

MISSION: IMPERATIVE!

...presenting the nature of creation

900+ down to 70....Why?

**WHY
DON'T WE
LIVE FOR
900
YEARS
TODAY?**

**ARE WE
EATING
THE
WRONG
FOODS?**

**IS IT THE
AIR WE
BREATHE?**

A fascinating subject that many people have wondered about, and about which I have been asked many times recently, is this: Why don't we live over 900 years anymore - just like Adam & Noah? What happened?

A lot of people have attempted to answer this question. Two of the most common answers that I have heard are as follows:

1. The pre-flood earth had a different atmosphere than today, and somehow the difference caused the decline in age.

2. People were only given permission to eat meat after the flood, and since meat is considered by some to be "basically harmful", this has caused the negative effect.

Supposedly, a reason such as one of these has influenced the shortening of our lifespans by about 92%. Interestingly, there is no evidence of a reason why either of these would do that. In fact, you will find that even those people brought up with the most perfect diets possible will still die before they reach even 12% of the age that humans used to live before the flood.

A fascinating article, written by Dr. Carl Wieland, published in the Sept.-Nov., 1999 issue of Creation Magazine, proposes that we grow old and die, at the average age we do now, because of our genetic makeup - and a perfect diet (or a perfect environment for that matter) can do virtually nothing to change it.

According to Dr. Wieland, when a cell in our body "gets old", it doesn't die - it just divides into two new copies. Theoretically, this should just keep going on and on like this. Of course, if this would happen, none of your body parts would wear out, and that would mean that *you* would never wear out. You would just keep on living and never get old.

So then, why do you age? You age and die because your cells do, in fact, stop dividing and you succumb to failure of various body organs. It is known that

ordinary human cells will only divide about 80-90 times, then no more. This is controlled by instructions written on the DNA code. Apparently, the cells in the patriarchs (Adam - Noah) were programmed to divide many, many more times than are ours, today. So, what happened to reduce the number of times our cells divide compared to Adam's and Noah's?

The simple answer is - there was a drastic genetic "bottleneck" at the time of the flood (and perhaps at other major "population events", such as at Babel). In that situation, the entire human race was reduced down to Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives. It is entirely possible that the genetic information present in Noah that encoded for a long life, was not passed on (remember, too, that the curse would have started genetic breakdown 1,656 years before the flood!). Since it appears that much of the aging process is under genetic control, loss of some of the genes coding for longevity may be a major reason for the post-flood drop in human lifespans.

If that is true, there might be other genetic factors, too. Mutations, for example, might have contributed to the continued decline in lifespans for the centuries after the flood. Isaac lived to 180, Moses to 120, King David down to 71. Dr. Walter Brown has made some startling discoveries related to the origins of radioactivity at the time of the flood. This may have dramatically damaged genetic material.

Dr. Wieland: "Of course, the ultimate reason for all aging and death is the curse on all creation (Genesis 3). Adam was told that if he disobeyed God, 'dying, you shall die' (literal Hebrew). Adam immediately died spiritually, and began to die physically on that same day, just as we are all dying today. Modern genetic research shows that we all inherit the inevitability of aging and death. When we look at our encroaching wrinkles in the mirror, it should remind us of the awfulness of sin in the sight of a holy God. And, it should cause us immense thankfulness that God has provided a way of escape from His own righteous judgment on sin, through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ." □