****[**Searching for Adam**](https://answersingenesis.org/answers/books/searching-for-adam/)

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Chapter 5

**When Was Adam Created?**

by [Dr. Terry Mortenson](https://answersingenesis.org/bios/terry-mortenson/) on January 11, 2017

**Introduction**

When did Adam come into existence? Evolutionists say *Homo sapiens* came into existence 200,000 to 400,000 years ago (depending on which evolutionist you consult, because they do not all agree on what a *Homo sapiens* is). Can we harmonize that with the teaching of God’s Word? Today, many Christians, including many leaders and scholars, think they can.

From my reading and interaction with old-earth creationists of all varieties in 25 countries over the last 35 years, I think one reason many of them think they can harmonize the two is that they have not paid very careful attention to the relevant biblical texts. They have just assumed that the scientists have proven the age of the creation to be billions of years and the age of mankind to be many tens or hundreds of thousands of years. They often recite the mantra that “the Bible is not a science textbook” (thereby confusing the vital difference between *origin* science and *operation* science, as discussed in this book’s introduction). Therefore, it is claimed, the Bible does not deal with the issue of the age of mankind or even how man came into existence.

Another reason that a great many Christians think that the age of man and the universe does not matter and that the scientific establishment’s view does not conflict with Scripture is because they or their teachers have been influenced by William Henry Green.[[1]](#footnote-1) The famous OT professor at Princeton Theological Seminary wrote an article in 1890 in which he argued that “the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11 were not intended to be used, and cannot properly be used, for the construction of a chronology.”[[2]](#footnote-2) He concluded that “the Scriptures furnish no data for a chronological computation prior to the life of Abraham; and that the Mosaic records do not fix and were not intended to fix the precise date either of the Flood or of the creation of the world.”[[3]](#footnote-3) In other words, Green contended, the Bible is silent about the age of man and also the age of the earth and universe, so scientists are free to determine these ages according to the scientific evidence, and Christians need not reject or fear any date so determined.

Of course, Green was not the first to reject the biblical chronology prior to Abraham. Most of the Church had accepted the millions of years at the beginning of the 19th century. Christian leaders proposed the gap theory[[4]](#footnote-4) or the day-age view[[5]](#footnote-5) of Gen 1 to accommodate all those years. Other reinterpretations were developed in the 20th century, such as the revelatory day view,[[6]](#footnote-6) the framework view,[[7]](#footnote-7) the Promised Land view,[[8]](#footnote-8) the analogical day view,[[9]](#footnote-9) the day-gap-day-gap-day view,[[10]](#footnote-10) and the cosmic temple/functionality view,[[11]](#footnote-11) to name a few. Most advocates of these views have also reinterpreted the account of Noah’s Flood to be a large but localized flood in the Mesopotamian Valley (modern-day Iraq) or a myth, which in either case has no bearing on the geological record, which supposedly reveals the millions of years.

Nevertheless, Green had a significant influence on a great many scholars who have taught Christians that we all need to simply “agree to disagree” about the time before Abraham. They insist that the age question is an unimportant and divisive side issue that we can leave to the scientists to determine. These influential evangelical scholars who followed Green, directly or indirectly, include B.B. Warfield (who in turn many recent evangelical theologians and others cite in support of their old-earth views being consistent with Scripture),[[12]](#footnote-12) Francis Schaeffer,[[13]](#footnote-13) Wayne Grudem,[[14]](#footnote-14) Millard Erickson,[[15]](#footnote-15) Walter Kaiser,[[16]](#footnote-16) Robert Newman,[[17]](#footnote-17) C. John Collins,[[18]](#footnote-18) Norman Geisler,[[19]](#footnote-19) and Ronald Youngblood.[[20]](#footnote-20) In this chapter I will present some of the reasons for concluding that these great scholars were wrong on this important point and have thereby misled many pastors and lay people.

**Genesis 1–11 Is History.**

Before attempting to determine the date of Adam’s creation, I want to make a few more comments about the historicity of Genesis to supplement and complement the arguments in previous chapters. The early chapters of Genesis are not poetry,[[21]](#footnote-21) a series of parables or prophetic visions, or mythology. The chapters recount God’s acts in time-space history: acts of creation, providence, and redemption. When we insist that Gen 1–11 is history, we are not saying that this section of the Bible is *only* history, i.e., that it was only inspired to satisfy some of our curiosity about origins. It is far more than history, for it teaches theology, morality, and redemption, and those truths are vitally important. But Gen 1–11 is not less than history, and what it teaches on the latter themes is rooted in that history. If the history is not true, then the theology, morality, and gospel based on that history is seriously called into question if not rejected.

Several lines of evidence demonstrate that this introductory section of Scripture is to be understood as history. First, the Hebrew *waw*-consecutive verb forms used in Gen 1 (and continuing through the rest of the book) are characteristic of Hebrew narrative, but not of Hebrew poetry.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Second, Gen 1 does not have the dominant characteristic of Hebrew poetry, namely parallelism, where the truth in the first part of a verse is repeated in different ways in the second part (e.g., Ps 19:1, 30:10, [32:1](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%2032.1), 37:1, 103:1). But those who hold to the Framework view claim there is a different kind of parallelism in Gen 1 that should lead us to conclude that Gen 1 is not straightforward history. They say that days 1–3 describe the created space and days 4–6 discuss the creatures that fill those spaces, where day 1 is linked to day 4, day 2 to day 5, and day 3 to day 6. But this claimed parallelism only works if one overlooks the details of the text. The heavenly bodies made on day 4 were placed in the expanse, which was made on day 2 (not day 1). The sea creatures made on day 5 filled the water (which was made on day 1) of the seas, which was formed on day 3 (not day 2). And nothing was made on day 6 to fill the seas, which were made on day 3. There are many more serious exegetical problems with the framework view.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Third, Gen 1-11 has the same characteristics of historical narrative as Gen 12-50, most of Exodus, much of Numbers, Joshua, 1 and 2Kings, etc. Gen 1-11 describes real people by name, real events in their lives, real places and geographical areas by name,[[24]](#footnote-24) real times (days, months, years[[25]](#footnote-25)), etc.

Fourth, the eleven *toledoths* (“these are the generations of ”) sprinkled through Genesis tie the whole book together as a unit, and no truly evangelical Bible scholar doubts that Gen 12–50 is history.

Fifth, in every case that Jesus, NT authors, and OT authors referred to the events in Gen 1-11, they always treated the text as straightforward, literal history. And they all knew the difference between truth and myth.[[26]](#footnote-26) Jesus referred to Genesis more than any other book, and the Gospels record Him saying “it is written” 30 times and “have you not read?” 11x in reference to all three divisions of the OT: the Law (Pentateuch), Prophets, and Psalms (e.g., Lu 24:44). This shows that Jesus’ default hermeneutic was: just read it, it means what it says.[[27]](#footnote-27) Even most old-earth proponents recognize that Gen 1–11 is history.[[28]](#footnote-28) And virtually all Christians prior to the 19th century read it that way.

So there are many good biblical and historical reasons for taking Gen 1–11 as literal history in which all the details matter and are inerrant. Given that fact, we need to look carefully at those details.

**From the Beginning of Creation to Adam: How Long?**

How long was it from the first moment of creation to the creation of Adam? According to evolutionists, the big bang (when, they say, nothing suddenly became something) was about 13.8 billion years ago, and the first true man appeared 13.7998 billion years after the beginning (or about 200,000 years ago).

In contrast to the evolutionary view, young-earth creationists believe the whole creation is only a few thousand years old. But it should be noted that while they do all agree that there were only five literal days of history before Adam, they do not all agree about the age of the earth and therefore about how long ago Adam was created. Some argue that there may be missing names in the genealogies of Gen 5 and 11 and therefore up to a few thousand years could be added between Adam and Abraham (so that the first day of creation was perhaps 10,000 to 12,000 years ago).[[29]](#footnote-29) On the other hand, three of the world’s leading young-earth creationist organizations (AiG, Institute for Creation Research, and Creation Ministries International) argue that there are no gaps and that therefore the beginning (Gen 1:1) was a little more than 6,000 years ago.[[30]](#footnote-30) Though open to gaps in the 1960s, by 1976 Henry Morris, the most influential young-earth proponent of the 20th century, also took Gen 5 and 11 as strict chronologies.[[31]](#footnote-31)

The evidence that the evolutionary dates are utterly false and that there were only five literal days before Adam was created is discussed briefly as follows (for more depth, consult the footnoted sources).

**The Meaning of “Day” (Hebrew: Yom) in Genesis 1**

The very dominant meaning of *yom* in the OT is a literal day, and the context of Gen 1 confirms that meaning there. *Yom* is defined in its two literal or normal senses in v. 5 (the light portion of the dark/ light cycle and the whole dark/light cycle).[[32]](#footnote-32) It is repeatedly modified by a number (one day, second day, etc.), which elsewhere in the OT always means a literal, normal, 24-hour day. Each of the six days ends with the refrain “evening was and morning was,” and everywhere in the OT where *‘ereb* (“evening”), *boqer* (“morning”), and *laylah* (“night”) are used, they always mean a literal part of a literal day. *Yom* is defined again literally in v. 14 in relation to the movement of the heavenly bodies, and the sun, moon, and stars do enable us to measure literal days, literal years, and literal seasons.

The numbering of the days and the repeated refrain along with the repetition of “and it was so,” (6x), “God saw” (7x), and “it was good” (6x) coupled with Ex 20:8–11 (see below) emphatically indicate that these creation days were sequential and non-overlapping. The creative acts of one day were complete before the next day began.

We also should note that if God indeed created over long ages of time, there are various ways in Hebrew that He could have said that. He could have used *dor* (translated as time, period or generation in Gen 7:1; Ex 3:15, 31:13; Dt 32:7).[[33]](#footnote-33) Or He could have used a phrase such as “after many days” (Jos 23:1), or “thousands of ten thousands” of years (cf. Gen 24:60), or “myriad thousands” of years (cf. Nu 10:36), or “years of many generations” (Jl 2:2). He could have borrowed a word from a neighboring language, as many languages do today and as God did with the Aramaic time words *zeman* or *iddan* in the books of Nehemiah and Daniel.[[34]](#footnote-34) Instead, God chose to use the only Hebrew word (*yom*) that means a literal 24-hour day.

**The Order in Which God Created**

Not only does the time period of creation in Gen 1 contradict the time claimed for the evolution of all these things, but the order of creation in Gen 1 also contradicts the order of events in the evolutionary story in at least 30 points. For example, the Bible says the earth was created before light and before the sun and stars, just the opposite of the big-bang theory. The Bible says that fruit trees were created before any sea creatures and that birds were created before dinosaurs (which were made on day 6, since they are land animals), exactly the opposite of the evolutionary story. Evolution says that initially the earth was a hot molten ball that cooled to develop a hard crust, and then evolved an atmosphere that produced rain, and then with the help of melted asteroids produced oceans. But Genesis says the earth was completely covered with water for two days and then dry land appeared. According to evolution, the earth has never been covered with a global ocean. But according to the Bible the earth has been completely covered with water twice: the first two days of creation and Noah’s Flood. It is impossible to harmonize Gen 1 with big-bang cosmology or the evolutionary story of earth’s development.[[35]](#footnote-35)

In addition to these contradictions, another obstacle to adding millions of years to the days or between the days relates to the order. If the “days” are figurative of long ages, then so are the “evenings” and the “mornings.” But how could plants survive millions of years of darkness? Or how could they reproduce if they had to wait hundreds of millions of years before insects and animals were created that would pollinate the plants?

**How Did God Create?**

Many old-earth advocates say, “Gen 1 tells us *that* and *why* God created, not *how* and *when* He created.” Actually, the chapter does not tell us why God created but certainly does tell us when and how. He created the first animate and inanimate things supernaturally and virtually instantly. On the day that they were created they were fully formed and fully functioning.[[36]](#footnote-36) For example, plants, animals, and people were created as mature adult forms (not as seeds or fertilized eggs or infants). These statements are very clearly contrasted with how all the subsequent plants, animals, and people would come into existence: reproduction by natural procreation “after their kinds.” When God said, “Let there be,” He did not need to wait millions of years for things to come into existence. He spoke, and creatures came into existence immediately, as Ps 33:6–9 emphasizes. To postulate millions of years between these supernatural acts of creation is an insult to the wisdom of God. Why would God create the earth and leave it covered with water for millions of years, when He says He created it to be inhabited (Is 45:18)? Why would He create plants and then wait millions of years before creating animals and people who would eat plants for food? Why would He create sea creatures and birds and wait millions of years before creating land animals and people?

**Objections to Literal Days**

Many objections have been raised against the literal, 24-hour days interpretation, such as: (1) 24 hours would be insufficient to accomplish all the events attributed to the sixth day, (2) Gen 2:4 uses *yom* in a non-literal sense, showing that the days of Gen 1 were not literal, (3) the seventh day does not conclude with the refrain of the other days implying that it was not literal, (4) days 1–3 cannot be literal if the sun was not created until day 4, and (5) Heb 4:1–11 says that the seventh day continues and therefore is at least 6,000 years long. All of these and other objections have been refuted for years in creationist literature,[[37]](#footnote-37) but I conclude from their published writings that old-earth advocates seem to pay little or no attention to creationist literature, and so they keep raising the same objections without responding to young-earth refutations.

**God’s Commentary on Genesis 1: Exodus 20:8–11**

Ex 20:8–11 stands as an insurmountable stone wall against any attempts to add extra time (months, years, millennia, or millions of years) anywhere in Gen 1 or before Gen 1:1. The fourth commandment says that God created everything in six days, just as the Israelites were to work six days and rest on the seventh.

V. 11 rules out the day-age view and the day-gap-day-gap-day view because it says “for in six days”[[38]](#footnote-38) God made everything and He used the plural *yamim* just as He did in the first part of the commandment. So the days of the Jewish workweek are the same length as the days of Creation Week. As noted above, God could have used several other words or phrases here or in Genesis 1, if He meant to say “work six days because I created over six long, indefinite periods.”[[39]](#footnote-39) But He didn’t.

These verses also rule out the gap theory or any attempt to add millions of years before Gen 1:1, because God says He created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and *all that is in them* during the six days described in Gen 1. Ex 20:11 also proves that the first day of creation begins in Gen 1:1 (when the earth was created), not [1:3](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Genesis%201.3) (when God made light). He made nothing before those six days. It should be noted that the fourth commandment is one of only four of the Ten Commandments that contains a reason for the commandment. If God created over millions of years, He could have commanded Sabbath-keeping without giving a reason, or He could have given a theological or redemptive reason, as He did elsewhere.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Most old-earth proponents ignore this vital passage. A few have tried to reinterpret the verse to open the door for accepting millions of years. For example, Grudem says that in the very next verse (Ex 20:12) “‘day’ means ‘a period of time,’” implying a non-literal meaning.[[41]](#footnote-41) Of course, a literal day is a period of time, though obviously by this statement Grudem wants to make room for millions of years. More importantly however, the verse does not use the singular *yom* (day), as Grudem’s statement implies, but rather the plural *yamim* (days). The non-literal word in the verse is “prolonged,” not “days.” In other words, God is saying that if the Jews honor Him by faithfully keeping the Sabbath, the total number of days that they dwell in the land will be long (i.e., many), not that their days will be lengthened to be more than 24 hours. Ex 20:12 does not show that the days in 20:8–11 are not literal.

Collins and Lennox assert that Ex 20:11 teaches the difference between man’s *work* and *rest* and God’s *work* and *rest* (i.e., that man’s work and rest are “like,” but not identical to, God’s creation work and rest).[[42]](#footnote-42) But the fourth commandment is not *contrasting* the *work* of man and the *work* of God at all. Rather, it is *equating* the human *week* with God’s creation *week*.

To these previous considerations we can add the following biblical arguments against the billions of years of cosmic and geologic history before Adam.

**Purpose of the Heavenly Bodies (Genesis 1:14)**

God tells us why He created the sun, moon, and stars: so man could tell time. This is a ridiculous purpose if the evolutionary story of 13.8 billion years is true. In that case, for most of the years of existence of those heavenly bodies they did not accomplish the purpose for which they were made.

**Adam and Eve Were to Rule Over the Animals (Genesis 1:26–28)**

If millions of years of history really happened before Adam and Eve, most of the creatures that ever lived also died and many kinds of creatures became extinct before Adam and Eve could ever rule over them. What kind of a God would make such a ridiculous assignment?

**Jesus and the Biblical Authors**

Several passages show that Jesus believed that man was created at the beginning of creation, not billions of years after the beginning (as all old-earth views imply), which confirms the young-earth creationist view (Mk 10:6, 13:19; Lu 11:50–51).[[43]](#footnote-43) His miracles also confirm the young-earth view. From His first miracle (in His earthly ministry) of turning water into wine (which revealed His glory as the Creator, cf. Jn 2:11 and 1:1–5) to all His other miracles (e.g., Mt 8:23–27, Mk 1:40–42), His spoken word brought an immediate, instantaneous result, just as His word did in Creation Week.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Paul also made it clear that he was a young-earth creationist. In Rom 1:20 he says that God’s existence and at least some of His attributes have been clearly understood by people “since the creation of the world”[[45]](#footnote-45) so that they are without excuse for not honoring Him as God. Surely this great student of Scripture would have had in mind what David said 1,000 years earlier (Ps 19:1, cf. Ps 97:6) and what Job said 1,000 years before that (Job 12:7–10). The creation has always revealed the Creator to man from the beginning. Paul’s language, like Jesus’ language, is inaccurate and misleading if man was created billions of years after the creation of the world.

Similarly, Is 40:21 shows that the prophet was a young-earth creationist. The parallelism of the verse shows that “from the beginning” and “from the foundations of the earth” refer to the same point in time. What the people of Isaiah’s day knew about God is what people (Adam and Eve, and Cain and Abel, etc.) knew right at the foundation of the earth (the beginning of creation), which is also what all idolaters in Paul’s day knew and what atheists throughout history and today have known. He is a fool who says there is no Creator for His glory is seen in His creation (Ps 14:1, 19:1).

If the evolutionary view of 13.8 billion years is true, then Jesus, Paul, and Isaiah were badly mistaken and cannot be completely trusted in other things they teach.

**No Death before the Fall**

A critically important theological reason that we cannot add long ages of time before Adam is that it would mean millions of years of animal death, disease, carnivorous behavior, and extinction as well as thorns and thistles, earthquakes, tsunamis, asteroid impacts, etc. in God’s “very good” vegetarian creation (Gen 1:29–31).

The fossil record in the sedimentary rock layers of the earth is where the evolutionary geologists and paleontologists supposedly got their evidence for millions of years of history before man. Radiometric dating was not invented until the early 20th century, almost 100 years after millions of years was locked into the minds of most geologists (and other scientists).[[46]](#footnote-46) But in that fossil record we find evidence of carnivores eating other animals; cancer, arthritis and brain tumors in dinosaurs; diseases and cannibalism in supposedly pre-human hominids; thorns and thistles; and at least five mass extinction events when anywhere from 60 to 90% of the species living at the time went extinct due to some kind of natural evil (such as the supposed asteroid that wiped out all the dinosaurs and most other life “65 million years ago”).

Not only does this evolutionary reconstruction of history contradict the picture of a “very good” creation in Gen 1, it destroys the Bible’s teaching in Gen 3:14-19, 5:29, and Rom 8:19-23 about the cosmic impact of the Fall. Furthermore, it undermines what the Bible teaches about the final redemptive work of Christ in the whole cosmos (Act 3:21; [Col 1:15-20](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Col.%201.15%E2%80%9320); Rev 21:3-5, 22:3). It also assaults the character of God as revealed in Scripture. What kind of God would create over millions of years using all that natural evil and call it all “very good”? Belief in the impact of the Fall on the whole creation, not just man, was Christian orthodoxy until the early 19th century.[[47]](#footnote-47) Today, however, from my experience and reading, it is clear that most old-earth proponents have never even thought about these issues. Many theologians believe that the Fall affected the whole creation, just as they believe that after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in the new heavens and new earth there will be no more human death and suffering for the redeemed but also no more natural evils (animal predation, death, disease, extinctions, earthquakes, tornadoes, etc.). But these theologians fail to see the inconsistency between these biblically and historically orthodox beliefs and their acceptance of millions of years.[[48]](#footnote-48) Elsewhere I have given a thorough, documented discussion of the Fall and millions of years and responded to old-earth objections, and I urge readers to carefully consider this vital point.[[49]](#footnote-49) Christians who accept the evolutionary date for the first *Homo sapiens* (200,000–400,000 years ago) and for the age of the cosmos do not impress non-Christians or motivate them to believe the Bible and the gospel. The late atheist Christopher Hitchens remarked about such old-earth thinking,

Let’s say that the consensus is that our species, being the higher primates, *Homo sapiens*, has been on the planet for at least 100,000 years, maybe more. . . . In order to be a Christian, you have to believe that for 98,000 years, our species suffered and died, most of its children dying in childbirth, most other people having a life expectancy of about 25 years. . . . Famine, struggle, bitterness, war, suffering, misery, all of that for 98,000 years. Heaven watches this with complete indifference. And then 2,000 years ago, thinks, “That’s enough of that. It’s time to intervene,” and the best way to do this would be by condemning someone to a human sacrifice somewhere in the less literate parts of the Middle East. . . . This is nonsense. It can’t be believed by a thinking person.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Without a literal Adam and a literal Fall, the gospel is nonsense. But you cannot with any exegetical consistency believe in a literal Fall and simultaneously deny the literal six-day creation of a “very good” world devoid of death and suffering and natural evil. The evolutionary view of death and other natural evils is diametrically opposed to the biblical view.

For all these reasons, the only biblically possible view is that Adam and Eve were created on the sixth, literal, normal, 24-hour day after the beginning of time. So now we turn to the time between Adam and us.

**From Adam to Us Today: How Long?**

As noted earlier, due in part to the influence of William Henry Green, the majority of evangelical scholars and leaders today say or think that Gen 5 and 11 provide no chronological information about the time from the beginning of creation to Abraham. But every sincere Bible reader before the 19th century strongly believed that Genesis was telling us *when* God created the world. Even non-Christians had chronologies presenting an age of the world very similar to what is derived from a literal interpretation of Genesis.[[51]](#footnote-51) Furthermore, conservative Jews take the text that way for their calendars today.[[52]](#footnote-52)

But this is no great wonder. Genesis sure looks like God wants to convey a chronology. He gives the age of each patriarch when he dies and when the next man in the genealogy was born, when instead He could have just listed names, as He did in 1Chr 1:1–27, Mt 1:1–16, and Lu 3:23–38. He also numbers the days of Creation Week, gives time markers for events during the Flood, tells us how old Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were at key events in their lives, and tells the Jews to pay attention to the calendar for religious festivals. He tells us how long the Israelites were in Egypt, how long they wandered in the wilderness, and how long it was from the Exodus to the building of Solomon’s temple. He gives us chronological information about the reigns of the pre-kingdom judges, and the kings of Israel and Judah, and some neighboring kingdoms. He tells us how long the Babylonian captivity would last, and gives us plenty of chronological information in the Gospels and Acts to follow the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles. God has given a history in Scripture, and He evidently wants us to know when things happened.

If God doesn’t want us to glean chronological information from Gen 5 and 11, then why did He put it there? Does that mean that none of the dates in Gen 6–8 has chronological information either, in which case we have no idea how long it rained and how long the Flood lasted? Without even looking at the biblical details, to think that Gen 5 and 11 give no chronological information relevant to determining the age of mankind or of the universe seems extremely doubtful.

As I explained earlier, among young-earth creationists who do think the Genesis genealogies give us some chronological information there are two views. Some say that there very likely are missing names and therefore gaps of time, in which case Adam was created perhaps 8,000–12,000 years ago. Others, clearly the majority of leading creationists today, think there are good reasons to conclude that Gen 5 and 11 are strict chronologies with no missing names or years. Hence, Adam and Eve (along with the whole universe) were created a little over 6,000 years ago. I will present some of the reasons for concluding the latter and encourage the reader to dig deeper in the resources in the footnotes.

**Arguments for Gapless Genealogies and No Missing Years in Genesis 5 and 11**

Unlike other genealogies in the Bible that simply list names (e.g., 1Chr 1–8; Rt 4:18–22; Mt 1:1–17; Lu 3:23–38), in Gen 5 and 11 we are given the age of each “father” when the “son” was born and how many years the father lived after that birth. Gen 5 and 11 are in fact the only genealogies in the Bible and in ancient Near Eastern literature that do this,[[53]](#footnote-53) which draws our attention to this information even more. Furthermore, we know there are missing names in Mt 1, not only because we might suspect it from the arrangement of three groups of 14 names, but also because we can check the genealogy against other texts in the OT to find the omitted people. But we have no texts that would fill in the supposed missing names in Gen 5 and 11. The extra Cainan in Lu 3:36 is almost certainly due to scribal error in copying manuscripts, for that Cainan is not in the oldest manuscripts of Luke and the Septuagint.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Another evidence that Matthew has omitted some names is that if his list was complete, the average generation time between David and Jesus would be 35 years, which seems too long. But Luke’s genealogy from Jesus all the way to Adam has 41 generations between David and Jesus, averaging a very reasonable 24 years for each. Luke also expressly states that in writing his Gospel he “investigated everything carefully” to present the “exact truth” concerning Jesus (Lu 1:3–4), giving us reason to think that Luke was giving us a complete genealogy from Jesus back to Adam.

But what about the highly influential article by Green in 1890 mentioned earlier? Sexton has carefully examined Green’s argument and exposes his logical fallacies.[[55]](#footnote-55) Sexton affirms that Green was correct in the two examples he cited[[56]](#footnote-56) to show that the Hebrew verb יּ֖וֹלֶד (*yoled*, the hiphil form of *yalad*, “beget”), which is used in Gen 5 and 11, does not always mean a literal parent-child relationship in Scripture, a fact which corrects what I have written elsewhere.[[57]](#footnote-57) But Tanner notes that *yoled* is used 170 times in Genesis, and in all other cases outside of ch 5 and 11 the context makes clear that a literal parent-child relationship is in view.[[58]](#footnote-58) Additionally, because of non-chronological details given about six of these relationships, we know they are literal father-son links.[[59]](#footnote-59) But since in both chapters it says that each of these six patriarchs had “many [other] sons and daughters,” which surely is referring to immediate family members, this is strong evidence that all the links in Gen 5 and 11 are literally father-son.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Sexton also shows from various Scriptures and comments by modern Hebrew scholars that Green was right that *yoled* describes the birthing process or actual delivery of the child. But Green’s argument collapses when he assumes that since *yoled* indeed *may* refer to a distant relative, there *must* be genealogical gaps in Gen 5 and 11. More importantly, as Sexton demonstrates, Green erred in assuming (without explicit argument) that *genealogical* gaps necessarily imply *chronological* gaps. In other words, even if names (i.e., generations) are missing, that does not mean that there must be missing time too. It does not matter, for example, if Kenan was the son or grandson or great grandson, etc., of Enosh. In any case, Kenan was born when Enosh was 90 years old. So, again, while theoretically the Hebrew verb *yoled* could allow for missing names, there is no basis for imagining missing years. Gen 5 and 11 provide us with a strict chronology from Abraham back to Adam (and thereby back to the very beginning of creation). Sexton, Tanner, and Freeman (cited in the notes) present other strong arguments to show that Green was mistaken and thereby has misled many other good scholars and that the position taken in this chapter is strong. But I will discuss a few more arguments here.

Many have argued that Gen 5 and 11 each contain two lists of 10 names.[[61]](#footnote-61) But this is simply not correct. In Gen 5 if we count from Adam to Shem in the segmented genealogy of Noah, we have 11 names. In Gen 11, if we start with Shem and count to Abraham in the segmented genealogy of Terah, we have 10 names. If we leave off the three sons of Noah, then we have 10 names in Gen 5. But then to make a fair comparison we must leave off the three sons of Terah, giving us 9 names. We can count Noah in Gen 11 to get 10 names to Terah, but Noah is not listed in the genealogy of Gen 11.[[62]](#footnote-62) Even if both genealogies did contain 10 names, this would not nullify the conclusion that we have here a strict chronology.

Some have denied that Gen 5 and 11 have chronological value because these chapters do not total up the years, as other Scriptures give total years between two events. In support of this argument Youngblood cites Ex 12:40 (giving the years the Jews were in Egypt) and 1K 6:1 (giving the time from the Exodus to the building of Solomon’s temple).[[63]](#footnote-63) But surely Moses and God would expect the Jews to do the simple addition of the obvious numbers in Gen 5 and 11. By contrast, it would take considerable effort and detective work to arrive at the total years in the two cases Youngblood cites.

Some have argued that the drop in ages after the Flood is evidence of missing names and missing time in Gen 11. In particular, there is a 162-year drop in lifespan between Shem and Arpachshad and a 225-year drop in lifespan between Eber and Peleg. But there is a difference of 350 years between the lifespans of Noah and Shem. So this indicates missing names and years, it is argued. However, when the ages in Gen 11 are analyzed mathematically, the drop in ages nicely fits an exponential decay curve, just as we would expect in the aftermath of the world-changing Flood.[[64]](#footnote-64)

Formerly, some creationists attributed the drop in lifespans in Gen 11 to significant environmental changes resulting from the collapse of a vapor canopy during the Flood. Not only is the idea of vapor canopy in the pre-Flood world no longer widely accepted by leading creationists,[[65]](#footnote-65) but also today creationist experts think that genetics is the primary factor influencing lifespan, which will be addressed in the later chapter by Jeanson and Tomkins.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Some have suggested that the ages of the pre-Flood patriarchs are inflated ten-fold, but in that case, Enoch and Mahalalel had kids at the unbelievable age of 6.5 years old, Kenan at age 7, and Enosh at age 9. Christensen has argued that these ages cannot be literal because each age is the product of 5s and 7s.[[67]](#footnote-67) He correctly observed that the age of each patriarch in Gen 5 is the product either of 5s, or of 5s plus one 7, or in the case of Methuselah, 5s plus two 7s. However, he never stated what the theological significance of these multiples of 5s and 7s is, and the pattern is different in Gen 11, where the ages are made up of the multiples of 5 and either four or seven 7s. Besides this, we should note that every number above 18 (except for 23, 33, 43, 53, 73, 83, and 93) is a multiple of 5s, 7s, or a combination thereof. So this numerical analysis reveals nothing.

Furthermore, even if Gen 5 and 11 are open genealogies with gaps, we cannot add enough years to harmonize Genesis with the evolutionary timescale for *Homo sapiens* without making the genealogies absurd. Since, as noted, 6 of the genealogical links are clearly literal, father-son relationships, that leaves 13 links where there could *possibly* be missing time. However, if we add 1,000 years between each of those men, which would be equivalent to the time gap implied by the genealogical link, “Jesus, the son of David,” this still would not harmonize with the evolutionary dating of man. But adding even this much time between these patriarchs (most of whom we know nothing about) seems unreasonable in the extreme and would call into question why any genealogy was given. To match the evolutionary timescale, we would need to add tens or hundreds of thousands of years to Gen 5 and 11, which creates even more problems, as illustrated next.

In 2005 in *Who Was Adam?* Rana and Ross said that God created Adam and Eve “50,000–70,000 years ago.”[[68]](#footnote-68) But ten years later in their 2015 updated and expanded second edition they said, “In 2005, we predicted that God created human beings between 10,000 and 100,000 years ago.”[[69]](#footnote-69) If the evolutionist dating methods are so reliable, as Rana and Ross believe, why this difference in ages? The 2015 statement had no footnote to the page in the 2005 book, so without searching in the 2005 book readers would never know (1) that Rana and Ross did not accurately report what their own 2005 book said and (2) that they backed off from their 2005 relatively close range of ages to a less precise and wider range of dates. But Rana and Ross continued in the very next sentence of their 2015 book:

The latest results from molecular anthropology place humanity’s origin between 100,000 and 150,000 years ago. We were wrong [in 2005]. However the new dates line up with estimates of humanities’ origin from the fossil record (between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago). Though these dates are older than those reported in the first [2005] edition of *Who Was Adam?* we argue that they still harmonize with Scripture.[[70]](#footnote-70)

How can any thoughtful Christian accept this? Adam was 50,000–70,000 years ago, then 10,000–100,000 years ago or 100,000–150,000 years ago or even 150,000–200,000 years ago, and this all harmonizes with Scripture? Really? In the very next sentence in 2015 they continue,

After carefully reconsidering our interpretation of the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11, we now take the position that the biblical text implies that Adam and Eve were created while an ice age, probably the most recent one, was in effect.[[71]](#footnote-71)

But when was that last ice age according to Rana and Ross? They don’t tell the reader. Instead they have an endnote after this sentence, pointing the reader to several pages in Ross’s 2014 book *Navigating Genesis*. Of course, unless the reader has that 2014 book, he cannot check and see that Ross says there (p. 97–98) that the last ice age (when Adam was supposedly created) was 15,000–50,000 years ago. And the reader won’t know that in the same book (p. 75) Ross says that “Noah would have been alive roughly 40,000 years ago and Adam and Eve anywhere from 60,000 to 100,000 years ago.” This, says Ross in 2014 on the same page, shows that “the biblical account of creation retains its credibility in light of advancing [scientific] research.”[[72]](#footnote-72) But this statement about biblical credibility will seem reassuring to readers, *only* if they think that Gen 5 and 11 have no chronological value *and* if they don’t examine the conflicting numbers Rana and Ross are presenting in several books or on even different pages of the same book. To make matters worse, in *Who Was Adam?* (2015), Rana and Ross said (p. 51) that the Flood was “roughly 20,000 to 30,000 years ago.” But going off the dates in Ross’s 2014 book, that puts the Flood 10,000–20,000 years *after* Noah existed!

The vast majority of Rana and Ross’s readers will never see this confusing and contradictory collection of dates. Sadly, their books have been warmly endorsed by many leading theologians and apologists[[73]](#footnote-73) who apparently never bothered to do some simple math. So, let’s do some.

Given that (as all agree) Abraham was born about 2000 b.c., the timeframe of Adam being 10,000–100,000 years ago (Rana and Ross’s 2005 range) would put 6,000–96,000 years between Adam and Abraham. After taking out the 1,149 years covered by the 6 demonstrably literal father-son links,[[74]](#footnote-74) Rana and Ross would need to account for another 4,851–94,851 years. This means that they would need to add an average of 373 to 7,296 years between *each* pair of names in the 13 *supposedly* non-literal links. If we consider that, apart from Noah’s age of 502 when Shem was born, all the other begetting ages were less than 188 years (and most were below 100 years), then even 373 years for the ages of all the other patriarchs when the next man was born is ridiculous. Using Rana and Ross’s 2015 range of 100,000 to 200,000 years would put Adam 96,000–196,000 years before Abraham, or an average of 7,296 to 14,988 years between *each* pair of names in the supposedly non-literal links from Adam to Abraham! As Sarfati has shown and documented, these errors and “harmonizations” of Scripture and “science” made by Ross and Rana are just the tip of the iceberg of the biblical and scientific errors that they and Reasons to Believe have been presenting to the Christian public for several decades (with strong endorsements by some very prominent evangelical theologians, apologists, and other Christian leaders).[[75]](#footnote-75)

This cavalier dating of Adam (following the constantly changing claims of evolutionists) certainly raises serious questions about Ross and Rana’s claims to believe in the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture.

**Where Are All the Human Bones and All the Living People?**

Where are all the fossilized and unfossilized bones, if mankind is 50,000 or 100,000 or even more years old? The earth should be overflowing with skeletal remains and human artifacts, but we find very little. And why isn’t the human population today much larger and written records and other evidences of civilization much older than about 6,000–10,000 years (by secular dating of civilizations), if *Homo sapiens* came into existence 100,000 to 400,000 years ago? From the eight people coming off the ark about 4,500 years ago, the present world’s population can be easily explained.[[76]](#footnote-76) But if mankind is as old as the evolutionists claim, the world’s population today is far, far too small. Reality confirms the Bible, not evolutionary dates.

**What About the Scientific Dating Methods?**

All scientific dating methods are based on naturalistic uniformitarian assumptions (see ch 16 for discussion of these critically important assumptions). Many physical processes could theoretically be used to date the earth or any object in the earth (e.g., radioactive decay, or the erosion of the continents, or the increase in the salinity of the oceans, or the buildup of helium in the atmosphere). But every such dating method involves making assumptions about the initial conditions when the process started, the rate of change since then, and whether the physical process was changed in any other way prior to human observations. Because scientists have no way to verify the accuracy of their assumptions about the unobserved and unrepeatable past, no scientific method can confidently determine the age of the earth, the universe, or a fossil.

With respect to human history, archeological dates based on carbon-14 are most untrustworthy.[[77]](#footnote-77) The research that the BBC summarized and reported in 2001 is still true:

A complete rewrite of the history of modern humans could be needed after a breakthrough in archaeological dating techniques. British and American scientists have found radiocarbon dating, used to give a rough guide to the age of an object, can be wrong by thousands of years. . . . They found that the carbon dates were wrong by thousands of years and that the further back in time they went, the more out-of-date they were.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Creation scientists contend that the Flood is very important in explaining why prior to about the time of Christ, the C-14 dates become less and less reliable.[[79]](#footnote-79)

Archeology is dominated by the same naturalistic philosophical presuppositions that control biology, geology, and astronomy, and most archeologists judge the Bible’s history based on the standard of Egyptian chronology. But in addition to the fact that the Bible is God’s inspired inerrant Word and Egyptian writings are not, there are strong reasons to reject this reverence for Egypt’s historians.[[80]](#footnote-80) The anti-biblical assumptions controlling archeology and thereby discrediting the history of the Bible, especially in Genesis and Exodus, are clearly revealed in the recent excellent documentary film, *Patterns of Evidence*.[[81]](#footnote-81)

The only way we can know with certainty the age of the creation or the age of mankind is if there was an absolutely trustworthy eyewitness of those creation events. We have one, the only one, in God Himself. He observed everything described in Gen 1–11, which is His inspired, inerrant eyewitness testimony about those people and events.

**Conclusion**

It is simply impossible to apply sound hermeneutical principles to the biblical text and harmonize Gen 1–11 with the evolutionary claims about the antiquity of man (or the earth and universe). It is exegetically impossible to put more than six days between Adam and the first moment of creation. Even if names are missing in Gen 5 and 11 (I think this is highly unlikely), there are no missing years because the age of the patriarch is given when the next man is born. William H. Green, like Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge, B.B. Warfield, and likely the rest of the faculty at Princeton at the time, were wrong about the age of the earth and man and unintentionally misled many others.

But we cannot be dogmatic about the precise date of Adam’s creation. Johnson helpfully suggests that it is highly unlikely that each son was born on the birthday of his father. This requires a “fudge factor” of a partial year for the time between the father’s birthday and the son’s birth.[[82]](#footnote-82) Nevertheless, given the ages in Gen 5 and 11 in the Masoretic Hebrew Bible (and reflected in our modern translations), Adam (along with the rest of the universe) was created a little before 4000 b.c., and Noah’s Flood was a little before 2400 b.c.[[83]](#footnote-83) Even if the Septuagint were shown to be more correct on all the begetting ages of the patriarchs,[[84]](#footnote-84) that would push the date of the Flood back only 750 years and the date of Adam’s creation back another 586, making the age of the creation only around 7,350 years ago.[[85]](#footnote-85)

The approximate date of Adam’s creation (and therefore the creation of the universe) must be determined from the inerrant Word of God, not on the basis of fallible ancient pagan chronologies or equally fallible modern scientific dating methods that are controlled by equally pagan, naturalistic, philosophical assumptions.

But does it matter? Yes, it matters because God has given us many chronological details in His inerrant Word. He could have easily inspired Moses and the other biblical writers to speak in vague terms of “thousands of years” or “long ago.” The details matter because every Word of God matters. It also matters because Jesus and the Apostles all clearly took Genesis as literal history. There is no reason to suppose that they thought any differently about the genealogies of Gen 5 and 11. If their word cannot be trusted on this matter, then their truthfulness and authority are undermined on all other matters. Furthermore, it bears repeating that if we accept the evolutionary dates and view of history, then we must insert death, disease, and other natural evils long before the Fall, which contradicts the Bible’s teaching on that subject and thereby undermines the truth of the gospel.

So the only real question regarding the dating of Adam’s creation is whether or not we will believe God’s Word. Or will we instead make secular archeology, paleontology, geology, and astronomy and their dating methods as well as ancient pagan chronologies our final authority on this matter? Put more simply, whose word do we supremely trust: God’s or man’s?

<https://answersingenesis.org/bible-characters/adam-and-eve/when-was-adam-created/>

1. William Henry Green, “Primeval Chronology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 47 (1890): 285–303. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 286. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., 303. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Popularized by Thomas Chalmers, C.I. Scofield and others, it puts the millions of years somewhere between Gen 1:1 and 1:3, before six literal days of re-creation. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. One of the early advocates was the Anglican theologian, George Stanley Faber, in his book in 1823. Today one of the most well known promoters is Hugh Ross and Reasons to Believe. This view says that each of the days of Gen 1 are long ages of hundreds of millions or billions of years each. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Advocated by P.J. Wiseman, it says that the days of Gen 1 are days of revelation, not creation, when on six literal days God revealed what He had created over who knows how long a time. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Popularized by Bruce Waltke, Meredith Kline, and others, it says that Gen 1 is not historical narrative, but a literary framework to teach theology. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Developed by John Sailhamer in *Genesis Unbound*, it says everything but man was created in Gen 1:1 and then from v. 2 onward the text is referring to the preparation of the Promised Land, which he equates with the Garden of Eden. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Advocated by C. John Collins in *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* this is similar to the day-age view but says that God’s creation days are like our days but not exactly like them. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The view of John Lennox (in his *Seven Days that Divide the World*) inserts an indeterminate (but long) amount of time between each of the six literal days. But Lennox also believes day 1 starts at Gen 1:3 with an indeterminate amount of time before that. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. John Walton is the leading proponent and insists in *Lost World of Genesis 1* that God did not create anything in Gen 1 but only gave function to pre-existing things so as to change a disordered creation into a cosmic temple for the Lord. He insists that the Bible says nothing about when or how God created things, including Adam. So whatever the scientific majority says is true is acceptable for Christians. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Mark A. Noll and David N. Livingstone, eds., *Evolution, Science and Scripture: Selected Writings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000), p. 217–222. Warfield was heavily influenced by Green and concluded, “It is precarious in the extreme to draw chronological inferences from these genealogies” (217) . . . because they are “so elastic that they may be commodiously stretched to fit any reasonable demand on time.” He thought “the period from the creation of Adam to Abraham may have been nearer two hundred thousand years than two thousand years” (222). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Francis Schaeffer, *No Final conflict* (1975), p. 37–43, and *Genesis in Space and Time* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1972), p. 122, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Grudem did not cite Green, but cited Schaeffer who cited Green. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), p. 290–292. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Erickson does not cite Green, but cites Warfield who relies on Green. Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1983), p. 484. His second edition (1998) and third edition (2013) say the same. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Peter H. Davids, F.F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), p. 101–103, and Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), p. 69–75. Kaiser republished Green’s whole 1890 article in *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. Walter Kaiser, Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1972). On p. 7 Kaiser describes it as one of “the finest moments in OT scholarship.” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Robert C. Newman and Herman J. Eckelmann Jr., *Genesis One and the Origin of the Earth* (Hatfield, PA: IBRI, 1977), also reprinted Green’s essay. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. C. John Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), p. 107–109. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), p. 267–270. Geisler cites Green, Warfield, Schaeffer, and Newman as sources for his view that Gen 5 and 11 do not contribute anything to “satisfy our curiosity about the date of human creation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ronald Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), p. 75–76. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The fact that Genesis records Adam’s poetic and romantic statement in Gen 2:23 and the words of Jacob’s poetic prophecy given to his sons in Gen 49:2–27 does not negate the fact that Genesis is history. It accurately records what those men poetically said on those occasions. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See the in-depth analysis of Steven Boyd, “The Genre of Gen 1:1–2:3: What Means This Text?” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, eds. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), p. 163–192. A layman’s summary of Boyd’s research is in Donald DeYoung, *Thousands, Not Billions: Challenging an Icon of Evolution* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2005), p. 157–172. A fuller technical discussion is Steven Boyd, “Statistical Determination of Genre in Biblical Hebrew: Evidence for a Historical Reading of Gen 1:1–2:3,” in *Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth*, Vol. 2, eds. Larry Vardiman, et al. (El Cajon, CA: ICR, 2005), p. 631–734, [http://www.icr.org/i/ pdf/technical/Statistical-Determination-of-Genre-in-Biblical-Hebrew.pdf](http://www.icr.org/i/%20pdf/technical/Statistical-Determination-of-Genre-in-Biblical-Hebrew.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. For a thorough refutation of the Framework view see Robert McCabe, “A Critique of the Framework Interpretation of the Creation Week,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, eds. Mortenson and Ury, p. 211–250. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The reason old-earth Bible scholars can’t find the Garden of Eden and the location of Cain’s city in our present Middle East geography is because those places no longer exist, having been destroyed in the global Flood that radically rearranged the surface of the earth and buried the pre-Flood land under thousands of feet of sediments. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The account of Noah’s Flood reads almost like a very simplified ship’s log or diary. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. See, for example, Mk 10:6–9; Lu 3:23–38, 11:50–51; Mt 24:37–39; Rom 5:12; 1Cor 15:21–22; 1P 3:20; 2P 2:4–9; Ez 14:12–20; and Is 54:9. Jesus, since He is the truth, knew the difference between truth and myth and would never use myth as a basis for teaching truth. Likewise, the Apostles clearly knew the difference between truth and myth (1Tim 1:4, 4:7; 2Tim 4:4; 2P 1:16.) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Of course, Jesus Himself used figurative language (“I am the light of the world,” or “I am the door”) and would not have “taken everything literally” in a woodenly literal manner. But He clearly implied that we should assume a literal interpretation, unless of course there are clear contextual reasons for not taking the text literally. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. See, for example, the arguments by Walter Kaiser, *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), p. 53–83, and Edward J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publ., 1964), p. 82–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. For example, Whitcomb concluded that the two genealogies “have nothing to do with the actual length of the overall period” and therefore “it is unnecessary to press them into a rigid chronological system.” See John C. Whitcomb Jr. and Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977 reprint of 1961), p. 474–489, quotes on p. 477. Also arguing for possible missing names and gaps of time is Mark Snoeberger, “Why a Commitment to Inerrancy Does Not Demand a Strictly 6000-Year-Old Earth: One Young-earther’s Plea for Realism,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 18 (2013): 3–17, [https://www.dbts.edu/journals/2013/Snoeberger.pdf](https://www.dbts.edu/journals/2013/Snoeberger.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See for example, Larry Pierce and Ken Ham, “Are There Gaps in the Genesis Genealogies?” <https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/gaps-in-the-genesis-genealogies/>; James J.S. Johnson, “How Young Is the Earth? Applying Simple Math to Data Provided in Genesis,” [http://www.icr.org/article/how-young-earth-applying-simple-math-dataprovided/](http://www.icr.org/article/how-young-earth-applying-simple-math-dataprovided/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank); Jonathan Sarfati, “Biblical Chronogenealogies,” [http://creation.com/biblicalchronogenealogies](http://creation.com/biblicalchronogenealogies%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1976), p. 152–155. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. For an in-depth analysis of the meaning of *yom* in Genesis 1 see Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1: Literal ‘Days’ or Figurative ‘Periods/Epochs’ of Time?” *Origins* 21:1 (1994): 5–38; Andrew E. Steinmann, “אֶחדָ as an Ordinal Number and the Meaning of Genesis 1:5,” *JETS* 45:4 (2002): 577–84; Jim Stambaugh, “The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach,” <https://answersingenesis.org/days-of-creation/the-days-of-creation-a-semantic-approach/>, 1 April 1991; Robert McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week,” *DBSJ* 5 (2000): 97–123; and Trevor Craigen, “Can Deep Time Be Embedded in Genesis?” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 193–210. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Unless otherwise noted, Scripture in this chapter is from the New American Standard Bible (NASB). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. He used *zeman* in Neh 2:6 and Dan 2:16, [2:21](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Daniel%202.21%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), [4:36](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Daniel%204.36%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), and 7:25, and iddan in Dan 4:16, [23](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Daniel%204.23%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), [25](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Daniel%204.25%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), and 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See Craigen, ibid., p. 195–197; and Terry Mortenson, “Evolution vs Creation: the Order of Events Matters!” <https://answersingenesis.org/why-does-creation-matter/evolution-vs-creation-the-order-of-events-matters/>, April 4, 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. When God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation,” it could have been a supernatural growth to maturity, just as occurred when God made a plant to grow large enough in a few hours to provide shade for Jonah (Jon 4:6). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ken Ham, ed., *The New Answers Book* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2006), p. 88–112; Terry Mortenson, “Biblical Creation: Strengthening Your Defenses” DVD; Tim Chaffey and Jason Lisle, *Old-Earth Creationism on Trial* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2007), p. 23–79; Andrew Kulikovski, *Creation, Fall, Restoration* (Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publ., 2009), passim; Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise*, 2nd rev. ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publ., 2011), p. 67–104; Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account* (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publ., 2015), passim. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. There is no Hebrew word for “in” here, but if it is taken out of the English “For in six days God created,” the verse still means the same: “For six days God created.” [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. See also James Stambaugh, “The Days of Genesis: A Semantic Approach,” *TJ* 5:1 (1991): 70–78. [www.answersingenesis.org/tj/v5/i1/semantic.asp](https://answersingenesis.org/days-of-creation/the-days-of-creation-a-semantic-approach/). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ex 31:13 and Dt 5:13–15. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), p. 296. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. C. John Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), p., 65, 85–86, 97–99; John Lennox, *Seven Days That Divide the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. I am not saying that the age of the earth was the focus of these verses. Rather, they reflect the young-earth creationist worldview of Jesus. For a thorough discussion of Jesus’ words and old-earth attempts to reinterpret them, see Terry Mortenson, “Jesus, Evangelical Scholars and the Age of the Earth,” *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 315–346. A short layman’s discussion is Terry Mortenson, “But from the beginning of . . . the institution of marriage?” [www.answersingenesis.org/docs2004/1101ankerberg\_response.asp](https://answersingenesis.org/family/marriage/but-from-the-beginning-of-the-institution-of-marriage/), which is a response to a web article by John Ankerberg and Norman Geisler on Mk 10:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. This is true even of the two-stage healing of the blind man (Mk 8:22–25). Each stage of the healing was instantaneous. Jesus apparently did this miracle in stages for a pedagogical purpose. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. So read the NASB, ESV, NKJV, NIV, NLT, and NRSV. The KJV, KJ21, and HCSB render *apo ktiseos kosmou* as “from the creation of the world.” But *apo* (“from”) here surely means “since.” For reasons behind this conclusion, see Ron Minton, “Apostolic Witness to Genesis Creation and the Flood,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 351–354. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Terry Mortenson, “The Historical Development of the Old-Earth Geological Time-Scale,” <https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/the-historical-development-of-the-old-earth-geological-time-scale/>, August 8, 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. See for example, Thane H. Ury, “Luther, Calvin, and Wesley on the Genesis of Natural Evil: Recovering Lost Rubrics for Defending a Very Good Creation,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 399–424. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. See examples of this inconsistency in my critique of three leading systematic theology texts which make this error: Terry Mortenson, “Systematic Theology Texts and the Age of the Earth: a Response to the Views of Erickson, Grudem, and Lewis and Demarest,” <https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/systematic-theology-texts-and-the-age-of-the-earth/>, December 16, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. See Terry Mortenson, “The Fall and the Problem of Millions of Years of Natural Evil,” <https://answersingenesis.org/theory-of-evolution/millions-of-years/the-fall-and-the-problem-of-millions-of-years-of-natural-evil/>, July 18, 2012. See also James Stambaugh, “Whence Cometh Death? A Biblical Theology of Physical Death and Natural Evil,” *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, eds. Mortenson and Ury, p. 373–398. William Dembski has made a valiant attempt to wed an orthodox understanding of natural evil being a result of the Fall with the evolutionist claim that the natural evil happened for millions of years before the Fall. Even though his book, *The End of Christianity: Finding a Good God in an Evil World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2009), has been endorsed by a host of evangelical leaders (including Josh and Sean McDowell, Frank Turek, Gary Habermas, Norman Geisler, Hank Hanegraaf, Chuck Colson, J.P. Moreland, C. John Collins, and many others) I argue that Dembski’s proposal is fatally flawed. See Terry Mortenson, “Christian Theodicy in the Light of Genesis and Modern Science,” <https://answersingenesis.org/reviews/christian-theodicy-in-light-of-genesis-and-modern-science/>, 11 November 2009. This article links to an excellent critique of Dembski’s book by Dr. Tom Nettles. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Christopher Hitchens, [https://ashleyfmiller.wordpress.com/2010/09/24/hitchens-briefly-on-the-immorality-of-christianity/](https://ashleyfmiller.wordpress.com/2010/09/24/hitchens-briefly-on-the-immorality-of-christianity/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). The video of Hitchens saying this is on this page. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Bodie Hodge, “How Old Is the Earth?” in *The New Answers Book 2*, ed. Ken Ham (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), <https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/how-old-is-the-earth/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. So, May 31, 2016, is 23 Iyyar 5776 in the Jewish calendar. See <https://www.hebcal.com/>, <https://www.hebcal.com/> and [http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/this-day-in-jewish-history/1.679000](http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/this-day-in-jewish-history/1.679000%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Jeremy Sexton, “Who Was Born When Enosh Was 90? A Semantic Reevaluation of William Henry Green’s Chronological Gaps,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 77 (2015): 194, [http://pastorsexton.com/articles/](http://pastorsexton.com/articles/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). Sexton cites the thorough work of OT scholar, Gerhard Hasel on this point. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. That was the conclusion of the great Baptist Hebraist of the 18th century, John Gill, in his commentary on Lu 3:36 in John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament; The Whole Illustrated with Notes, Taken from the Most Ancient Jewish Writings* (1746–1763), quoted in <https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/gaps-in-the-genesis-genealogies/>. See also J. Paul Tanner, “Old Testament Chronology and Its Implications for the Creation and Flood Accounts,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 172 (January–March 2015): 33–34; and Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, p. 679–683. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Sexton, “Who was born when Enosh was 90?” p. 193–218. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. The two examples were Dt 4:25 (referring to both children and grandchildren) and 2K 20:18 (in a prophecy that was fulfilled in the lives of Hezekiah’s descendants living 4–5 generations after him: 2K 24:12–17, 25:1–7). [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Terry Mortenson, “Systematic Theology Texts and the Age of the Earth,” <https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/systematic-theology-texts-and-the-age-of-the-earth/>, just before endnote 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Tanner, “Old Testament Chronology,” p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. They are Adam-Seth, Seth-Enosh, Lamech-Noah, Noah-Shem, Shem-Arpachshad and Terah-Abraham. Adam named Seth because, as Eve said, he replaced Abel who was murdered (Gen 4:25). Seth named his son Enosh (Gen 4:26). Lamech named his son Noah and prophesied about him (Gen 5:29). Shem was on the ark with Noah. Arpachshad was born two years after the Flood (Gen 11:10). Abraham traveled with his father Terah to Haran where Terah died at age 225 when Abraham was 75 (Gen 11:27–12:4). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. While “son of ” doesn’t always mean a literal son but can refer to a distant descendant (e.g., Jesus, son of David), in the cases of Gen 5 and 11 it surely refers to literal sons and daughters in 6 cases and it therefore seems inexplicable why it would mean anything different in the other 13 cases. What would be the point of conveying by this phrase the obvious fact that these 13 patriarchs had other distant descendants? [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. For example, Ronald Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. See further, Travis R. Freeman, “Do the Genesis 5 and 11 Genealogies Contain Gaps,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 283–314; and Tanner, “Old Testament Chronology,” p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Youngblood, *Genesis*, p. 76. Citing the same two verses, Kaiser et al., *Hard Sayings*, p. 103, actually give “one final warning”: “do not add up the years of these patriarchs and expect to come up with the Bible’s date for the birth of the human race.” [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Philip M. Holladay, “An Exponential Decay Curve in Old Testament Genealogies,” *Answers Research Journal*, vol. 9 (Oct. 2016), at [https://answersingenesis.org/answers/research-journal](https://answersingenesis.org/answers/research-journal/). See also Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, p. 685–688. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. See Bodie Hodge “The Collapse of the Canopy Model,” <https://answersingenesis.org/environmental-science/the-collapse-of-the-canopy-model/>, September 25, 2009; and Andrew Snelling, *Earth’s Catastrophic Past*, 2 Vol. (Dallas, TX: ICR, 2009), I:471–473 and II:662–670. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. David Menton and Georgia Purdom, “Did People like Adam and Noah Really Live Over 900 Years of Age?” in *The New Answers Book 2*, ed. Ken Ham (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), p. 129–137, [https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/did-adam-and-noah-really-live-over-900-years/](https://answersingenesis.org/environmental-science/the-collapse-of-the-canopy-model/). See also Snelling, *Earth’s Catastrophic Past,* I:65. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Duane L. Christensen, “Did People Live to Be Hundreds of years Old Before the Flood? NO,” in *The Genesis Debate*, ed. Ronald F. Youngblood (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1986), p. 166–183. See also Youngblood, *Genesis*, p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross, *Who Was Adam?* 1st ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), p. 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross, *Who Was Adam?* 2nd rev. ed. (Covina, CA: Reasons to Believe, 2015), p. 376. It should be noted that Rana and Ross follow William Henry Green in arguing for gaps in Genesis 5 and 11 to allow for all this extra time. (p. 50). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Ross, *Navigating Genesis*, p. 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. *Who Was Adam?* (2015) is endorsed by Walter Kaiser, Ted Cabal, Ken Keathley, Norman Geisler, John Bloom, Jack Hayford, C. John Collins, and John Ankerberg. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Adam was 130 when Seth was born, Seth was 105 when Enosh was born, Lamech was 182 when Noah was born, Noah was 502 when Shem was born (Japheth was the first born: cf. Gen 5:32 and 10:21), Shem was 100 when Arpachshad was born, and Terah was 130 when Abraham was born. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Compromise: A Biblical and Scientific Refutation of “Progressive Creationism” (Billions of Years), as Popularized by Astronomer Hugh Ross,* 2nd rev. ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publ., 2011). This revised second edition refutes the rebuttals that Ross made in response to Sarfati’s first edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. For a layman’s discussion see Brian Thomas, “Population Study Standoff,” [http://www.icr.org/article/9132](http://www.icr.org/article/9132%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), January 18, 2016. For the technical arguments, see Robert Carter and Chris Hardy, “Modelling biblical human population growth,” *Journal of Creation* 29, no. 1 (2015): 72–79, [http://creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j29\_1/j29\_1\_72-79.pdf](http://creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j29_1/j29_1_72-79.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. To understand this dating method see Andrew Snelling, “Carbon-14 Dating, Understanding the Basics,” <https://answersingenesis.org/geology/carbon-14/carbon-14-dating/>, October 1, 2010, as well as parts 2 and 3 linked in the article. A recent example of why C-14 dating doesn’t work is discussed in Elizabeth Mitchell, “The Bible Wins the Debate with Carbon-Dated Camel Bones,” ["https://answersingenesis.org/is-the-bible-true/the-bible-wins-the-debate-with-carbon-dated-camel-bones/](https://answersingenesis.org/is-the-bible-true/the-bible-wins-the-debate-with-carbon-dated-camel-bones/), February 10, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Anon., “Dating Study ‘Means Human History Rethink,’” [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/1413326.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/1413326.stm%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), June 29, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Andrew Snelling, “The Creationist Puzzle: 50,000-year-old Fossils,” *Answers Magazine,* <https://answersingenesis.org/geology/carbon-14/a-creationist-puzzle/>, April 1, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. The problems with Egyptian chronology are discussed in Elizabeth Mitchell, “Doesn’t Egyptian Chronology Prove That the Bible Is Unreliable?” in *The New Answers Book 2*, ed. Ken Ham (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008), p. 245–264, https://answersingenesis. org/archaeology/ancient-egypt/doesnt-egyptian-chronology-prove-bible-unreliable/. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. [http://store.patternsofevidence.com/](http://store.patternsofevidence.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. See James J.S. Johnson, “How Young Is the Earth? Applying Simple Math to Data Provided in Genesis,” [www.icr.org/article/4124](http://www.icr.org/article/4124%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). Johnson also assumes that the begetting refers to conception, not birth, but Sexton’s article above (p. 195–196) gives strong biblical evidence to the contrary. Johnson also mistakenly counted Abraham as being born when Terah was 70. However, Haran was Terah’s first-born and Abraham was not born till Terah was 130 (Abraham was 75 when Terah died at 205: cf. *Gen11:32 and 12:4*). So these points invalidate Johnson’s calculations just a little. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Readers who are not convinced are urged to consider the articles by Tanner and Sexton and the chapter by Freeman cited above. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. It appears that young-earth creationists need to investigate this question more deeply. Sarfati argues (*The Genesis Account*, p. 460–462) that the Septuagint (LXX) obviously has inflated ages because it has Methuselah living 14 years after the Flood, that the LXX also shows evidence of having been altered to fit with Egyptian chronology, and that the Dead Sea Scrolls strongly confirm the Hebrew Masoretic text as the faithful copy of the original. On the other hand, Sexton presents a more in-depth argument in favor of the ages in the LXX in the appendix of his “Who Was Born When Enosh Was 90?” p. 210–218. See also Jeremy Sexton and Henry B. Smith Jr., “Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting the Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11,” *Bible and Spade* 29.2 (2016): 42–49. Regardless, both Sarfati and Sexton take the genealogies of Gen 5 and 11 as tight chronologies. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. In the Masoretic Text (MT) the time from the creation of Adam to the beginning of the Flood is 1,656 years; in the LXX it is 2,242 years, an increase of 586 years. The time from the beginning of the Flood to the birth of Abraham is 353 years in the MT and 1,103 years in the LXX (if we omit the extra Cainan in later copies of the LXX), adding 750 years to the chronology. So if all the ages in the LXX were correct, we would add a maximum of 1,336 years between the creation of Adam (and the whole universe) and the birth of Abraham. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)