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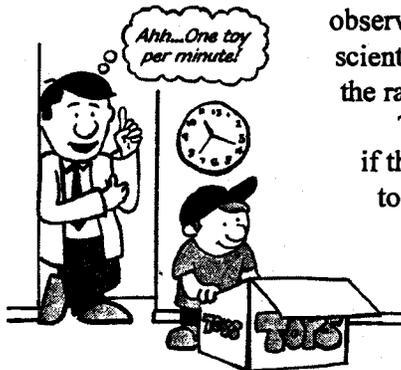
THE DATING GAME

How old is the earth? There are many scientific ways for dating the earth. Some ways show the earth to be only hundreds of years old. Others show it to be thousands of years old, while still others, may show an age of billions of years. The whole problem of dating the earth is that we are trying to date something of **unknown age**. *All dating methods are based on guesses that may or may not be true.*

This story shows the problem of dating and assumptions. Suppose a scientist came home one day to find his son Tommy



putting away toys in his bedroom. Being an observant fellow, the scientist noticed that the "second" hand of the wall clock reached twelve just as Tommy dropped a toy into the toy box. Tommy then walked to another toy, picked it up, returned and dropped it into the toy box, just as the "second" hand on the clock reached twelve once again. The



scientist watched Tommy picking up toys for ten minutes, and then asked himself, "I wonder how long Tommy has been doing that?"

To answer the question, the scientist went to the toy box and counted 29 toys.

Having just watched (observed) Tommy picking up toys at a rate of one toy per minute, the scientist concluded that Tommy had been picking up toys for 29 minutes. Is that how long Tommy had been picking up toys? Well, maybe... To come to that answer the scientist had to make some guesses about the past that he **did not observe** (see.) If his guesses are wrong, his answer will also be wrong.

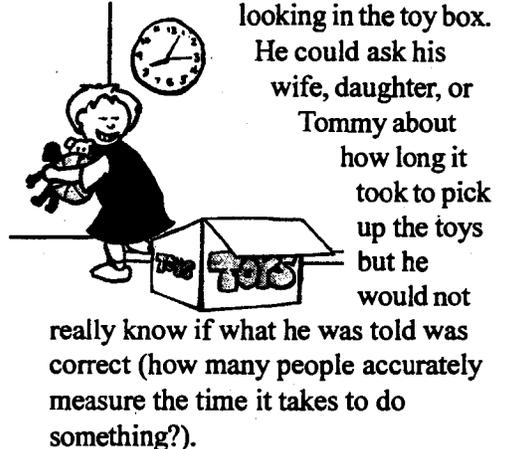
The first thing that the scientist had to assume (guess) about the past is that Tommy had been picking up all the toys at a constant rate. All he scientifically knew is what Tommy had picked up in the last ten minutes. Perhaps the closer toys did not take as long to pick up as those farther away. Perhaps Tommy was getting tired and had actually slowed down from when he began. Or maybe Tommy was getting better at picking up his toys and was doing it faster than when he began. By observing the present rate, the scientist does not necessarily know the rate of the past.

The scientist then had to guess if there were any toys in the box to start with. He was not there to observe if the box was empty when Tommy started, therefore he can only guess. If his guess is wrong, his answer will also

be wrong.

The next guess the scientist had to make was if any toys had been added to, or taken away from the toy box before he saw Tommy was putting toys in. Perhaps, unknown to the scientist, his wife had put away a few toys from the living room before she made Tommy clean up the toys in his

room. Or, maybe Tommy's sister had borrowed an armful of toys from the toy box and taken them to her room. The scientist would have absolutely no way of knowing just by looking in the toy box.



He could ask his wife, daughter, or Tommy about how long it took to pick up the toys but he would not really know if what he was told was correct (how many people accurately measure the time it takes to do something?).

How old is the earth? We can study and know many things about rocks and minerals. However, rocks, rock layers, or fossils are **not** found with tags or labels giving their age. Every dating method used to date rocks essentially uses the same basic ways as the scientist did with his son. A lot of guesses have to be made about the past.

No method can scientifically prove or disprove the age of the earth. Thankfully, we have a reliable record in the Word of God, the Bible. Using the genealogies found in the Bible, the time of the creation of the earth and universe is about 6,000 years ago. We must make a decision as to what we will believe—the ideas of man or the Word of God.



HOW OLD IS THE EARTH?

(adapted from Kay Arthur's *God's Amazing Creation*)

Here is an exercise for you to do to find out how old the earth is according to the Bible. Genesis 1:1 tells us "In the beginning God

created the heavens and the earth." That is when time began. On day 6 of creation God created Adam. From the genealogies in the Bible we can know how many years it was from Adam to the Flood. Look up the verses below to find out how old the father was when his son was born. **Note...these names are from the King James version, so your names might be spelled different.*

| Verse in Genesis | Father | Son | Age of the Father |
|------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 5:3 | Adam | Seth | |
| 5:6 | Seth | Enos | |
| 5:9 | Enos | Cainan | |
| 5:12 | Cainan | Mahalaleel | |
| 5:15 | Mahalaleel | Jared | |
| 5:18 | Jared | Enoch | |
| 5:21 | Enoch | Methuselah | |
| 5:25 | Methuselah | Lamech | |
| 5:28 | Lamech | Noah | |
| 5:32 | Noah | Shem, Ham, Japheth | |
| 11:10 | Shem | Arphaxad | |
| | | Total | |

Now look up Genesis 11:10 to find out how many years after the Flood Shem had Arphaxad. _____ By subtracting that number from the Total will give you the time from Creation to the Flood. (A) _____

Next look up verses below to find out how many years from Flood to Abraham.

| Verse in Genesis | Father | Son | Age of the Father |
|------------------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 11:12 | Arphaxad | Salah | |
| 11:14 | Salah | Eber | |
| 11:16 | Eber | Peleg | |
| 11:18 | Peleg | Reu | |
| 11:20 | Reu | Serug | |
| 11:22 | Serug | Nahor | |
| 11:24 | Nahor | Terah | |
| 11:26 | Terah | Abram, Nahor, Haran | |
| | | TOTAL (B) | |

Now look up Matthew 1:17 to find out how long from Abraham to Christ.

| Verse | Events | Number of Generations |
|--------------|--|-----------------------|
| Matthew 1:17 | Abraham to David | |
| Matthew 1:17 | David until the carrying away into Babylon | |
| Matthew 1:17 | Carrying away into Babylon unto Christ | |
| | Total (C) | |

A generation is the time from the birth of a person to the birth of his children. Although the Bible does not tell us how long a generation was, a good guess is probably between 30 to 50 years.

If a generation was 30 years...

$30 \times (C) = \text{_____} (D)$ time from Abraham to Christ.

If a generation was 50 years...

$50 \times (C) = \text{_____} (E)$ time from Abraham to Christ.

Fill in the table below to get the approximate Biblical ages of the earth

| Creation To Flood | Flood to Abraham | Abraham To Christ | Christ to this Year (2003) | Age of Earth |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| A+ | B+ | D+ | + | = |
| A+ | B+ | E+ | + | = |

What did you get? (Answers below) As you can see the earth is only thousands of years old; certainly not the millions upon billions that evolution teaches. Again, at some point we must make a decision in what we are to believe; the ideas of man or the Word of God?

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The earth is about 5,207 years to 6,047 years old.

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