

How Long Did Adam And Eve Live In The Garden Of Eden?

A while back we started studying the Book of Genesis, the Book of Beginnings. Anyone familiar with the Bible account of creation knows God created everything in six days, Genesis 1. Included in the creation account was Adam and Eve. In the beginning the Universe was mature in the sense there was the sun, moon, and stars giving light to the earth; vegetation was full grown, as were the animals. Adam and Eve were not babies upon creation but proclaimed to be man and woman, indicating full grown.

The frequent question when studying this passage is "How long they lived in the Garden of Eden"? The Bible does not give us a specific length of time and some, wanting to reconcile the creation account with evolution, say they may have lived in the Garden a long time before sinning against God. So, let us look at what the Bible does and doesn't say about their length of time in the Garden.

Genesis 1.17 states God made man and woman in His own image. Verse 28 reads, "Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." There is no reason to believe Adam and Eve waited until after being cast out from the Garden before fulfilling God's command to be fruitful and multiply. Those who see Adam and Eve living in the Garden for a long period of time must admit they would have had a lot of children if they lived there for thousands or millions of years. Yet we do not read of any of their children until after they were cast out of the Garden.

Another fact was answered when Jesus was questioned about divorce in Matthew 19 said, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?" Notice the words "at the beginning" in this passage. Jesus is referring to the beginning of creation and the beginning of the marriage relationship. God created woman to be a helper or one suitable for Adam, Genesis 2.18. Further down in this chapter, God said, "24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." There is no indication they lived together outside the marriage relationship. When God created them, He also created the marriage bond. Therefore, God spoke of marriage in the beginning. We cannot find a long period of time between Eve's creation and the marriage relationship. Jesus did not say thousands or millions of years after the beginning God created man, but in the beginning.

The length of time Adam lived on this earth tells us something about how long Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden. "After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. 5 So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died." (Genesis 5:4-5) To get thousands or millions of years in the Garden of Eden one must conclude Adam and Eve lived there that long since the Garden was part of God's creation. Genesis 2.2 God rest from His work of creation. In other words, God quit creating. Then in Genesis 2.8-14 we read of God planting the Garden. The planting of the garden was part of God's creating in Genesis 1. Therefore, Adam and Eve could not have lived in the Garden any longer than nine hundred and thirty years since that is the total length of his life.

In Genesis 5 we read of Seth's birth. "And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth." (Genesis 5:3) From Adam's creation to Seth's birth was one hundred and thirty years. This pretty much puts a limit on the time Adam and Eve could have lived in the Garden at one hundred thirty years. Actually, it had to be quite a bit earlier when Adam and Eve sinned because they had Cain and Abel first. Then Cain and Abel had to grow up so as to offer sacrifice to God. It was after Cain killed Abel when Seth was born. "And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed." 26 And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD." (Genesis 4:25-26) So it had to be less than one hundred thirty years minus the years of Cain's life.

Finally, God placed man and woman in the Garden in Genesis 2 which was in the beginning. He then told them what would happen if they ate of the tree of good and evil, the tree of knowledge, Genesis 2.16. Genesis 3 gives us the account of them eating the forbidden fruit. Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" - 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken." (Genesis 3:22-23) God said "in the day you eat of it you shall surely die". (Genesis 2.17) God did not allow them to live in the Garden after they had sinned. The very day they sinned they were cast out of the Garden.

While one cannot say exactly how long they were in the Garden, one can say they live in it until they sinned against God and then were cast out. Also, it had to be less than one hundred thirty years due to

Adam's age when Seth was born. There is no room for evolution and its millions of years to occur in Genesis 1 & 2. - - Dennis Tucker

(Some points in the article were taken from an article "How Long Were Adam and Eve in the Garden Before Sinning?" written by Jeff Miller, Ph.D. and available at Apologetics Press.)