

# Calculating the Date of Creation and the Flood:

## A Young-Earth Creationist View

THINKSTOCK

By J. Paul Tanner

The proposals presented here are based on the assumption that the dates given in the Bible are taken at face value and that the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 are “tight” (without gaps). A detailed elaboration and defense of these calculations appear in my article “Old Testament Chronology and Its Implications for the Creation and Flood Accounts” (*Bibliotheca Sacra* 172 [Jan-Mar 2015]).

### 931 BC. Inauguration of Rehoboam as King of Judah

Rehoboam’s accession year was from Nisan 1 to Tishri 1 of 931 BC [These are months on the ancient Hebrew calendar]. This is established by correlation with the Battle of Qarqar in 853 BC (a firm date in Assyrian chronology). In this battle, the Assyrian King Shalmaneser III fought a 12-king alliance that included Hadadezer of Damascus and King Ahab of Israel. King Ahab died in 853 BC, shortly after this battle. The Assyrian victory is recorded on the Kurkh Monolith Stela. From this historical event, we can reliably calculate Rehoboam’s inauguration as 931 BC based on Ahab’s death and the dates given for the Judean kings in the Bible.

This is further supported by the invasion of Shishak, King of Egypt, in 925 BC (= Sheshonq I who ruled approximately 943-922 BC). See 2 Chr 12:2-9. He invaded Canaan in Rehoboam’s 5th year, which is understood to be his 5th regnal year.

+ 40 yrs. *The years of Solomon’s reign (971-931 BC). See 1 Kgs 11:41-43.*

### 971 BC. Inauguration of Solomon as King

- 4 yrs. *The construction of the Temple was started in Solomon’s 4th year. See 1 Kgs 6:1.*

Solomon’s first regnal year was Tishri 1 of 971 BC to Tishri 1 of 970 BC. The temple was started in the 2nd month of his fourth year (i.e., his 4th regnal year), which would be in the spring of 967 BC.

### 967 BC. Start of Solomon’s Temple

+479 yrs. *The years from the Exodus to the start of the Temple construction. See 1 Kgs 6:1.*

Since the temple was started in the 480th year of the “going out” from Egypt, 479 complete years had transpired. [Note that the LXX has 440 years rather than 480].

### 1446 BC. Date of the Exodus

This would be March/April of 1446 BC (in the first month of Nisan).

+ 430 yrs. *The years that the “sons of Israel” lived in Egypt. See Exod 12:40-41.*

The LXX adds the words “and in the land of Canaan” in Exod 12:40, and on this basis some scholars use the figure 400 years rather than 430 for the time they

lived in Egypt. I go with the Hebrew Bible and use the figure 430.

### 1876 BC. The year that the Hebrews formally entered Egypt.

This is the point at which Jacob and the “whole family” came into Egypt, at which time Jacob was presented before Pharaoh. See Gen 47:7-9 and compare Acts 7:11-15.

### 1876 BC. The year that the Hebrews entered Egypt.

+ 130 yrs. *The age of Jacob according to Gen 47:7-9 when he was presented before Pharaoh.*

### 2006 BC. The year of Jacob’s birth.

+ 60 yrs. *The age of Isaac at the time of Jacob’s birth. See Gen 25:26.*

### 2066 BC. The year of Isaac’s birth.

+100 yrs. *The age of Abram (later, Abraham) at the time of Isaac’s birth. See Gen 21:5.*

### 2166 BC. The year of Abram’s birth [Abram lived 175 yrs (Gen 25:7), 2166-1991 BC].

*Problem:* We do not know the exact year in which Abram’s father, Terah, was born. The text is vague as to how old Terah was when Abram was born.

Genesis 11:26 indicates that Terah was 70 when he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. However, there is a conflict if we assume that Abram was the first-born son. According to Gen 12:4, Abram was age 75 when he departed Haran for Canaan in 2091 BC. But according to Acts 7:4, Abram left Haran *after* his father had died. Genesis 11:32 tells us that Terah died at age 205. Therefore, Terah could not have been 70 at Abram’s birth *and also* have died before Abram left Haran.

Based on this data, the latest date that Terah could have been born would be 205 years before Abram departed from Haran, i.e., 2296 BC (2091 + 205). To calculate the earliest date that Terah could have been born, we need to consider Abram’s wife Sarah.

Terah left Ur for Haran *after* Abram and Sarah were married (see Gen 11:31). We know from Gen 17:17 that Sarah was ten years younger than Abram, and from Gen 23:1 that she lived to be 127 years old. If Abram was born in 2166 BC, then Sarah lived 2156-2029 BC. We do not know how old Sarah was at the time of her marriage to Abram, but we

can probably assume she was *at least* 15 years old. Therefore, Abram and Sarah were married by at least 2141 BC (2156 – 15), and Terah and the family moved to Haran sometime *after* 2141 (more likely several years later).

I conclude from this, then, that Terah died sometime between the years 2141 BC (the earliest likely date of Abram’s marriage) and 2091 BC (when Abram left Haran for Canaan). Since Terah lived to be 205 (Gen 11:32), then the earliest he could have been born would be 2346 BC (2141 + 205) and the latest 2296 BC (2091 + 205)—a 50 year span. Or, we can say that Terah was born in 2321 BC ± 25 years (averaging 2346 and 2296).

### 2321 BC ± 25 yrs. Terah’s birth [All dates earlier than Abraham can only be dated to ± 25 yrs].

+ 220 yrs. *The years from Arpachshad to Terah according to the Genealogy in Gen 11:10-26.*

+ 2 yrs. *The time after the flood until Shem became the father of Arpachshad. See Gen 11:10.*

### 2543 BC (± 25 yrs). Noah’s Flood.

+ 600 yrs. *The years from Noah’s birth until the Flood. See Gen 7:6.*

### 3143 BC ± 25 yrs. Noah’s birth.

+ 1056 yrs. *The years from Adam’s birth until Noah’s birth according to the Genealogy in Gen 5:3-32.*

### 4199 BC (± 25 yrs). The Approximate Date of Creation. See Genesis 1. ■■

*J. Paul Tanner is currently a traveling teacher and curriculum writer for BEE World Ministries, and lives near Tyler, Texas*