

Six Literal Days

He created the physical universe (including mankind), in six literal days. – It is clear from the context of scripture that God created the “heavens and the earth” in six literal 24 hour days. This is evident from several texts of scripture dealing with the six days of creation. As in the verse in the Ten Commandments where the scripture declares this, the context of the Ten Commandments uses the word day several times, and every single time its meaning is of a literal 24 hour day.

Exodus 20:8-11 - 8 "Remember the sabbath **day**, to keep it holy. 9 Six **days** you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh **day** is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11 **For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the 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. NASB

Grudem comments on this passage in Exodus.....pg 296

“Certainly in that text the sabbath “day” is a twenty-four-hour day. And must we not say that verse 11, which in the same sentence says that the Lord made heaven and earth in “six days,” uses “day” in the same sense? This is again a weighty argument, and on balance it gives additional persuasiveness to the twenty-four-hour day position.”

See also therefore....

Exodus 31:16-17 - 16'So the sons of Israel shall observe the **sabbath**, to celebrate the **sabbath** throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.' 17 "It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for **in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day** He ceased from labor, and was refreshed." NASB

The text in Exodus 20:12 which states.....

Exodus 20:12 - 2 "Honor your father and your mother, that your **days** may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. NASB

.....is NOT being used to speak of long periods of time but rather a *plural form of single days*, thus having the meaning of a plural form of days.....ie. “the days of your life.”

Whereas in the Old Testament when the word “*day*” is used to mean a long period of time or an “*era*”, the context makes this quite clear such as Gen 2:4, Isa 23:15*(see use of **day and days**), Isa 27:1-2, Isa 28:5, Zep 3:11,16, Hos 2:16,18,21, etc....

See the contrast between the “*era*” in Isa 27:1-2, 12-13 and the “*literal day*” Isa 27:3, 28:19.

Another example would be that of the text of Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31 where the phrase “*there was evening and there was morning*” is repeated to emphasize the fact that they were literal 24 hour days.

Genesis 1:31 - 31 And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And **there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day**. NASB

This not only seems to imply a succession of literal days, but is used to *emphasize* that fact. Consider what other purpose that phrase may be intended to convey? Do not the basic principles of hermeneutics lend themselves to this literal reading?

1. Taken in its customary, normal, and natural sense
2. Taken within its context of word, phrase, or larger passage
3. Scripture must interpret scripture, and be compared to scripture

The above statements are *persuasive arguments from the context of scripture* to see the days of creation as “literal days.” Should it also not logically therefore follow that the

“burden of proof” for these days being **“eras”** or **“long periods of time”** lie on those who have such a view, since the normal reading of these words would lend itself to the arguments above? If this be so, what is the evidence given for such a position and does it have **conclusive evidence from the context of scripture** to support its claim?

One of the arguments for the “era” theory is that of the **3rd Day**.

Grudem quotes from advocates of this position.....pg 295

“that the first three creative “days” could not have been marked by evening and morning as caused by the sun shining on the earth, for the sun was not created until the fourth day (Gen. 1:14–19); thus, the very context shows that “evening and morning” in this chapter does not refer to the ordinary evening and morning of days as we know them now. So the argument from “evening and morning,” though it may give some weight to the twenty-four-hour view, does not seem to tip the balance decisively in its favor.”

If this be true, then what must the bible mean when using the phrase **“there was evening and there was morning”** on these days? Would God use terms like “evening and morning” to speak of long periods of time or “eras”, or would He find some other more clear way of saying that these were long periods of time?

Grudem answers persuasively.....pg 297

(3) Though there was no sun to mark the first three days of creation, nonetheless, the earth was still rotating on its axis at a fixed speed, and there was “light” and “darkness” that God created on the first day (Gen. 1:3–4), and he called the light “day” and the darkness “night” (Gen. 3:5). So God in some way caused an alternation between day and night from the very first day of creation, according to Genesis 1:3–5

And again.....pg 296

2. The third day of creation cannot be very long, because the sun does not come into being until the fourth day, and plants cannot live long without light. In response to this, it might be said that the light that God created on the first day energized the plants for millions of years. But that would suppose God to have created a light that is almost exactly like sunlight in brightness and power, but still not sunlight—an unusual suggestion.

Brown, Driver, Briggs - Yowm - OT:3117 yowm —day, time, year

- a) a day (as opposed to night)
- b) a day (24 hour period)
- 1) as defined by evening and morning in Gen 1**
- 2) as a division of time; a working day, a day's journey
- c) days, lifetime (plural)
- d) time, period (general)
- e) year
- f) temporal references
- 1) today
- 2) yesterday
- 3) tomorrow

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Zodiatēs - 3117. yôm:

A masculine noun meaning day, time, year. This word stands as the most basic conception of time in the Old Testament. It designates such wide-ranging elements **as the daylight hours from sunrise to sunset (Gen 1:5; 1 Kings 19:4)**; a literal twenty-four hour cycle (Deut 16:8; 2 Kings 25:30); a generic span of time (Gen 26:8; Num 20:15); a given point in time (Gen 2:17; 47:29; Ezek 33:12). In the plural, the word may also mean the span of life (Ps 102:3[4]) or a year (Lev 25:29; 1 Sam 27:7). The prophets often infuse the word with end-times meanings or connotations, using it in connection with a future period of consequential events, such as the "day of the LORD" (Jer 46:10; Zech 14:1) or simply, "that day" (Isa 19:23; Zech 14:20,21).

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