

Genesis: Myth, Figurative or Historical?

Resurrection Series (Part 3)

By Ed Stevens -- Then and Now Podcast -- Sept 1, 2013

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Here we go for another look at the Bible and History.
- B. Last time we critically examined some of the arguments and claims of the *Collective Body View* of the Resurrection, which is one of the two major resurrection views within the Preterist Movement. We noticed some of the false teachings that have resulted from that viewpoint, which are disturbing the faith of many preterists right now. It is always wise to inspect the fruit of a Tree to see what kind of fruit it is producing. If the fruit that the Collective Body Tree is producing is bad, then it suggests that the View itself is probably defective in some way, and we need to back away from it.
- C. In this session we will take a closer look at the way we interpret Scripture, especially in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, in regard to the Creation week and the global flood. The historicity of the Genesis record has been under heavy attack for the last two hundred years especially, so it is no surprise that some fellow preterists have also denied its historicity and promoted a figurative, symbolic, or allegorical approach to it.
- D. Let's pray before we begin --
Creator of the Heavens and the Earth and all that is in them, who alone possesses immortality and gives it to whomever You wish, we praise you for your sovereign acts of creation, and for providing an inspired and absolutely authoritative record of it, to guide us down the path to your Holy Presence. Help us here as we look at what your servant Moses said about Your creation of the universe in his amazing book of Genesis (the book of beginnings). Help us always to handle your Word with reverence and respect, and to make a diligent effort to rightly divide it. We know that it can only be understood correctly and fully if your Spirit enlightens us and guides us. Help us discern truth from error, especially here in the book of Genesis. May we take great pains to interpret it in a way that honors and exalts and glorifies YOU, and gives no credit to the foolishness of human knowledge and wisdom. In Jesus' matchless Name we pray. Amen.

To Get the Ending Right, We Have to Get the Beginning Right

All of us Full Preterists agree on the TIME of fulfillment. So, why is there so much confusion among us regarding the NATURE of Fulfillment, especially as it relates to the Resurrection issue and the interpretation of the book of Revelation? I believe it is because each of us are starting out in Genesis with a different hermeneutical approach. We end up at the wrong place because we start out at the wrong place.

How we interpret Genesis will significantly affect the way we interpret the rest of the Bible, since the rest of the Bible is based directly on the narrative in Genesis. So, if we want to end up with the right interpretation of the Last Things in the book of Revelation, we need to start out with the right interpretation of the First Things in Genesis. So, how are we supposed to interpret the book of Genesis, and where do we go to find help on interpreting Genesis correctly?

The mockers, skeptics, critics, and scoffers have nothing to offer us in the way of Biblical interpretation. Their lack of faith in the existence of God, and in the inspiration and absolute authority of His Word, has blinded their minds to its meaning and message. As a result they wander aimlessly in all kinds of fruitless speculation, ever-learning but never arriving at an understanding of absolute truth. Because they hate the way of righteousness which exposes their wickedness, they suppress the truth. Here is what Apostle Paul said about that:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who **suppress the truth** in unrighteousness, because that which is **known about God is evident within them**; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been **clearly seen**, being **understood through what has been made**, so that they are **without excuse**. For even though **they knew God**, they **did not honor Him as God or give thanks**, but they **became futile in their speculations**, and their **foolish heart was darkened**. Professing to be wise, they **became fools**... [Rom. 1:18-22 NAS95]

Skepticism about a literal historical Genesis carries over into the rest of the Bible. We cannot mishandle Genesis and expect to interpret the rest of the Bible correctly. If we misinterpret Genesis, then our understanding of the Plan of Redemption and its nature of fulfillment will be automatically derailed. Ken Ham has noted not only the value and importance of taking Genesis literally and historically, but the absolute necessity of it:

If we allow [ourselves] to ... doubt the [literal six] days of creation when the language speaks so plainly, then we are [following a particular approach to interpreting scripture which will allow us to also] doubt that Christ's Virgin Birth really means a virgin birth, [and] to doubt that the Resurrection really means resurrection. [Article by Ken Ham: *The Necessity for Believing in Six Literal Days*, December 1, 1995. Found here: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/cm/v18/n1/six-days>]

In other words, if we start out doubting the truthfulness of God's Word in Genesis, we have no consistent reason for believing the rest of the Bible means what it says. If

we deny the miracles of a six-day creation and worldwide flood, what is to stop us from rejecting the rest of the miracles in the Bible? If we have freedom to interpret Genesis any way we want to, then we have freedom to interpret the rest of the Bible any way we want to, including the doctrinal and redemptive scriptures. You see, it is simply not consistent to go through the Bible cafeteria-style, cherry-picking what we want to believe and leaving the rest behind. The Bible is a complete and closed system of faith. It is all or nothing. It is not left up to "private interpretation" as Apostle Peter said (2 Pet. 1:20 NAS95).

For Christians, the Bible is not open for speculation. Our faith must be grounded on the absolute certainty and authority of God's Word from Genesis to Revelation. As Christians we assume the Bible in its entirety is true and authoritative, including Genesis 1-11 especially. Those who doubt the veracity and authority of any part of Scripture are like the doubter described by James when he said: "the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind" (Jas. 1:6 NAS95).

The interpretation of the Bible is not left up to the relativistic speculations and opinions of men. It is instead an absolute standard of truth and righteousness that demands our uncompromising faith and obedience. Without this absolute standard of truth, humanity would be left hopelessly adrift in a sea of relativistic speculation. Therefore, it is essential for us to conform our beliefs and behavior to the absolute standard of God's Word, and not to our own private relativistic standards.

This is why the society around us is so religiously confused and morally-ethically bankrupt. They have no uniform standard by which to live. They have rejected the Bible as that standard. There is no absolute right or wrong, or absolute good or bad. Everything is relativistic, left up to the individual to follow his own choices. When individuals reject the absolute standard of God's Word and follow their own relativistic standards, they end up in shipwreck of the faith, like Solomon said in Proverbs:

There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. [Prov. 14:12 NAS95]

Unbelievers and wicked folk do not like the Bible telling them how to live their lives. They want to feel justified in living ungodly sinful lives. But they know the Bible condemns that lifestyle. That is why they work overtime to discredit the Genesis account of creation. If they can show that Genesis is not literally true, then perhaps the rest of the Bible is not literally true either, especially in its doctrinal and moral-ethical teachings. They are thus compelled to discredit the Bible, so that they can feel justified in rejecting the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible. That is one of the major motives behind the non-literal and non-historical interpretations of Genesis. So you see, it is not the ambiguity and uncertainty of the meaning and intent of Genesis that is causing them to reject the literal 6-day creation. It is instead their desire to circumvent the moral and ethical requirements of the Bible, which compels them to interpret it non-literally.

Covenant Creationism is NOT Young Earth Creationism!

There are even some preterist teachers out there who are interpreting Genesis from a non-literal and non-historical perspective, treating it as allegorical, figurative, symbolic, typological, or mythological. *Covenant Creationism* is a case in point. Do not be fooled by their innocent-sounding label (Covenant Creationism). They are not Young-Earth Creationists by any stretch of the imagination.

Their theological system is based on a non-literal and non-historical interpretation of Genesis. They interpret Genesis 1-11 as an allegory of the formation of Israel as a nation, rejecting Adam and Eve as the first two human beings that God created. They interpret the whole story of Adam and Eve and Noah's Flood as one big allegory about Israel. No wonder they end up in the New Testament and in the book of Revelation with such allegorical and spiritualized interpretations. *We cannot start out wrong in Genesis and end up right in Revelation*. So it is no surprise to see some of the *Covenant Creationists* end up in some of the strange Collective Body ideas of "heaven now," "immortal body now," or "perfection now." Their error begins in Genesis, as a result of their allegorizing hermeneutic.

The reason why some of the Collective Body advocates end up in those strange views is because they are following the same kind of allegorizing or spiritualizing hermeneutic as the Covenant Creationists, not only here in Genesis, but in the rest of Scripture as well. So because they start down the wrong path in Genesis, they are doomed to end up at the wrong place in Revelation.

Tim Martin and Jeffrey Vaughn are the two main promoters of Covenant Creationism. Soon after they published the new edition of their book, *Beyond Creation Science*, I asked Tim Martin if he believed Adam and Eve were the first two human beings that ever existed?" After a pregnant pause, he finally replied: "I don't know."

Do you see what his answer implies? He is skeptical about whether the Genesis account of Adam and Eve is really literal and historical. Even if he was to admit that Adam and Eve were the first two human beings that ever existed, he does not see that as the primary meaning of Genesis 1-3. Instead, he would see Adam and Eve as allegorical of the covenantal creation of Israel as a nation. He uses this same allegorical approach in Genesis 6-8 in reference to Noah's Flood. Do you see what that does to the Genesis accounts of Creation and the Flood? It takes Genesis 1-11 totally out of the realm of history and opens the door for every kind of figurative, symbolic, typological, allegorical, or mythological interpretation possible.

It is no surprise that the Covenant Creationism view also holds to the Collective Body View of the Resurrection, since both views follow the same hyper-spiritualizing or allegorical approach to interpreting Scripture.

We preterists need to back away from this hyper-spiritualizing or allegorical approach that the Covenant Creationists and Collective Body advocates are using. It not only destroys our faith in a literal-historical Genesis, but our faith in the rest of the Bible as well, including the New Testament. There is no reason in the world for Christians to allegorize Genesis. Those who take the spiritualizing and allegorical approach are opening the door to all kinds of speculation and skepticism. If such literal-historical language in Genesis can be twisted to mean nothing more than an allegory of

covenantal Israel, then any other passage in the Bible can be allegorized to mean anything we want it to mean as well.

If the clearly literal-historical language of Genesis is supposed to be interpreted allegorically, then the rest of the Bible can be treated allegorically as well. How could we ever interpret this language literally and historically anywhere else in the Bible, if we cannot interpret it literally and historically here in Genesis?

So if we reject the literal-historical interpretation of Genesis, then we have no basis for believing and following anything else the Bible has to say. It all stands or falls on the literal-historical interpretation of Genesis 1-11. If we reject the testimony of Jesus and the Apostles about a literal-historical Genesis, then we have no logical, reasonable, rational, or consistent basis for believing anything else in the New Testament, including the miraculous Virgin Birth and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus.

You see, it makes a big difference how we treat Genesis, not only in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament as well. Rejecting a literal-historical Genesis will end up unraveling our faith in the rest of the Bible. If Genesis 1-11 cannot be believed, then neither can anything else in the Bible. Those who compromise with evolutionary science in rejecting a literal Genesis have no right to use any other scripture in the Bible to support their beliefs. To reject Genesis is to reject all of it. They have no logical basis for making any kind of biblical arguments whatsoever. They have rejected the Bible as an absolute standard. Therefore they are adrift in a sea of relativism, with no anchor, rudder, or sail. They cannot use any of scripture as a basis for determining any truth, nor can they consistently talk about truth in absolute terms, since they have rejected the Bible as a standard of absolute truth. If the Bible is not the repository of absolute truth, then there is no absolute truth, and there is no God.

Why Do I Mention the Covenant Creationism View?

The reason I mention the Covenant Creationism view is as an illustration of the figurative approach to the resurrection issue. Because they see the resurrection as collective and covenantal, they find no place for an experiential resurrection of dead disembodied individual saints out of Hades. It does not fit their covenantal and collective paradigm. It is too miraculous and experiential. They prefer a metaphysical, non-experiential, and non-miraculous concept of resurrection that pertains to the whole nation of Israel covenantally as a collective body. The key word there is covenantally. Their whole paradigm is consumed with explaining how Genesis is an allegory about the formation of Israel as a nation, a collective nation of people in covenant with God, and how they died spiritually and covenantally in their sin and rebellion against God, and were raised covenantally and collectively when they were converted to Christ and gathered into His Kingdom as a collective body under the New Covenant.

All of that is certainly true in a covenantal sense, but it is not the full picture. It does not even deal with the individual aspect of death and resurrection, nor the experiential aspect of resurrection out of Hades and entrance into the heavenly realm. Both the Collective Body advocates and the Covenant Creationists tend to leave the individual experience of resurrection out of their consideration. For them, it is all about the covenantal change that took place for the Collective Body at the Cross and Parousia.

But there is a lot more to the resurrection than that, especially for the individual saints who were held captive in Hades until Christ our Redeemer came to set them free. The experience of having their souls redeemed from Hades and getting their new immortal bodies was the grand finale of redemption from the Death that descended upon mankind in the Garden of Eden. This redemption or resurrection was not just an abstract or metaphorical covenantal and judicial change of status for a collective body of Israelites. It was far more than that. It was supremely experiential for all the individuals when they were actually raised up out of Hades and given their new immortal bodies.

So, the problem with the Collective Body and Covenant Creationism views is not their concept of covenantal change for a collective body. Those are valid concepts and biblical concepts. But they are not adequate to explain the full ramifications of the resurrection event as it relates to the individual experience of it. They have focused exclusively on the collective body change to the exclusion of the individual experience.

So we Individual Body advocates are simply trying to restore the balance between the collective redemption and the individual experience of it. It is not an either/or, but a both/and. There certainly is a covenantal and collective aspect to resurrection. We see it dealt with in Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians especially, where Paul talks about being dead in our trespasses and sins, and being raised to walk in newness of life. The Church is certainly a collective body of resurrected saints in a spiritual and covenantal sense. But that does not exhaust the meaning of all the other resurrection texts which describe the resurrection of the dead out of Hades. At the time when Christ appeared on the scene, countless generations of saints had already died and gone to Hades. They had to be raised back out of Hades in order to share in the redemption of God's covenantal people. That was a supremely experiential event for those individual saints when their disembodied souls were released from their captivity in Sheol or Hades and translated into heaven where they received their new immortal bodies.

It is this individual experience of release and rescue out of Hades, and their reception of new immortal bodies with which to dwell in heaven, that the Collective Body and Covenant Creationism views are leaving out of their paradigms.

What Does Genesis Actually Say (and Mean)?

So, we need to look at the Genesis text, to see what it actually says, and what it actually means. We will also look at how Jesus and the writers of our New Testament interpreted Genesis 1-11. For the Christian, this is a powerful presuppositional argument, since if it can be shown that Jesus and the Apostles interpreted Genesis literally and historically, then it means that we must do likewise if we claim to believe in Jesus and His Word through the Apostles.

This is a crucial study for all Christians, including futurists and preterists, since it relates not only to belief in God, but the reliability of His Word, and the proper understanding of His whole biblical revelation to us.

If Genesis was left subject to the private interpretation of man, then our whole faith and the whole biblical revelation is open for relativistic speculation, ambiguity, and uncertainty as well. There can be no such thing as absolute truth that is bound upon every generation of mankind forever, if any part of the Bible is open to the whimsical and capricious interpretation of man.

It matters not whether a literal historical Genesis is scientifically reasonable. The only thing that matters to a Christian is whether the Bible actually teaches it. Christians do not check to see if the Virgin Birth or bodily Resurrection of Christ are scientifically reasonable or historically palatable before believing in it. They know these are miracles, and have to be accepted by faith on the basis of the testimony of inspired, inerrant, and absolutely authoritative Scripture. Biblical miracles cannot be trumped by science, history, or tradition. They are absolutely true, no matter what science, history, or tradition says. The creation and the flood are described in Genesis as being miraculous events. Therefore, they cannot be disallowed or reinterpreted by science, history, or tradition. It matters not what science, history, or tradition asserts about Genesis. The only thing that matters for a Christian is what Genesis actually says and means.

If we believe that the one true sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, immortal, infinite, perfect, and Holy God of the universe actually revealed His will to His creatures, and inspired His prophets to write it down for us in the pages of our Bible, then the only thing that should matter to us is what it says and what it means, and how it applies to us today.

Science and history and tradition can never overthrow the Bible. If there is a seeming conflict between them and the Bible, the problem has always turned out to be either in science and history itself, our understanding of science and history, or in our faulty interpretation of scripture, science, or history. The Genesis account of Creation and the Flood has never been proven fallacious, even though countless thousands of unbelieving scientists and historians have diligently tried.

When the evidence has been carefully and objectively considered, it always comes down on the side of the Genesis account. We are not going to look at all that scientific and historical evidence here. If any of our listeners wish to examine that evidence, there are tons of it available on the various Creationist websites, of which my favorite is Ken Ham's *Answers In Genesis* (<http://AnswersInGenesis.org>). I am absolutely astounded at the massive amount of great creationist resources that are available at his site alone. Hundreds of scientists with earned doctorates in all branches of science are associated with Ken Ham and his creationist organization.

Since there is so much excellent *evidence* to support a historical Genesis out there on the Internet, I will not be presenting much of it here, other than to point you to some excellent websites where that evidence is available. In this session I will mainly limit our apologetic methodology to the *presuppositional* approach, which means that we will argue for a literal 6-day creation and global flood by examining the biblical statements to see what they are actually teaching.

The Presuppositional Apologetic

In the field of Christian apologetics, there are two basic types of argumentation that are used by Christians to establish the existence of God and the authority of His Word: (1) *Evidentiary*, and (2) *Presuppositional*. Both types of argumentation are valid and useful in the overall defense of the faith. The *evidentiary* approach tends to focus on external extra-biblical evidence in order to convince unbelievers that there is a God and that His Word is authoritative. However, the *presuppositional* approach takes it for

granted that there is a God, and argues its case from internal biblical absolutes in order to convince Christians and believers that the Bible is true and absolutely authoritative.

For the Christian who already believes in the one true Creator God, this is the most important approach. Since the external evidence can be interpreted and skewed in both directions, especially by well-meaning Christians who have compromised with evolutionary philosophy, the only way we can reliably decide which way it should be interpreted is by looking at the Genesis account itself. All the external evidence in the world cannot prove anything on behalf of a literal 6-day creation and global flood, if the Bible itself does not teach it. So, the issue for the Christian is NOT about what evidence we have, or how to interpret that external evidence, but rather what does the Bible actually say and mean.

The Literal-Historical Interpretative Method

The Collective Body View of eschatology has a different explanation of HOW the endtime events were fulfilled. They agree with all Full Preterists on the TIME of fulfillment, but differ with other Full Preterists regarding the NATURE of fulfillment. That difference in the way we explain the NATURE of fulfillment is directly related to the way we interpret the book of Genesis. In other words:

- We arrive at different interpretations of the LAST THINGS (Revelation), because we start out with different interpretations of the FIRST THINGS (Genesis).
- And we arrive at different interpretations of Genesis because we start with different presuppositions and follow different hermeneutical methods.
- So, the way we interpret Genesis will drastically affect the way we interpret the rest of the Bible.
- Every theologian knows that his theological system must be built on a solid interpretation of Genesis 1-11, or it is just a house of cards built on a foundation of shifting sand.
- That is where all systematic theologies must start: at the beginning, in Genesis, where sin and death first appeared, and where redemption from that death was first promised.
- And so there is a tight connection and direct relationship between **Genesis** and the rest of the Bible which unveils the fulfillment of that redemption that was first predicted in Genesis.

That is why it is so important to "get it right" in Genesis before we "get it wrong" in Revelation! We cannot start out "wrong" in Genesis and expect to end up "right" in Revelation. So, let's see if we can discover the right way to interpret Genesis.

The fundamental task of every Bible interpreter is to discover as much as possible about what the original author intended to communicate to his original audience. This means that we will need to know a lot about the original author and his intended audience, as well as **when** he wrote, **where** he wrote, **why** he wrote, and all the **historical circumstances** involved in that writing.

One of the rules of interpretation that we use, is that every biblical text had only one correct originally intended meaning and interpretation. It might have many

applications and implications, but there is only one correct originally intended meaning and interpretation. This means that the Creation and Flood stories in Genesis cannot have multiple correct interpretations!

So, what is the one true originally intended meaning of Genesis 1-11? And why do I follow a literal-historical approach to interpreting Genesis? And why am I so confident that it teaches a literal six-day creation and a global flood?

Well, here is part of the reasoning for that. The Hebrew word for "day" here in Genesis 1 is "YOM." It is used about 2300 times in the Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures. About 1450 of those occurrences are in the singular, 845 in the plural, and five occurrences of the dual form "two days" (Sarfati, p. 67). It is translated by several different words or phrases, including: day, daylight, time, today, age, forever, continually, perpetually, etc. However, "day" is by far the most common translation of it, and the *Hebrew Analytical Lexicon* (HALOT) indicates that the specific reference to "day one" in Gen. 1:5 is to a "day of twenty-four hours."

Sarfati notes that every time the word "YOM" is used with the phrase "evening and morning" or with a numeric ordinal such as first, second, third, etc., it always means a 24-hour day. He says: "In particular, whenever YOM is used with a number or the words evening or morning, it can mean only an ordinary day, never a long period of time."

Moreover, Genesis 1 uses both of those indicators. It has an ordinal used with each of the numbered days of creation, and refers to the passing of each of those enumerated days by the phrase "evening and morning." This is double confirmation that Moses intended to communicate a literal 24-hour day in Genesis 1. The language is clear and specific. There is no ambiguity or wiggle-room in the Genesis text. The ambiguity is in the minds of critics, compromisers, and skeptics. Moses writes as if he wants us to understand that the universe was created in six literal 24-hour days. If Moses is not talking about literal days here, how in the world would we ever be able to understand all the other uses of YOM in the rest of the O.T.? If Moses did not intend for his readers to understand a literal day here, why did he use this kind of language and phraseology about it? How can we trust anything else Moses says if he is playing semantic games with us here in Genesis 1? And if we cannot believe Moses, how can we trust Jesus who believed in Moses explicitly?

Furthermore, the Jewish people have always interpreted the seven days of Genesis 1 as ordinary days because their weekly sabbath observance is based on its pattern of God's creation week. In other words, since God worked six days and rested on the seventh, so should we. And that is exactly how one of the ten commandments states it when it says, "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" (Ex. 20:11; cf. Ex. 31:17).

As Sarfati has stated it: "The fourth commandment makes sense only if the days of creation week were the same as those of the ordinary working week" (Sarfati, p. 67).

Note also that this very command was written in stone "by the finger of God" on the two stone tablets that were given to Moses (Ex. 31:18; 32:15-16; Deut. 9:10-11; 10:1-5). Those words on those two tablets were not only "God-breathed" but "God-inscribed." And since God is the Creator, it was the Creator Himself telling us that he created the universe and all that is in them in six literal days.

Moreover, the New Testament claims that Jesus was the Creator, through whom all things were made (Col. 1:16). That means that Jesus was there at the creation, and knew exactly how it was done. And He was there when the stone tablets were inscribed. So there is no one who would know more about how things were created than our Creator, Jesus Himself. So if Jesus teaches that the universe was created in six days, it has to be so! Do you catch the power of that?

God could have created the universe instantly or in six billion years. God has no reason to hide the length of time for His creative activity. The Jews had several ways of describing long periods of time. Moses could have easily described it using terminology that meant six long ages. So, why did Moses use language that means six literal days? Ken Ham explains the significance of this language quite well:

The Hebrew word for "day" in Genesis chapter 1 is the word *YOM*. It is important to understand that almost any word can have two or more meanings, depending on context. We need to understand the context of the usage of this word in Genesis chapter 1. Respected Hebrew dictionaries, like the *Brown, Driver, Briggs* lexicon, give a number of meanings for the word *YOM* depending upon context. One of the passages they give for *YOM*'s meaning an ordinary day happens to be Genesis chapter 1. The reason is obvious. Every time the word *YOM* is used with a number, or with the phrase "evening and morning", anywhere in the Old Testament, it always means an ordinary day. In Genesis chapter 1, for each of the six days of creation, the Hebrew word *YOM* is used with a number and the phrase, "evening and morning". There is no doubt that the writer is being emphatic that these are ordinary days.

If you think about it, an infinite Creator God could have created everything in no time. Why, then, did He take as long as six days? The answer is given in **Exodus 20:11**. Here we find that God tells us that He deliberately took six days [to create] and rested [on the seventh day] as a pattern for man—this is where the seven-day week comes from. The seven-day week has no basis for existing except from Scripture. If one believes that the days of creation are long periods of time, then the week becomes meaningless. [Article by Ken Ham: *The Necessity for Believing in Six Literal Days*, December 1, 1995. Found here: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/cm/v18/n1/six-days>]

What about Jesus and the New Testament writers? What was their belief and understanding of the Genesis accounts of Creation and the Flood? Again hear what Ken Ham had to say about this:

A very important question we must ask is, "What was Jesus' view of the days of creation? Did He say that He created in six literal days?" When confronted with such a question, most Christians would automatically go to the New Testament to read the recorded words of Jesus to see if such a statement occurs. Now, when we search the New Testament Scriptures, we certainly find many interesting statements Jesus made that relate to this issue. Mark 10:6 says, "But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.'" From this passage, we see that Jesus clearly taught that the creation was young, for Adam and Eve existed "from the beginning," not billions of years after the universe and earth came into existence. Jesus made a similar statement in Mark 13:19 indicating that man's sufferings started very near the beginning of creation. The parallel phrases of "from the foundation of the world" and "from the blood of Abel" in Luke 11:50-51 also indicate that Jesus placed Abel very close to the beginning of creation, not billions of years after the beginning. His Jewish listeners would have assumed this meaning in Jesus' words, for

the first-century Jewish historian Josephus indicates that the Jews of his day believed that both the first day of creation and Adam's creation were about 5,000 years before Christ.

[For even more of these New Testament texts supporting a literal-historical interpretation of Genesis, see Ed's PDF entitled the **World That God Created.**]

In John 5:45-47, Jesus says, "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" In this passage, Jesus makes it clear that one must believe what Moses wrote. And one of the passages in the writings of Moses in Exodus 20:11 states: "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." This, of course, is the basis for our seven-day week—six days of work and one day of rest. Obviously, this passage was meant to be taken as speaking of a total of seven literal days based on the Creation Week of six literal days of work and one literal day of rest.

In fact, in Luke 13:14, in his response to Jesus healing a person on the Sabbath, the ruler of the synagogue, who knew the law of Moses, obviously referred to this passage when he said, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day." The sabbath day here was considered an ordinary day, and the six days of work were considered ordinary days. This teaching is based on the Law of Moses as recorded in Exodus 20, where we find the Ten Commandments—the six-day Creation Week being the basis for the Fourth Commandment.

We should also note the way Jesus treated as historical fact the accounts in the Old Testament, which religious and atheistic skeptics think are unbelievable mythology. These historical accounts include Adam and Eve as the first married couple (Matthew 19:3-6; Mark 10:3-9), Abel as the first prophet who was killed (Luke 11:50-51), Noah and the Flood (Matthew 24:38-39), Moses and the serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14), Moses and the manna from heaven to feed the Israelites in the wilderness (John 6:32-33, 49), the experiences of Lot and his wife (Luke 17:28-32), the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (Matthew 10:15), the miracles of Elijah (Luke 4:25-27), and Jonah and the big fish (Matthew 12:40-41). As New Testament scholar John Wenham has compellingly argued, Jesus did not allegorize these accounts but took them as straightforward history, describing events that actually happened just as the Old Testament describes. Jesus used these accounts to teach His disciples that the events of His death, Resurrection, and Second Coming would likewise certainly happen in time-space reality.

These passages taken together strongly imply that Jesus took Genesis 1 as literal history, describing creation in six 24-hour days. But are there any more explicit passages? I believe there are. However, one has to approach this issue in a slightly different manner. We are not limited to the New Testament when we try to find out if Jesus stated He created in six days; we can also search the Old Testament. After all, Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity and therefore has always existed.

First, Colossians makes it clear that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was the one who created all things: "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16-17).

We are also told elsewhere in Scripture how Jesus created: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spoke, and

it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:6, 9). We see the meaning of this when we consider the miracles of Jesus during His earthly ministry. All the miracles occurred instantly—at His Word. He instantly turned water into wine in His very first miracle, which “revealed His glory” as the Creator (John 2:1-11; John 1:1-3, 14, 18). It was the instant calming of the wind and the waves that convinced His disciples that He was no mere man. So it was with all His miracles (Mark 4:35-41). He did not speak and wait for days, weeks, months, or years for things to happen. He spoke and it was done. So, when He said, “Let there be . . .” in Genesis 1, it did not take long ages for things to come into existence.

We also know that Jesus is in fact called the Word: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:1-3). Jesus, who is the Word, created everything by simply speaking things into existence.

Now, consider Exodus 20:1: “And God spoke all these words, saying . . .” Because Jesus is the Word, this must be a reference to the pre-incarnate Christ speaking to Moses. As we know, there are a number of appearances of Christ (Theophanies) in the Old Testament. John 1:18 states: “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” There is no doubt, with rare exception, that the pre-incarnate Christ did the speaking to Adam, Noah, the patriarchs, Moses, etc. Now, when the Creator God spoke as recorded in Exodus 20:1, what did He (Jesus) say? As we read on, we find this statement: “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” (Exodus 20:11).

Yes, Jesus did explicitly say He created in six days. Not only this, but the one who spoke the words “six days” also wrote them down for Moses: “Then the Lord delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words which the Lord had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly” (Deuteronomy 9:10).

Jesus said clearly that He created in six days. And He even did something He didn’t do with most of Scripture—He wrote it down Himself. How clearer and more authoritative can you get than that? [Article by Ken Ham: *Did Jesus Say He Created in Six Literal Days?*, December 20, 2007. Found here: <http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/nab/did-jesus-say-he-created-in-six-days>]

I have to say that this idea of Jesus being present on Mount Sinai when Moses received the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone is profound. He was the very Word of God that was spoken and written. He was with God, and was God. He was the One who wrote. He was the Creator explaining to Moses how He created the universe. So how in the world can we reject His own words that He himself spoke and wrote on stone on Mount Sinai? Jesus himself said and wrote that the universe was created in six literal 24-hour days. To reject that, is to reject the very words of the One who created everything. If anyone knows how it was created, it would be Jesus, the Creator. And He stated it plainly for all to see, not only in the Ten Commandments, but even more explicitly in Genesis 1, in language that is unequivocally clear and unambiguous.

In Conclusion:

- A. Christians do not need to apologize to anyone for taking the Genesis account of creation literally and historically. It takes no greater leap of faith than it does to believe that blind and ignorant chance against impossible odds was somehow able to produce organic life in this universe. That is infinitely harder to believe than the Bible.
- B. True science supports the Biblical accounts of Creation and the Flood.
- C. There really is no legitimate reason for a Christian to compromise on this. The Bible is too clear. If God did not create the universe in six literal days, then Moses was wrong and cannot be trusted on anything else he says.
- D. Moreover, if Genesis 1 is wrong, then the whole Bible is wrong, including Jesus and the Apostles, since they accepted Genesis 1-11 as literal and historical. That destroys not only the credibility of the whole Bible, but our Christian faith as well.
- E. You see, there is a lot riding on the first chapter of Genesis. We have to interpret it correctly, or nothing else matters. And since it is clear that Moses wrote in such a way as to indicate six literal days, we need to honor that language just the way he wrote it. No quibbling with it, and no compromise.
- F. We did not have time to develop it here, but the same literal-historical hermeneutic applies to the Genesis account of Noah's Flood. When the language of Genesis 6-8 is analyzed in context, it is easy to see that Moses was teaching a global flood. It flies right off the face of the text. Even a caveman can see it.
- F. So this means that those fellow-preterists today, such as the Covenant Creationists, who say that Genesis does not teach a literal six-day creation or a global flood, are clearly wrong. It means that their allegorical interpretation of Genesis is mistaken, and hopelessly out of sync with the teaching of Moses and the rest of Scripture.
- G. None of the preterist theological systems will stand the test of time if they are not rooted in and founded upon a literal historical interpretation of Genesis. That is where we must begin in building a biblical theology of the Last Things. As far as I know, none of the various advocates of the Collective Body View believe in a literal six-day creation and global flood.
- H. However, the Individual Body View of the resurrection IS founded on that solid rock of a literal and historical Genesis. So it is at least starting out at the right place, and building on a solid foundation. We have a much better chance of arriving at the correct understanding of the LAST Things when we start out with a correct understanding of the FIRST things. So, hang in there with us on this study of the resurrection issue. I think it will resonate with you, and make the scriptures come alive for you in ways you never imagined.
- I. I have several lesson outlines which take this idea further and talk about the implications of a literal Genesis on our understanding of the Fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, and how that relates to the resurrection issue. If you would like to have those PDFs on the **Fall of Adam** and the **World that God Created**, simply email me with your request.

That will wrap it up for this time. If this study has raised any questions or stimulated any interesting thoughts, please share them with me. Send me an email. I would love to hear from you. Thanks so much for listening.

Some Recommended Resources

Edward E. Stevens. *The World God Created*. Article in *Fulfilled Magazine*, (2008) Vol. 2, Issue 4. Napa, California USA: Fulfilled Communications Group. Available as a PDF document from Ed Stevens (preterist1@preterist.org).

Edward E. Stevens. *The Fall of Adam*. Major Term Paper (36-pages) written for one of Ed's Master degree seminary courses. Available as a PDF document from Ed Stevens (preterist1@preterist.org).

Answers In Genesis website: <http://AnswersInGenesis.org>

Disclaimer: Ken Ham and his organization (Answers In Genesis) are coming from a futurist perspective, so some of their interpretations of Genesis are skewed in a futurist direction, but nothing that affects our firm belief in a literal 6-day creation or a global flood. Their futurist eschatology only affects the way they handle the origin of physical death and the interpretation of Genesis in regard to the death of Adam and Eve when they sinned in the garden, as well as how they view the restoration of a physical paradise at some future end. When we separate their futurist eschatology from the rest of the Genesis narrative, we are left with some excellent insights into Moses' intended meaning when he originally wrote the Genesis account. See my PDF on the Fall of Adam for a preterist view of that.

Edward C. Wharton. *Genesis: Historical or Mythological? A Study in Historical Evidences*. Lubbock, Texas USA: Sunset Institute Press, no date. Available from the Sunset International Bible Institute bookstore: <http://extensionschool.com>

Jonathan Sarfati. *Refuting Compromise: A Biblical and Scientific Refutation of "Progressive Creationism" (Billions of Years) As Popularized by Astronomer Hugh Ross*. Green Forest, Arkansas USA: Master Books, 2004. Available on [Answers In Genesis](http://AnswersInGenesis.org) website.

Ken Ham. *The Lie: Evolution. Genesis: The Key to Defending Your Faith*. Green Forest, Arkansas USA: Master Books, 1987. Available on [Answers In Genesis](http://AnswersInGenesis.org) website.

Ken Ham, Gen. Ed. *The New Answers Book: Over 25 Questions on Creation/Evolution and the Bible*. Green Forest, Arkansas USA: Master Books, 2006. Available on [Answers In Genesis](http://AnswersInGenesis.org) website.

David G. Hagopian, Editor. *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*. Mission Viejo, California USA: Crux Press, 2001.

Bert Thompson. *Creation Compromises*. Montgomery, Alabama USA: Apologetics Press, 1995.

Ann Coulter vs. Evolution

Listen to this dialogue between John Hawkins and Ann Coulter:

John: If you [Ann] were to pick three concepts, facts, or ideas that most undercut the theory of evolution, what would they be?

Ann: 1. It's illogical, 2. There's no physical evidence for it, and 3. There's physical evidence that directly contradicts it. Apart from those three concerns, I'd say it's a pretty solid theory.

John: If the science behind evolution doesn't stand-up, why do you think so many people who should know better so fervently believe in evolution?

Ann: A century of brain-washing combined with a desperate need to not believe in an intelligent designer. [And sinners wanting desperately to avoid any accountability to the supreme Judge of all men.]

John: Do you think evolution, intelligent design, or something else should be taught in schools?

Ann: I would say teach them the one that has the strongest scientific basis to it, and if there's any time left over at the end of the day you could also teach them about the theory of evolution.

I appreciated Ann pointing out that there has been a full century of brain-washing and evolutionary propaganda being taught to our children. But that is not the whole story. Not only is there a plethora of evolutionary teaching going on in our public schools, but there is an lack of any significant or systematic teaching of the Bible. Bible reading and prayer has been removed from the schools, with atheism, socialism, and evolutionary thinking being taught in its place.