

April, 2004

# Pause Ponder Profit

## The Six Days Of Creation Literal Days Of Twenty- Four Hours Each

By James A. Brown

The record in Genesis tells us that God created the earth and its contents in six days. But the infidels of our time scoff at this and declare it to be a fable. As well, many professed Christians today act as if they are ashamed of the record. They seem to want to patch it up by saying that the days mentioned are not six literal days of twenty-four hours, but are long, indefinite periods of time. Thus they become self-appointed apologists for God to a scoffing world. But the testimony of Genesis is true. And that the days are literal days of twenty-four hours, is abundantly proved by the Word of God. The days mentioned are composed of an evening and a morning. The record says, "the evening and the morning were the first day" (Gen. 1:5). "The evening and the morning were the second day" (Gen. 1:8), and so on through the six days (Gen. 1:9-31).

It is a fact that the evening and the morning are caused by the revolution of the earth on its axis. Without this rotation of

the earth we could have no day with an evening and a morning. This shows that at the very moment the earth was spoken into existence it began revolving upon its axis, the first revolution completing the first day of time for the earth. The first six revolutions completed the first six days with an evening and a morning. After these six days "God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done" Gen. 2:1).

This institution—the seven day week has been preserved intact until this very day and it stands today as an unimpeachable witness to the truthfulness of the record in Genesis. And furthermore, God confirmed the record in Genesis with his own mouth, and wrote it with His own finger in the ten commandments on tables of stone (Ex. 31:18). In the fourth commandment He declares that He created the earth in six days and rested the seventh (Ex. 20:8-11). Then He showed His people just how long those days of creation were by permitting manna to fall upon the six days during which He worked, and withholding it on the identical day on which He rested (Ex. 16:15-26).

So we see from this that the record in the first chapter of Genesis is fully confirmed by God Himself, and the days are proved to be days of twenty-four hours, composed of an evening and a morning. Those who do not believe the record of creation in Genesis cannot, with consistency, observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:6-7). For the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper by God's people testifies of their faith in the Bible record of creation.

Indeed, the word of God is an infallible rule of faith.



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## Who Killed Jesus?

by Rusty Miller

**I**t is shaping up to be one of the most controversial films of our time, maybe of all time. "It" of course, is Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ," and over the last several weeks (and continuing for at least a few weeks into the future), much has been written and said about this film, which intends to depict the last 12 hours in the life of Jesus.

Let me begin by saying I have not seen the film (as of this writing, it is still unreleased, and I am not highly placed enough to have been invited to one of the early screenings). As such, I will not comment on the film's content, cinematic value, or even whether or not I think you should see the film.

However, there is one aspect of all the controversy that I believe bears at least some interest. Since the beginning of filming, the movie has been portrayed as anti-Semitic because it reportedly has the Jews playing a part in the death of Jesus. If that is anti-Semitic then historical fact is as well, but this raises a valuable question, which even Newsweek magazine raised in a recent cover story on the controversy: "Who Killed Jesus?"

It is a question with simple answers, yet complex, far-reaching implications. And it is worthy of our time in studying it.

**The Jews:** No matter that it is considered anti-Semitic, there can be no dancing around the fact that the Jewish leadership in the time of Jesus was responsible for His death. This is not surprising even to first-time readers of scripture. When Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath, He angers the Pharisees and they seek to kill Him (Matt. 12:1-14). John chapter 7 is riddled with talk of the Jews intentions to seize and kill Jesus (Jn. 7:1,19,30,32,44). Over and over in the story of Jesus, the Jews make known their desire to put Him to death, culminating in their stirring up the crowd at His trial (Matt. 27:20-23), and declaring, "His blood shall be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25). Peter also places blame on the Jews in the first sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2:36).

Clearly, the Jews are guilty of the death of Jesus, but it does not end there.

**Pilate and the Romans:** Just as the Jews would deny culpability in the crucifixion, Pilate would almost certainly assert his innocence, for that is exactly what he did, washing his hands and declaring, "I am innocent of this man's blood" (Matt. 27:24). But Pilate is the one person in the story with the power to release Jesus or to crucify Him, as even he acknowledged (Jn. 19:10). That Pilate is so spineless as to let the crowd sway his decision does not excuse him for his part in the death of Jesus.

**It is a question with simple answers, yet complex, far-reaching implications.**

The Roman executioners have never denied blame in the death of Jesus. That was their job. They killed people, and the gospels detail the physical pain and indignities suffered by Jesus at the hands of Roman soldiers (Matt. 27:26-35; Mk. 15:15-24; Lk. 23:11, 33; Jn. 19:1-3, 16-18). Pilate and the Romans were the governing authorities of the day, and as such were the only ones with the right to execute, so their guilt in crucifying Jesus is obvious.

**Sinners:** In truth, the Jews, Pilate and the Romans are merely instruments in the death of Jesus. Real, moral culpability is brought upon sinners by the gospel of Christ as taught in the New Testament. It was because of sin that Jesus had to die (Rom.6:1-7; 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:3-5; 1 Pet. 2:21-25), and that means that, ultimately it is sinners who are responsible for the death of Jesus. However, it is easy to state that sinners are the ones who killed Jesus, while thinking of "really bad sinners," like murderers, rapists and child molesters. In other words, it is easy to blame particularly heinous criminals and deny our own guilt in the death of Jesus.

**Me:** The fact is that if the death of Jesus is going to mean anything in my life, then a search for His killers must culminate in a good, hard look in the mirror. Read Isaiah 53:4-6, substituting personal pronouns for the collective ones (i.e. "He was pierced through for my transgressions ..."), and it becomes pretty clear that Jesus would have had to die for me, no matter what the rest of the world is like. If God desires to save me, and He says He does (2 Pet. 3:9), then I need a sacrifice for my own sins. When Paul writes of those who will not enter the kingdom of heaven, he reminds the Corinthians, "Such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

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### **The Testimony Of The Seasons** by John R. Hurt

**I**n the changing of every season, we see powerful, convincing testimony to the truthfulness of the Word of God. Note the reading of Genesis 8:22.

"While the earth remains, seed time and harvest,

And cold and heat, and summer and winter,

And day and night, shall not cease."

As we see the splendor of spring, the burgeoning flowers, the green sprouts and the whole of nature come alive again, we know that God's word is true. Just as surely as the green sprouts grow into summer's lush growth and each tender bud blooms into summertime's radiant blossoms, we can rest confidently in the unshakable fact that the Bible speaks the truth. With the coming of fall and all the beautiful colors that make the hues of the greatest Italian artists pale in significance, the Word of God is authenticated. Then, with the arriving of the harsh cold, the falling leaves, and the stark brown bareness of winter's landscape, you may be assured of the indisputable fact that countless centuries have shouted and proclaimed. While the earth remains it shall ever be so! The word of God is true!

In this tribute to the veracity of God, this

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miracle of his creation, do we not also see the answer to Job's ancient question, "If a man dies will he yet live again" (Job 14:14)? Each year we witness God taking the seemingly dead, lifeless plants and reviving again the germ of life within them. In the explosion of new life that follows, all nature is robed in brilliant splendor of the season. Surely, then, it is but a small thing for the creator of this vast universe to reach down to our narrow house beneath the earth and revive again the germ of life within the soul of man. Ah, the changing of the seasons attests to the irrefutable truth of God!



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Worship .....	10:45 A.M.	
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