

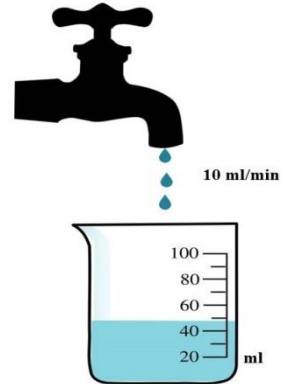
The Book of Genesis
Dating Creation
08/21/2019 Wednesday PM

Introduction

- Last week we studied **Genesis 1:1-5** where God created “the heavens and the earth” as well as light.
- I take a view that the Bible should be read as literally as the context of individual passages allow.
- I advocate for a plain reading of **Genesis**. We must always be careful when we attempt to read outside ideas into the Bible.
- There are no gaps that are visible between **vv.1-2**, and God created using 6 normal-length days.
- Tonight, we are going to pause in our study of the verses and look at **Dating Creation**.
- We need to discuss this in detail before we move on, because it addresses “the elephant in the room.”

How Long Ago Was the Beginning?

- This is the million-dollar question that is debated vigorously within the church.
- **Illustration:** Before we get into the question itself, I want us to look at an illustration.
- The photo on the right depicts a faucet dripping water into a measuring glass. The glass is currently sitting at 50ml of water. The photo shows that the water is dripping at 10ml every minute. So the question is, how long did it take for the water to reach 50ml?
- The most obvious answer to many people would be that it took 5 minutes to fill the glass with 50ml of water because it would be $10\text{ml} \times 5\text{min} = 50\text{ml}$.
- Why does that answer have to be right though? What if the glass started out with 20ml of water already in it? Then it would have only taken it 3 minutes to reach 50ml.
- The point is that when we attempt to look at events happening in the present and use that data to infer what took place in the past, we cannot be sure that we are correct.
- What is the best way to know exactly what happened in any event? To speak with an eye-witness of the event.
- The Bible claims to be the best eye-witness account of all because it is inspired by the Creator who was there.
- So, How Long Ago Was the Beginning? Well the Bible provides us with enough data to calculate a ball-park figure for the following periods:
 - **Creation to Adam:** six 24-hour days.
 - **Adam to Flood:** 1656 years based on the genealogical accounts of the Bible.
 - **Flood to Abraham:** 352 years. That would put Abraham being born 2008 years after Creation.
 - **Abraham to Sojourn:** 290 years, Abraham to Isaac 100 years (Genesis 21:5); Isaac to Jacob 60 (25:26), Jacob entered Egypt when he was 130 (47:9). So Israel’s Sojourn was 2298 years after Creation.
 - **Sojourn:** exactly 430 years until God rescued Israel in the Exodus (Exodus 12:40-41). So the Exodus was 2728 years after Creation.
 - **Exodus to Solomon’s Temple:** **480 years** (1 Kings 6:1). The Temple was begun 3208 years after Creation.
 - **Start of the Temple to division under Solomon’s son Rehoboam:** 37 years. Solomon reigned for 40 years and the temple was started in his 4th year. (1 Kings 11:42). So Israel and Judah split 3245 years after Creation.
 - **Division to Exile:** 345 years. This one is quite complex because of the harmonization between the kings of Judah and the kings of Israel. There were also co-regencies where the crown prince held the kingship alongside his father. So the Exile was 3590 years after Creation.
 - **Exile:** 588BC. This is the date calculated by James Ussher (1581-1656). He was an Irish archbishop and scholar. He comes up with this by studying Nebuchadnessar’s reign and working through the lists.
 - After looking at all this, **Creation was 4178 +/- 50BC (3590+588)**. The margin of error is because of some possible interpretation uncertainties around when the exact first year of a king’s reign would be counted. The Flood would have occurred some were around 2522BC and that means we are about 6190 years after Creation.
- There is no doubt that this claim of the earth being so “young” sounds like madness to most people today.
- However, it is the date we can get by using what we find in the Bible, without using outside material.
- If this is what the Bible is saying when we just plainly read the text, why do we need anything different?
- The answer to that is, secular scientists need much longer to make sense of what they think they see.



- Below is a table that shows what other cultures over time thought the creation date was as well as a table of when the long ages of the earth began to come into the forefront.

| Culture | Age, B.C. |
|--|-----------|
| Spain by Alfonso X (Spain, 1200s) | 6984 |
| Spain by Alfonso X (Spain, 1200s) | 6484 |
| India | 6204 |
| India | 6174 |
| Babylon | 6158 |
| Chinese | 6157 |
| Greece by Diogenes Laertius (Greece, 3 rd Cent) | 6138 |
| Egypt | 6081 |
| Persia | 5507 |
| Israel/Judea by Josephus (1 st Century Jew) | 5555 |
| India | 5369 |
| Babylon (Talmud) | 5344 |
| Vatican (Catholic using the Septuagint) | 5270 |
| Samaria | 4427 |
| German, Holy Roman Empire by Johannes Kepler* | 3993 |
| German, reformer by Martin Luther | 3961 |
| Israel/Judea by computation | 3760 |
| Israel/Judea by Rabbi Lipman | 3616 |

| Who? | Age of the Earth | When Was This? |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Comte de Buffon | 78 thousand years old | 1779 |
| Abraham Werner | 1 million years | 1786 |
| James Hutton | Perhaps eternal, long | 1795 |
| Pièrre LaPlace | Long ages | 1796 |
| Jean Lamarck | Long ages | 1809 |
| William Smith | Long ages | 1835 |
| Georges Cuvier | Long ages | 1812 |
| Charles Lyell | Millions of years | 1830–1833 |
| Lord Kelvin | 20–100 million years | 1862–1899 |
| Arthur Holmes | 1.6 billion years | 1913 |
| Clair Patterson | 4.5 billion years | 1956 |

- What happened in the late 16th century and beyond? The Enlightenment. This was also called the “Age of Reason”
- Extra-biblical evidences we seen as superior to the Scriptures. These ideas are the foundation of every thought process that is put forward in modern science today.

Scientific Evidence for a ‘Young’ Earth

- I say ‘**young**’ earth, because I propose that well over 6000 years is not young at all. We call 1000 years ancient.
- The best way to refute secular attacks on the Bible using ‘science’ is to use their own beliefs against them.
- This is a form of logic called a *reductio ad absurdum* which is an argument that shows a position is false by demonstrating that it implies an absurd, false, or indefensible conclusion.
- There are many strong arguments also from science itself that show us a ‘young’ earth, not an old one:
 - Soft tissue is being found in ‘68 million’ year old dinosaur bones when they can’t be possible.
 - Carbon-14 is found in coal and diamonds that are ‘too old’ to contain carbon-14.
 - We see some of the same comets passing by the earth and sun. Each time they pass the sun they lose mass, if the universe was really old, these comets would have evaporated by now.
 - The moon is moving away from the earth at 4cm per year. If the solar system is billions of years old, then the moon at one time was touching the Earth.
- The fact remains that the Bible is the only authoritative Word of God that we should put our hope and trust in.
- God created the world with the appearance of age, just like he created Adam and Eve as adults on Day 6.
- We should expect to find a universe that looks really old, but in face is younger than it appears.
- No side can be 100% accurate about the precise numbers, however, one side is a lot closer to the right answer than the other! 13.7billion years? Nope.

Next Week’s Study: Genesis 1:6-8