

The Interpretations of Genesis 1 and 2 Compared: Instantaneous or Gradual Creation of Everything Except Adam and Eve?

The Evidence from Genesis 1

Framework Interpretation

Day Age Interpretation

24 Hour Day Interpretation

Summary of What Follows: God Creates the Heavens and the Earth

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1)

The Third Day

The Creating Command

Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them;" and it was so. (Gen 1:11)¹

The Resulting Creation

The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. (Gen 1:12)

Creation: ***Instantaneous*** ***versus*** ***Gradual***

The Fifth Day

The Creating Command

Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." (Gen 1:20)

The Resulting Creation

God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. (Gen 1:21)

Creation: ***Instantaneous*** ***versus*** ***Gradual***

The Sixth Day

The Creating Command

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so. (Gen 1: 24)

The Resulting Creation

God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. (Gen 1: 25)

Creation: ***Instantaneous*** ***versus*** ***Gradual***

The Evidence from Genesis 2

Summary of What Follows: Vegetation and Animals are the Generations of the Heavens and the Earth

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, (Gen 2:4)²

The Third Day of Genesis 1 Described Further

The Situation

Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted,

Reasons for No Vegetation

for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. (Gen 2:5)¹

Moisture Enables Vegetation to Sprout

But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. (Gen 2:6)

Teaching of the Passage

God did not create mature vegetation; it grew by natural means.

The Instantaneous Creation of Adam

The Special Creation of Adam in the Image of God.
Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground,
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;
and man became a living being. (Gen 2:7)

Summary of What Follows: Adam Placed in the Garden of Eden

The Evidence from the Garden of Eden
The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. (Gen 2:8)

Trees Were Not Created Mature They "Grew"

The Sixth Day of Genesis 1 Described Further
Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Gen 2:9)

Moisture Enables the Trees to Grow Teaching of the Passage

Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden.... (Gen 2:10)
God did not create mature trees; they grew by natural means.

Adam Tends the Growing Trees

Adam is Placed in the Garden to Tend It
Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (2:15)

God Would Not Have Given This Command Before the Trees Had Grown Sufficiently to Produce Fruit

God's Commandment Regarding Eating from the Trees
The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." (Gen 2:16-17)

Adam Would Have Lived Alone in the Garden for Years

Adam Lived Alone in the Garden until the Trees Grew to Bear Fruit
Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." (Gen 2:18)

None of the Animals Was a Helper Suitable for Adam

God Created the Animals out of the Ground
Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. (Gen 1:19-20)

The Instantaneous Creation of Eve After Adam Has Lived Alone in the Garden for Years

The Special Creation of Eve in the Image of God
So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. (Gen 2:21-22)

¹ American Standard Bible

² King James Version.