

Evangelical Views of the Creation Account in Genesis 1–2

By J. Paul Tanner

More Literal

Less Literal

Young Earth View

Gap Theory

Pre-Creation Chaos

Promised Land View

Old Earth Views

Figurative Day Views

Cosmic Temple Views

Theistic Evolution

Traditional View. God created everything a few thousand years ago in six consecutive, 24-hour days, starting at Gen 1:1. Verse 2 depicts the earth in its initial incomplete stage, before God formed and filled heaven and earth (v 3ff).

John Whitcomb
Terry Mortenson
Todd Beall
William Barrick
Douglas F. Kelly
John MacArthur
Answers in Genesis

There is a long gap of time (perhaps billions of years) between an original creation in Gen 1:1 and a judged earth depicted in v 2. This is followed by a new re-creation in six literal days starting at v 3.

George H. Pember
Harry Rimmer
Arthur Custance
Scofield Ref. Bible

Genesis 1:1 is a summary statement for the whole chapter. Verse 2 depicts the earth negatively (not by God—something wrong has happened to it). The new creation starts in v 3 (which implies a previous creation).

Bruce K. Waltke
Allen P. Ross

Genesis 1:1 is the creation of the entire universe over millions (perhaps billions) of years. Verse 3ff describes God's work to prepare the Promised Land (i.e., Garden of Eden) for Israel. [Hebrew word 'erets can mean *earth* or *land*]

John H. Sailhamer

Millions of years were involved in the “six-day” creation week.

Day-Age View
Each day = millions of years (not 24 hour days).
Intermittent Day-Age View: A day = 24 hours, but millions of years between each day.
R. C. Newman
John C. Lennox

Day-Age
Gleason Archer
Walter Kaiser
Millard Erickson
J. P. Moreland
Reason to Believe (Hugh Ross)

Relies on literary analysis to take the days of the week figuratively.

Framework View
Days are not 24 hour days or sequential, but used to convey theology.
Literary Day View
Richard E. Averbeck
Analogical Day View
C. John Collins

Framework View
Meredith G. Kline
Henri Blocher
Lee Irons
Mark Futato
Bruce K. Waltke

Genesis 1–2 is not about material creation, but God giving function to pre-existing things. Cosmic space is prepared as His temple within which He will rule. This view relies heavily on comparison to Ancient Near East literature.

John H. Walton

God used natural processes (e.g., biological evolution) to create everything (e.g., stars, earth, plants, animals and man) over billions of years.

Many (not all) see Genesis as an allegory and deny a historical Adam and Eve.

Francis Collins
Peter Enns
Tremper Longman
N. T. Wright
Howard J. Van Til
Bruce K. Waltke
BioLogos