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THE SEPTUAGINT VS. THE MASORETIC TEXT ... A STATISTICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Introduction (Background): This paper continues the discussion on whether the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT) or the Greek Septuagint (LXX) more accurately preserves the original chronology of the patriarchs. For context, the LXX indicates we are approximately 7,500 years Anno Mundi (year after creation or AM) while the MT indicates we are approximately 6,000 years AM. This paper focuses on post flood chronology (Noah to Moses) due to the opportunity to use the concept of biological decay curves and statistical comparison. Additional chronologies or historical data points are provided for additional insight.

Methods: Assuming the concept of a genetic biological decay curve in the post flood chronology (length of patriarch's life) is legitimate, both the MT and LXX chronologies are used with Microsoft Excel curve fitting to data function to generate power curves that best fit their respective data. A statistical approach using the R-squared coefficient of determination (a confidence measure of data to curve) for both the MT and LXX should provide an indication which text more accurately captures the concept of post flood biological genetic decay and hence which text more accurately preserves the original chronology. This indication may also be supported by Benford's law of anomalous numbers, and visual comparison to provide additional context on the legitimacy of the R-squared comparative results. Macro comparison of chronologies alluded to in various other text and flood stories (preferably separate from Greek and Hebrew influence) are examined for additional insight providing they cluster around LXX or MT chronological data points.

Results: The R-Squared comparison shows that the MT curve has a 7% higher confidence measure of data to curve as compared to the LXX. Visual inspection of the curves identifies anomalous deltas (LXX vs MT lifespan) consistent with a lower R-square confidence measure. Macro comparison of chronologies from various other historical texts does show a clustering of chronology data points that inclines toward the MT.

Conclusions: The statistical comparison and analysis suggest that the Masoretic Text may contain the more accurate preservation of the original chronology of the patriarchs. Examination of others chronologies supports the statistical results.

KEYWORDS

Chronology, genetics, historical, statistical

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