



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics) Lesson 3.2 – The Doctrine of Creation

The Six Days of Creation

Time did not exist before creation. It was **“in the beginning”** (Genesis 1:1) that God created the universe. Only the Triune God was there before creation. Jesus said: **“O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was...You loved Me before the foundation of the world”** (John 17:5, 24). God the Father loved the Son before the beginning of time and He also chose us from all eternity: **“He (God) chose us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world”** (Ephesians 1:4).

Genesis tells us in clear language that God created the universe in six days. There is no reason to believe that these days were anything other than six normal 24-hour days. The Bible, the Word of God, says: **“So the evening and the morning were the first (also the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth) day”** (Genesis 1:5). This sentence could be translated more literally: “It became evening; it became morning – one day.” When God spoke His commandments at Mt. Sinai, He said: **“In six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them”** (Exodus 20:11). The context clearly shows that God was referring to six normal days because God told the Israelites: **“Six days you shall labor and do all your work”** (Exodus 20:9).

All evolutionists and even many who believe that God created the universe reject the idea that God created everything in six normal days. Some early Christians, like Augustine and Hilary, thought that was more time than God needed to create everything. They said that God created everything instantaneously in a matter of seconds. Many Christian teachers today say these six days are a myth, or poetry, or they say it was a way of teaching creation to a primitive people. Some teachers claim that each of the six days was actually a very long period of time. The theory of evolution requires very long periods of time for the gradual evolution of one kind of plant or animal into another. Many people have so much respect for scientific theories about the origins of the earth that they place these theories above the clear Word of God. Among creationists there are “old earth” creationists and “young earth” creationists. “Young earth” creationists are more likely to understand the six days as six twenty-four-hour days. Those who know the Hebrew language well know that when the Hebrew word for day (*yom*) is used with a definite number, as in Genesis 1 and Exodus 20, it always refers to a twenty-four-hour day.

Some teachers want to accept the six-day creation account in Genesis, but they also want to accept the idea that the world is millions of years old. They teach that Genesis 1:1 tells us that God created the world a long time ago. They say there was a gap of many hundreds or even thousands of years between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. During that gap people and animals lived and died, and many things happened. Then, after that world was destroyed, God started in again and put all things in order in a period of six days.

But there is nothing in Genesis to indicate that there is a huge gap of time between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. In fact, God Himself declared: **“For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them”** (Exodus 20:11). What God created in Genesis 1:1 falls within the six-day period. It is not a separate creation. God first made all the raw material for creation on that first day, and then in the days that followed, God put in order what was at first **“without form, and void”** (Genesis 1:2). The Bible is clear that there was no death in the universe before Genesis 3, because

death is the result of sin.

There is simply no way to accept both the creation account in Genesis and the theory of evolution. There is no way to accept the idea of a gradual development over a period of millions of years and the teaching of the Bible that the earth is much younger. The Bible does not tell us exactly how old this world is, but the numbers given in the Bible indicate that God created the world approximately four thousand years before Christ (BC). This number could possibly be extended a thousand years or two, but anything beyond that does not fit into the Bible's chronology. There are no truly scientific facts that make it necessary to teach that the world is millions or billions of years old. It is only man's theories that require such a long time.

The Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) subscribes to the Brief Statement of 1932, which says about creation: *"We teach that God has created heaven and earth, and that in the manner and in the space of time recorded in the Holy Scriptures, especially Gen. 1 and 2, namely, by His almighty creative word, and in six days. We reject every doctrine which denies or limits the work of creation as taught in Scripture. In our days it is denied or limited by those who assert, ostensibly in deference to science, that the world came into existence through a process of evolution; that it has, in immense periods of time, developed more or less of itself. Since no man was present when it pleased God to create the world, we must look for a reliable account of creation to God's own record, found in God's own book, the Bible."*

Questions

1. How long did God take to create the universe?
2. How long was each day of creation?
3. How does the Bible itself explain the length of these creation days?
4. Why do many people today, even those calling themselves Christians, reject the teaching that God created the world in six days?
5. Why did some early Christians say that six days was too long for God to create the world?
6. What is the gap theory that some false teachers propose?
7. Why do so many people try to explain away the six days of Genesis?
8. What is taught in the schools of your nation about the origin of the world?
9. Why can we be sure that what Genesis tells us about creation is the truth?