

7. The practice of adopting and publicizing unusual styles of Biblical interpretation for use on Scripture passages having to do with creation. It is of course always possible that some valid new method will be discovered; but, in view of the great amount of literature on Biblical interpretation which has been accumulating ever since the first century A. D., great caution in this should be exercised. One must remember that the Holy Spirit has been at work in the Church down through the centuries, and has already guided Bible scholars in discovering a great many exegetical principles. These must not be regarded lightly, nor should substitutes for them be accepted uncritically. Any proposed, unusual method of interpretation will have to be tested thoroughly, and found consistent, in order to be worthy of confidence.

While those theologians who hold to the young-earth view usually try to use the grammatico-historical method of interpretation, they have also branched out into the use of accessory, questionable methods. For example, the passage in Exodus 20:11 is used as a proof-text to assert that the creation days were of the same length as the days in the time of Moses. In using this Scripture in this way they are no doubt using a "grammatical" method, but are not using a true "historical" method. They are in reality forcing one kind of passage to be a commentary on an entirely different type of Scripture. The reference in Exodus to the days of creation was not being used in a lesson or teaching unit on the subject of creation, but was being used merely to illustrate the principle that one time unit out of seven was to be used as the sabbath. Verses 9 and 10 of the same chapter show that the purpose of verse 11 is to teach the Israelites the value of the sabbath, and their responsibility to keep it. Thus when this verse is used for teaching the length of creative days, two very dissimilar parts of the Divine revelation are being called upon to comment upon each other.³⁸

A second very widely used example of a questionable type of interpretation is the so-called "numerical adjective" or "ordinal number" argument for 24-hour days of creation. This argument has proven to be of no value, since there is actually no place in Scripture to test it, as is explained in Appendix I.

A third type of faulty interpretation used by young-earth creationists is the belief that, because some part of the created world is not mentioned in the Creation account, it did not yet exist. A well-known example of this pictures Genesis 1:11-12 as teaching that the very first kinds of plants created were the higher plants; namely, grass and fruit trees. It is true that these are the first plants mentioned, but there is no statement that these were the first plants. Many other kinds of plants which are not mentioned at all in the Creation account may have been created prior to the grass and fruit trees. For example, the most abundant of all plants, the many kinds of algae, are not mentioned anywhere in the Book of Genesis. It is right to assume that God did create both marine and fresh-water algae; but, just because the Biblical account of creation makes no reference to them, we are not justified in saying that the grass and fruit trees were created first. The fossil record indicates that many