

6. How old is the earth?

God created time in the beginning (Genesis 1:1). From the beginning of time God has organized time into years and seasons (Genesis 1:14). The opening chapter of Genesis gives us the first expression of time when it records how God created the earth in six 24-hour days. The Bible makes it clear that it was referring to solar days by repeatedly stating, “There was evening and morning” followed by the number of the day (Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31). This literal six-day creation week with a seventh day Sabbath becomes the basis of the seven-day week. This would be impossible to interpret or practice in any other way than a literal 24-hour day. How could one keep the Sabbath day if the Bible was referring to an extended period of time? Although it is true that “day” may mean a longer period of time (“the day of their calamity is at hand” [Deuteronomy 32:35]), the context makes it clear. In the case of creation week, the context is explicitly clear by defining a day as one 24-hour solar day (“there was evening and morning”). The sun still defines what this means for us today.

The Bible gives an accurate description of the historical record as it relates to the establishment of tribes, nations, and the approximate time they existed (Genesis 10). It does this by recording an accurate genealogical record of the generations from Adam to Jesus (Luke 3:23-37; see also Matthew 1:1-17). When the genealogical record is compiled it appears that the age of the earth would be approximately 6,000 years old. There is some variation based on different genealogical information. These genealogies give us an approximate age of the earth that is relatively young, when compared to the evolutionary view that the earth is millions and millions of years old. The Bible reveals that the earth is thousands, not millions and millions of years old.

Bible passages to read: Genesis 10; Luke 3:23-38

Questions to ponder:

1. How does teaching the earth as “millions and millions” of years old undermine the Bible?
2. How long is a day in Genesis 1?
3. Would you trust the Bible’s record of the generations or the evolutionary account to determine the age of the earth?
4. Is God’s word to be trusted even when men of “science” contradict its teachings?
5. What difference does it make in your life that God created time?