

## Days of Weeks and Weeks of Days By Dr. Chuck Baynard

The Bible opens with the words, “In the beginning God...” For almost 400 years the orthodox position concerning the creation account in Genesis was that it was a literal and historical presentation of how God created all things from nothing. Since 1924 when Professor Arie Noordjij of the University of Utrecht first used the Framework Hypothesis as an interpretive tool. Each generation has had those who followed his lead and found novel ways to understand the whole Bible. While, their focus is on the creation account in Genesis, the introduction of non-standard hermeneutics must be carried throughout the Bible. Today we still have scholar versus scholar and even school versus school concerning how the creation account in Genesis should be understood. To understand what this author is speaking against you need to have at least an overview of the Framework Hypothesis and the three men who are perhaps its most vocal proponents in our day. A very good and concise overview and critique can be found At <http://spindleworks.com/library/walker/framework01.htm>. This is a short paper by the Rev. Frank Walker entitled , “Genesis 1 versus the Framework Hypothesis.” Also of interest here would be Joe Pipa , “Did God Create in Six days? In “From Creation to Chaos: a critique of the non-literal interpretation of genesis 1:1-2:3. Likewise Kenneth gentry and Michael Butler, “Hath God Said?.”

Novel interpretations did not originate with Professor Noordjij but in the early 1800s which led to the “Gap Theory,” Day-Age Theory” along with a tranquil and local flood theories being proposed. This for the most part was introduced as a response to uniformitarian geology and evolution. What distinguishes the framework theory from the others is the attempt to twist the genre of the narrative, rather than twist the narrative itself. Day-age and gap advocates do not argue that genesis is history, they simply argue that we are not interpreting the history correctly. The framework advocates are saying it is not history at all – which is a more dangerous assertion.

There is a lot of material on the Framework Theory. In agreement with Reverend Walker, three of these are of key importance. 1. “Because It Had Not Rained,” by Meredith G. Kline (1958). 2. “Because It Had Rained,” by Mark D. Futato (1997). 3. “Space And Time, Meredith G. Kline (1996). The key element in the Framework Theory is that it applies a literary approach to Scripture. Scripture has literary genres (Poetry, history, law) as well as literary forms (Parallelism and figures of speech). This is not a problem since the Bible is not only a book but also a book of books. The goal of a literary approach is not to arrive at the intent of the original author but to enable to reader to interact with the text. This removes all fixed meaning and the reader’s imagination and assumptions that constantly change results in responses that are also always changing. There is no absolute truth available and the experience of the person is the zenith of understanding. This leaves the Framework Theory as a subversive that destroys the message of Scripture and ultimately is self-destructive to its adherents.

From Calvin through the Westminster Assembly the early reformers held to a literal six-day creation. The Framework Theory says the “days” of Genesis one are not

chronological periods of twenty-four hours. They appeal to an extremely doubtful interpretation of Genesis 2:5 for the foundation of this belief. The conclusions reached from 2:5 are then taken back to render the interpretation of the former verses.

Unlike the Framework Theory and its use of eisegesis and unnatural hermeneutics the defense of a literal understanding of the creation account are above true debate. Let us take a brief look at some of these key apologetics for a literal interpretation of Genesis one.

1. The Hebrew word used for day (*yom*) is used in the Bible to primarily mean a literal 24-hour day. This word has a plural form and can mean several days. At places this number of days may equal years, but the essential meaning of the word retains all of its integrity and means a literal twenty-hour period of time. The appeal of some to 2 Peter 3:8 that says "One day with the Lord is as a thousand years." is invalid in that it simply points out God is not subject to time at all. While it is true then this word has four or five different meanings, the most common is that of a 24-hour literal day. The predominant meaning is the daylight portion of a 24-hour day or the day itself.
2. Moses in writing the creation account under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit numbered the days and that in the singular. If other than a twenty-four hour period is intended there is no need to number the days in sequence. The framework theory does not discount the nature of the days, they argue against the historical reality of the days. So the 24-hour arguments, while valid do not directly address the framework theory.
3. Each day in the creation account is described as having evening and morning, which can only denote a normal solar day. This detail within the narrative should confirm the normal twenty-four hour day is meant by the text.
4. All the other books of the Bible that deal with the creation account treat it as literal and a historical fact, not a poem or some other allegory. Paul and Peter in their use of references to the creation narrative see it as a true historical event. (2 Cor. 4:6; 2 Pet. 3:5; Ps. 8, 104; Mt. 19:4-6; Mark 13:9; Luke 3:38; John 1:3, 10; Rom. 8:19-22; Col. 1:16; Hebrews 4:4; 11:3)
5. The fourth commandment demands that these days be a literal twenty-four hour period of time or a day because this is the pattern God set when He created the heavens and the earth. God can command without setting the example but in grace here set the pattern that all mankind is to follow and so notes it is a pattern. The Framework Theory has Moses writing under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit setting in place the sequence of literal days that are not literal days.
6. Andrew Kulikovsky (The keys to interpreting Genesis: history and genre, Technical Journal 18(3):61-61) notes that the best argument against the non-historical Framework Hypothesis is the assertion of the historical nature of genesis 1-11. He notes that the elements of Hebrew historical narrative are all present: point of view, characterization, dialogue, narration framework, plot, and repetition. Other markers such as the sequence

of the verb forms, the first in perfect form followed by the narrative in imperfect form, are found in Genesis 1. Reference here is also made to [http://www.gpts.edu/resources/resource\\_creation.html](http://www.gpts.edu/resources/resource_creation.html).

Calvin warned against playing games with the word of God. The Scriptures have been the only guide of faith and life for the reformed ever since the birth of the reformed churches. Suddenly modern scholars would have us turn the sacred word of God into a set of allegories without fixed meaning. God warned about that too and said in the end times all would do right according to their own thoughts.

The Framework theory is neither sound nor orthodox theology. It is the vain imagination of man trying to find something new under the sun and establish for himself a name. Solomon well said that there is nothing new under the sun. The Bible is God's word spoken to a historical people in a historical language. Those words had meaning to those people and they have meaning to us today. For the church to allow in her midst those who would reduce the word of God to a mere literary device is beyond belief to me. Yet we wonder why as a whole the church seems to be without power and rudderless in an angry sea? To deny the creation account as historical fact is to deny the whole of the Bible and leaves us with no truth and no Savior. This is not scholarship; it is heresy and should be so named by the church.

In attempting to create a 1000 word or less critique of the Framework Hypothesis I would like to express my appreciation to Rev. Frank Walker in acknowledgment of his work that preceded my efforts and helped considerably in my research efforts to gain the understanding needed for this task. Grateful appreciation is also expressed to John Reed for his critique of my understanding and his invaluable input in reaching a final conclusion concerning the Framework Hypothesis.

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