

## THE DAY-AGE THEORY: A COMPROMISE OF GENESIS

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For almost as long as some of us can remember, there have been those among us who have been working overtime to find ways to compromise the plain, literal, historical creation account as given through inspiration by Moses in Genesis 1 and 2. Especially hard hit have been those areas of Scripture dealing with **time**. Those who have as their goal the adoption of evolutionary timetables, geologic time, etc. have attempted to “squeeze” this alleged time into the biblical text in any number of ways. There are, of course, only three places (theoretically) where these so-called “eons” could be placed. First, the time might be placed **before** the creation week (a concept known as the Gap Theory or the Modified Gap Theory). Second, the time might be placed **during** the creation week (an idea referred to as the Day-Age Theory). Third, the time might be placed **after** the creation week. However, hardly anyone would suggest placing such vast time spans **after** the creation week due to the fact that the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 simply cannot be stretched enough to allow for the insertion of geologic/evolutionary time. Furthermore, the Gap Theory and the Modified Gap Theory are easily refuted (see: Thompson, 1982, pp. 170-184; Fields, 1976).

This article will deal, therefore, with the Day-Age Theory. Let us examine this concept and see why it should be rejected by Bible believers who respect what God said He did. The Day-Age Theory states that the days of Genesis 1 were not **days** at all, but in reality were long **eons** or expanses of evolutionary time. Supposedly, during these “days” evolutionary/geologic phenomena occurred (e.g., the formation of plant, animal, and human fossils, the formation of coal and oil, etc.), thus allowing Bible believers to accept the old-Earth claims of evolutionists and those who are sympathetic to their cause. It is clear from plain statements of Scripture, however, that the days of Genesis are exactly that—days of approximately 24 hours each, just as we know them today. Consider, for example, the following.

(1) We know the days of Genesis 1 are literal 24-hour days because the Hebrew word *yom*, which is translated “day,” is **used and defined** in Genesis 1:5.

The word is clearly defined the first time it is used. God defines His terms! “And God called the light Day and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:5). *Yom* is defined, here as the light period in the regular succession of light and darkness, which, as the earth rotates on its axis, has continued ever since. This definition obviously precludes any possible interpretation as a geologic age (Morris, 1974, p. 224).

(2) The Day-Age Theory is false because whenever the Hebrew word *yom* is preceded by a numeral, it **always** carries the meaning of a 24-hour day. *Yom* occurs over 100 times in the Old Testament in this manner, and **always** the meaning of a 24-hour day is conveyed. There is no exception. Exodus 20:11 states that “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.”

(3) The Day-Age Theory is false because whenever the Hebrew term *yom* appears in the plural (*yamim*), it **always** refers to a literal 24-hour day. When the word “days” appears in the plural (Hebrew *yamim*) as it does over 700 times in the Old Testament, it **always** refers to literal days. Thus, in Exodus 20:11, when the Scripture says that “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is,” there can be no doubt whatever that six literal days are meant (Morris, 1970, p. 59).

(4) The Hebrew phrase translated “evening and morning” is used over 100 times in the Old Testament with the word *yom*. Each time it refers to a literal 24-hour day.

... the writer of Genesis was trying to guard in every possible way against any of his readers deriving the notion of nonliteral days from his record.... The writer not only defined the term “day,” but emphasized that it was terminated by a literal evening and morning and that it was like every other day in the normal sequence of days. In no way can the term be legitimately applied here to anything corresponding to a geological period or any other such concept (Morris, 1976, pp. 55-56).

(5) Had Moses wanted us to understand these days as “long geologic periods,” he could have used Hebrew words to denote such. For example, he could have used the Hebrew term *olam*, or the word *dor*, both of which would indicate long, indefinite periods of time. But he did not! He could have modified the word *yom* with the adjective *rab* (*yom-rab*—“long day”). But again, he did not. Further, if God said He created everything in six days, yet He really used six eons, would not that make God deceitful?

(6) Genesis 1:14 is a death blow to the Day-Age Theory. It was in this verse that God stated that He created the lights to divide the day from the night, and that they were to be “for signs, for seasons, for days, and for years.” If the “days” are “ages,” then what are the years? If a day is an age, then what is a “night”? As Marcus Dods pointed out: “If the word ‘day’ in this chapter does not mean a period of 24 hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless” (1948, pp. 4-5).

There are numerous other arguments that could be offered if space permitted. But surely these few are enough to document the fact that the days of Genesis are exactly what God said they were—literal 24-hour **days**! If God **had** wanted to tell us that the Earth, the seas, the heavens, and everything in them were created in six literal 24-hour days, **what else could He have said?**

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