

Answers for Kids

BIBLE CURRICULUM

How Old Is the Earth?

Lesson 15

NAME _____

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8).

How old is the earth? 6,000 years? 10,000 years? 4.5 billion years? These figures (and others) have been tossed around as the "real" age of the earth. So, since they can't all be true, how can we know how old the earth really is?

Since none of us has been around since the beginning of time, we can only guess at what happened and when—unless, of course, there was a record written down for us by someone who *was* there at the beginning. Then we could study that record and figure out how long ago "the beginning" was.

Actually, we *do* have such a record (the 66 books of the Bible), which was given to us by someone who *was* there in the beginning—God. Now, the Bible doesn't say, "God created the earth . . . years ago." But it does give us some important clues. To figure out the age of the earth, you'll need your Bible, a sheet of paper, and a pencil.

Make three columns on your paper, labeled "Verse," "Event," and "Age of Earth" (years), and complete the chart which was started for you from the genealogies in Genesis 5. Now do the same for the list beginning in Genesis 11:10. (Hint: Noah was 502 when Shem was born.)

This final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar occurred around 584 BC. Our current calendar assumes that Jesus was born in AD 1—about 2,010 years ago (although He was probably born about 6 BC). And since the calendar system has no year zero, we can add the numbers to get the rough date of creation: $2,010 + 584 + 3,419 = 6,013$ (give or take a few years). Since the stars, our solar system, and all the other galaxies were created a few days after the earth, they're around 6,013 years old, too!

Since God always tells the truth, we can trust His account of history (in His Word, the Bible)!

Genesis 5 gives a list of men. From this, fill in your paper, adding to the earth's age as you go:

Verse	Event	Age of Earth (years)
Genesis 1:1-2:4a	Creation (in six days)	0
Genesis 5:3	Adam 130, Seth born	130
Genesis 5:6	Seth 105, Enos born	235 [=130 + 105]

Genesis 11:10	Noah 502, Shem born	1,558
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This list finishes with Abraham, but be a bit careful here:

Genesis 11:26, 32; 12:4	Terah 130 (=205-75; <u>not</u> 70), Abraham born	2,008
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The next event is when Abraham leaves Haran, and journeys to Canaan:

Genesis 12:4	Abraham leaves Haran (age 75)	2,083
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Abraham's descendants (the Israelites) stayed in Canaan and Egypt until they were delivered from the Pharaoh by Moses:

Genesis 12:10	Israelites live in Egypt for 430 years	2,513
Exodus 12:40		
Galatians 3:17		

The Israelites return to the Promised Land with Moses. They continued to live there, under the rule of Joshua, then the judges, then the kings. From the time they left Egypt until Solomon began to build the temple was 479 full years:

1 Kings 6:1	Solomon builds the Temple after reigning 3 full years	2,992
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King Solomon ruled for another 37 (40-3) years, and then the kingdom was divided between Jeroboam and Rehoboam:

1 Kings 11:42	Solomon dies	3,029
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The time from the kingdom's division to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was 390 years:

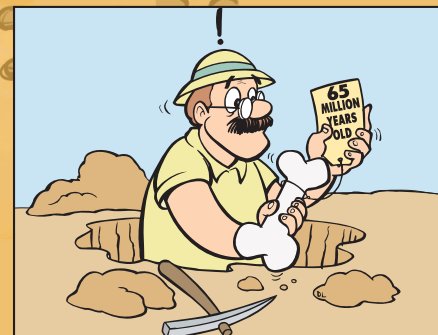
Ezekiel 4:4-6	Ruled by kings Jerusalem destroyed	3,419
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What Happened Here?



Even if you did scientific tests and detected elephant blood in the wreckage, for example, you would be very unlikely to work out the correct explanation. In the same way, we can't know for sure from scientific tests what happened in the earth's past, since we weren't there.

For example, the fossils we find of dinosaurs or other animals do not come with tags attached saying how old they are. We can try to make up stories about what we **think** happened to them and when, but unless we have an eyewitness account to rely on, it will be impossible for us to know **exactly** what happened.



LOOK AT THE PICTURE ABOVE. Can you guess what happened to this village?

Perhaps you thought an elephant just came and rampaged through the village. Well, actually, there's a lot more to this story. And since you weren't there, it is hard for you to know exactly what happened. The only way you could know for sure is if someone who witnessed the event told you how it all came about.

What happened was this: a man in India owned an elephant named Madhubala, and kept her chained to a tree. A bull elephant wandered by

one day and spotted her. It was love at first sight for the elephants. The bull elephant refused to leave Madhubala until the villagers began tossing firecrackers and flaming sticks at it. Later, he snuck back to Madhubala and broke her chains, and they both ran away. The owner tracked her down and brought her back to the village. But the bull elephant soon showed up to claim his true love. He roared through the village in a rage, ramming through huts, tearing down anything in his way, and causing the people to run into the jungle. He freed Madhubala again, and the two ran off, never to return.

Many people make statements about the beginning of the universe, claiming they know exactly when and how it all began. However, since they weren't there, these statements are only stories of their beliefs about the past.

There is only One alive today who was there in the beginning—God. He tells us how He created and what has happened since then in His written Word, the Bible.

Since we know God's Word is true, we can trust God when He says He created everything in six normal days. And many scientists today agree.