

Genesis 050
Thousands and Not Billions
Genesis 11:14-26
September 12, 2021
Dr. Andy Woods

Let's open our Bibles and open them to Genesis 11:14. The title of our message this morning is "Thousands and Not Billions." As we are continuing on with our verse-by-verse study through the Book of Genesis, we may actually (and I cannot promise it, of course), but we may actually finish part one today. It only took 50 sermons to get here.

We have been spending a lot of time in Genesis 1-11 where we have seen Creation, God's original design; and then we have seen the Fall and what went wrong. Immediately we see the solution of a coming Savior, Jesus Christ. We have seen how Satan tried to stop this Coming One by doing something very strange in the pre-Flood world. God brought an end to that through judgment—the Flood.

We have learned two very important things about God thus far, actually three things: He is Creator; He is Redeemer; He is Judge. You cannot get any higher credentials than that, can you?

Then we made it into Genesis 10-11, where we learned about the dispersion of the nations from Noah's three sons following the global Flood. But we are left with some questions. Where did these nations come from? We get an answer to that in Genesis 11:1-9 with the Tower of Babel, which we have worked our way through the origin of the nations.

Then we come to a genealogy. The genealogy starts with Shem, one of Noah's sons, because the lineage leading to this Messiah is going to come through the line of Shem (Genesis 9:26). This genealogy is going to go from Shem all the way to Terah. Terah is the father of Abram, who later will become Abraham, who is a very special man in the Bible, because it is through this man Abraham, that God is going to start all over, and He is going to create a brand new nation. Through that nation is going to come the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

What we have in this genealogy is an outline. It starts in Genesis 11:10 and it goes all the way through Genesis 11:26.

Genesis Structure

- I. Genesis 1-11 (four events)
 - A. Creation (1-2)
 - B. Fall (3-5)
 - C. Flood (6-9)
 - D. National dispersion (10-11)

1. Table of nations (10)
2. Tower of Babel (11:1-9)
3. Genealogy from Shem to Terah (11:10-32)

Here is the pattern we are going to look at as we look at each of these generations in this genealogy. We have looked at Shem, generation number one. Last time I was with you, we looked at Arpachshad, generation number two, who came after Shem. We talked about the fact that there is a missing name there. When you compare Luke's gospel to Genesis 11, you can see Luke inserts a name, Cainan, between Arpachshad and Shelah.

Old Earth creationists are happy that that gap is there because they think if they can stretch out these genealogies enough, they are going to get their billions of years. But we made the point last time, and we really went into depth about this, that that missing name is really a scribal error. If you want the explanation on that, I would encourage you to take a good look or a good listen to our sermon that we gave on this the last time we were in this study.¹

There is no missing generation in these genealogies from Genesis 5 and 11, as I will try to convince you today. It is wrong for people to build their doctrine of Old Earth Creationism from a scribal error. We talked about that. In fact, Dr. Henry Morris writes:

"Cainan's name should not be included, and its insertion in Luke 3:36 is most likely a copyist's error."²

We pick it up here with generation number three, which is the generation of Shelah. Notice, if you will, Genesis 11:14-15, as we continue with this genealogy:

"Shelah lived thirty years, and became the father of Eber; and Shelah lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Eber, and he had other sons and daughters" (Genesis 11:14-15).

Looking at our rubric here, or our pattern, we are now dealing with generation number three after Shem. This man's name is Shelah, meaning "the sent one." In this genealogy, the age of the patriarch is given at the time his seed son is born, the seed son being the one who is going to carry on the lineage leading to the Messiah. The seed son's name is Eber. Shelah was thirty years old when Eber was born. That is a specific detail there. He lived an additional 403 years. That takes the total years of his life up to 433 years, and he had other sons and daughters.

¹ <https://slbc.org/sermon/genesis-049-an-important-genealogy/>

² Dr. Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 281-82.

The next generation we are dealing with, generation number four, is the generation of Eber. Notice, if you will, Genesis 11:16-17:

"Eber lived thirty-four years, and became the father of Peleg; and Eber lived four hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Peleg, and he had other sons and daughters" (Genesis 11:16-17).

So now we are on generation number four, following Shem. This patriarch's name is Eber. Some believe his name literally means "cross over," and his seed son is Peleg. How old was Eber at the time Peleg was born? Eber was 34 years old. Notice how specific again the information is. Eber lived an additional 430 years, making the grand total years of his life 464 years, and he had other sons and daughters.

What is interesting about this name, Eber, is that it is most likely the origin of the word "Hebrew." Arnold Fruchtenbaum, in his Genesis commentary says:

*"The line of Shem begins in verse 21: And unto Shem, the father of all the children of Eber. Eber in Hebrew is 'Ever' and is the source of the Hebrew word for 'Hebrew,' 'Ivrit.' To be the father of the Hebrews is the main significance of the line of Shem."*³

It stands to reason that you start to see the origin of the word "Hebrew" here with this particular name, particularly since the whole point of this genealogy is to lead to the Hebrew people, the nation of Israel, that will be birthed through Abraham. That nation is very significant because it is through that nation that the Messiah is going to come.

We continue on with Genesis 11:18-19, and now we are in the fifth generation. This takes us to Peleg. Notice what Genesis 11:18-19 says:

"Peleg lived thirty years, and became the father of Reu; and Peleg lived another two hundred and nine years after he became the father of Reu, and he had other sons and daughters" (Genesis 11:18-19).

In generation number five we have this man Peleg. His name actually means "division." Why is that? Because we learned earlier in Genesis 10 that it was in his day that the earth was divided. (More on that in just a second.) How old was Peleg at the birth of his son Reu, the seed son? He was 30 years old, and the Bible is very clear that Peleg lived an additional 209 years, which made him 239 years.

Notice that you see how the life spans of people are starting to shrink? The last patriarch lived 464 years, and now this particular one that we are speaking of only lives

³ Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Genesis*, 217.

239 years. He had, of course, other sons and daughters. It was in his day the earth was divided. You might recall Genesis 10:25, which says:

"Two sons were born to Eber; the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan" (Genesis 10:25).

Something very interesting happened in the days of Peleg: the earth was divided. There is a lot of interesting conjecture on this. I just got back from a conference with a lot of Young Earth creationists there, and they talk a lot about the division of the continents happening at this point—the continents split. It is a very interesting discussion, and maybe it happened that way. I am just not so sure it fits the context of Genesis 10 and 11.

Is the division of the earth due to the confounding of the language, not the splitting of the earth? Because we learn from Genesis 11:1:

"Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words" (Genesis 11:1).

When you get into this whole discussion about continental divide, which is very interesting, I am just not sure that that is what it is talking about. I think what it is dealing with is not the division of the continents, but the division of humanity. God confounded the language, and the workers at the Tower of Babel could not cooperate with one another. Arnold Fruchtenbaum argues that this is probably the point based on context.

Dr. Henry Morris says:

*"The most obvious interpretation of this verse is that the division was the division of the peoples at the Tower of Babel, as discussed in Genesis 11...These verses seem clearly to refer to a linguistic and geographic division, rather than an actual splitting of the continents."*⁴

Leupold says:

*"The event referred to must be the one under consideration—the Confusion of Tongues."*⁵

Even John Calvin, I think, gets this right. He says:

⁴ Dr. Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 260-61.

⁵ H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, 1:378.

"...in whose days the languages were divided."⁶

It is always interesting to come to the Bible with our questions about science and the division of the continents and how that happened. It just becomes a little difficult when we try to make the Bible force something, we force it to say something it probably is not saying. But there is a lot of debate on that.

Here we come to the sixth generation. This is the generation of Reu. Notice what it says in Genesis 11:20-21:

"Reu lived thirty-two years, and became the father of Serug; and Reu lived two hundred and seven years after he became the father of Serug, and he had other sons and daughters" (Genesis 11:20-21).

Now we are at generation number six, after Shem, and this particular patriarch's name is Reu and the meaning of his name in Hebrew is probably "friend" or "neighbor." His son is named Serug. Notice again the specificity here that the age of the father at the time the seed son is born is 32 years. Then he lived an additional 207 years, which would take the total years of his life up to 239 years. Did he have other sons and daughters? Yes he did.

Then we come to the next generation. This is generation number seven. This is the generation of Serug. Notice, if you will, Genesis 11:22-23:

"Serug lived thirty years, and became the father of Nahor; and Serug lived two hundred years after he became the father of Nahor, and he had other sons and daughters" (Genesis 11:22-23).

We are dealing with generation number seven. The name of this patriarch is named Serug. The meaning of his name in Hebrew is unclear; we are not sure what that means. He had a seed son named Nahor. Serug was exactly 30 years old when Nahor was born; he lived an additional 200 years, taking the total years of his life up to 230 years. He had other sons and daughters.

As we are going through this, I want to remind you of something: all Scripture is God-breathed and profitable, even things that we might not find particularly tantalizing. If that means what it says, and says what it means (and it does), we have to give our attention to all of the Word of God.

Now we come to generation number eight, getting near Terah here. Can you believe it? Genesis 11:24-5 is the generation of Nahor, and it says:

⁶ John Calvin, *Genesis*, 1554 (Edinburgh, UK: Banner of Truth, 1984), p. 324.

"Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and became the father of Terah" (Genesis 11:24).

We are getting close to the end of this because who is the father of Abraham? A man named Terah.

"Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and became the father of Terah; and Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years after he became the father of Terah, and he had other sons and daughters" (Genesis 11:24-25).

We are on generation number eight, and the name is Nahor. Nahor's name actually means "river." Why would his name be named "river"? Because it is probably named after the Euphrates and the Tigris, which is where the Tower of Babel existed. It is where God confounded the language.

A lot of people probably remained in that part of the world. The two great rivers there were the Euphrates and the Tigris. That may mean, or that may give us an indication as to why Nahor's name means "river." His seed son is a man named Terah. How old was Nahor at the birth of Terah? It tells us right there in Genesis 11:4-25: he was exactly 29 years old, and he lived an additional 119 years, which brings the grand total of his life up to 148 years. He had other sons and daughters.

Finally, we get to the very end of this with generation number nine (Genesis 11:26). What does it say there in Genesis 11:26?

"Terah lived seventy years, and became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran" (Genesis 11:26).

So now we are at generation number nine and we finally come to Terah. What does Terah's name mean? It means "moon." Why would you name a kid "moon"? I think a lot of it had to do with paganism. These people are all steeped in paganism. Even when Abram was called from the Ur of the Chaldeans to follow God, he was steeped in paganism. Paganism always worships the creation rather than the Creator.

This is actually the background of Abram, which means that when God called Abram, Abram was not a perfect person. He did not have his theology straight. He did not have his life figured out. God called him because God's specialty is calling the unqualified. Amen. If God's specialty is doing great things through the unqualified, that means I can apply for the job. God does not call the qualified because there are no people that are qualified. Rather, He qualifies the called.

Your Bible teaches that *"all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). God is not looking for perfect people to use because there are no perfect people other than, of course, Jesus Christ. He is not looking so much for pedigree and ability as much as He is looking for availability.

You see this over and over again in the Bible, whether it is Moses or in the Book of Judges with Gideon, or any number of people right down to Abram, none of them are qualified. But God calls them because God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines, which means you should not dismiss yourself as being unqualified to be used by God. The only thing God is looking for is a willing heart.

Look at me, for example. My former profession is a lawyer. You talk about someone totally unqualified to be used of the Lord. The fact of the matter is that God can use anybody—He can even use an attorney. He can even use someone that works for the IRS, a tax-gatherer like Matthew. He could use someone that has a pagan education like Daniel. He could use someone that is steeped in paganism like Abram. This is why I find this so interesting.

We are dealing here with generation number nine. The name is Terah. The name means "moon," probably because of being steeped in paganism. That, by the way, is why God brings forth light before He forms the sun and the moon and the stars on day four of creation (Genesis 1:3): light (Genesis 1:3); sun (Genesis 1:14-19).

The big question there is, how can there be light without the sun? The answer is that God deliberately did it that way because He wanted humanity to understand that He is the true source of light. He does not need the sun. In fact, there is coming a day in human history where there will be no sun and moon. Did you know that? It is in the eternal state. You will find it in Revelation 21:23 and Revelation 22:5. We will not need the sun in that day, because the eternal state will be illuminated by the Son, Jesus Christ.

Paganism always reverses this, and they want to worship the created thing rather than the Creator. Deuteronomy 4:19 warns us against this, and it says:

"And beware not to lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven" (Deuteronomy 4:19).

Do not worship the created thing; worship the Creator. If you want to get a good historical record on why not to do that then read Genesis 1, where light came into existence before the sun existed. And read Revelation 21-22, where light will exist in the Person of Jesus Christ, without the help of the luminaries, the sun and the moon and the stars. Yet Terah's name actually means "moon" because he was steeped in paganism.

Now Terah has three sons. One is named Abram, one is named Nahor, and one is named Haran. How old was Terah when Abram was born? He was 70 years old. If you drop down to Genesis 11:32, you will see that Terah lived an additional 135 years,

bringing the grand total of his life up to 205 years. Other than Abram, did Terah have other sons and daughters? Yes, he did.

It is interesting that Abram's name means "exalted father." Nahor's name means "river," and Haran's name means "mountaineer." Interesting stuff.

I want to give you these three concluding points or observations showing you that what we just read is really a big deal. One thing to understand is this genealogy is a big deal because it is the only genealogy we have connecting the promises given to Shem to Abram. If we did not have this genealogy we would have no reason as to understanding why God called Abram and formed a new nation through him. God called Abraham and formed a new nation through him, because he is the beneficiary of the promises given to Shem that the Messiah is going to come from Shem's line. We know from Genesis 3:15 that this Messiah is coming. Genesis 9:26 tells us that He is coming from Shem's line, and Shem is connected to Abram, the nation of Israel.

Why is Israel such a big deal? Because she is the beneficiary of this messianic blessing. When the Messiah comes into the world, He will not be a Southern Baptist; He will not be a Methodist; He will not be a Presbyterian; He will not even go to a church that plays the organ during worship time; He will not be involved in a contemporary service. He will be Jewish to the core, a physical descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This is why you can find Jesus in the Gospel of John making five trips to Jerusalem. Why does He keep going to Jerusalem? Because that is what Hebrews are supposed to do to celebrate certain feast days. You will find that in Leviticus 23, the Hebrew calendar. Jesus is walking in accordance with the Hebrew calendar because that is who He was. He was a Hebrew. He was not an American. He was a Hebrew. He was Jewish. He had Jewish blood coursing through His veins.

That is why this genealogy is such a big deal because it connects Israel, who is about to be formed in Genesis 12, to the promises of Shem going right back to the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15).

Having said all that, let us make a few observations here. Observation number one is that there are no missing generations in the genealogy that we just read. How do we know that? When we go back to the Genesis 5 genealogy, which connects Noah back to Adam, we see that there were no missing names in that genealogy. Why is that so?

One reason we know is that Seth received his name from Adam and Eve. Obviously, it is the parents that name the children. So there is no missing genealogy between Adam and Seth. Then in Genesis 4:26 we know that Seth named Enoch. Obviously there is no missing name between Seth and Enoch. Then we get to Genesis 5:29 and Lamech named Noah. If parents name children (and I know there are a lot of aggressive

grandparents out there, but usually the way it works is the parents name the children), then there is no missing name between Lamech and Noah.

Jude comments on that genealogy, and he talks about Enoch, the seventh from Adam (Jude 1:14). Start with Enoch and go seven backwards and you will come right to Adam. So Jude, who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, apparently did not feel that there were any missing generations in the Genesis 5 genealogy.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum of that Genesis 5 genealogy says, "It gives the years before and after the birth of the seed-son."⁷ This is something you do not find in any other biblical genealogies other than the one in Genesis 5 and 11. The detail that is given, and you are aware of that detail because we just read through the whole thing, is mind-numbing. It gives the years before and after the birth of the seed son. It tells you exactly how old the father was when the seed son was born. You find that nowhere in any other biblical genealogy.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum says of the Genesis 5 genealogy:

"So this type of language simply does not allow gaps to occur."⁸

Arnold Fruchtenbaum makes the exact same point with the genealogy that we just read through. He says:

"...In Shem's genealogy, as in the previous genealogy of Adam (Genesis 5), the language does not allow for gaps in the genealogy, since the text does not merely say begat, but it is more specific, giving the age of the father when the seed-son is born and how many years the father lived thereafter."⁹

You find no such specificity anywhere else in the Bible other than the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11.

With that being said, why does everybody want there to be missing names here? Generational skipping. It has to do with something James Barr said. Who was James Barr? He was a great Hebrew scholar, and he did not believe one millimeter of this book came from God, which put him at an advantage. It allowed him to simply articulate what it says.

You see, the problem with an evangelical who is bound by the Bible is that once they come up with an interpretation of the Bible, they have to live under it. If you have an evangelical that has been influenced by billions of years, and Charles Darwin, they are

⁷ Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Genesis*, 141.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 231.

the ones that are compromising because whatever they come up with, by way of interpretation, they are bound by. James Barr had no problems declaring the Bible for what it says because he was a liberal and did not have to live under his own conclusions, because he never felt that this book came from God. So James Barr is one of those interpreters of the Bible that is completely without bias. This is what he wrote:

"Probably, So far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that: (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the 24 hours we now experience. (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical history. (c) Noah's flood was understood to be world-wide and extinguish human and animal life except for those in the ark. Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which supposes that the 'days' of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not to be chronological, and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by such professors, as far as I know."¹⁰

In other words, let us just read it for what it says. The Flood covered the whole earth. The genealogies themselves have no gaps in them. The earth, therefore, is about 6,000 years old, because the creation days were 24 hour days. Now, James Barr says, "I am a liberal. I do not have to live under this. But that is what the book says."

Once you start to understand this, you begin to understand why evangelicals are obsessed with finding gaps in these genealogies, because there are seven men that rule the world from the grave. These are people that had godless philosophies. They are dead and gone, but their ideas reign supreme in our world to the point where you do not dare question these things. If you question these things, you are considered anti-intellectual, unscientific.

Who are these seven men that rule the world from the grave? You should know these men and you should know what they taught, because these are the philosophies being forced into the minds of your children and your grandchildren as I speak. As a parent, you need to be able to deactivate what is happening in those little minds.

One name is Karl Marx, who gave us communism. Karl Marx is dead and gone, but my goodness, look at the trajectory of the United States. It is almost as if Karl Marx's theories are alive and well. Another one is Julius Wellhausen, who taught the documentary hypothesis that the first five books of the Bible were not written by Moses,

¹⁰ "Letter from Professor James Barr to David C.C. Watson of the UK, dated 23 April 1984." Cited in Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise: A Biblical and Scientific Refutation of "Progressive Creationism" (Billions of Years), as Popularized by Astronomer Hugh Ross*. Updated and expanded ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publishers, 2014), 134-35.

but written by someone long after the time of Moses. Then there was a man named John Dewey who gave us the compulsory public education system with God completely pushed out of it. Thank you, John Dewey.

All of these people put Christmas tree presents under your Christmas tree. Every day when you wake up, there is a Karl Marx present just waiting for you. There is a Wellhausen Christmas present waiting for you. There is a Dewey present waiting for you. You would not even trust many of these guys to babysit your kids, when you look at their personal lives, let alone imitate or emulate the philosophies they espouse.

Then, of course, there is Sigmund Freud. We know about him—basically a sexual deviant, a sexual pervert who described all human behavior through the lens of sexual repression and things of that nature. Then there is John Maynard Keynes, who says the way to prosper as a nation is to go into debt. In fact, one of our presidential candidates actually said that. He says, "We have to spend money to prosper. Why would he say that? Thank you, John Maynard Keynes. Finally, you have Soren Kierkegaard. I am a little more hazy or fuzzy on him. I believe he gave us relativism, situational ethics. In other words, ethics are not absolute. They are determined by the situation.

By the way, these are all described for you in a wonderful book by the late Dave Breese, "Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave." Required reading if you have not read this.

Right at the top of the list is Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin taught the holy trinity. We have a Holy Trinity that you have to accept by faith as revealed by God. Charles Darwin had a holy trinity is time plus matter plus randomness—time, matter, randomness—equals design.

In other words, and I have used this illustration before, if you took cards numbered one through 52 and you put them in a bag and you numbered them once, just one side, one through 52, put them in a bag, shook up the bag, and threw them on the ground, what is the chance that those cards would line up in a straight line, all number side up, chronologically ordered, starting with number 1 to 52? What are the chances of that happening? Well it is impossible. It is not improbable; it is impossible.

But Darwin came along and he said, "You know what? If you did that for a billion years, eventually it would work out." This is how the Darwinist explains the design in our world without God. How can you get randomness and matter to equal design? How can you get a tornado to go through a junkyard and assemble a 747 aircraft? How can that happen? Give it enough time and it will happen. Give it a billion years and it will happen.

There is no such thing as Darwinism without the issue of time. This is their explanation for the origin of the complexity of life, the DNA molecule, the fact that all of our fingerprints are different, all of our personalities are different. Give it enough time, it will happen. This is how they explain creation without the Creator.

In Darwinism, time is a big deal. So when Christianity was confronted with this in 1859, when Darwin published his "Origin of the Species," the Christian church adopted a strategy by the name of a man named W.H. Greene, who basically articulated "backward Christian soldier." In fact, there are biographies of this man, W.H. Green. He was one of the most elite professors of Old Testament at Princeton University at the time, which used to be, believe it or not, a Bible based institution.

You can watch or read the biographies of Green's sons describing the anguish that their father was under when Darwin's "Origin of the Species," with its assumption of time, was becoming popular. As an evangelical, he had no idea how to handle this, and so the biographies of his sons describe him on the porch, on the balcony, just pacing back and forth, back and forth. "What are we going to do with this issue of time that the scientific world is telling us is a scientific fact?"

Finally, Green wrote an article saying, "I figured it out. There are gaps in the genealogy of Genesis 5 in Genesis 11. So what we can do is we can stretch out these genealogies like an accordion, and eventually we are going to come up with hundreds of thousands of years."

Today they are saying billions of years, so the genealogies are only going to stretch so far. What people today have gone into is to say, "The Creation days are not 24 hour days. They are ages and they articulate a missing age in between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. There are a billion years between those verses." It is called the gap theory. Using the gap theory, using the day-age theory, using genealogy stretching, the Christian church went into "backward Christian soldier" because that is the only thing W.H. Green knew how to do to keep up with the findings of so-called science.

The game changer was in 1960, when Henry Morris and John Whitcomb came along and changed the strategy. The strategy is articulated in a book called "The Genesis Flood." You should have it on your bookshelf. You should read it. It is a classic because Henry Morris, the scientist, and John Whitcomb, the Hebrew scholar, said, "Enough is enough. We are not going to keep rewriting Genesis to keep up with science. You know what we are going to do? We are going to go out and challenge science." First Timothy 6:20, in the good old King James Version talks about science falsely called.

In other words, there are a lot of things concerning science that have been foisted upon us that are really nothing more than pagan philosophy. They went out and they challenged the idea of the missing link, the alleged link between apes and man. They said, "Do you know why it is called the missing link? Because the missing link is still missing." Science has not explained that.

They went out and challenged radiometric dating, Carbon-14 dating that everybody was using to argue that the earth is old, and they began to interpret the fossil record not over billions of years, but through a sudden catastrophe, a sudden deluge called the global Flood. They began to hold the findings of so-called science hostage to the Bible, which was the opposite of what W.H. Green was doing. He was not doing "forward Christian

soldier," he was doing "backward Christian soldier," and he was trying to rewrite the Bible to keep up with so-called science.

A lot of people email us and ask, "How do we recognize a good church, a good Bible teacher?" The first thing you want to figure out is, which strategy does that Bible teacher use to explain the difference between what the Bible says and what the scientific community is saying? Are they using the old, outdated W.H. Green strategy of genealogy stretching, day-age theory, gap theory? Or are they adopting the new 1960 Genesis Flood model from Whitcomb and Morris?

Obviously, you have listened to me long enough to know what camp we are in here at Sugar Land Bible Church. We are not going to rewrite the Bible to keep up with so-called science. What we are going to do is we are going to take the findings of the natural world paganism and hold them hostage to the Bible and come up with an interpretation of those things that harmonizes with the Bible.

This issue of missing names in the genealogies is actually one of the hottest, most controversial things ever debated within Christianity. We are not the first generation that has had to wrestle with this particular issue. This goes back to W.H. Green in 1892-1893, roughly.

One of the things that Green said is, "You know what? Let's look at Matthew's genealogy. There are gaps in Matthew's genealogy—the genealogy leading from Abraham to Jesus Christ. There are gaps there. If there are gaps there, missing names, which there are, there must be missing names in Genesis 5. There must be missing names in Genesis 11."

In fact, none other than Norm Geisler argues for this position. I have used Norm Geisler's name before. I use it with great reverence and respect because I essentially agree with almost everything Norm Geisler says, but not on this. He is a big advocate of what is called Old Earth Creationism, which in my view, is a compromising strategy. Geisler is the one that built his interpretation of a missing generation, as I tried to explain last time, from a scribal error. Here he goes again:

"If there is one gap, there may be more—indeed, we know there are more. For example, Matthew 1:8 says: 'Jehoram the father of Uzziah,' but the parallel listing in 1 Chronicles 3:11-14 illustrates missing generations between Jehoram and Uzziah (Azariah), namely, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. Just how many gaps there are in biblical genealogies and how much time they represent is not known. Even so, gaps there are and, hence, complete chronologies cannot be made; only accurate genealogies (lines of descent) are given."¹¹

¹¹ Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany, 2003), 648.

Translation: "There are gaps in Matthew's genealogy. If there are gaps in Matthew's genealogy, maybe we can find enough missing names in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 to stretch this baby out like an accordion and finally harmonize the Bible with what so-called science, Darwinism, is saying about the age of the earth."

When you compare Matthew 1:8-9 to 1 Chronicles 3:10-12, you clearly see there are gaps in Matthew's genealogy. So what is the response? The response is that Geisler and others are making an apples-and-oranges comparison. You cannot compare the genealogies of Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 to Matthew's genealogy. Those are two different animals.

For one thing, Matthew is summing up because he is writing in the New Testament era, a huge chunk of history. Aren't you glad there are gaps in Matthew's genealogy? Or how big would your Bible be? It would read like the United States tax code. But in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11, you only have a summation of a much smaller segment of human history. That is why there could be gaps in Matthew 1, but not in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11.

What do the genealogies in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 do that Matthew's genealogy does not do? They give you mind numbing detail, such as the age of the father at the time the son is born. You have nothing like that whatsoever in Matthew's genealogy. So Geisler is making an apples-and-oranges comparison.

The way to understand what is happening in Matthew's genealogy connecting Abraham to Jesus is to look very quickly at Matthew 1:17. What does it say there?

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to Messiah, fourteen generations" (Matthew 1:17).

Matthew is going to summarize Jewish history by looking at three groups of selectively picked 14 generations. He is not covering every single generation. He could not, or else Matthew 1 would read like 1 Chronicles 1-9. Have you ever tried to read 1 Chronicles 1-9? That is what Matthew 1 would read like if he did not have gaps. So Matthew is saying, "I am not going to give you every name. What I am going to do is I am going to give you three groups of 14 selected people.

"The first group is going to go from Abraham to David. Why start with Abraham? Because he was the first Jew. Why stop with David? Because the Messiah has to come through whose line? David's. Then I am going to give you 14 more names from David to the exile in Babylon. Why give us 14 names to the exile in Babylon? It is just to show that at the height of Israel's greatest disobedience, when God put them into captivity, the messianic promises were never canceled. Then I am going to give you an additional

14 names—not every name, not comprehensive, just selected. It is going to go from the days of the Babylonian captivity and it is going to go to Jesus Christ."

Now, why 14? "Matthew, why don't you give us 15 names? Why don't you give us 13 names? I thought the biblical number was seven. Why don't you give us seven names? Why are you focusing on 14 names, times three?" It has to do with the purpose for which Matthew wrote. Matthew is the very first New Testament book that we have. It is most likely, other than James, the very first and the earliest New Testament book.

Put yourself in the shoes of the people that received Matthew's book. They were not Gentile. They were Jewish. They were Jewish Christians who had believed in Yeshua, the Hebrew name for Jesus Christ. The whole early church to whom Matthew wrote is Jewish. In fact, you do not even have a Gentile convert in the Church Age until a man named Cornelius. That does not happen until Acts 10-11. The Gentiles do not gain ascendancy in the church until Paul's first missionary journey into southern Galatia (Acts 13-14).

You have to put yourself in the shoes of a Jewish Christian to understand Matthew's gospel. A Jewish Christian who has believed in Yeshua for personal salvation is wondering, have we really believed in the Messiah? Because I do not see the Kingdom on the earth that was promised. So Matthew strategically writes a book to tell them, "Yes, you have got the right guy. You believed in the right Messiah. The Kingdom is not canceled, but in a state of postponement."

What is going to happen in the interim until the Kingdom comes? Matthew begins to describe this interim period of time which has been lasting for 2,000 years, called the Inter-Advent Age, later described as the Age of the Church. The Hebrew Christians knew nothing about that. The problem is they were hitting the panic button, wondering, "Have we believed in the right Messiah?" Matthew painstakingly shows that Jesus is the guy. "You believed in the right Messiah, and His Kingdom is not canceled, it is currently in a state of postponement." That is why Matthew's genealogy starts with Abraham, the first Jew or Hebrew, then to David, through whom the Messiah will come (the Davidic Covenant), and ultimately to Jesus Christ Himself.

Having said all that, there is something called gematria in ancient languages. In ancient languages you could take letters and attach the right number to the right letter, then add up the digits and everybody's name could be reduced to a number. I think this is the mystery of 666 in Revelation 13. When the Antichrist comes, you will be able to spell out his name in Greek. Just attach the right letter to the right number, add up the total, and it will yield the total 666. This is called gematria.

TABLE OF ALPHABETIC NOTATION OF NUMERALS					
	Hebrew	Greek		Hebrew	Greek
1	א	α	50	נ	ν
2	ב	β	60	ס	ξ
3	ג	γ	70	ז	ο
4	ד	δ	80	ח	π
5	ה	ε	90	ט	ρ
6	ו	ς	100	ק	σ
7	ז	ζ	200	ל	τ
8	ח	η	300	מ	υ
9	ט	θ	400	נ	φ
10	י	ι	500	ס	χ
20	כ	κ	600	ז	ψ
30	ל	λ	700	ח	ω
40	מ	μ	800		

Geoffrey Bromiley, ed., *The International Bible Standard Encyclopedia*, 3:556. 23

It is true not only with Greek, but it is also true with Hebrew. What do you think the gematria is for the Hebrew word David? Could it be 14? You spell out David in Hebrew, you attach the right number to the right letter, you add up the digits, and David's name is 14. That is why Matthew picks not 15 names per group, but 14. You see what is going on here? He has skillfully put together something that the ancient Hebrews would understand that Jesus is the guy—Jesus, Yeshua, is the guy to inherit the Davidic Covenant.

That is why Matthew uses the number 14. It is a literary device. That is why Matthew skips generations coming up with this number 14—three groups of 14. It is just another way of telling his Hebrew Christian audience that "you believed in the right Messiah. The only thing you are confused about was not the Messiah, but the Kingdom. Do not worry about that. That is coming too, it is just not coming on your timetable. It is coming on God's timetable."

What did the early disciples say to Jesus in between the resurrection and ascension, 40 days? What are they asking Him about? "Are you going to restore the Kingdom to David at this time?" Remember that Yeshua, Jesus, says to them, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons that the Father has set by His own authority."

He never challenges them on the belief that the Kingdom would come. He never challenges them on the belief that Jesus is the right Messiah. The only thing he calls attention to is that their timing is off, because we are in a new age now where God is doing a new work. Everything in Matthew's Gospel is going to relate to that purpose. Once you start understanding that, everything in Matthew's Gospel starts to make sense, right down to the number 14.

Having said all that, there is nothing like that going on in Genesis 5. There is nothing going on like that in Genesis 11. It is simply a straightforward chronology that is so detailed that it gives you the age of the father at the time the son was born. No literary device, no number 14, no gematria. My point is that when you compare the genealogy

in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 to the genealogy in Matthew 1 you are mixing two things together that do not belong together, beloved.

That is why this argument from Norm Geisler, who is the best and the brightest of evangelicalism, whose respect for him from me is off the charts. This is why it is bewildering to me that someone of his intellect and countenance could make such a rudimentary and fundamental and basic error. "There are gaps in Matthew's genealogy. There must be gaps in the genealogy in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11." You just took two things that do not go together at all. You mixed them up as if they are one and the same. And in the process, you are confusing the Christian public into thinking that Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 are saying something that they are not saying.

One of the arguments is that these groups of 14 are even numbers—three groups of 14, even numbers—and they are a symbol. Don't you have that in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 where it is ten patriarchs leading to three sons? Three groups of 14, lots of gaps, why cannot we have that in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11? Ten patriarchs in Genesis 5, leading to three sons, Noah's three sons. Ten patriarchs in Genesis 11, leading to Terah's three sons. Can't we just keep these large numbers with gaps in them? The answer is no, because how many patriarchs are featured in Genesis 5? Ten. Ten Patriarchs leading to three sons. How many patriarchs are in Genesis 11 leading to three sons? Not ten, but nine. Nine does not equal ten, and ten does not equal nine. That is simply another way of saying that what is happening in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 is completely and totally and fundamentally different from anything happening in Matthew 1.

You start talking like this, as I said before, and suddenly you are not invited to a lot of the liberal cocktail parties, because everybody within neo-evangelicalism that is following the W.H. Green model is trying to get the Bible to harmonize with Darwin. That is how you stay relevant; that is how you stay hip; and that is how you stay cool and you get invited to hang around with the in-crowd. You do not get invited to hang around with the in-crowd by saying that the earth is 6,000 years old.

This genealogy stretching is very popular in evangelical circles, as is the day-age theory, as is the gap theory. I am trying to tell you what James Barr said is not what the text says. By simple arithmetic you come up with a 6,000 year-old age, not just for man, but for the cosmos itself. It is thousands and not billions, you just took away a member of the Holy Trinity from Darwin, which involves time. That is why these things actually are such a big deal.

The next time I am with you, which will be next week, I am going to tell you how to work backwards and come up with an exact date for the origin of this world. I am also going to show you how Adam came on the scene, not billions of years later, but he came on the scene right after God brought the heavens and the earth into existence. So I will be giving you an exact date when Adam got his belly button. In fact, that might be my sermon title for next week as I am thinking about it.

All of this is very significant because what is important is the first Adam got us into a world of trouble. Who rescues us out of it? The Last Adam. If the first Adam was a literal historical figure, then so was the Last Adam. The first Adam is the problem; the Last Adam is the solution. Humanity can be divided into those two groups. You are born under the curses of the first Adam. Whether you want them or not, that is your condition. Jesus, Yeshua, came into the world to reverse what the first Adam had inflicted. He came to rescue us.

When a person exercises faith in the person of Jesus Christ, and they are no longer trusting in themselves and their own works of righteousness for salvation, in a nanosecond, they are saved. That is why I am passionate about this. My fear is compromise. Interpretations related to the first Adam are eventually going to remove from the minds of people the rescue operation accomplished by the Last Adam, because you cannot understand the rescue operation unless you see the problem.

The problem is the first Adam. We are under his curse. We are careening for judgment. But Jesus, Yeshua, came into the world as the Last Adam to reverse that. He says, "Look. Do not trust in yourself for the rescue operation. Trust in Me." That is what His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension were all about.

Anybody within the sound of my voice can, in their heart of hearts, exercise faith in this man Jesus Christ, which means trust. In a nanosecond their position changes. Our hope and prayer here at Sugar Land Bible Church is for people to trust in the Savior. It is something you can do right now as I am speaking. It is not a matter of walking an aisle, joining a church or giving money, but rather it is a matter of privacy between you and the Lord, where the Lord convicts you of your need to do this, and you trust in the Savior.