

# There are many today who have come to doubt the Genesis account of creation.

Looking at scientific evidence as interpreted by an evolutionary worldview, they have concluded that the Genesis story is just not credible and can't be trusted.

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that in them is” (Exodus 20:11).

“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3).

## Become Part of the Discussion

Southern Adventist University fully supports the belief in a literal six-day creation. Recognizing that there are still unanswered questions relating to the creationist worldview, professors and students are involved in research to address these topics.

Southern provides the following resources to enable church and community members to become more educated about issues related to creation.

### Origins Exhibit

The hallways of Hickman Science Center, the home to Southern Adventist University's Biology Department, have been transformed into the Origins Exhibit. Visitors of all ages and scientific levels are able to enjoy the detailed wall art and displays depicting the complexity of God's creation, a biblically consistent interpretation of the fossil record and geologic column, and evidence for an Intelligent Designer.

### E. O. Grundset Lecture Series

These natural history and research lectures, open to the public, are held each semester with guest speakers presenting on various scientific topics.

### Origins Weekend

Southern's Biology Department hosts invited speakers to present on origins-related topics on campus each year.

### Faith and Science Website

Southern is host to a website showcasing an interdisciplinary approach to origins: [southern.edu/faithandscience](http://southern.edu/faithandscience).

Located in Collegedale, Tennessee, Southern Adventist University provides a welcoming learning environment. For more information about Southern or any of the above resources, call 1.800.SOUTHERN or visit [southern.edu](http://southern.edu).



<sup>1</sup>Letter from James Barr to David Watson, 1984. Cited in *The Young Earth*, John Morris, Master Books, Colorado Springs, 1994, p. 31.

All scripture is taken from *The Holy Bible*, King James Version.

# Creation or Evolution: Does It Matter What I Believe?

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## How is the creation story interpreted?

Some attempt to dismiss the creation story as simply poetry, an allegory, or an origins myth. Others read Peter's words that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years" (2 Peter 3:8) and speculate that creation week was spread out over thousands or millions of years.



**"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day" (Exodus 20:8, 11).**

There are others who believe that God, the Supreme Being, created Earth, but that He did so through the mechanism of natural laws that He had earlier set in motion. They assert that He used the process of evolution over millions of years to accomplish His purpose. This viewpoint is known as theistic evolution. Indeed, there are many scientists and theologians who believe in God and attend church but also are thoroughly convinced of the "fact" of evolution.

With all of these different viewpoints from which to choose, does it really matter what you believe? Is it possible to dismiss the Genesis account of creation and still remain a Bible-believing Christian?

## Is God telling the truth?

Let's look at what God himself has to say about the creation of this world. In Exodus 20, the actual words of God are recorded. These are the commandments that He proclaimed in a loud voice to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. Here God states, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day" (Exodus 20:8, 11).



Biblical Hebrew Manuscript

Just like the story of creation in Genesis 1, the fourth commandment tells us that God created everything—and that He did it in six days. But not only did God say that He created everything in six days, He also wrote it with His own finger on stone tablets.

Bible scholars tell us that the Hebrew word for day (*yom*), as it is used in the Genesis account of creation, means a literal, 24-hour period of time.

"So far as I know," wrote Oxford Old Testament professor James Barr, "there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the idea that creation took place in a series of six days, which were the same as the days of 24 hours that we now experience."<sup>1</sup>

Was Moses being truthful when he reported that God himself said He created it all in six days? If Moses was not telling the truth, how could we trust anything else he has written? If he would lie about the Ten Commandments, how could we believe whatever else he said?

Was God telling the truth when He said that He created everything in six literal days? If God said—and wrote in stone—that He created everything on Earth in six days, but He didn't really do that, it would mean that we cannot trust God. It is not possible to have a trust relationship when someone is lying.

## How does the creation story fit in with the plan of salvation?

Self-sacrificing love is the law of God's kingdom as exemplified by the death of Jesus for our sins. To lay down one's life for another, rather than the survival of the fittest (as Darwin's theory suggests), is the highest standard in God's eyes.

The fossil record, which is used as evidence for evolution, consists of the remains of dead plants and animals. Evolutionary scientists say that most of these fossils preceded the appearance of human life by many millions of years. However, Paul tells us that death came into the world through the sin of Adam. If the evolutionary interpretation is true, it means that death was present for millions of years before man ever sinned. In contrast, the Bible tells us that God's perfect creation was drastically changed as a result of Adam's sin and that death is a direct consequence of sin. In the New Earth, pain and death are banished, and the original harmonious relationships of the animal and plant kingdoms are restored.

**The Hebrew word for day (*yom*), as it is used in the Genesis account of creation, means a literal, 24-hour period of time.**

It is in Genesis that we learn of the fall of man, and it is also where the promise of a Savior is given. If Genesis cannot be trusted, why would we even believe that Adam and Eve sinned? If there is no sin, why would we need a plan of salvation? The central theme of the entire Bible is the plan of salvation. So if Genesis is not true—if there is no sin and, consequently, no need of a Savior—then we would need to dismiss most of the Bible, including the story of Jesus, as just another myth.

So does it matter what you believe about creation and evolution?

Absolutely! For the truth of Genesis is the truth about God. It is the truth about sin and salvation. It is the truth that God and His Word can be trusted.



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