

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S

SCHOOL OF CULTURAL RESTORATION
LENT 2026 - PASTOR STEVE WILKINS



THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S - SESSION #1

“Is the Creation Account History or Poetry?”

“No one in the history of the church for over 3000 years ever questioned the chronology of the Bible and only a tiny handful ever questioned that the six days of Genesis 1 were six ordinary, 24-hour-type days.”

– Jim Jordan

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"Is the Creation Account History or Poetry?"

How should we respond to the assertion that Genesis one is poetry not history?

There is no exegetical reason to accept this view.

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1. Genesis 1 has none of the features common to Hebrew poetry. You don't have the poetic parallelism – that you see in Proverbs 1:24-28 for example:

Because I have called and you refused,
I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded,
25 Because you disdained all my counsel,
And would have none of my rebuke,
26 I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your terror comes,
27 When your terror comes like a storm,
And your destruction comes like a whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon you.
28 "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;
They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.

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“The man who says, ‘I believe that Genesis purports to be a historical account, but I do not believe that account’, is a far better interpreter of the Bible than the man who says, ‘I believe that Genesis is profoundly true, but it is poetry.’”

– E. J. Young, *In the Beginning*, p. 19

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2. Some have pointed out that there is a structural parallelism in the account:

Forming:

Day 1 we have the creation of Light and

Day 2 the creation of a firmament and seas and

Day 3 the creation of dry land and

Filling:

Day 4 the creation of light bearers;

Day 5 the creation of creatures that fly in the sky and swim in the sea;

Day 6 the creation of creatures on the land and man.

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3. The Genesis one account reads like a straightforward historical account and has the characteristics of a historical account:

1. The days are sequentially numbered ("first day, second day, third day, etc.).

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2. Each day is described as having an "evening and a morning"

3. The rationale of the fourth commandment seems clearly to indicate the fact that what is described in Genesis 1 is a normal week (Exodus 20:9-11 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.").

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We are told that if we read Genesis as a literal account, we are reading naively.

But why is it naive to believe that God created all things in six ordinary days?

What in the text would indicate that this impression is incorrect?

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Our question must always be: What *in the text* suggests that the days of the creation week are not to be taken as normal, ordinary days?

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We are told that we cannot ignore natural revelation in interpreting the Bible.

Scientists do not simply follow the "evidence of their senses" when they talk about the age of the earth and universe. Even Scientists walk by faith.

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Other questions:

What if God initially created things in a fully mature condition?

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What are the implications of an "old earth" view?

In Genesis 1 God first creates the heavens (Gen. 1:1a) and then creates the earth (Gen. 1:1b). This pattern establishes "heaven" as the blueprint or pattern for the earth.

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It's clear in Genesis one that all of God's work on the first six days was leading up to the creation of man on the sixth day.

There is a rationale for God carrying out creation in six days – but what is the point of doing this work over billions and billions of years?

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Why does God present the work of creation in a way that didn't actually happen?

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The rest of Scripture indicates that Genesis one is to be taken as straightforward history:

1. The Sabbath is a sign of the creation work (Exodus 31:17 "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.' ").

2. The psalmist says that the creation is the work of God's fingers and that all things came into being by means of His command (Psalm 33 "by the word of the Lord the heavens were made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth . . . He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast.")

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3. Jesus quotes the creation account as we have it in Genesis (Matt. 19:4-6 "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?). He did not view the account of Genesis as merely poetical.

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4. Paul notes in 2 Corinthians 4:6 that just as God commanded light to shine out of darkness, so He dispels the darkness of our hearts by His word – He gives us “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

5. Peter in 2 Peter 3:5 takes this account literally “by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,”

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6. Paul in Hebrews 4:4 does the same “For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works” and in Hebrews 11:3 “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”

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Objection: “the Bible is not a science textbook.”

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This view requires us to reject the authority of the Bible.

“The Bible says: ‘He (God) made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel’ (Psalm 103:7). The Bible is either a revelation of God, or it is simply the gropings of the Hebrew nation and the presentation of the best that they could find.”

(E. J. Young, *In the Beginning*, p. 35)

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