

the modern scientific system of classification, the word "fish" is used to denote an animal that has certain specific structures. In ancient times the word was used to designate any animal that habitually lives in the water. Modern science has a perfect right so to define the words that it uses as to fit its attempted classification and interpretation, but we are wrong if we insist upon attempting to interpret the Bible as if its words were written with today's usages in mind. We must take words and phrases in the meanings that they possessed at the time when they were written.

A similar situation exists in connection with the use of the word "day." Nowadays it is quite customary, for the figuring of interest, or the arranging of railroad or airplane time-tables, to think of a day as indicating a period of 24 hours. Yet it is comparatively seldom that any of us use the term "day" in common speech in this particular sense. No one, meeting a friend in the late evening, would say, "Isn't this a nice day?" He would be more apt to say, "We had a very pleasant day, and the evening is nice too!" In common use a day ordinarily means a period of light between two periods of darkness or a period of activity whether short or long. A radio speaker began a statement with the words: "Al Smith used to say, in his day, that . . . ." Here it is clear that the word "day" did not indicate any particular period of 24 hours, but rather a period of activity which ran for several years. Similarly in John 8:56, Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad." He did not here refer to a period of 24 hours, but to the time of His activity on earth.