

Biblical Interpretation: Exodus 20: 8-11
By Greg Neyman
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www.answersincreation.org/exodus20.htm

Many young earth creationists point to Exodus 20:8-11 as solid proof that God created in six calendar days. This fourth of the ten commandments says:

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Young earth creationist Henry Morris says of this passage, “The Lord himself had worked six days, then rested on the seventh, setting thereby a permanent pattern for the benefit of mankind.”¹

Seen in an old earth perspective, this description by Morris is perfect. God gave us a pattern of behavior for our work week. This is not to say that the days of creation were 24 hour days. During the creation week, man was not created until the very end of Day Six, so assigning man’s limited 24-hour day concept to God is not appropriate.

God was the only one here during the creation week. Thus, our concept of 24-hour days does not apply to Him. Does God have a “beginning” and “ending” to every day He experiences? No, he doesn’t experience days as we do. God does not require sleep as we do. Thus, the beginning and ending God refers to are specific creative events, and not the concept of “time.”

If we assign 24-hour days to the days of creation, then the fossil record and astronomy does not match the Bible's account of creation. However, the Genesis account of creation matches perfectly with the scientific record of creation that we see in the fossil record, when understood within an old earth framework (www.answersincreation.org/genesis1.htm). The “days” of creation cannot be thought of in man’s time, but in God’s time. It is clear that God is breaking down the events of creation by events, not by time, since He is not bound by time.

God set an example for us to follow, by describing the creative week in terms of creative events. Man, who is limited by time, benefits from the work/rest cycle started by God. In fact, God is still resting, thousands of years after the end of the creation.

Young earth creationists point to the fourth commandment, thinking it proves conclusively that the days of creation were 24-hour days. The only thing it proves is that God gave us a pattern of work/rest. There is no Biblical reason why 24 hour days is the correct interpretation. God cannot have a “beginning” and “ending” of each day. To say that the days of creation are 24 hours is to limit God to a system of time that He created. God is not “in” the system of time...as the creator He is outside of time.

¹ Biblical Creationism, by Dr. Henry Morris, Master Books, 2000. Page 62