

led the writer to merely say that He "placed" them in the garden.

Adam was then put into the garden, given instructions to cultivate it, and assigned the task of naming "every beast of the field," and "every bird of the sky." How are we to suppose that this task was accomplished in a matter of a few hours? Especially in the light of the vast number of animals, the Biblical custom of care and consideration in the assigning of names, and Adam's evaluation of each to see if it might be a suitable companion for himself (2:20), Moses' readers certainly must have regarded this as an extended task.

A study of Genesis 2:20-23 definitely shows that Adam had been considering the various animals from the standpoint of his own person, had experienced a feeling of disappointment and loneliness in finding none compatible with his own personality, and had finally rejoiced upon receiving a mate who was "now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." In the Hebrew text the word for "now" in this passage is really happa'am, meaning "now at last," or "now at length," (as pointed out in the Brown, Driver, and Briggs lexicon, and in numerous commentaries and versions). This same word, with its article as here, also appears in several other places in Genesis, Exodus, and Judges, with the same connotation of final realization after long waiting. For example, in Genesis 29:34 Jacob's wife Leah, after a long time of frustration in not being loved by her husband, bears her third son to Jacob and exclaims, "Now this time (happa'am) my husband will be joined to me." It is obvious that such human emotional feelings do not arise in a mere few hours of one day, or during a frantic rush of naming all the beasts of the field and birds before the darkness of one solar day should fall.*

Thus we must recognize that even the text of the first chapters of Genesis contains some strong indications that at least the sixth day of creation was much longer than 24 hours. This, together with the other factors we have been considering, leads us to believe that most, if not all, of the six creative days were long periods of time (most likely of varying length).

*I am indebted to Rev. R. John Snow of Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, for several of the points contained in this section on the 6th Day. Another source of information on the same subject is A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, by G. L. Archer, Jr., Moody Press, 1964.