

The Six Days of Creation

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Introduction

Many fundamentalists insist that Genesis be taken literally and according to their interpretation the universe, the Earth, and all life were all created in the space of six twenty-four hour days, approximately 6,000 year ago. This reckoning follows a time-line set centuries ago by Bishop James Ussher Archbishop of Ramah and Primate of all Ireland in his tome¹ '*The Annals of the World iv*' published in 1650. He declares that creation of the universe, Earth, and life began on Sunday the 23rd day of October 4004 BCE, according to the Julian calendar. The time from Adam to Noah, at the time of the flood, is 1,656 years. Add subsequent genealogies found in Genesis chapters 10 and 11 and then the time from Jesus to the present equals approximately 6,000 years. This time line conflicts with modern science that finds the age of the Earth to be 4.6 billion years and that of the universe to be 13.73 billion years.

Throughout Genesis chapter one the word "day" is used and gives rise to young-earth creationist's claim that the universe is only 6,000 years old and was created in six twenty-four hour days. In Hebrew the word for day "yom" can refer to a 24 hour day or an undefined length of time. The claim that the days of creation are 24 hours long is not supported by the Bible. Thus:

King James Bible Genesis 2:17

17 - "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the **day** that you eat of it you shall surely **die** (to die is muth in Hebrew)."

King James Bible Genesis 5:3-5

3 - And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

4 - After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were **eight hundred years**, and he had sons & daughters.

5 - So all the days that Adam lived were **nine hundred and thirty years**; and he **died** (again the Hebrew word muth).

The Hebrew Torah, and various concordances all confirm that this translation is correct. Adam ate of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil prior to his eviction from the Garden of Eden and had sex with his wife Eve only after exiting from the garden resulting in the birth of their son when Adam was 130 and then lived for an additional 800 years. Therefore, the elapsed time from his eating the fruit until his death was at minimum eight hundred years and nine months and perhaps more than nine hundred years; certainly not a 24 hour day.

Some contend that the death that Adam first experienced was spiritual death and eight hundred to nine hundred years later experienced physical death. This is not in accord with the Hebrew word for death (muth) found in the Torah in English, the scholarly translation by E.A. Speiser in the Anchor Bible series, nor in any of the Biblical concordances. In each instance, the word “muth” refers strictly to physical death. In addition 2nd Peter 3:8 makes it clear that God’s reckoning of time is different from that of humans. “---with the Lord one day is as a thousand years. And a thousand years as one day.”

Genesis 1:5, Day One

5 - “God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.”

If the light is from the sun then why doesn’t God mention that the light is the light of the sun or use the words ‘sunrise’ and ‘sunset’? The light cannot be the sun as the sun is not created until the fourth day according to Genesis 1:14-19. Genesis 1:16 makes this clear “Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night...” which is clear evidence that the sun was created only on the fourth day.

Throughout the history of the universe there are epochs of vast time marked by the appearance of light and its subsequent disappearance. Light was indeed trapped in darkness as Genesis 1:2-4 declares and doesn’t appear in the early universe until the epoch of reionization 380,000 year after the Big Bang and then eventually fades as the universe cools and does not appear again until 300-400 million years later when the first quasars ignite. Eventually these early stars drift way from one another and darkness once again ruled the universe and thus day one.

Genesis 1:7-8, Day Two

These verses seem to be describing accretion and the formation of stars and perhaps the Earth itself. Strange there is no mention of light to mark a

day. Perhaps the Earth was forming in darkness prior to the ignition of the sun and thus, with the absence of light from the sun, day two ends.

Genesis 1:9-13, Day Three

It is entirely possible that life may have had a beginning prior to the ignition of the sun. Life may have formed around hot water vents deep in the early ocean of Earth before the sun finally ignited its thermonuclear reaction and light returned.

Professor Julius Oppert², a renowned Assyriologist, claims that the Biblical account is taken from the Sumerian Kings list and that the Hebrews reduce the Kings list of 432,000 years^{3,4} to meet what they perceived to be their genealogy. Apparently the Sumerians obtained their age of the Earth from the Rig Veda the oldest extant religious document. That source gives the day of God as 4,320,000,000 years^{5,6}, which is a time line in close agreement with the latest findings of when life first appeared on Earth.

It is interesting to note that these ancient texts were written in an age of scientific ignorance and evoke the question of how could these ancients have arrived at lengths of time that approximate modern scientific findings? Even so there will be those who will resist accepting any association between the Bible and other religions. It is human arrogance, ignorance, and bigotry that posit that their religion is the only true religion and reject the possibility that other religions, other cultures, may contain truths. Perhaps, in time, they will consider that a supreme intelligence would not favor any of its creations more than another anymore than a human mother or father would favor one child to the neglect of the rest. Each civilization received the word and recorded it in a manner compatible with their culture.

The Age of the Patriarchs Problem

Of all the arguments young-earth creationists put forth for a young age of the Earth, none is more exacting than the Patriarch's list as found in Genesis chapter 5 verses 1-27. The list of the patriarchs found in Genesis, linked together from the birth of a son to the birth of that son's son, gives a time-line from Adam to Noah at the time of the flood of 1,656 years.

Table - 1 lists the age of each of the Pre-Flood Patriarchs and the Post-Flood Patriarchs at the time of their death and their age at the time of the birth of their successor. Some have suggested that maybe the age of the patriarchs was originally expressed in months rather than years.

PATRIARCH	AGE AT BIRTH OF SON	TOTAL AGE	TOTAL ELAPSED TIME	DATE (BCE)
PRE FLOOD (Genesis 5:3-32)				4004
ADAM	130	930	130	3874
SETH	105	912	235	3769
ENOSH	90	905	325	3679
KENAN	70	910	395	3609
MAHALAL	65	895	460	3544
JARED	162	962	622	3382
ENOCH	65	365	687	3317
METHUSELAH	187	969	874	3130
LAMECH	182	777	1056	2948
NOAH	600	950	1656	2348
POST FLOOD (Genesis 11:10-32& 24:7)				
SHEM	100	600	100	2248
ARPHAXAD	35	438	135	2213
SALAH	30	433	165	2183
EBER	34	464	199	2149
PELEG	30	239	229	2119
REU	32	239	261	2087
SERUG	30	230	291	2057
NAHOR	29	148	320	2028
TERAH	70	205	390	1958
ABRAM		175	495	1853

Table -1 Age of the Patriarchs as Expressed in Genesis

If this is the case, then the ages would reduce to those in **Table - 2**. and the life spans of the pre-flood patriarchs make sense, but the life spans of the post-flood patriarchs, and certainly the age at which both sired sons, make no sense at all because this would require them to sire children while they themselves were but children and, in some cases, less than six years old. Regardless of which figure is accepted, it would seem clearly to state that the universe and the Earth are less than 10,000 years old. This seems to present an obstacle impossible to overcome. Where then does the answer to this dilemma lie?

Patriarch	Age at Birth of Son	Total Age
PRE FLOOD		
ADAM	10.83	77.50
SETH	8.75	76.00
ENOSH	7.50	75.42
KENAN	5.83	75.83
MAHALAL	5.42	74.58
JARED	13.50	80.17
ENOCH	5.42	30.42
METHUSELAH	15.58	80.75
LAMECH	15.17	64.75
NOAH	50.00	79.17
POST FLOOD		
SHEM	8.33	50.00
ARPACHS	2.92	36.50
SHELAH	2.50	36.08
EBER	2.83	38.67
PELEG	2.50	19.92
REU	2.67	19.92
SERUG	2.50	19.17
NAHOR	2.42	12.33
TERAH	5.83	17.08
ABRAHAM	0.00	14.58

Table – 2 Ages of the Patriarchs

Skeptics point out that the Genesis genealogy must be a fabrication because it has humans ranging in life spans of 365 years for Enoch to 969 years for Methuselah; these life spans far exceed the oldest age for any human for which there is any reliable evidence. All evidence strongly indicates that the average life expectancy has been rising and not descending as literalists contend. For example, 5,000 years ago the average life span was less than 35 years. Little more than 200 years ago the human life span was not much more than 45 years and with a high mortality rate for children – about half the children failing to reach adulthood. Only in the last century did medical science progress to the point where life expectancy began to rise to the present level of nearly 80 years. It is of interest that the Bible, Genesis 6:3, claims that the maximum age of humans will be 120 years. Not long ago the only human with a verifiable record lived just a short time past 120 years. All other record holders for old age have lived on average about 114 years.

In order for humans to attain the advanced ages described by the Patriarch’s list they would have to be immune to all disease and to have dramatically slowed the aging process; two steps that modern science has yet to achieve. Thousands of years ago living conditions were unsanitary, diseases were rampant, medical knowledge was primitive, if non-existent, there was death from starvation caused

by crop failure and/or depletion of game, polluted water, warfare, accidents, and civil strife, all contributed to a short life expectancy. No skeletal remains have ever been found that indicate an age at death much beyond 100 years. If young-earth creationists insist on making the claim that humans lived to hundreds of years old in the past then they must provide physical evidence, and such evidence they have consistently failed to provide.

The Patriarch List of the Bible lists ten patriarchs and the Kings List, as recorded in Sumerian cuneiform tablets, as described by Berossus³, priest of Bel Marduk and a historian of Babylonia who lived sometime between 356 BCE-261 BCE, lists ten kings. Some biblical commentators declare that the Sumerian King's list **Table – 3** was based on the Hebrew Patriarch's list as found in Genesis chapter 5. Assyriologists soundly disagree and place the age of the Sumerian Kings List as predating the Patriarchs list by a few hundred years, if not in an even more remote time. If the Hebrew list was derived from the Sumerian list, then why doesn't it agree? My speculation is the Hebrews had an oral genealogy that went back only a few thousand years, and they reduced the Sumerian to match theirs. If so, then how did they do this?

No.	PATRIARCH'S LIST	AGE AT BIRTH OF NEXT GENERATION	SUMERIAN KINGS LIST	YEARS REIGNED
1	ADAM	130	ALOROS	36,000
2	SETH	105	ALAPAROS	10,800
3	ENOSH	90	AMELON	46,800
4	KENAN	70	AMMENON	43,200
5	MAHAHALEL	65	MEGALAROS	64,800
6	JARED	162	DAONOS	36,000
7	ENOCK	65	EUEDORACHES	64,800
8	METHUSELAH	187	AMENPSINO	36,000
9	LAMECH	182	OPARTES	28,800
10	NOAH'S AGE AT FLOOD	600	XISUTHROS	64,800
	SUM of YEARS	1,656		432,000
	WEEKS	86,400	LUSTRA	86,400

Table – 3 Patriarchs List vs. Berossus Sumerian Kings List

In E.A. Spiecer's Anchor Bible book of Genesis, there were references that lead to an obscure article written just before the turn of the 20th century and published in the 1913 edition of the Encyclopedia Judaica. The author was Professor Julius Oppert³ (1825-1905), a French Jewish Assyriologist, who was

born in Germany but was naturalized as a French citizen in recognition of his services during an 1851 archaeologist expedition to Mesopotamia. In 1857 he was appointed professor of Sanskrit and comparative philology in the school of languages connected to the Bibliotheque Nationale (National Library of France). He was fluent in English, French, German, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and the language of the Sumerians. Oppert's influence on Semitic scholarship was profound, and in 1881 he became a member of Academie des Inscriptions et des Belles-Lettres and in 1891 became president of the Academy. Professor Oppert became a renowned authority in Assyrian culture and the decipherment of Sumerian cuneiform tablets. He noted, as did E.A. Speiser, that there is a parallel between the story of creation in the Bible and the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh. On page 42 of The Anchor Bible book of Genesis E.A., Speiser states:

“It is suggestive at any rate that the biblical account of the ark (*of Noah*) landed on a peak in the Ararat range, whereas the Akkadian version has it grounded on Mount Nisir, in the vicinity of modern Sulaimaniya. Armenia had various connections with the Hurrians, and the Hurrians had intimate contacts with the Hebrews. On this roundabout reasoning, the Hurrians could have served as intermediaries in the transmission of the antediluvian lists to biblical chroniclers.”

If the Biblical Patriarch List was derived from the Babylonian Kings list, then the problem becomes more complicated because the Kings list ranges in the tens of thousands of years from 10,800 to 64,800 years versus Patriarch lifetimes of less than 1,000 years in the Genesis version. Obviously no king or dynasty has ever lasted tens of thousands of years.

The Biblical story of the flood of Noah has much in common with the Sumerian version except with the account of the time that transpired from the creation of the universe to the universal flood of Noah. Professor Oppert determined that those involved in writing the Genesis version, or those who may have edited it at a later date, reduced the time frame of the Babylonian version to match the perceived genealogical history of the Hebrew people.

Professor Oppert's calculations⁴ are somewhat difficult to follow but may be reviewed in their entirety on pages 67-69 of the 1913 edition of the Jewish Encyclopedia.

According to Professor Oppert the Babylonians assumed a sexagesimal unit of measure based on 60 rather than on our decimal system based on 10; however, our reckoning of time and measurement of angles are all based on Sumerian concepts. 60 seconds, 60 minutes and 360 degrees in a circle, etc.

Quoting Professor Oppert's article:

“The Chaldeans admitted the eternity of the world without any beginning;

but the existing astronomical bodies had a commencement. From the creation of these astronomical bodies to the great cataclysm, or the Deluge (*Noah's Flood*), they assumed a sexagesimal unit, the number of the seconds in a day; that is, 60 seconds x 60 minutes x 24 hours = 86,400 seconds, and called it a lustra. The unit of the Babylonian school was 60 months, or 5 years, times the seconds in a day (a lustra); that is, 432,000 years (86,400 x 5 = 432,000).”

The Hebrew scribes took the 86,400 years of the Babylonians and divided it by the number of weeks in a year; that is, 86,400 / 52.1739 weeks in a year according to their reckoning and came up with 1,656 years. They then divided the 1,656 years into 72 periods of 23 years or 1,200 weeks; apparently they did this reduction so that the time frame would match their genealogical legends. Professor Oppert determined that the Patriarch list was calculated as follows:

Adam to Jared 130+105+90+70+65	= 460 x 86,400 / 1656 = 24,000 weeks
Mahalalel to Methuselah 162+65+187	= 414 x 86,400 / 1656 = 21,600 weeks
<u>Lamech to Noah 182 + 600</u>	<u>= 782 x 86,400 / 1656 = 40,800 weeks</u>
Total 1,656 years	= 86,400 weeks

A simpler way to see the calculation is to take 24,000 Babylonian weeks in the first line and divide by the weeks in a year (52.1739) to arrive at 460 years. Professor Oppert goes on to state: “The corresponding Babylonian figures relating to the ten antediluvian Sumerian kings are:

The first three together	= 93,600 years = 18,720 lustra
The following two together	= 108,000 years = 21,600 lustra
<u>The remaining five</u>	<u>= 230,400 years = 46,080 lustra</u>
Totals	432,000 years = 86,400 lustra

The Bible (*Genesis*) has ----- 86,400 Weeks
 The Chaldean texts have -----86,400 Lustra

What legends the Hebrew and Chaldean authors used in apportioning the years assigned to each of the Hebrew patriarchs and the Chaldean kings appear now to be lost to history.

E.A. Speiser made a cryptic remark in one of his writings, indicating that he believed the Babylonian figure of 432,000 years came from a source farther to the east of Samaria. The origin of the Hebrew and Chaldean chronologies seems to trace back to the oldest extant religious text the Rig Veda. The figure 432,000 years is the length of the present age in Hinduism; that is, the Kali Yuga. There are four ages in Hinduism.^{5,6}

Krta Yuga	=	1,728,000 years
Treta Yuga	=	1,296,000 years
Dvapara Yuga	=	864,000 years
<u>Kali Yuga</u>	=	<u>432,000 years</u>
MahaYuga	=	4,320,000 years

The Hindu text appears to record time in eras just like modern science breaks the history of the Earth into eras from the Hadean to the present Pleistocene. It may be that the Kings in the Sumerian text are not kings and the patriarchs in the Biblical text are not human beings but geological ages.

In the Hindu religion Brahma is the Allah of Islam, the God of Christianity and the Yahweh of Judaism. Brahma is the creator of the universe and one Maha Yuga x 1,000 equals one day of Brahma or 4,320,000,000 years. It is interesting that this length of time nearly matches the age of the Earth as determined by modern science or perhaps indicates when the precursors of life first began to form shortly after the formation of the Earth at 4.5 to 4.6 billion years ago. Recent finds indicate that primitive life may have been present at 4,290,000,000 years ago.

A day and night for Brahma is 4,320,000,000 x 2 or 8,640,000,000 human years. A year of Brahma is 8,640,000,000 human years x 360 days in a Hindu year or 3,110,400,000,000; that is, three trillion one hundred and ten billion four hundred million years. The life time of Brahma is 100 of these years or 311.04 trillion years, a Maha Kalpa. Science estimates that the universe will reach heat death at some time after 100 trillion years. Amazing how people in a distant age could come up with figures that match modern science. According to the Hindu text at the end of this time, the universe is no more. At the end of this vast age Brahma does not die in the usual sense; rather Brahma rests and after a period of time, some say 100 million years, Brahma thinks a thought and the creative cycle begins once again as it has in the past and will in the future. Interestingly, the latest concepts of how the universe began involves the collision of 'branes', vast entities of immense size that set off a Big Bang and the creation of matter and energy. These collisions occur periodically over vast stretches of time and appear to have been doing so for an incalculable number of times and will continue to do so for an incalculable number of times in the future and seem to agree with the Hindu version of creation. The number of times this has occurred is a number beyond our ability to calculate except to use the words "an infinite number of times".

Skeptics have posed the question "If God made the universe, well then who made God?" Brahma, like the God of the Christians, Hebrews, and Moslems, has no beginning and no end and is eternal. Perhaps God is something beyond space and time. As sentient humans, we are aware that we have a beginning and an eventual end. We find it near impossible to imagine something that never had a beginning and will never have an end. Mountains will arise and eventually they

will erode away; our sun will eventually become a red giant in about 5 billion years, and then become a dead cinder, and eventually all the stars will exhaust their fuel and become dark. In some vast age the universe itself will finally become vacant, cold, and dark. In science it is the time well beyond 100 trillion year in the epoch of heat death of the universe referred to as the 'Big Freeze'. Interesting how the ancients came up with these immense numbers that just happen to agree with modern science.

Summary and conclusions

Professor Julius Oppert believes the Biblical account is taken from the Sumerian Kings list and that the Hebrews reduce the Kings list of 432,000 years^{3,4} to meet what they perceived to be their genealogy. Apparently the Sumerians obtained their age of the Earth from the oldest extant religious document. That source gives the day of God as 4,320,000,000 years^{5,6}, which is a time-line in close agreement with the latest findings of when life first appeared on Earth. It is interesting to note that these ancient texts were written in an age of scientific ignorance and evoke the question of how could these ancients have arrive at lengths of time that approximate modern scientific findings.

There are those that will undoubtedly object to a connection between ancient Hindu texts and the Biblical book of Genesis. Rather than object, they should realize that the connection from Hinduism to the Chaldean and then to the Hebrew is a confirmation of the validity of Genesis as a record of evolution and not a myth. Even so, there will be those who will resist accepting any association between the Bible and other religions. It is human arrogance, ignorance, and bigotry that posit that their religion is the only true religion and reject the possibility that other religions, other cultures, may contain truths. Perhaps in time, they will consider that a supreme intelligence would not favor any of its creations more than another, any more than a human mother or father would favor one child to the neglect of the rest. Each civilization received the word and recorded it in a manner compatible with their culture. If we read about other religions and look for things that are common, we may see common threads. The Rules of Reciprocity⁷ is an example because it occurs in virtually every religion on Earth, and these rules constitute the very foundation of all religions.

NOTES:

- 1) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ussher_chronology
- 2) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/julius-oppert>
- 3) <http://prajnaquest.fr/blog/wp-content/uploads/Babylonaica-of-Berossus.pdf>
Pages 18-19
- 4) <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/4373-chronology#anchor4>
- 5) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_units_of_time
- 6) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_cosmology

7) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Rule#sikhism