

THE AGE OF THE EARTH

from
 **FAITH MAKES SENSE**

The Bible is not a science textbook, and it should not be read as one. However, the Bible is a book of history, and it should be read as one. The Genesis account of creation is written as the account of the origin of the universe, life, humanity, and faith. Christians should also understand while an important issue, one's position on the age of the earth is not a matter of heresy.

HOW OLD IS THE EARTH IN THE BIBLE?

The bible describes 2,000 - 4,000 years from Creation to Abraham, 2,000 years from Abraham to Jesus, and 2,000 years from Jesus to today.

Even allowing for generational compression and computational errors, the Bible describes creation as less than 10,000 years old.

WHAT ABOUT THE DAY-AGE THEORY?

2 Peter 3:8 says "a day is like a thousand years". Couldn't this apply to creation? This verse is a comparison, not a definition. Peter is comparing "a day" to "a thousand years", not defining a day as a thousand years.

Even if this were true, it would only add 6,000 years to the age of the earth, not billions.

NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES TO GENESIS

Jude 14 refers to generations from Adam to Enoch
Hebrews 4:3,4,10 all refer to God's seventh day rest
2 Peter 2:5 refers Noah and the flood as historical
2 Peter 3:5 speaks of creation "out of water"
2 Corinthians 11:3 refers to the deception of Eve
Ephesians 5:31 quotes Gen 2:24 (man shall leave...)
Matt 1:1 refers to Abraham as a historical figure
Luke 3:37 refers to Adam as a historical figure

ARE THE CREATION "DAYS" 24HR DAYS?

Hebrew word "Yom" can have three meanings: (a) a 24 hour day, (b) the opposite of night, or (c) a reference to a specific period (back in my day).

What clues exist to help us decide?

Modifying numbers (first, second, third, etc) when used with "yom" in Scripture always refers to 24 hour days.

The words "evening and morning" suggest a 24 hour day.

In Exodus 20:11 refers to creation week as the reason for the Sabbath rest in the 10 Commandments

JESUS ON GENESIS

In Matthew 11:23-24, Jesus refers to the destruction of Sodom.
In Matthew 23:35, Jesus refers to Abel as a historical person
In Matthew 24:37-39, Jesus refers to Noah and the flood as historical.
In Mark 10:6-9, Jesus refers to God's creation of male and female and the foundation of marriage

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Radiometric dating is one of the key tools used by those who argue for an old earth. This method is suspect for several reasons. Here is a brief introduction to the science of radiometric dating. While different methods exist, this handout will focus on Carbon dating which is the most widely known. There is also a brief review of evidence suggesting the earth is in fact young.

INTRODUCTION TO CARBON DATING

The 2nd Law of Thermodynamics states the universe is running out of usable energy. Matter itself breaks down over time. The practice of measuring the decay of a parent element into its daughter element is called Radiometric Dating. The most common form of this measurement is Carbon¹⁴.

What is Carbon¹⁴? A carbon¹⁴ is created when solar radiated particles bombard earth's atmosphere and add one neutron to a Nitrogen¹⁴ atom. Over time, Carbon¹⁴ decays back to a Nitrogen¹⁴ atom. It takes 5,730 years for half of the Carbon¹⁴ atoms in a sample to decay back to Nitrogen¹⁴. This is called the half-life. After 10 half-lives or 57,300 years, there should be 0.1 percent Carbon¹⁴ left in the sample. After 100,000 years any sample should be completely lacking any Carbon¹⁴.

ASSUMPTIONS IN RADIOMETRIC DATING

While this method appears to be reliable, it is built on several unproven assumptions. If these assumptions are found to be false, the entire method should be disqualified. Here are three assumptions built into the radiometric dating method.

- a: There was no daughter element in the beginning.
- b: The elements have not been affected by outside factors.
- c: The rate of decay has always been same.

EVIDENCE FOR A YOUNG EARTH

Human Population: Evolution contends humans have been on earth for millions of years. If this is true, there should be more humans alive today than could fit on the planet! However, if the Biblical story of a flood and repopulation is true, the population count should be 6.7 to 8.1 billion people. There are about 7.7 billion people alive today.

The Oldest Tree: Earth's oldest tree is a Great Basin bristle-cone pine located in California named, "Methuselah". It is 4,800 years old.

Dinosaur Soft Tissue: Multiple dinosaur fossils have been found to have soft tissue and even blood cells still in them. These types of tissue should not have survived 100,000 years let alone millions.

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