, the formless earth, the waters covering the earth, and the light, which was separated from darkness. In addition, time itself began on the first day (Genesis 1:3–5).

On Day Two, God created the “firmament” or “expanse.” The Hebrew word is *raqiya*, and it has the idea of something spread out. This expanse was called “heaven.” Part of that was the atmosphere and the air. This expanse separated the waters below from the waters above (Genesis 1:6–8).

God caused the dry land to appear and gathered the seas together to one place on the earth. He then spoke the plants, grass, herbs, and trees into existence. This was Day Three (Genesis 1:9–13).

God again spoke and created lights in the expanse of the heavens—the sun, moon, stars, and other heavenly bodies appeared on Day Four (Genesis 1:14–19).

God created all the living things according to their “kinds,” including the plants, grass, herbs, and trees. It is important to be aware that the concept of kinds refutes the process of evolution in that one plant, for instance, could never change into another plant. So, as we read Genesis 1, we must be aware that reproducing according to “kinds” is a repeated, creative directive presented by the holy God.

Another biblical truth that clearly refutes evolution comes as we study the Hebrew word for “created.” This word (bara) depicts the making of something from nothing. God created our world ex nihilo—out of nothing that had previously existed (see Hebrews 11:3). The Bible confirms God as the omnipotent Creator in several other passages: Psalm 148:4–6, Isaiah 40:25–26, Colossians 1:15–16, and Revelation 4:11. We know that he spoke, and all of creation came to be. This is impossible for us to comprehend. But it should leave us awed at the power of God.

Historical/Apologetics Background

Prior to the 1700s, few people believed in an old earth. Most people accepted the biblical account of Genesis and believed that the earth was approximately 6,000 years old. The subjective concepts of old age and uniformitarian geology—the view that slow and gradual processes, rather than a global catastrophe, created the earth’s rock layers—started in the mid-1700s and 1800s. This began the surrender of the truth of Genesis and the belief in millions of years of earth’s history.

These concepts have weakened the culture of the western world and have affected the church because they attack the veracity of the Word of God. Genesis 1 tells us exactly how God created the universe and exactly how long it took him. To deny the very beginning verses of God’s Word is to open the door of compromise to many other Scriptural truths. The church is rushing down that road of compromise and must realize the urgent need to ignite a new reformation—calling believers back to the absolute authority of the Bible.

Those who want to fit millions of years and evolution into the creation account often reinterpret the 24-hour days in Genesis to be millions of years. As Christians who stand firmly on the authority of God’s Word, we believe that a day is a day—24 hours—just as the Bible says.

We can understand the length of the days of creation by exploring the Hebrew word for “day” in Genesis 1, which is yom (rhymes with home). First, almost any word can have more than one meaning, depending on context. Yom can have several meanings. It can mean a day (an ordinary 24-hour day), the daylight portion of an ordinary 24-hour day (i.e., day as distinct from night), or

an indefinite period of time describing an era (e.g., in the day of the judges, in the day of the Lord, or in my grandfather's day).

When determining the meaning of the word yom in the context of Scripture, theologians have relied on Hebrew dictionaries like the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon. This respected Hebrew resource actually gives Genesis 1 as an example in Scripture where the word yom refers specifically to a 24-hour day.

We also know that the Hebrew word yom always refers to an ordinary day when associated with a number and the words "evening" or "morning." In fact, whenever the word yom is used in the Old Testament in this way, it clearly refers to a 24-hour day. This simple study of the Hebrew language confirms the Genesis account of creation as occurring in six 24-hour days.

The study of Genesis and its accuracy regarding the age of the earth is never far from a discussion of fossils. Fossils are the remains, traces, or imprints of dead plants or animals that have been preserved in the earth's near-surface rock layers. Secular scientists view fossils as evidence for a long prehistory for the earth and life on it—spanning millions of years.

Creationists view the same fossil deposits around the world and understand that these had to be formed by the rapid burial of countless billions of plants and animals. This rapid burial, when looked at through the lens of Scripture, is consistent with a global, catastrophic, year-long Genesis Flood that occurred, according to the biblical time frame, about 4,300 years ago.

Why is this an important issue? Because millions of years of history create an insurmountable problem regarding the gospel. The fossil record consists of the death of billions of creatures. It is a record of death, disease, suffering, cruelty, and brutality. The Bible makes it clear that God's creation was "very good" (Genesis 1:31) and that it was the sin of Adam that brought death, disease, and suffering into the world (Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12). Death is the penalty for man's sin; Jesus Christ is the remedy. When Christians allow that death, suffering, and disease happened before Adam's sin, they are ignoring the exclusive message of the cross and Christ's atoning work there, and they doubt the character of God who called his creation "very good."

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