

The Physical & Biblical Evidence for Creation

II. The Age of the Earth

1. Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) Anglican Church, Ireland

His book, *The Annals of the World* describe the history of the world from creation to the fall of Jerusalem. He relied on the chronologies in Genesis 5 & 11. He determined the date of creation to be Sunday, October 23, 4004 B.C.

Nowhere in your Bible does it say that the day of creation was October 23. Because the Jews and many other ancient peoples started their year in the autumn, Ussher assumed there must be a good reason for it. He therefore concluded that God created the world in the autumn. After consulting astronomical tables, he picked the first Sunday on or after the autumnal equinox to begin the year 4004 BC.

2. Lyell & Darwin - The Perfect Storm

Charles Lyell (1797-1875) proposed the Law of Uniformitarianism in his *Principles of Geology*. Charles Darwin read this book during his voyage on the *Beagle*.

The entire world (mountains included) is covered with sedimentary rock. This rock is formed in layers when dissolved minerals are deposited from water.

Before Lyell most scientists believed that these layers were formed in some catastrophic way.

Index fossils are used to determine the age of the layers. The layers are used to determine the age of the fossils. This is circular reasoning.

3. Church Leaders Compromise

Gap Theory – C.I. Scofield suggested that God created a world and which was destroyed sometime before Genesis 1.1 and Genesis 1.2.

Day Age Theory – A popular approach to Genesis chapter one suggested that the “days” of creation represented aeons of time.

The old earth view was accepted (without critical evaluation) by some important theologians: Charles Spurgeon, Charles Hodge, and Benjamin Warfield.

4. Radiometric Dating

Only works on igneous rocks. Parent elements decay into daughter elements over time. By measuring the proportion of parent elements to daughter elements we should be able to determine the age of the rock.

Three Major Assumptions: 1. Sample began with parent element only. 2. Rate of decay is constant. 3. There have been no physical changes in the sample over time.

There are admitted difficulties and inconsistencies.

5. Starlight – Astronomers have been able to determine the great distances of stars. If the speed of light is constant, then the light coming from the stars must be very old. There are two possible explanations for this.

The Appearance of Age – The light shining from the star was created by God when the star was created. (Beginning the “life-cycle”)

The Impact of General Relativity – Einstein showed that gravity affects time. If the universe is bounded and has a center, gravitational forces are different nearer the center than at the edge. Time runs slower when influenced by greater gravity.

6. Other Evidences of a Young Earth

Galaxies wind up too fast. Indicates a universe *millions* not *billions* of years old.

Not enough super novas observed. Indicates a universe *thousands* of years old.

Comets disintegrate too quickly. Indicates a universe *thousands* of years old.

Not enough sediment on the sea floor or salt in the sea. Indicates an earth *millions* of years old.

Earth’s magnetic field decaying too fast. Indicates an earth *thousands* of years old.

Biological material (DNA) recovered from amber and fossils believed to be millions of years old. Indicates an earth *thousands* of years old.

Too much helium found in zircon crystals. Indicates an earth *thousands* of years old.

Too much Carbon 14 found in deep geologic strata. Indicates an earth *thousands* of years old.

Not enough stone-age skeletons. If humans have been alive on earth for 185,000 years there should be many more skeletons and artifacts. Indicates an earth *thousands* of years old.

Agriculture is too recent. The evidence for agriculture dates back to 10,000 years. Yet humans are thought to have been alive for much longer. Indicates an earth *thousands* of years old.