

sheep. The meaning of these passages is perfectly clear. The figure of speech not only adds beauty, it also expresses an idea much more briefly than could be done in literal language and every bit as clearly. Figures of speech are like salt on a dish. A sprinkling of salt adds spice to the dish, but if you pour on a whole bucket of salt the food becomes worthless. To interpret any portion of the Bible as completely figurative is apt to reduce it to nonsense, but individual words or phrases must often be so interpreted. In Genesis 1 the question is, Do these words indicate a literal evening and a literal morning, or do they ^{merely describe} ~~simply indicate~~ the beginning and the end of each period?

The answer to this question is not difficult to find. Since sun, moon and stars were not set in the heavens as measures of time until the fourth day it would hardly be likely that evening and morning in the literal sense would have occurred on the first, second and third day. Moreover, we should note that the chapter is written from the viewpoint of God. There is no human observer present until near the end of the sixth day. When would it be evening to God and when would it be morning to God? When it is evening in Texas, it is morning in China, and vice versa. God, of course, is not at any particular point of the earth. He is always aware that it is evening in some parts of the earth and morning in others, so that it is quite meaningless to speak of each of these days as having a literal evening and then a literal morning. It is quite clear that the phrases must be used figuratively here and simply indicate the beginning and end of a period of time, whatever its length may be.

While the word "day" does not indicate in itself whether the length of time involved was 24 hours or many millions of years, and the words evening and morning do not affect the interpretation