

CRITICAL APOLOGETICS ISSUES FOR GENESIS 9 TO 11

Abstract

The following is a composition of articles taken from apologetics.org and answersingenesis.org, which address critical apologetic issues connected to and encountered in Genesis chapters 9 to 11. All authors and sources are appropriately accredited in the article to which they are associated.

God's Command to "Replenish" the Earth

by Bert Thompson, Ph.D.

Q. My Bible (KJV, 1611) says in Genesis 1:28 that God told Adam and Eve to "...be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth...." The same wording is used again in Genesis 9:1 after the Flood. Since Adam and Eve were told to replenish the Earth, does this not clearly indicate that the Earth had inhabitants before Adam and Eve?

A. There are a number of false theories relating to the Genesis account of creation. Among those is the currently popular "Gap Theory." This idea, first proposed in 1814 by Scottish theologian Thomas Chalmers, suggests that a vast "gap" of time should be inserted between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2, and that during this indeterminable amount of time there lived and died an entire pre-Adamic world, complete with plants, animals, and even pre-Adamic races of people. The popularity of the theory is due, of course, to its supposedly valiant attempt to "squeeze" the geological ages of time necessary for an ancient Earth into the biblical record. The Gap Theory is based on several fallacious arguments, among which is the argument suggested by the question above. Some (though not all) proponents of the Gap Theory have attempted to establish the existence of a pre-Adamic race of people during the alleged gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. One of the arguments often used has to do with the command given by God to Adam and Eve to "replenish the earth." The argument goes something like this: since Adam and Eve were told to replenish the Earth, and since replenish means to "fill again," then it is obvious that the Earth was "full" to begin with. Thus, there must have been people in existence before Adam's creation.

George H. Pember spoke of a "preadamite race" and of "preadamite man," which he believed belonged to that primeval world with its own "sin-stained history" (1975, pp. 35,67-73). In later years the renowned commentator, J. Sidlow Baxter, became a defender of the Gap Theory, and even went so far as to speak of a "pre-Adamite rebellion and judgment of Lucifer and associated angel-beings" (1960, pp. 189-190). Others likewise have suggested "pre-Adamic" populations in relation to the Gap Theory.

The truth of the matter, however, is that defenders of the Gap Theory could have saved themselves much time, effort, and endlessly wild speculation if they simply had examined more carefully the correct meaning of "replenish" in Genesis 1:28. I readily admit that our English word "replenish" derives from the Latin *re* (again) and *plenus* (full), and thus can mean "to fill again." I also readily admit that even Webster's Dictionary quotes this verse under its definition of "replenish" as to "repeople." But theological issues are not determined by appeals to Webster's Dictionary or modern-day usage. Such issues are determined by appeals to the original languages, however. And in this case, such an appeal immediately clears up any

questions on the topic. The Hebrew word, which unfortunately is translated “replenish” in the King James Version of 1611, does not mean to “replenish.” That word is *male’*, and means simply “to fill” (Davidson, 1863, p. 488; cf., Brown, Driver, and Briggs, 1962, p. 22; see also, Harris, Archer, and Waltke, 1980, 1:505-506). Interesting is the fact that this very same word is used in Genesis 1:22 where the command is given by God to “fill the waters of the seas.” Later versions of the Bible (ASV, RSV, NASB, NIV, et al.) have rendered the verb properly as merely “fill.”

Also of interest in this regard is the fact that not even the Scofield Reference Bible (which so adamantly defends the Gap Theory in its “Notes”) makes an argument for a “pre-Adamic” race on the basis of Genesis 1:28, and has changed its KJV text at this point (and in Genesis 9:1) by substituting “fill” for “replenish.” I also might note that the Gap Theory’s leading spokesman (until his death), Arthur C. Custance, acknowledged that the Hebrew *male’* means only “to fill” (1976, p. 314). Neither does *male’* mean to “refill” or “repopulate” in Genesis 9:1. Rather, its meaning is “to bring forth abundantly” (Workman, 1982, p. 185-204). Of the more than 300 times the KJV uses the word *male’*, it is translated by the word “replenish” only seven times, and even those seven could be rendered correctly as “fill” (Morris, 1976, p. 76).

I might add as a concluding remark that the whole idea of pre-Adamic beings living on the Earth prior to the creation week of Genesis 1 is incorrect. Paul, through inspiration, plainly stated that Adam was “the first man” (1 Corinthians 15:45), and that through Adam’s sin death entered the world (Romans 5:12; 8:20-22; 1 Corinthians 15:21). Certain supporters of the Gap Theory, albeit perhaps inadvertently, have set forth a theory that causes Scripture to contradict itself. If Adam was the first, none existed before him. If death to the race came through his sin (and Paul plainly affirmed that it did), then no one could have died before that sin/ death. In providing answers to Bible questions, whatever else we do, we must be careful not to suggest answers that pit the Bible against itself. The Gap Theory does just that, and therefore must be rejected.

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The Death Penalty.

by [Mark Looy](#) on July 27, 2001

Once again the debate over the death penalty has become a major point of discussion in the United States and beyond.

With last month's execution of terrorist Timothy McVeigh for the 1995 bombing that killed 168 people in Oklahoma City, USA, once again the debate over the death penalty has become a major point of discussion in the United States and beyond (even Pope John Paul II had urged President George W. Bush to stop the execution; and Russian President Putin recently argued against the death penalty, stating that only "the Almighty" has the right to take life¹). It is also an emotional debate, even among Christians. But because the Book of Genesis teaches on this subject, we submit this commentary to shed light (and we trust no heat) on what the Bible teaches.

Indeed, it is a question that many Christians are currently asking themselves: is the death penalty still applicable today as the Biblical punishment for murder? Unfortunately, many Christians don't go to the Bible first to see what God's Word says on this issue.

Of those who do, some say that the commandment in [Genesis 9:6](#) ("Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man") is from the time of the "law," and therefore does not have any bearing in our so-called "New Testament Age." (More about that objection below.)

There are other objections to the death penalty expressed by some believers. For example, one Christian on American national television said that he was against the execution of Timothy McVeigh because he believes that Jesus would also be against it, applying the now-famous phrase "What Would Jesus Do (WWJD)?"² As if he could "read the Lord's mind" on this issue, he declared that the Lord would say "don't execute McVeigh."

Both of the objections cited above by some Christians to the death penalty are symptomatic of a disturbing lack of Biblical understanding among believers in the United States (and probably the world as well). If the man interviewed on television had carefully read his Bible, he would know that his answer to the question "What Would Jesus *Do*?" was wrong. In fact, asking this question without first asking "What did Jesus BELIEVE?" (WDJB) is bound to give wrong answers. Christ accepted the historicity of the book of Genesis (e.g. [John 5:47](#) "But if ye believe not his [Moses's] writings, how shall ye believe my words?") and did not rescind the [Genesis 9:6](#) penalty for murder during His earthly ministry. It therefore seems to follow that He accepted (and still accepts) the death penalty.

Man was created by Christ Himself ([Colossians 1:16](#)) and made in His (Christ's) image. Thus according to [Genesis 9:6](#), if a murder was committed, permission has been given to man to take

the life of the murderer, one who dared violate the Creator's command not to kill His special creation, made in His image.

Some Christians claim that the death penalty was voided by New Testament teaching. They point out that Christ came to make us free from the law of Moses (usually citing [John 1:17](#), [Galatians 5:14](#), and others). While the issue of law and grace is beyond the scope of this brief article, the point they miss in this debate is that [Genesis 9:6](#) came *well before* the Mosaic law, and was a part of the universal Noahic covenant God made with all mankind.

Therefore, there is nothing in the Bible that has rescinded [Genesis 9:6](#): a person who has unquestionably (the Biblical standard of proof required eyewitness testimony) committed premeditated murder can be punished by execution.

To cement this issue, in [Romans 13:1-4](#) Paul, the "Apostle of Grace," refers to the ruling authorities having been ordained of God to carry out just acts to restrain evil. He points out that they are entitled to "bear the sword" to apply the just penalty to evildoers. In other words, in a fallen world, God has instituted human government, however imperfect, as an instrument to restrain evil to some extent. The state, of course, cannot be said to "bear the sword" to punish evil if in fact it could not legitimately remove life under *any* circumstances. Also, it should be stated that there is no contradiction between Paul's teaching here and the Biblical commandment "thou shalt not kill" because the commandment actually uses the Hebrew word for "murder" -- the unjust, unsanctioned taking of a human life--not the word "kill."

Furthermore, if it were *always* wrong to take life, there would be no point in police wearing guns, as it would be clear to criminals that they could never use them, even when defending themselves against a life-threatening attack. It would also have been immoral, wrong, and evil for Allied troops to use weapons and deadly force to wrest Europe from Hitler's thugs and liberate people from the death camps.

Of course, if convicted murderers on Death Row were to repent and become truly converted, their sins (all of them) would be forgiven on the basis of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and they would not have to face the ultimate penalty, what the Bible calls "the second death." But the state would still have the right, if not the duty, to carry out the just penalty for their murderous actions.

There are difficult questions to face in the whole death penalty debate, not the least being the degree to which the state applies Biblical standards of proof, and whether it does so impartially and justly. The fact is that in western jurisprudence, using complex arguments about circumstantial evidence, some people are going to be wrongly convicted, and thus a great evil will have been done. And, of course, bloodthirsty calls for revenge should have no part in a Christian approach to such matters.

Arguments rage over whether the death penalty is a deterrent or not. But such human opinions are ultimately not the issue—what counts are the Maker’s standards. The simple, stark comment in Genesis has nothing to do with deterrence, but with right and wrong.

Our point here is not to join in any lobbying or politics, but simply to state that any argument that appeals to Christianity to oppose the death penalty must also take into account the clear teaching of the Bible on the matter. The death penalty, if fairly and justly implied, was

- a. instituted by God in Genesis, in a statement to all mankind, not just the Israelites.
- b. never rescinded in the New Testament, but actually reinforced in principle.

Was Noah wrong for cursing Canaan? Troy Lacey.

By Troy Lacey of AiG

Dear AiG,

I noticed this tidbit in [a recent "feedback"](#):

While some have thought Ham's viewing of Noah was sinful, or that Ham did something perverse, the Bible seems to indicate that it was Ham's mocking response of telling his brothers that was wrong. Rather than respecting his father, Ham apparently took some delight in Noah's lack of dignity at that moment, and he shared his disrespect with his brothers.

How did you come to the conclusion that Ham mocked his father in [Genesis 9:21-25](#)? All I see is that Ham saw his father was naked and told his brother. Am I missing something here, a Hebrew definition maybe? Or is it possible that Noah was in the wrong to curse Canaan? He certainly wasn't perfect, he was just passed out drunk the night before!

Yours in His service,
C.S.

Hi C.S., thank you for contacting Answers in Genesis with your questions. It is highly improbable that Noah was wrong for cursing Canaan, even though he had just awakened from his drunken sleep. Keep in mind that Scripture contains different kinds of curses. The one in view here seems to be a prophetic utterance of malediction upon the descendants of Canaan. This is not an idle or knee-jerk vengeful proclamation, but one of prophetic foresight. Compare this with the curses announced in [Deuteronomy 27:12-26](#) that serve as a warning of what would happen to the Israelites if they disobeyed.

The Bible does not shy away from recording the sins of its key figures, and at times it reveals the motivations behind them. Sometimes men mistakenly do things, and their wrong actions are recorded in Scripture, but when this happens we are often told by the human author of the book (through the Spirit's guidance) that the person was mistaken or made a bad decision. Thus, in many cases we are not left to wonder ([2 Kings 4:39-40](#) and [2 Chronicles 35:20-27](#) are good examples).

SOMETIMES WE MUST COMPARE A PERSON'S ACTIONS TO OTHER BIBLICAL TEACHING TO SEE THAT IT WAS WRONG.

However, sometimes we must compare a person's actions to other biblical teaching to see that it was wrong. The case in point is a perfect example. The text simply tells us that Noah became drunk, but nothing in the immediate context mentions that he did something wrong. We need to compare his actions to other biblical passages, such as [Ephesians 5:18](#), to see what the Bible

teaches about drunkenness. Regarding Noah's cursing of Canaan, there is nothing in Scripture to tell us that it was inappropriate.

We also know from Scripture that God is fully capable of predicting the future ([Isaiah 46:10](#)). In fact, when a prophecy is from God, we can be certain that it will come to pass, since He can never be wrong ([Isaiah 46:11](#), [55:11](#)). On the other hand, if humans prophesy apart from God's inspiration, then they will show themselves to be false prophets because their prophecies will fail ([Deuteronomy 18:22](#); [Jeremiah 28:9](#)).¹ Noah's words did come to pass in the future, as we read that many of Canaan's descendants were either killed or put under tribute by Israel (descendants of Shem) during the times of Joshua and the Judges, and later by King Solomon.

A possible clue that Ham might be mocking his father is from the Hebrew word used in [Genesis 9:22](#) (the root is *ra'ah*) which means "to see" but frequently has the connotation of regarding or perceiving. The same word is also used as a noun for birds of prey that use sight to hunt ([Deuteronomy 14:13](#)).² We should remain tentative on this point since we are not told whether or not Ham looked away immediately, but his actions after he saw his father naked are reproachful.

Another strike against Ham is that he observed his father's nakedness, but his other two brothers deliberately did not. [Genesis 9:23-24](#) states that Shem and Japheth took extra measures to ensure that they did not see their father's nakedness, and that they covered him. Apparently they didn't even want to have accidentally seen their father naked, but out of respect walked in backwards. If Ham had just accidentally observed Noah naked and promptly covered his father (as a good son would have), then there probably would not have been a curse.

Additionally, there was no reason to tell his brothers. That was purely gossip at best, or contempt at worst. Some commentators (Poole, Hodge and Bunyan) have felt that Ham also told his son Canaan, and perhaps that is why Canaan was cursed, because he also came and looked at Noah naked. This is only conjecture, though, since Scripture does not state it. What is stated is that Canaan was cursed, and this must have been due to either the same sin committed by Canaan or a prophetic utterance of the sins that Canaan and his descendants would become notorious for over the coming centuries ([Leviticus 18:3-29](#), [Deuteronomy 20:17-18](#)), or possibly both things.

Think of it this way; if you saw your cousin or a close friend lying passed out, drunk, and naked in your backyard, would you call your siblings over to come take a look? Or out of decency would you at least wrap a blanket around him, and possibly even bring him into the house and put him on the couch? How much more respect should Ham have had for his father?

Why did Noah pronounce a curse upon Canaan rather than Ham? His words came to pass, so we believe he was inspired by God. Other than that, the Bible does not reveal the precise reason why Canaan was cursed instead of Ham. As such, we can only speculate. Here are some of the conjectures I found in my research:

- Noah refused to curse his son since God had already blessed Ham in [Genesis 9:1](#).
- Noah could see that Canaan also possessed the carnal and materialistic nature of Ham, and he realized it would only get worse in the coming generations. Perhaps this is why the phrase “Ham the father of Canaan” was used in [Genesis 9:22](#), since Canaan was very much his father’s son.
- Canaan was not only the father of the Canaanites, but also of the Amorites, Jebusites, Sidonians and the Phoenicians. All of these peoples would at some period in the future wage war against the descendants of Shem and (to a lesser extent) Japheth, and would also become grossly idolatrous. Noah may have been prophetically denouncing this departure from faith in the true and living God.

Again, since the Bible does not give us a specific reason, we can only be tentative in our answer to this question. These speculations were provided to give the reader some possible solutions to the problem. Whatever the proper solution, we can be confident that God had a perfectly just reason (or reasons) for inspiring Noah to utter these words.

The inclusion of embarrassing or sinful moments in the lives of key biblical figures testifies to the truthfulness of the biblical accounts. Rather than mythicizing godly men and women, the Bible presents them to us “warts and all.” Noah became drunk. Moses murdered a man. David committed adultery and conspired to murder Uriah. Paul (Saul) persecuted the early church. Yet God used these men in powerful ways. This is a great lesson to all of us. We have all sinned and regularly make mistakes. The God who mightily used Noah, Moses, David, and Paul is the same God Christians believe in and follow. He can use any one of us in a powerful way, despite our failings, if He chooses to do so.

Were All Men Vegetarians before the Flood?

By Eric Lyons, M.Min.

After the creation of man and land animals on day six of the Creation week, God instructed Adam saying, “I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food” (Genesis 1:29). There is no record of God telling Adam and Eve that they could butcher cows or smoke chickens, but He did authorize them to eat the seeds and fruits of plants and trees. In the very next chapter of Genesis, it is recorded where God told Adam that he could eat “of every tree of the garden” (except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – 2:16-17). Notice that nothing is said here about animals – only vegetation. Then again, in Genesis 3, when God sentenced Adam and Eve to a life outside of the Garden of Eden, He said: “And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground” (3:18-19). Three times in the first three chapters of the Bible, God instructed man regarding his diet. Each time, the Bible records only where God permitted man to eat vegetation (some of which could be made into bread – 3:19). The Bible nowhere mentions man receiving permission from God to eat any kind of animal until **after** the Flood. It was then that God said:

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, **even as the green herbs** (Genesis 9:1-3, emp. added).

Just as God had authorized mankind to eat “green herbs” many centuries earlier, after the Flood, God gave His permission for mankind to eat “all things” – including all animals that move on the Earth and swim in the sea. [NOTE: It appears that laws regarding the **eating** of clean and unclean animals were not given until the Law of Moses (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14:3-21). Although a difference was made between clean and unclean animals prior to the Flood (cf. Genesis 7:2-3), this distinction seems to have applied only to the matter of which animals were suitable for sacrifice, not for consumption (cf. Genesis 8:20).]

To answer the question, “Were all men prior to the Flood vegetarians?,” one merely can conclude that the Bible reveals God giving instructions only regarding the eating of food made from vegetation prior to the Deluge. God’s Word is conspicuously silent regarding the eating of animals. However, just because God apparently did not authorize man to eat animal flesh before the Flood, does not mean that mankind abided by this regulation. It seems likely that there were some people who went beyond what God allowed, and ate various kinds of animals anyway. It is not difficult to imagine those living just prior to the Flood, whose every thought was evil continually (Genesis 6:5), leaning over a sacrificial sheep, smelling the sweet aroma, and taking a bite out of the lamb’s leg (cf. 1 Samuel 2:12-17).

Some have asked why Adam's son Abel raised flocks, if he and his descendants were supposed to be vegetarians? Although the Bible does not say exactly why Abel was a "keeper of sheep" (Genesis 4:2), most likely it was because by raising sheep, Abel could provide clothing for himself and others, as well as provide animals that people could get from him to sacrifice to Jehovah. One thing we can know assuredly is that before the Flood, we never read of God granting permission to humans to eat animal flesh. Yet, at least three times prior to the Flood the Bible mentions God authorizing the fruit of the Earth for man's consumption. Furthermore, Genesis 9:2-3 stresses that after the Flood a vastly different relationship existed between animals and humans. Animals developed a fear of humans, and humanity was permitted to use the flesh of animals for food, "even as the green herbs" were permitted since the beginning of the Creation (9:3; 1:29).

Pre-Babel Confusion?

By Eric Lyons, M. Min.

As if we had not “heard it all,” some now are teaching that there was a great gap of time between Genesis chapters 10 and 11. **Supposedly**, since Moses recorded that the descendents of Shem, Ham, and Japheth spoke different languages in Genesis 10 (vss. 5,20,31), and since Genesis 11:1 states that “the whole earth had one language and one speech,” **there must have been a gap between Genesis 10:32 and 11:1!** It is alleged that enough time must have passed in order for the descendents of Shem, Ham, and Japheth to the begin speaking one language.

If you have ever read Genesis 6-11, you likely have questioned why the order of events seemed to indicate that the Earth’s population went from speaking one language (by the eight persons on the ark), to speaking a variety of languages and dialects (10:5,20,31), to then speaking one language again (11:1). It may be that you have asked the same question that I heard asked recently: “How can there **not** be a gap between Genesis 10 and 11?”

The reason that no gap of time exists between Genesis 10 and 11 is because the events recorded in these two chapters **were not written chronologically**. As Victor Hamilton stated in his commentary on Genesis: “We have here the unusual order of effect (ch. 10) before cause (ch. 11), or result preceding explanation” (1990, p. 347).

The simple fact is, Bible writers did not always record information in a strictly chronological sequence. Genesis 2:5-25 does not pick up where chapter one left off, rather it provides more detailed information about some of the events mentioned in chapter one. Several of the events in Genesis 38 involving Judah and Tamar occurred while the things recorded in chapter 39 and following took place. Making the assumption that the entire Bible was written chronologically hinders the trustworthiness of the text. How will one explain the differences in the arrangement of the temptations of Jesus recorded by Matthew (4:1-11) and Luke (4:1-13) if we always must conclude that things are written in sequential order? If Jesus only cleansed the temple once, how does a person explain why John mentioned this event as having occurred **early** in Jesus’ ministry while the other gospel writers placed it **later** in His ministry (John 2:12-17; cf. Matthew 21:12-17)? Obviously, the gospel accounts were not arranged to be a strict chronology of Jesus’ life. Similarly, Moses jumps ahead of himself at times, inserting parenthetical material like that found in Genesis 10.

Aside from the languages mentioned in Genesis 10, there is another “clue” in the text that reveals the events recorded in chapter 11 occurred before the descendents of Noah began speaking different languages and spreading throughout the Earth. In 10:25, it mentions a man named Peleg (meaning “division”) who received such a name because “in his days the earth was divided.” This is a clear reference to the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel described in chapter 11. The “earth” (i.e., people; cf. 11:1) divided when God confused the

languages (11:7-8). Thus, the division in Peleg's day is linked contextually to the linguistic segregation at Babel (Genesis 11:1-9).

When Genesis 10 and 11 are read with the understanding that not all events are recorded chronologically, one clearly sees how the events revealed in these chapters are entwined tightly with one another – so tightly in fact that those who seek to place a gap of time between them are doomed to fail. Linguistically speaking there was no pre-Babel confusion!

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Pangea and the Flood

By Kyle Butt, M.Div.

Anyone who has taken time to examine a globe in detail has probably noticed that the continents look like they could fit together. Often, this appearance has been likened to a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces of which have been pulled apart. It is not difficult to imagine the continents fitting together as one large land mass. In fact, the idea that the continents once joined together in a single land mass is standard teaching in most middle-school and high-school textbooks. This massive land conglomeration is known to most as Pangea (also spelled Pangaea). Evolutionary-based science books, including many Earth science books used in public schools, suggest that many millions of years ago, Pangea existed as the main land feature on the globe. Due to rather slow processes, known as continental drift, the continents lazily drifted apart over millions of years. With an array of impressive terms such as plate tectonics, sea-floor spreading, polar wandering, and paleomagnetism, evolutionary scientists explain the division of Pangea using uniformitarian philosophy in which present conditions and rates of drift are extrapolated back through millions of years of supposed Earth history. In *Focus on Earth Science*, published by Merrill, the following typical explanation is given for a facet of the plate tectonic theory:

The average rate of spreading at the East Pacific rise is 4 cm/year. The Maximum distance from the ridge to any trench is 10 000 km. If the spreading rate is constant, then no existing Pacific Ocean rock should be older than 250 million years. To date, no rocks older than 200 million years have been found in the Pacific Ocean basin. Thus, the evidence supports the plate tectonics model (Hesser and Leach, 1989, p. 449).

Several problems exist with the typical evolutionary explanation, which will be discussed directly. There is some legitimate evidence, however, that the continents did, at one time, fit together. Many rock types and formations abruptly end on the coast of one continent and just as abruptly begin on the coast of another continent. In numerous instances, these similar rock patterns and formations are found on the very continents that seem to have fit together in the past. In fact, well-known creationists have used the idea of Pangea in their explanatory models of certain geologic phenomena (see Baumgardner, 1994). At present, even though the idea is far from proven, there seems to be no scientific evidence that overwhelmingly suggests that Pangea could not have been an option. Nor is there any biblical evidence that would rule out the possibility that all land was once conglomerated. Certain biblical passages even hint that such might have been the case. Genesis 1:9-10 states: "Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear;' and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas." Admittedly, these verses deal more with the water being gathered together in one place than with the land. Yet, it is not an unreasonable possibility to suggest that if the water was in one place, then the exposed land mass was in one place as well. No biblical passage militates against the idea that all the continents once were together as Pangea.

The fundamental problem with most evolutionary explanations of Pangea's separation comes in their application of uniformitarian principles. Since we see the continents drifting only a few centimeters a year at present, then, according to uniformitarian thinkers, that must be the rate at which they have drifted for millions of years. This explanation fails to account for geologically catastrophic events on a massive scale. In truth, while the continents may have been connected in the past, they did not drift lazily apart over hundreds of millions of years.

In the April 23, 1999 issue of *Science*, Paul R. Renne and his team of researchers put forth the idea that a huge flow of magma and volcanic activity began the process that "drove the land mass [Pangea – KB] apart to create the Atlantic Ocean, at the same time dispersing evidence of the eruption widely on the margins of four continents" (Sanders, 1999). In the opening paragraph of their article, Renne and his colleagues discuss "the Central Atlantic Magmatic Province (CAMP), which is associated with the disruption of Pangea and the opening of the central Atlantic Ocean" (Marzoli, Renne, et al., 1999, p. 616). Their thesis was that, due to new "high-precision geochronological analysis" components of CAMP can be related "to a single brief magmatic episode...with an estimated original extent of volcanism over an area at least $4.5 \times 10^6 \text{ Km}^2$ " (Marzoli, Renne, et al., p. 616). In layman's terms, the split of Pangea began to take place in one huge, cataclysmic volcanic eruption.

While Renne and his colleagues most likely would not endorse the biblical Flood model, their findings fit perfectly with the idea that the geological activity during the Flood could have greatly accelerated the rate at which the continents spread. In the Genesis account of the Flood, "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up" (7:11). This statement has long been recognized as evidence of heavy volcanic and magmatic activity during the Flood. Such volcanic activity on the ocean floor would also speak to the idea of an accelerated rate of sea-floor spreading. The force and magnitude of the Global Flood, coupled with the ensuing volcanic and geologically cataclysmic activity, would certainly supply adequate causes for accelerated rates of continental drift.

Was there ever a single land mass known as Pangea? It is possible. But if there was, the uniformitarian model of continental drift provides an inadequate explanation for its separation. The catastrophic events surrounding the global Flood supply a much more feasible model for the separation of Pangea.

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What was the Sin at Babel?

By Kyle Butt, M.Div.

The biblical narrative often gives little commentary on major events it records. For instance, the death of James the apostle is mentioned in a single verse in Acts 12:2. Due to this abbreviated style in certain instances, one must take a rather in-depth look into the text for answers to questions that naturally arise from a straightforward reading. One such instance involves the details surrounding the tower of Babel in Genesis.

In an amazing act of divine intervention, God confused the language of all the inhabitants. Yet, this monumental event is recorded in a mere nine verses. Such brevity quite possibly leaves the reader wondering what sin those at Babel had committed to elicit such an unprecedented and active response from the Almighty. The text of Genesis 11:1-9 that describes the event does not forthrightly declare specific sins of which the denizens of Babel were guilty. But a close look at the passage and context reveals at least two areas in which those building the tower erred.

First, after Noah and his family exited the ark, God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth” (Genesis 9:1). After the Flood, God desired that humans spread throughout the world and “fill” it. Yet, those at the tower of Babel appear to have been in overt rebellion against this command of God. The rebels at Babel said: “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, **lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth**” (Genesis 11:4, emp. added). These people obviously understood that they would (or should) be scattered over the face of the Earth, but they were attempting to fight against this directive. When God confused their languages, the text states that He also “scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11:8).

Second, the rebellious tower builders mentioned that they were building the tower to “make a name” for themselves. At the heart of the confusion at Babel was the sin of pride. The New Testament writer John mentioned that the sinful world consists of three primary areas of temptation: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). Pride had so invested those at Babel that they were no longer seeking to glorify and honor their Creator Who was responsible for endowing them with the ingenuity to survive, build, and thrive. Instead, they sinfully heaped up recognition for themselves in an attempt to gain undue notoriety. As Burton Coffman stated: “The children of men who wrought this wickedness in God’s sight were clearly infected with the *us* virus, the pride, arrogance, and conceit of the people standing starkly obvious in this cryptic account of it” (1985, p. 159, italics in orig.).

Furthermore, it has been suggested that the tower of Babel was one of the first organized efforts to propagate pagan worship and idolatry (Coffman, p. 158). While such could be the case, it is not necessary to establish in order to document sins of such a grievous nature that would deserve God’s condemnation. Those at the tower of Babel were rebellious, arrogant sinners who attempted to thwart God’s design to have the Earth inhabited by men. Not only were they unsuccessful, they were also punished. Their story stands as a reminder to all who read: God demands obedience, and His ultimate will always prevails.

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My Three Sons

by [Bodie Hodge](#) on February 2, 2009

Were Noah's sons born when he was 500 as [Genesis 5:32](#) says or not as stated in [Genesis 7:6](#) and [Genesis 11:10](#)?

The Bible indicates that Noah had three sons prior to the Flood ([Genesis 6:10](#)). Noah's sons were not all the same age, but let's first begin with [Genesis 5:32](#):

[Genesis 5:32](#)

After Noah was 500 years old; he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

This indicates that Noah was 500 or just over when his first son was born. Listings such as these are rarely an indication of ages but shows that Noah *began* having children when He was 500 ([Genesis 11:26](#)). The listing of children often started with most important one (through Shem we receive the blessing of Christ). We know the relative ages of each from [Genesis 10:21](#) and [Genesis 9:24](#).

[Genesis 10:21](#)

Sons were also born to Shem, whose older brother was Japheth; Shem was the ancestor of all the sons of Eber.

[Genesis 9:24](#)

When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son (Ham) had done to him.

[Genesis 10:21](#) indicates that Japheth was the oldest and was born when Noah was 500 years old. Ham is the youngest, as indicated in [Genesis 9:24](#), after Ham's inappropriate actions to his father.

Therefore, Shem had to be born in between Japheth and Ham. Shem wasn't born as a triplet or twin of Japheth when Noah was 500, as shown by [Genesis 7:6](#) and [Genesis 11:10](#).

[Genesis 7:6](#)

Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth

[Genesis 11:10](#)

This is the account of Shem. Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of Arphaxad.

So, Noah was 600 when the floodwaters came on the earth, and two years later Shem was 100. Therefore, Shem had to be born to Noah when he was 502. We are not sure of Ham's exact age in Scripture, but he had to be born after Shem. Thus, [Genesis 5:32](#) introduces us to Noah's sons all together, and other passages give more detail about their birth order and age.

Location, Location, Location

by [Bodie Hodge](#) on March 23, 2009

Why do names of places appear in both pre-Flood and post-Flood? Does this refute a global Flood that should have destroyed such places?

When we read in *Genesis* 6–9, it is obvious that there was a global Flood. So, the alleged contradiction is that some pre-Flood place names reappear after the Flood. For example, Table 1 illustrates the most common ones:

Table 1. Pre-Flood and Post-Flood References

Name	Bible Reference Pre-Flood	Bible reference Post-Flood	Person
Havilah	Genesis 2:11	Genesis 10:7,29	Noah's grandson through Ham; Noah's great, great, great, great grandson through Shem
Cush	Genesis 2:13	Genesis 10:6	Noah's grandson through Ham
Asshur	Genesis 2:14 (NIV)	Genesis 10:22	Noah's grandson through Shem
Tigris	Genesis 2:14 (NIV)	Genesis 10:4	River in modern-day Iraq
Euphrates	Genesis 2:14	Genesis 15:18	River in modern-day Iraq

The answer to this conundrum is quite simple, but let's use some illustrations so that we can better understand this.

1. Names of places often transfer. For example, Versailles, Illinois, was named for Versailles, Kentucky, when settlers moved from Kentucky into Illinois. And before that Versailles, Kentucky, was named for Versailles, France. If someone said to meet me in Versailles, you may have to ask "which one?"
2. Names of places often come from names of people as well. The land of Canaan was named form Noah's grandson Canaan. St. Louis, Missouri, was named for King Louis IX of France.
3. Names of people sometimes came from places. Consider the name London that many people today have and its origin as a city in England.

With this in mind, it should be fairly easy to see how names could easily have been transferred through the Flood. Ham's grandson was likely named after the land of Havilah. Cush was Ham's son, and Asshur was Shem's son. Noah, Ham, and Shem lived before the Flood and would have been aware of these regions. And, of course, these names have gone on to become names of regions where some of these people settled after the dispersal of the Tower of Babel. Cush is modern-day Ethiopia; Asshur was where Assyria developed into a great nation and so on.

For example, if I were to mention the "Thames River," most people would quickly think of a river in southern England. However, the state of Connecticut in the U.S. and Ontario, Canada, also have a river named Thames. When people settled in the Americas from Europe, they named some of these rivers for rivers they were familiar with. Why would we expect Noah and his descendants to do any differently. The Tigris and Euphrates that we know today in modern day Iraq were named for the famous headwaters in the Garden of Eden.

There is no contradiction, but merely a situation of renaming new places, rivers, and people with previously used names.

In the Days of Peleg

Ancient Documents Are Consistent with the Total Accuracy of the Bible's Chronology.

by [Larry Pierce](#) on December 1, 1999

Originally published in Creation 22, no 1 (December 1999): 46-49.

Ancient documents about the days of Peleg are consistent with the total accuracy of the Bible's chronology.

Four generations after Noah, [Genesis 10:25](#) records the birth of Peleg (meaning *division*) "for in his days was the earth divided". Some suggest the continents of the earth were divided at this time. However, this seems unlikely, as such a process would have had to occur within a very confined time period. The resultant geological violence would be overwhelmingly catastrophic – like another Noahic Flood all over again. Any continental separation thus likely occurred *during* the Flood.^{[1](#)}

The traditional interpretation, which seems more reasonable, relates this verse to the division of people/nations at the Tower of Babel event in Genesis 11. (Just like the English "earth" can have a variety of meanings, the Hebrew *erets* can also mean nation(s) – thus *erets Yisrael*, the land (nation, people) of Israel.) According to the biblical chronology as deduced by Archbishop Ussher, the Flood occurred in 2349–2348 BC, and Peleg was born in 2247 BC about a hundred years later. Do ancient writers shed any light on when this happened? The answer is a resounding yes.

Babylon begins

The year was 331 BC. After Alexander the Great had defeated Darius at Gaugmela near Arbela, he journeyed to Babylon. Here he received 1903 years of astronomical observations from the Chaldeans, which they claimed dated back to the founding of Babylon. If this was so, then that would place the founding of Babylon in 2234 BC, or about thirteen years after the birth of Peleg. This was recorded in the sixth book of *De Caelo* ("About the heavens") by Simplicius, a Latin writer in the 6th century AD. Porphyry (an anti-Christian Greek philosopher, c. 234–305 AD) also deduced the same number.^{[2](#)}

Egypt emerges

The Byzantine chronicler Constantinus Manasses (d. 1187) wrote that the Egyptian state lasted 1663 years. If correct, then counting backward from the time that Cambyses, king of Persia, conquered Egypt in 526 BC, gives us the year of 2188 BC for the founding of Egypt,^{[3](#)} about 60 years after the birth of Peleg. About this time Mizraim, the son of Ham, led his colony into

Egypt. Hence the Hebrew word for Egypt is Mizraim⁴ (or sometimes “the land of Ham” e.g. [Psalm 105:23,27](#)).

Greece gets going

Artist’s reconstruction of the Tower of Babel. This view, modelled upon ancient ziggurats, is probably very similar to how it actually appeared. The Greek historian Herodotus (5th century BC), who saw it on his way through Babylon, described it as having eight levels, and standing a colossal 60 m (about 20 modern stories) high.

According to the 4th Century bishop and historian Eusebius of Caesarea, Egialeus, king of the Greek city of Sicyon, west of Corinth in Peloponnesus, began his reign in 2089 BC, 1313 years before the first Olympiad in 776 BC.⁵⁶ If Eusebius is correct, then this king started to reign about 160 years after the birth of Peleg.

Note that Babylon, Egypt, and Greece each spoke a different language. These ancient historians have unwittingly confirmed the extreme accuracy of the biblical genealogies as found in the Hebrew scriptures. The Tower of Babel would have had to have occurred before the founding of these other kingdoms. Babel (Babylon), being in the same region as the Tower, would have been one of the earliest kingdoms, of course.

Of the other kingdoms, the ones most distant from Babel would have been founded the latest. This is exactly what these writers have described. First Babylon, then Egypt, and then Greece were founded.

This tells us something about human nature too! After the Tower of Babel, people were forced to split into groups according to their new language. Humans are basically lazy. They would have moved away only as far from Babel as they had to in order to live in peace. However, population pressure, military force, or the desire to search for “greener pastures” would have induced them to move out further and further. So civilization would have slowly spread by periodic migrations from its centre at Babel.

Although secular historians ignore the events of Babel and the Flood, they assume civilization started in the Middle East, likely near Babylon, and spread out slowly from there. However, they use a time frame much earlier than the time deduced from the biblical chronologies.

An interesting piece of information comes from Manetho, who recorded the history of Egypt in the third century BC. He wrote that the Tower of Babel occurred five years after the birth of Peleg.⁷ If this was so, then this would confirm that the migrations recorded in *Genesis* 10 occurred over a period of time, for the apparent leaders of many of these national groups would have been very young children when the confusion of languages occurred.⁸

WHETHER SECULAR RECONSTRUCTIONS OF HISTORY AGREE WITH IT OR NOT DOES NOT CHANGE THE ACCURACY OF THE BIBLE.

The lesson for us to learn is this. The Bible is accurate. Whether secular reconstructions of history agree with it or not does not change the accuracy of the Bible. We should use the biblical chronologies to determine where the secularists have gone astray and we should not amend the Bible to fit the latest secular speculations on history. This research area has largely been ignored by Christians in the last hundred years or so as they scramble to manipulate the Bible to conform to the latest secular reconstructions of man's history.

In recent years, some Christians have done an excellent job of restoring the authority of Genesis 1-4, 6-9. However, the genealogies in Genesis 5,10, and 11 (and the chronological portions in Kings and Chronicles) have been quietly surrendered to the domain of secular historians. Their destructive work on these chronologies has overthrown the faith of many. It is about time that this the biblical ground was reclaimed. If you could not trust the numbers in the chronologies of the Bible, why should you trust the words between the numbers? What limits would you place on your unbelief?

The Bible and chronology

There are three errors common in biblical chronology today. First, there are those who have a low view of the Bible and ignore its chronological data altogether. The ancient secular writers cited in the accompanying article provide independent support for the accuracy of the data in the Bible, which is based on facts, not myths as many liberals believe. Second, there are those



who would shorten the period of the divided kingdom. Edwin Thiele⁹ is the main proponent of this. Thiele uses the fragmentary Assyrian chronology of the divided kingdom period by about 50 years, to fit the conjectured dates from Assyria. But this would mean that Babylon would have been founded way before Peleg and the Tower of Babel! Third, there are those who would lengthen the biblical chronology. One of the earliest were those rabbis in Egypt who translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek to produce the Septuagint (LXX) in the third century BC. They arbitrarily added about 700 years to the biblical chronology for the period between Noah and Abraham, to make it agree with the works of Manetho. If what they had done was correct, then Peleg would be dead and gone (as would most of the leaders of the division of the nations) before the Tower of Babel happened.

Many modern biblical archaeologists, like the translators of the LXX, are just as guilty of the same thing today. Just as the LXX's translators listened to the fairy tales the Egyptian priests told them, most modern biblical scholars follow the just so stories told by secular historians and archaeologists who push the founding of Babylon and Egypt back thousands of years¹⁰

Footnotes

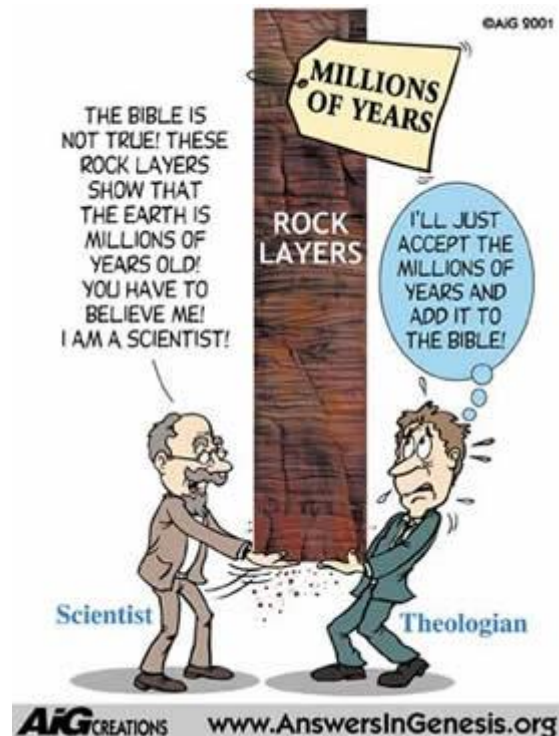
1. [Baumgardner, J.](#), Probing the earth's deep places, *Creation* **19**(3):40–43, 1997; [Snelling, A. A.](#), Plate Tectonics: Have the continents really moved apart? *TJ* **9**(1):12–20, 1995.
2. Ussher J., *Annales Veteris Testamenti*, Flesher and Sadler, London, p. 5, 1654. (This work is in Latin. I am preparing a new English translation, which is scheduled to be published in September 2000. The paragraph number for this footnote is 49 in that revised work.)
3. Ussher J., *Annales Veteris Testamenti*, Flesher and Sadler, London, p. 5, or paragraph 51 in the revised work, 1654.
4. Even now, Egyptians call their country *Mizr*.
5. Ussher J., *Annales Veteris Testamenti*, Flesher and Sadler, London, p. 6, or paragraph 54 in the revised work, 1654.
6. Eusebius, *Chronici Canones*, Humphredurn Milford, London, Preface pp. 1–14, 1923. (This Latin copy was prepared by Johannes Knight Fotheringham.)
7. Manetho, *The Book of Sothis*, Harvard Press, Cambridge, MA, p. 239. (Loeb Classical Library 350). Manetho was the victim of many Egyptian fairy tales in constructing his chronology of Egypt. The Egyptians would place the Flood and Peleg's birth much earlier than the Bible, but still they linked the Babel incident with Peleg's birth.
8. Ussher deduced that the division of the earth at the time of Peleg's birth was Noah dividing the land among his grandchildren. They subsequently moved to Shinar, where they conspired to hinder this dispersion of them as commanded by God and begun by Noah, building the city and tower of Babylon (Babel). God frustrated this project with the confusion of languages, which was then followed by the dispersion of nations.
9. Thiele E., *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, Kregel, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994. The most mysterious thing about his work is the way he handled the Hebrew numbers to make them conform to Assyrian chronology. Little attempt was made to make Assyrian chronology fit the biblical chronology.
10. Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1954. On page 84 he states Egypt dates back to about 5000 BC. On page 97 he states that Susa near Babylon dates back to about 4000 BC. Since the biblical date for the Flood is 2349 BC, how long could these people tread water? Although this book was published in 1954, its opinions are reflected in newer works dealing with biblical archaeology. If anything the situation has become worse, not better, in the last fifty years. Unger is a very conservative and well-respected Bible scholar. If he could be deceived, how much more careful should we be today when so many more errors are afoot?

Are There Gaps in the Genesis Genealogies?

by [Larry Pierce](#) and [Ken Ham](#) on April 8, 2010

Most people believe the genealogies contain only dull details, but since “every word is given by inspiration of God” even these so-called dull passages contain vital truth that can be trusted.

Most of us love to read portions of Scripture that give accounts of victories, miracles, and drama. We enjoy far less the Scriptures that outline a certain person begat a son or daughter, who in turn begat a son, thus beginning a long list of begats. Most people believe the genealogies contain only dull details, but those of us who keep in mind that “every word is given by inspiration of God” see that even these so-called dull passages contain vital truth that can be trusted.



Genesis 5 and 11 contain two such genealogies. It may be hard to believe, but Genesis 5 and 11 are actually two of the more controversial chapters in the Bible, even in Christian circles.

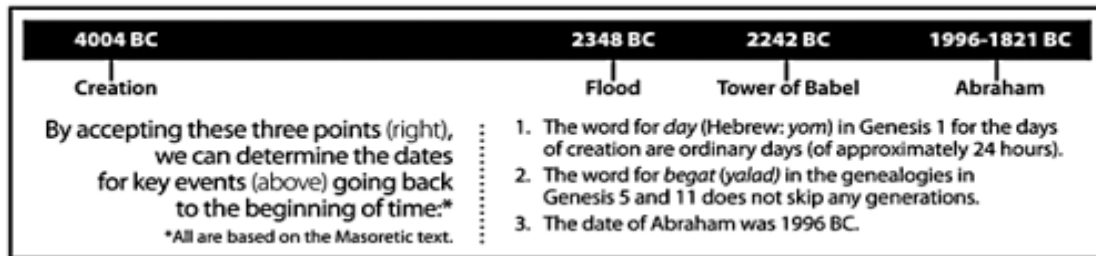
Because so many Christians and Christian leaders have accepted the secular dates for the origin of man and the universe, they must work out ways that such dates can somehow be incorporated into the Bible’s historical account. In other words, they must convince people that the Bible’s genealogical records do not present an unbroken line of chronology. If such an unbroken line exists, then we should be able to calculate dates concerning the creation of man and the universe.

To fit the idea of billions of years into Scripture, many Christian leaders, since the early 19th century, have reinterpreted the days of creation to mean long ages. Biblical creationist literature has meticulously addressed this topic many times, showing clearly that the word *day*, as used in Genesis 1 for each of the six days of creation, means an ordinary, approximately 24-hour day.^{[1](#)}

A straightforward addition of the chronogenealogies yields a date for the beginning near 4000 B.C. Chronologists working from the Bible consistently get 2,000 years between Adam and Abraham. Few would dispute that Abraham lived around 2000 B.C. Many Christian leaders, though, claim there are gaps in the Genesis genealogies. One of their arguments is that the word *begat*, as used in the time-line from the first man Adam to Abraham in Genesis 5 and 11, can skip generations. If this argument were true, the date for creation using the biblical time-line of history cannot be worked out.

In a recent debate,² a well-known progressive creationist³ stated that he believed a person could date Adam back 100,000 years from the present. Since most modern scholars place the date of Abraham around 2000 B.C. (Ussher's date for Abraham's birth is 1996 B.C.), the remaining 96,000 years must fit into the Genesis 5 and 11 genealogies, between Adam and Abraham.

Now, if we estimate that 40 years equals one generation, which is fairly generous,⁴ this means that 2,500 generations are missing from these genealogies. But this makes the genealogies ridiculously meaningless.



Two Keys to Consider

Those who claim that there are gaps in these genealogies need to demonstrate this from the biblical text and not simply say that gaps exist. However, consider the following:

1. Although in the Hebrew way of thinking, the construction "X is the son of Y" does not always mean a literal father/son relationship,⁵ additional biographical information in Genesis 5 and 11 strongly supports the view that there are no gaps in these chapters. So we know for certain that the following are literal father/son relationships: Adam/Seth, Seth/Enosh, Lamech/Noah, Noah/Shem, Eber/Peleg, and Terah/Abram. Nothing in these chapters indicates that the "X *begat* Y" means something other than a literal father/son relationship.
2. Nowhere in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word for *begat* (*yalad*) used in any other way than to mean a single-generation (e.g., father/son or mother/daughter) relationship. The Hebrew word *ben* can mean *son* or *grandson*, but the word *yalad* never skips generations.

Six Arguments Refuted

In the recent debate (mentioned previously), various biblical references were given as proofs that the Hebrew word *yalad* does not always point to the very next generation. However, when analyzed carefully, these arguments actually confirm what we are asserting concerning the word *begat*.

Argument 1

[Genesis 46:15](#) says, “These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three” (KJV). The word *bare* here is the Hebrew word *yalad*, which is also translated *begat*. It is claimed by some that because there are sons of various wives, grandsons, daughters, etc., in this list of “thirty and three,” the word *begat* is referring to all these and can’t be interpreted as we assert.

Is Argument 1 Relevant?

A person needs to read the quoted verse carefully to correctly understand its meaning. The *begat* (*bare*) refers to the sons born in Padanaram. [Genesis 35:23](#) lists the six sons born in Padanaram (those whom Leah begat), who are listed as part of the total group of 33 children in [Genesis 46:15](#). Thus, this passage confirms that *begat* points to the generation immediately following—a literal parent/child relationship.

Argument 2

[Matthew 1:8](#) omits Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, going directly from Joram to Uzziah. [Matthew 1:11](#) skips Jehoiakim between Josiah and Jeconiah. These passages prove that the word *begat* skips generations.

Is Argument 2 Relevant?

Here, the Greek word for *begat* is *gennao*, which shows flexibility not found in the Hebrew word and does allow for the possibility that a generation or more may be skipped. The only way we would know that a generation has been skipped is by checking the Hebrew passages. However, it is linguistically deceptive to use the Greek word for *begat* to define the Hebrew word for *begat*. Also, Matthew 1 is intentionally incomplete when reading [Matthew 1:1](#) and [Matthew 1:17](#), merely giving 14 generations between key figures of Abraham, David, and Jesus.

Argument 3

[Genesis 46:18](#), [22](#), and [25](#) says, “These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls. . . . These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen. . . . These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven” (KJV). In verse 18, the Hebrew word *yalad* (*begat* or *bore*) implies a grandson, as well as a son; so the word *begat* cannot be used to show a direct relationship.

Is Argument 3 Relevant?

The word *bare* in verse 18 refers to Zilpah's actual sons, referenced in verses 16 (Gad) and 17 (Asher). Note the pattern in this chapter. In verse 15 we are given the total number of Leah's offspring (33), in verse 18 the total of Zilpah's offspring (16), in verse 22 the total of Rachel's offspring (14), and in verse 25 the total of Bilhah's offspring (7). This makes a total of 70. But nowhere is it stated that these four wives physically bore the total number of sons listed for each.

What this passage shows, as stated earlier, is that the Hebrew word for *son* (*ben*) may include grandsons. In the case of Zilpah, her two sons are clearly listed, as well as the children of Gad and Asher. To insist that in this case only (and not the cases of Leah, Rachel, and Bilhah) the summary total given at the end of verse 18 implies that all these were begotten of Zilpah is not justified by the context, and therefore, is not sound hermeneutics. The context makes it very clear that Zilpah had only two sons, and this passage does not show that the Hebrew word *yalad* (*begat* or *bore*) implies a grandson, as well as a son.

Argument 4

An example of where the word *begat* omits generations is [1 Chronicles 7:23-27](#). It is clear from this passage that there are ten generations from Ephraim to Joshua, whereas [Genesis 15:16](#) says there were only four generations from the time the children of Israel entered Egypt to the time they left. Therefore, the Hebrew word for *begat* does not always mean the next generation.

Is Argument 4 Relevant?

This argument seems logically airtight except for two minor points. The Hebrew word *yalad* for *begat* is not used in the 1 Chronicles passage, and [Genesis 15:16](#) is misquoted. Genesis states that "in the fourth generation" the children of Israel would leave Egypt—not that there would be a maximum of four generations. For this prophecy in Genesis to be fulfilled, some of the fourth generation would be in the exodus from Egypt—and they were. Exodus 6 lists the generations from Levi to Moses, showing that Moses and Aaron were in the fourth generation. Therefore the passage in 1 Chronicles cannot be used to prove that the Hebrew word for *begat* can skip a generation.

It is quite helpful, however, to explain how the Israelites became so numerous during their stay in Egypt. The descendants of Joshua appear to have had a new generation about every 20 years, whereas the descendants of Moses and Aaron had a new generation about every 50 years.

Argument 5

In [Luke 3:36](#), the name Cainan is listed, which is not listed in the Old Testament chronologies.

Is Argument 5 Relevant?

The present copies of the Septuagint (ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament) incorrectly have the name Cainan inserted in the Old Testament genealogies. The great Baptist Hebrew scholar John Gill (c. A.D. 1760), in his exposition on this verse, wrote:

This Cainan is not mentioned by Moses in [Genesis 11:12](#) nor has he ever appeared in any Hebrew copy of the Old Testament, nor in the Samaritan version, nor in the Targum; nor is he mentioned by Josephus, nor in [1 Chronicles 1:24](#) where the genealogy is repeated; nor is it in Beza's most ancient Greek copy of Luke: it indeed stands in the present copies of the Septuagint, but was not originally there; and therefore could not be taken by Luke from there, but seems to be owing to some early negligent transcriber of Luke's Gospel, and since put into the Septuagint to give it authority: I say early, because it is in many Greek copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, even in the Syriac, the oldest of them; but ought not to stand neither in the text, nor in any version: for certain it is, there never was such a Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, for Salah was his son; and with him the next words should be connected.[6](#)

Since Gill's commentary was written, the oldest manuscript we have of Luke, the *P75*, was found. It dates to the late second century A.D. and does not include Cainan in the genealogy. This verse in Luke should not be used to prove that the genealogies in Genesis have gaps, because it has poor textual authority.

Argument 6

Author and radio host Harold Camping argues for a unique interpretation of the chronologies in Genesis 5 and 11. According to his interpretation, Adam was created in 11,013 B.C. The chronological statements in these two chapters are of the following form.

When X was A years old he begat Y. He lived B years after he begat Y and died at the age of C years. So $A + B = C$.

Camping interprets this statement as follows:

When X was A years old he begat a progenitor of Y. He lived B years after he begat a progenitor of Y and died at age C, which was the same year that Y was born.

Is Argument 6 Relevant?

We must give Mr. Camping credit for originality and ingenuity, for we are not aware of anyone who interpreted these verses as such before him. As proof for this interpretation, Mr. Camping cites [Matthew 1:8](#) that the word *begat* does not mean a father/son relationship. We have already discussed this line of reasoning in argument 2 and refuted it, thus exploding Mr. Camping's argument.

While claiming to honor the text of the Bible, Mr. Camping demonstrates a profound misunderstanding of the Hebrew verb forms for *begat* found in chapter 5 and 11 of Genesis. These verbs use the *hiphil* form of the verb. Most Hebrew verbs use the *qal* form, which corresponds to the active indicative tense in English. *Hiphil* usually expresses the causative action of *qal*.

he eats	he causes to eat
he comes	he causes to come, he brings
he reigned	he made king, he crowned

The *hiphil* has no exact English equivalent and is difficult to capture the meaning in English. Some modern English translations use the word *fathered* instead of the word *begat*, thus removing the ambiguity. To make it absolutely clear, the verb could be translated X *himself fathered* Y, but that is awkward English. It is difficult to father a remote descendant without committing incest! When the Hebrew verb form is honored in English, it precludes the interpretation Mr. Camping places on it. God chose this form to make it absolutely clear that we understand that there are no missing generations in chapters 5 and 11 of Genesis. Any other Hebrew verb form would not have been nearly as emphatic as the *hiphil* form.

In his latest book *Time Has an End*, Mr. Camping sets out a complete chronology for the Bible using his defective understanding of the chronologies in Genesis 5 and 11, which includes the following mistakes.

- Israel's time in Egypt was 430 years.
- The date for the Exodus is wrong.
- The chronology for the time of the judges is confused.
- The chronology of the divided kingdom is partially based on Dr. Edwin Thiele's work *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, which contradicts the Bible in many places.
- The end of the world in 2011. (His earlier prediction of 1994 had to be reinterpreted.)

Rather than refute these incorrect ideas, we recommend the *Chronology of the Old Testament* (Master Books, 2005) by Dr. Floyd Jones for a more accurate, biblically based chronology that is devoid of the speculations of Mr. Camping and refutes most of Camping's chronology.

Missing Generations?

THESE CREATIONISTS ARE INADVERTENTLY AND BLINDLY TRUSTING MAN'S FALLIBLE DATING METHODS FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA.

Many creationists believe the earth is about 10,000 years old in an attempt to make the biblical record conform to modern archaeological ideas. According to these ideas, Egypt began around 3500 B.C. and Babylon in 4000 B.C. Since these nations speak different languages, their founding must have been after the Tower of Babel, which occurred after the Flood. So some creationists place the Flood around 5000 B.C. and the creation around 10,000 B.C. It is curious that, having rejected the evidence for long ages, these creationists are inadvertently and blindly trusting man's fallible dating methods for archaeological data, which rests on just as flimsy a foundation as does the evidence for long ages.⁷

Assuming these creationists are correct, how many generations are missing from Genesis 5 and 11? We will use the Hebrew text for these calculations; using other versions such as the Septuagint (LXX) makes the matter even more improbable.

According to the Hebrew text, there were 1,656 years between creation and the Flood and 1,556 years between creation and Noah's first son, or 10 generations. Assuming the average generation (from father to son) was 156 years (divide 1,556 by 10), how many extra generations are needed to get 5,000 years from the creation to Noah's first son? Divide 5,000 by 156 and you get about 32 generations. On the average, then, for every generation listed in Genesis 5, two are missing! However, let's examine Genesis 5 more closely:

1. There are no missing generations between Adam and Seth, since Seth is a direct replacement for Abel, whom Cain murdered ([Genesis 4:25](#)).
2. There are no missing generations between Seth and Enosh, since Seth named him ([Genesis 4:25](#)).
3. Jude says Enoch was the seventh from Adam ([Jude 14](#)), so there are no missing generations between Adam and Enoch.
4. Lamech named Noah, so there are no missing generations there ([Genesis 5:29](#)).
5. Some Hebrew scholars believe that the name *Methuselah* means "when he dies it is sent," referring to the Flood. Assuming no gaps in the chronology, Methuselah died the same year the Flood began. Some Jews believed that God gave Noah time to mourn the death of Methuselah, whom they believe died a week before the Flood began ([Genesis 7:4](#)). If this is so, then no missing generations can be inserted here. If this were not the case, then this is the only place in Genesis 5 one might attempt to shoehorn the missing 22 generations! Would you trust a chronologist who was so careful to record names and ages yet omit 22 generations in his tabulation in one place? It simply doesn't follow.

As we have seen, careful exegesis of the Bible simply does not allow for an extra 22 generations.

A similar analysis can be done for Genesis 11, which features 10 generations over 355 years, therefore averaging 36 years per generation. Those who hold to a creation occurring in 10,000 B.C. and the Flood happening in 5,000 B.C. have expanded this time period from 355 years to over 2,600 years. Assuming each generation lasts 36 years, then there would be 72 generations, such that for every generation listed, six are missing. If the writer of Genesis was so careless as

to omit over 85 percent of the generations in Genesis 11, why did he waste time giving us the information in the first place? What purpose would it serve, since it would be so inaccurate?

These examples show the folly of accepting a creation event as distant as 10,000 B.C. Those who accept even longer ages have a worse problem; they must insert 10 to 100 times as many “missing generations” in Genesis 5 and 11 as those who hold to a creation of about 10,000 B.C. Interestingly, both camps loathe explaining where these missing generations are to be inserted. All they know for sure is that they are missing! Those who hold to the inerrancy of the Scriptures should reject all attempts to make the earth older than the Hebrew text warrants, which is about 4000 B.C.

Conclusion

The Scriptures themselves attest to the fact that the secular dates given for the age of the universe, man’s existence on the earth, and so on, are not correct, because they are based on the fallible assumptions of fallible humans. Nothing in observational science contradicts the timeline of history as recorded in the Bible.

But there are two more reasons that these genealogies are vital. First, they are given in Scripture to show clearly that the Bible is real history and that we are all descendants of a real man, Adam; thus all human beings are related.

Second, the Son of God stepped into this history to fulfill the promise of [Genesis 3:15](#), the promise of a Savior. This Savior died and rose again to provide a free gift of salvation to the descendants of Adam—all of whom are sinners and are separated from their Creator.

Without the genealogies, how can it be proven that Jesus is the One who would fulfill this promise? Indeed, perhaps the primary purpose of the genealogies is to show that Jesus fulfilled the promise of God the Father.

We can trust these genealogies because they are a part of the infallible, inerrant Word of God.

An Extra Cainan?

by [Paul F. Taylor](#) on July 6, 2009

Does the genealogy in [Luke 3:36](#) give an extra Cainan not found in similar genealogies, such as [Genesis 11:12](#)?

[**Editor's note:** This article was taken, with slight modification, from [The New Answers Book 2](#).]

There is an alleged error in [Luke 3:36](#). The genealogy gives an extra Cainan not found in similar genealogies, such as [Genesis 11:12](#).

Expositor Dr. John Gill gives ample reasons why this was a copyist error.¹

Gill says:

This Cainan is not mentioned by Moses in [Ge 11:12](#) nor has he ever appeared in any Hebrew copy of the Old Testament, nor in the Samaritan version, nor in the Targum; nor is he mentioned by Josephus, nor in [1Ch 1:24](#) where the genealogy is repeated; nor is it in Beza's most ancient Greek copy of Luke: it indeed stands in the present copies of the Septuagint, but was not originally there; and therefore could not be taken by Luke from thence, but seems to be owing to some early negligent transcriber of Luke's Gospel, and since put into the Septuagint to give it authority: I say "early," because it is in many Greek copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, even in the Syriac, the oldest of them; but ought not to stand neither in the text, nor in any version: for certain it is, there never was such a Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, for Salah was his son; and with him the next words should be connected.

If the first Cainan was not present in the original, then the Greek may have read in a manner similar to the following. Remember that NT Greek had no spaces, punctuation, or lower case letters.

ΤΟΥΣΑΡΟΥΧΤΟΥΡΑΓΑΥΤΟΥΦΑΛΕΓΤΟΥΕΒΕΡΤΟΥΣΑΛΛΑ
ΤΟΥΑΡΦΑΞΑΔΤΟΥΣΗΜΤΟΥΝΩΕΤΟΥΛΑΜΕΧ
ΤΟΥΜΑΘΟΥΣΑΛΑΤΟΥΕΝΩΧΤΟΥΙΑΡΕΔΤΟΥΜΑΛΕΛΕΗΑΤΟΥΚΑΙΝΑΝ
ΤΟΥΕΝΩΣΤΟΥΣΗΘΤΟΥΑΛΑΜΤΟΥΘΕΟΥ

If an early copyist glanced at the third line, while copying the first line, it is conceivable that the phrase ΤΟΥΚΑΙΝΑΝ(son of Cainan) may have been copied there.

ΤΟΥΣΑΡΟΥΧΤΟΥΡΑΓΑΥΤΟΥΦΑΛΕΓΤΟΥΕΒΕΡΤΟΥΣΑΛΑΤΟΥΚΑΙΝΑΝ
ΤΟΥΑΡΦΑΞΑΔΤΟΥΣΗΜΤΟΥΝΩΕΤΟΥΛΑΜΕΧ
ΤΟΥΜΑΘΟΥΣΑΛΑΤΟΥΕΝΩΧΤΟΥΙΑΡΕΔΤΟΥΜΑΛΕΛΕΗΑΤΟΥΚΑΙΝΑΝ
ΤΟΥΕΝΩΣΤΟΥΣΗΘΤΟΥΑΛΑΜΤΟΥΘΕΟΥ

There is some circumstantial evidence for this theory. The Septuagint (LXX) is a Greek translation of the Old Testament said to be translated by about 72 rabbis. Early copies of LXX do not have the extra Cainan in *Genesis 11*, but later copies postdating Luke's gospel do have the extra Cainan.

It might seem odd to suggest that there could be a copyist error in our translations of the Bible. What is even more remarkable to me, however, is that such possible copyist errors are so extremely rare. Paradoxically, the possible existence of such an error merely reinforces how God has preserved His Word through the centuries.

Ancient Patriarchs in Genesis

by [Bodie Hodge](#) on January 20, 2009

The genealogical list in Genesis can teach us more than just a list of names; it is the story of our historical ancestors.

Imagine the possible headlines of long ago:

“Methuselah and Adam Have Long Talk”

“Noah outlives great, great, great grandson Peleg”

“Shem and Abraham go fishing”

Many people are unfamiliar with the historical figures in Genesis. It is sometimes difficult to believe that people lived such long lives, too – although they did. There is much to learn from these patriarchs (an early father of the human race). But let’s simply do some introductions to the group here.

The Great Ages

Many of the ancient people listed in the Bible’s genealogies lived very long lives. Methuselah holds the title of oldest-known man at 969 years old. After he died, the Flood came.

After the Flood, we see the ages of these men declining. For example, Noah lived to be 950 years old, Shem to 600, Shelah to 433, and Abraham to 175.

	Patriarch	Age	Bible reference
1	Adam	930	Genesis 5:4
2	Seth	912	Genesis 5:8
3	Enosh	905	Genesis 5:11
4	Cainan	910	Genesis 5:14
5	Mahalalel	895	Genesis 5:17
6	Jared	962	Genesis 5:20
7	Enoch	365 (translated)	Genesis 5:23

8	Methuselah	969	<u>Genesis 5:27</u>
9	Lamech	777	<u>Genesis 5:31</u>
10	Noah	950	<u>Genesis 9:29</u>
11	Shem	600	<u>Genesis 11:10-11</u>
12	Arphaxad	438	<u>Genesis 11:12-13</u>
13	Shelah	433	<u>Genesis 11:14-15</u>
14	Eber	464	<u>Genesis 11:16-17</u>
15	Peleg	239	<u>Genesis 11:18-19</u>
16	Reu	239	<u>Genesis 11:20-21</u>
17	Serug	230	<u>Genesis 11:22-23</u>
18	Nahor	148	<u>Genesis 11:24-25</u>
19	Terah	205	<u>Genesis 11:32</u>
20	Abram (Abraham)	175	<u>Genesis 25:7</u>
21	Isaac	180	<u>Genesis 35:28-29</u>
22	Jacob (Israel)		

Table 1. Ages of the Patriarchs from Adam to Jacob

Until the Flood (Noah's day), living to about 900 years old was the norm . . . unless you were Enoch or Lamech. Like Elijah, Enoch was translated without dying ([Genesis 5:23](#); [Hebrews 11:5](#)). Lamech, it seems, was a bit unusual by being about a quarter of a century away from making 800.

The Overlaps

It is hard to imagine that Abraham could have spoken to Shem (Noah's son), who surely talked to his great-grandfather Methuselah, who in turn could have spoken to Adam, the first man, directly. Although the Bible never records that Adam and Methuselah or Abraham and Shem met, that possibility is likely. Consider the other patriarchs that could have talked to one another:

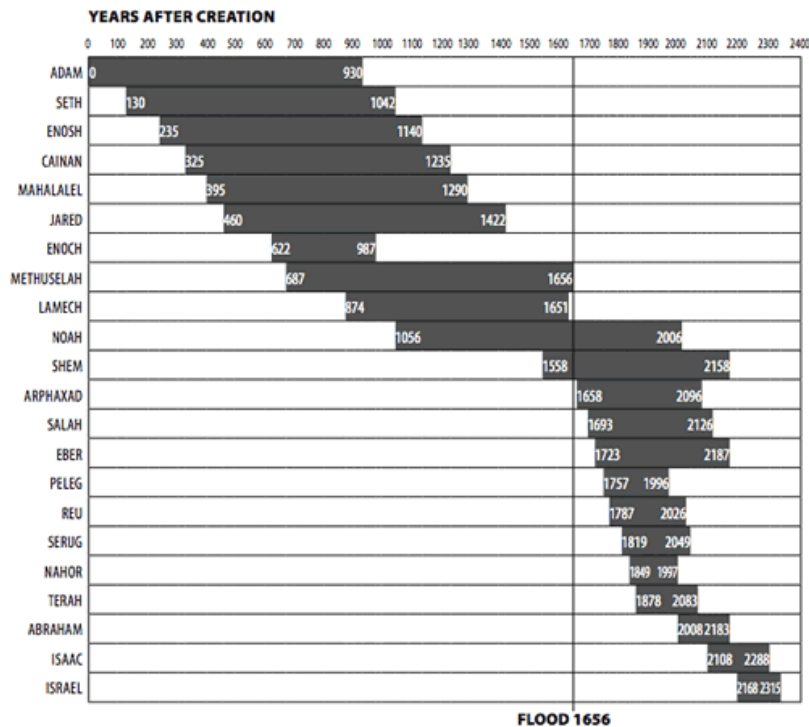


Table 2. Patriarchs from Adam to Israel (Jacob)

Everyone today shares the same lineage from Adam to Noah, since only Noah's family survived the Flood. After the Flood, Noah's three sons and wives populated the earth. Noah had three sons: Japheth, Shem, and Ham ([Genesis 9:24, 10:21](#)).

The list of men in the table above record Shem's line to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who is also called Israel. Israel had twelve sons, and through his son Judah, the Bible traces the genealogy of Jesus Christ ([Luke 3:23-38](#)). The book of Genesis ends with the death of Joseph at 110 years old, one of Israel's others sons.

Extra-biblical Support

Other ancient cultures have legendary periods or ancient kings lists that support the vast ages of the patriarchs. For example, the Sumerian kings list has eight kings whose lives span a great period of time. Then, accordingly, the Flood came. Removing Enoch, who was translated, and

Noah, who survived the Flood, these eight could easily “match up” with remaining pre-Flood patriarchs.¹

Greek myths point to the patriarchs as well, equating Zeus and Hera as deified corruptions of Adam and Eve.² The Chinese also have a legendary period with various rulers. Some researchers have said:

Could it be that the Legendary Period recalls a time when the ancestors of China’s first dynasties were indeed kin to Noah’s descendants before the great dispersion of mankind over the earth?

Since all peoples of earth are descended from Noah or his sons, the early Chinese ancestors were likely contemporaries of Noah, who lived 350 years after the flood ([Genesis 9:28](#)). Therefore, information could have been passed to them by word-of-mouth, even Noah himself. He in turn, obtained historical data from his father Lamech, who was 56 years old when Adam died.

Thus, all the details of creation and life before the flood could have been passed to the Chinese from Adam with only two intermediaries, Lamech and Noah.³

Such recollections support the idea that information passed from Noah to his descendants who then spread across the globe. (though other accounts were prone to corruption).

Are There Gaps?

The genealogies are very specific in giving the age of the father when the son is born.⁴ However, in some translations of the Bible in [Luke 3:36](#), there seems to be an extra Cainan. Because of this, some have proposed that there may be gaps in the genealogies. However, one needs to understand this specific instance better. Expositor Dr. John Gill points out:

This Cainan is not mentioned by Moses in [Ge 11:12](#) nor has he ever appeared in any Hebrew copy of the Old Testament, nor in the Samaritan version, nor in the Targum; nor is he mentioned by Josephus, nor in [1Ch 1:24](#) where the genealogy is repeated; nor is it in Beza’s most ancient Greek copy of Luke: it indeed stands in the present copies of the Septuagint, but was not originally there; and therefore could not be taken by Luke from thence, but seems to be owing to some early negligent transcriber of Luke’s Gospel, and since put into the Septuagint to give it authority: I say “early,” because it is in many Greek copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, even in the Syriac, the oldest of them; but ought not to stand neither in the text, nor in any version: for certain it is, there never was such a Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, for Salah was his son; and with him the next words should be connected. . . .⁵

This appears to have been one of a few copyist mistakes that have crept into the manuscripts after Luke wrote the original, inspired manuscript.⁶ Others have pointed out how this error could have occurred rather easily.⁷ There is no legitimate reason to introduce gaps into the genealogies – other than the desire to extend the dates based on extra-biblical ideas.

Conclusion

The book of Genesis spans nearly one-third of world history, but sadly in today's church, much of it is overlooked. Perhaps if we realized the heritage that each of us have from these ancient patriarchs, we would gain a better understanding of where we came from and where we are going. [Romans 4:3](#) says:

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Surely, there is much to learn from our ancestors.

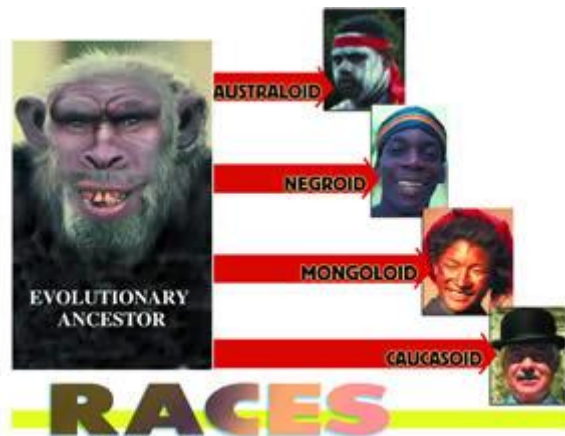
Footnotes

1. Raúl Erlando López, "[The Antediluvian Patriarchs and the Sumerian King List](#)," *TJ* 12 no. 3 (1998):347-357.
2. Robert Bowie Johnson, Jr., "[Athena and Eve](#)," *TJ* 17 no. 3 (2003):85-92.
3. Ethel Nelson, Richard Broadberry, and Ginger Chock, [God's Promise to the Chinese](#) (Dunlap, Tennessee: Read Books Publisher, 1997), p. 118.
4. See also Ken Ham, gen. ed., [The New Answers Book 2](#) (Green Forest, Arkansas: Master Books, 2008), pp. 173-182.
5. Dr. John Gill, Commentary notes on [Genesis 3:36](#), adapted from the [Online Bible](#).
6. Copyist mistakes do not affect inspiration or inerrancy. It is the original manuscripts that were inerrant, and as fallible copyists made mistakes these things can be traced via textual criticism to preserve the text. Please see the following article for a more complete explanation: "[Manuscript Support for the Bible's Reliability](#)."
7. Ken Ham, gen. ed., [The New Answers Book 2](#) (Green Forest, Arkansas: Master Books, 2008), pp. 296-297.

Are There Really Different Races?

by [Ken Ham](#) on November 29, 2007; last featured September 16, 2014

What if a Chinese person were to marry a Polynesian, or an African with black skin were to marry a Japanese—would these marriages be in accord with biblical principles?



The tragic legacy of Darwin’s controversial speculations on evolution has led to terrible consequences taken to the deadliest extremes. [One Race One Blood](#) reveals the origins of these horrors, as well as the truth revealed in Scripture that God created only one race.

A significant number of Christians would claim that such “interracial” marriages directly violate God’s principles in the [Bible](#) and should not be allowed. Does the Word of God really condemn the marriages mentioned above? Is there ultimately any such thing as interracial marriage?

To answer these questions, we must first understand what the Bible and [science](#) teach about “race.”

What Constitutes a “Race”?

In the 1800s, before Darwinian evolution was popularized, most people, when talking about “races,” would be referring to such groups as the “English race,” “Irish race,” and so on. However, this all changed in 1859 when [Charles Darwin](#) published his book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.

Darwinian evolution was (and still is¹) inherently a racist philosophy, teaching that different groups or “races” of people evolved at different times and rates, so some groups are more like their apelike ancestors than others. Leading evolutionist Stephen

Jay Gould claimed, “Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory.”²

The Australian Aborigines, for instance, were considered the missing links between the apelike ancestor and the rest of mankind.³ This resulted in terrible prejudices and injustices towards the Australian Aborigines.⁴

Ernst Haeckel, famous for popularizing the now-discredited idea that “[ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny](#),” ⁵ stated:

At the lowest stage of human mental development are the Australians, some tribes of the Polynesians, and the Bushmen, Hottentots, and some of the Negro tribes. Nothing, however, is perhaps more remarkable in this respect, than that some of the wildest tribes in southern Asia and eastern Africa have no trace whatever of the first foundations of all human civilization, of family life, and marriage. They live together in herds, like apes.⁶

Racist attitudes fueled by evolutionary thinking were largely responsible for an African pygmy being displayed, along with an orangutan, in a cage in the Bronx zoo.⁷ Indeed, Congo pygmies were once thought to be “small apelike, elfish creatures” that “exhibit many ape-like features in their bodies.”⁸

As a result of Darwinian evolution, many people started thinking in terms of the different people groups around the world representing different “races,” but within the context of evolutionary philosophy. This has resulted in many people today, consciously or unconsciously, having [ingrained prejudices](#) against certain other groups of people.⁹

SCIENTISTS TODAY ADMIT THAT, BIOLOGICALLY, THERE REALLY IS ONLY ONE RACE OF HUMANS.

However, *all* human beings in the world today are classified as *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Scientists today admit that, biologically, there really is only one race of humans. For instance, a scientist at the Advancement of Science Convention in Atlanta stated, “Race is a social construct derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by events of recorded history, and it has no basic biological reality.” This person went on to say, “Curiously enough, the idea comes very close to being of American manufacture.”¹⁰

Reporting on research conducted on the concept of race, ABC News stated, “More and more scientists find that the differences that set us apart are cultural, not racial. Some even say that the word *race* should be abandoned because it’s meaningless.”

The article went on to say that “we accept the idea of race because it’s a convenient way of putting people into broad categories, frequently to suppress them—the most hideous example was provided by Hitler’s Germany. And racial prejudice remains common throughout the world.”[11](#)

In an article in the *Journal of Counseling and Development*,[12](#) researchers argued that the term “race” is basically so meaningless that it should be discarded.

More recently, those working on mapping the human genome announced “that they had put together a draft of the entire sequence of the human genome, and the researchers had unanimously declared, there is only one race—the human race.”[13](#) Personally, because of the influences of Darwinian evolution and the resulting prejudices, I believe everyone (and especially Christians) should abandon the term “race(s).” We could refer instead to the different “people groups” around the world.

The Bible and “Race”

The Bible does not even use the word *race* in reference to people,[14](#) but it does describe all human beings as being of “one blood” ([Acts 17:26](#)). This of course emphasizes that we are all related, as all humans are descendants of the first man, Adam ([1 Corinthians 15:45](#)),[15](#) who was created in the image of God ([Genesis 1:26–27](#)).[16](#) The Last Adam, Jesus Christ ([1 Corinthians 15:45](#)) also became a descendant of Adam. Any descendant of Adam can be [saved](#) because our mutual relative by blood ([Jesus Christ](#)) died and rose again. This is why the gospel can (and should) be preached to all tribes and nations.

Can the Bible be used to justify racist attitudes?

The inevitable question arises, “If the Bible teaches all humans are the same, where was the church during the eras of slavery and segregation? Doesn’t the Bible actually condone the enslavement of a human being by another?”

Both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible mention slaves and slavery. As with all other biblical passages, these must be understood in their grammatical-historical context.

Dr. Walter Kaiser, former president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Old Testament scholar, states:

The laws concerning slavery in the Old Testament appear to function to moderate a practice that worked as a means of loaning money for Jewish people to one another or for handling the problem of the prisoners of war. Nowhere was the institution of slavery as such condemned; but then, neither did it have anything like the connotations it grew to

have during the days of those who traded human life as if it were a mere commodity for sale. . . . In all cases the institution was closely watched and divine judgment was declared by the prophets and others for all abuses they spotted.^{[17](#)}

Job recognized that all were equal before God, and all should be treated as image-bearers of the Creator.

If I have despised the cause of my male or female servant when they complained against me, what then shall I do when God rises up? When He punishes, how shall I answer Him? Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? ([Job 31:13–15](#))

In commenting on Paul's remarks to the slaves in his epistles, Peter H. Davids writes:

The church never adopted a rule that converts had to give up their slaves. Christians were not under law but under grace. Yet we read in the literature of the second century and later of many masters who upon their conversion freed their slaves. The reality stands that it is difficult to call a person a slave during the week and treat them like a brother or sister in the church. Sooner or later the implications of the kingdom they experienced in church seeped into the behavior of the masters during the week. Paul did in the end create a revolution, not one from without, but one from within, in which a changed heart produced changed behavior and through that in the end brought about social change. This change happened wherever the kingdom of God was expressed through the church, so the world could see that faith in Christ really was a transformation of the whole person.^{[18](#)}

THE FORCED ENSLAVEMENT OF ANOTHER HUMAN BEING GOES AGAINST THE BIBLICAL TEACHING THAT ALL HUMANS WERE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND ARE OF EQUAL STANDING BEFORE HIM.

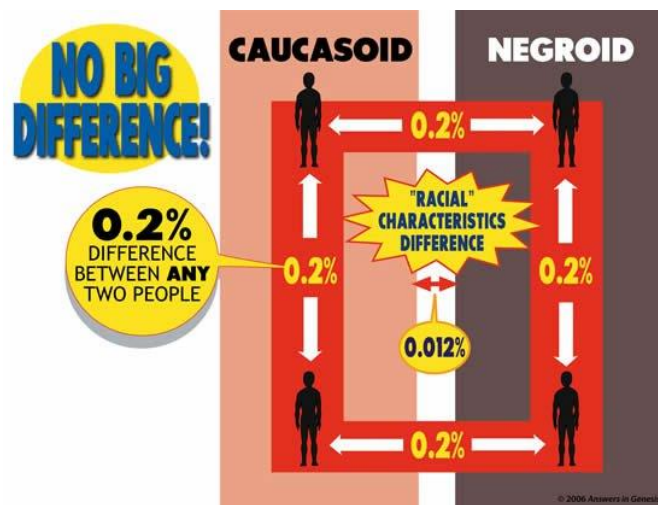
Those consistently living out their Christian faith realize that the forced enslavement of another human being goes against the biblical teaching that all humans were created in the image of [God](#) and are of equal standing before Him ([Galatians 3:28](#); [Colossians 3:11](#)). Indeed, the most ardent abolitionists during the past centuries were Bible-believing Christians. John Wesley, Granville Sharp, [William Wilberforce](#), Jonathan Edwards, Jr., and Thomas Clarkson all preached against the evils of slavery and worked to bring about the abolition of the slave trade in England and North America. Harriet Beecher Stowe conveyed this message in her famous novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. And of course, who can forget the change in the most famous of slave

traders? John Newton, writer of “Amazing Grace,” eventually became an abolitionist after his conversion to Christianity, when he embraced the truth of Scripture.

“Racial” Differences

But some people think there must be different races of people because there appear to be major differences between various groups, such as skin color and eye shape.

*THE TRUTH . . . IS THAT THESE SO-CALLED
“RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS” ARE ONLY MINOR
VARIATIONS AMONG PEOPLE GROUPS.*



The truth, though, is that these so-called “racial characteristics” are only minor variations among people groups. If one were to take any two people anywhere in the world, scientists have found that the basic genetic differences between these two people would typically be around 0.2 percent—even if they came from the same people group.¹⁹ But these so-called “racial” characteristics that people think are major differences (skin color, eye shape, etc.) “account

for only 0.012 percent of human biological variation.”²⁰

Dr. Harold Page Freeman, chief executive, president, and director of surgery at North General Hospital in Manhattan, reiterates, “If you ask what percentage of your genes is reflected in your external appearance, the basis by which we talk about race, the answer seems to be in the range of 0.01 percent.”²¹

In other words, the so-called “racial” differences are absolutely trivial—overall, there is more variation *within* any group than there is *between* one group and another. If a white person is looking for a tissue match for an organ transplant, for instance, the best match may come from a black person, and vice versa. ABC News claims, “What the facts show is that there are differences among us, but they stem from culture, not race.”²²

The only reason many people think these differences are major is because they've been brought up in a culture that has taught them to see the differences this way. Dr. Douglas C. Wallace, professor of molecular genetics at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, stated, "The criteria that people use for race are based entirely on external features that we are programmed to recognize."[23](#)

If the Bible teaches and science confirms that all are of the same human race and all are related as descendants of Adam, then why are there such seemingly great differences between us (for example, in skin color)? The answer, again, comes with a biblically informed understanding of science.

Skin "Color"

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight.

When Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven"([Matthew 19:14](#)), He did not distinguish between skin colors. In fact, scientists have discovered that there is one major pigment, called melanin, that produces our skin color. There are two main forms of melanin: eumelanin (brown to black) and pheomelanin (red to yellow). These combine to give us the particular shade of skin that we have.[24](#)

Melanin is produced by melanocytes, which are cells in the bottom layer of the epidermis. No matter what our shade of skin, we all have approximately the same concentration of melanocytes in our bodies. Melanocytes insert melanin into melanosomes, which transfer the melanin into other skin cells, which are capable of dividing (stem cells), primarily in the lowest layer of the epidermis. According to one expert,

The melanosomes (tiny melanin-packaging units) are slightly larger and more numerous per cell in dark-skinned than light skinned people. They also do not degrade as readily, and disperse into adjacent skin cells to a higher degree.[25](#)

DIFFERENT COLORS or SAME COLOR-DIFFERENT SHADES?

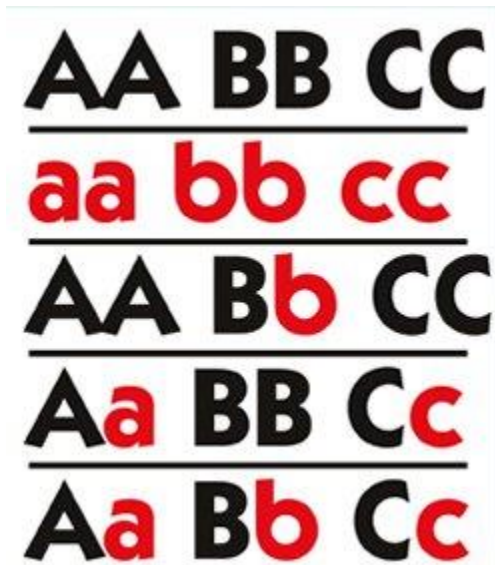


In the stem cells, the pigment serves its function as it forms a little dark umbrella over each nucleus. The melanin protects the epidermal cells from being damaged by sunlight. In people with lighter shades of skin, much of the pigment is lost after these cells divide and their daughter cells move up in the epidermis to form the surface dead layer—the stratum corneum.

Geneticists have found that four to six genes, each with multiple alleles (or variations), control the amount and type of melanin produced. Because of this, a wide variety of skin shades exist. In fact, it is quite easy for one couple to produce a wide range of skin shades in just one generation, as will be shown below.

Inheritance

DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is the molecule of heredity that is passed from parents to child. In humans, the child inherits 23 chromosomes from each parent (the father donates 23 through his sperm, while the mother donates 23 through her egg). At the moment of conception, these chromosomes unite to form a unique combination of DNA and control much of what makes the child an individual. Each chromosome pair contains hundreds of [genes](#), which regulate the physical development of the child. Note that no new genetic information is generated at conception, but a new *combination* of already-existing genetic information is formed.



To illustrate the basic genetic principles involved in determining skin shade, we'll use a simplified explanation,[26](#) with just two genes controlling the production of melanin.

Let's say that the A and B versions of the genes code for a lot of melanin, while the a and b versions code for a small amount of melanin.

If the father's sperm carried the AB version and the mother's ovum carried the AB, the child would be AABB, with a lot of melanin, and thus very dark skin. Should both parents carry the ab version, the child would be aabb, with very little melanin, and thus very light skin. If the father carries AB (very dark skin) and the mother carries ab (very light skin), the child will be AaBb, with a middle brown shade of skin. In fact, the majority of the world's population has a middle brown skin shade.

A simple exercise with a Punnet Square shows that if each parent has a middle brown shade of skin (AaBb), the combinations that they could produce result in a wide variety of skin shades in just one generation. Based on the skin colors seen today, we can infer that Adam and Eve most likely would have had a middle brown skin color. Their children, and children's children, could have ranged from very light to very dark.

No one really has red, or yellow, or black skin. We all have the same basic color, just different shades of it. We all share the same pigments—our bodies just have different combinations of them.[27](#)

Melanin also determines eye color. If the iris of the eye has a larger amount of melanin, it will be brown. If the iris has a little melanin, the eye will be blue. (The blue color in blue eyes results from the way light scatters off of the thin layer of brown-colored melanin.)

Hair color is also influenced by the production of melanin. Brown to black hair results from a greater production of melanin, while lighter hair results from less melanin. Those with red hair have a mutation in one gene that causes a greater proportion of the reddish form of melanin (pheomelanin) to be produced.[28](#)

DNA also controls the basic shape of our eyes. Individuals whose DNA codes for an extra layer of adipose tissue around the eyes have almond-shaped eyes (this is common among Asian people groups). All people groups have adipose tissue around the eyes, some simply have more or less.

Origin of People Groups

Those with darker skin tend to live in warmer climates, while those with lighter skin tend to live in colder climates. Why are certain characteristics more prominent in some areas of the world?

We know that Adam and Eve were the first two people. Their descendants filled the earth. However, the world's population was reduced to eight during the Flood of Noah. From these eight individuals have come all the tribes and nations. It is likely that the

skin shade of Noah and his family was middle brown. This would enable his sons and their wives to produce a variety of skin shades in just one generation. Because there was a common language and everybody lived in the same general vicinity, barriers that may have prevented their descendants from freely intermarrying weren't as great as they are today. Thus, distinct differences in features and skin color in the population weren't as prevalent as they are today.

In *Genesis 11* we read of the rebellion at the Tower of Babel. God judged this rebellion by giving each family group a different language. This made it impossible for the groups to understand each other, and so they split apart, each extended family going its own way, and finding a different place to live. The result was that the people were scattered over the earth.[29](#)

IF WE WERE TO TRAVEL BACK IN TIME TO BABEL, AND MIX UP THE PEOPLE INTO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FAMILY GROUPS, THEN PEOPLE GROUPS WITH COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS MIGHT RESULT.

Because of the new language and geographic barriers, the groups no longer freely mixed with other groups, and the result was a splitting of the gene pool. Different cultures formed, with certain features becoming predominant within each group. The characteristics of each became more and more prominent as new generations of children were born. If we were to travel back in time to Babel, and mix up the people into completely different family groups, then people groups with completely different characteristics might result. For instance, we might find a fair-skinned group with tight, curly dark hair that has blue, almond-shaped eyes. Or a group with very dark skin, blue eyes, and straight brown hair.[30](#)

Some of these (skin color, eye shape, and so on) became general characteristics of each particular people group through various selection pressures (environmental, sexual, etc.) and/or mutation.[31](#) For example, because of the protective factor of melanin, those with darker skin would have been more likely to survive in areas where sunlight is more intense (warmer, tropical areas near the equator), as they are less likely to suffer from diseases such as skin cancer. Those with lighter skin lack the melanin needed to protect them from the harmful UV rays, and so may have been more likely to die before they were able to reproduce. UVA radiation also destroys the B vitamin folate, which is necessary for DNA synthesis in cell division. Low levels of

folate in pregnant women can lead to defects in the developing baby. Again, because of this, lighter-skinned individuals may be selected against in areas of intense sunlight. On the flip side, melanin works as a natural sunblock, limiting the sunlight's ability to stimulate the liver to produce vitamin D, which helps the body absorb calcium and build strong bones. Since those with darker skin need more sunlight to produce vitamin D, they may not have been as able to survive as well in areas of less sunlight (northern, colder regions) as their lighter-skinned family members, who don't need as much sunlight to produce adequate amounts of vitamin D. Those lacking vitamin D are more likely to develop diseases such as rickets (which is associated with a calcium deficiency), which can cause slowed growth and bone fractures. It is known that when those with darker skin lived in England during the Industrial Revolution, they were quick to develop rickets because of the general lack of sunlight.[32](#)

Of course, these are generalities. Exceptions occur, such as in the case of the darker-skinned Inuit tribes living in cold northern regions. However, their diet consists of fish, the oil of which is a ready source of vitamin D, which could account for their survival in this area.

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE BIBLE THAT SPEAKS CLEARLY AGAINST MEN AND WOMEN FROM DIFFERENT PEOPLE GROUPS MARRYING?

Real science in the present fits with the biblical view that all people are rather closely related—there is only one race biologically. Therefore, to return to our original question, there is, in essence, no such thing as interracial marriage. So we are left with this—is there anything in the Bible that speaks clearly against men and women from different people groups marrying?

The Dispersion at Babel

Note that the context of *Genesis 11* makes it clear that the reason for God's scattering the people over the earth was that they had united in rebellion against Him. Some Christians point to this event in an attempt to provide a basis for their arguments against so-called interracial marriage. They believe that this passage implies that God is declaring that people from different people groups can't marry so that the nations are kept apart. However, there is no such indication in this passage that what is called "interracial marriage" is condemned. Besides, there has been so much mixing of people groups over the years, that it would be impossible for every human being today to trace their lineage back to know for certain which group(s) they are descended from. We need to understand that the sovereign creator God is in charge of the nations of this world. Paul makes this very clear in [Acts 17:26](#). Some people erroneously claim

this verse to mean that people from different nations shouldn't marry. However, this passage has nothing to do with marriage. As John Gill makes clear in his classic commentary, the context is that God is in charge of all things—where, how, and for how long any person, tribe, or nation will live, prosper, and perish.[33](#)

In all of this, God is working to redeem for Himself a people who are one in Christ. The Bible makes clear in [Galatians 3:28](#), [Colossians 3:11](#), and [Romans 10:12–13](#) that in regard to salvation, there is no distinction between male or female or Jew or Greek. In Christ, any separation between people is broken down. As Christians, we are one in Christ and thus have a common purpose—to live for Him who made us. This oneness in Christ is vitally important to understanding marriage.

Purpose of Marriage

[Malachi 2:15](#) informs us that an important purpose of marriage is to produce godly offspring—progeny that are trained in the ways of the Lord. Jesus (in *Matthew 19*) and Paul (in *Ephesians 5*) make it clear that when a man and woman marry, they become one flesh (because they were one flesh historically— Eve was made from Adam). Also, the man and woman must be one spiritually so they can fulfill the command to produce godly offspring.



This is why Paul states in [2 Corinthians 6:14](#), “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

According to the Bible then, which of the following marriages in the picture on the right does God counsel against entering into?

The answer is obvious—number 3. According to the Bible, the priority in marriage is that a Christian should marry only a Christian.

Sadly, there are some Christian homes where the parents are more concerned about their children not marrying someone from another “race” than whether or not they are marrying a Christian. When Christians marry non-Christians, it negates the spiritual

(not the physical) oneness in marriage, resulting in negative consequences for the couple and their children.[34](#)

Roles in Marriage[35](#)

Of course, every couple needs to understand and embrace the biblical roles prescribed for each family member. Throughout the Scriptures our special roles and responsibilities are revealed. Consider these piercing passages directed to fathers:

The father shall make known Your truth to the children ([Isaiah 38:19](#)).

Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. ([Ephesians 6:4](#))

For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him. ([Genesis 18:19](#))

These are just a few of the many verses that mention *fathers* in regard to training children. Additionally, the writer of *Psalms* 78 continually admonishes fathers to teach their children so they'll not forget to teach their children, so that they might not forget what God has done and keep His commandments. This includes building within their children a proper [biblical worldview](#) and providing them with answers to the questions the world asks about God and the Bible (as this book does). It also includes shepherding and loving his wife as Christ loved the church.

Of course, just as God made the role of the man clear, He has also made His intentions known regarding the role of a godly wife. In the beginning, God fashioned a woman to complete what was lacking in Adam, that she might become his helper, that the two of them would truly become one ([Genesis 2:15–25](#)). In other Bible passages the woman is encouraged to be a woman of character, integrity, and action (e.g., [Proverbs 31:10–31](#)). Certainly mothers should also be involved in teaching their children spiritual truths.

These roles are true for couples in every tribe and nation.

Rahab and Ruth

The examples of Rahab and Ruth help us understand how God views the issue of marriage between those who are from different people groups but trust in the true God.

Rahab was a Canaanite. These Canaanites had an ungodly culture and were descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham. Remember, Canaan was cursed because of his obvious rebellious nature. Sadly, many people state that Ham was cursed—but this is not true.^{[36](#)} Some have even said that this (non-existent) curse of Ham resulted in the black “races.”^{[37](#)} This is absurd and is the type of false teaching that has reinforced and justified prejudices against people with dark skin.

In the genealogy in *Matthew 1*, it is traditionally understood that the same Rahab is listed here as being in the line leading to Christ. Thus, Rahab, a descendant of Ham, must have married an Israelite (descended from Shem). Since this was clearly a union approved by God, it underlines the fact that the particular “people group” she came from was irrelevant—what mattered was that she trusted in the true God of the Israelites.

The same can be said of Ruth, who as a Moabitess also married an Israelite and is also listed in the genealogy in *Matthew 1* that leads to Christ. Prior to her marriage, she had expressed faith in the true God ([Ruth 1:16](#)).

When Rahab and Ruth became children of God, there was no longer any barrier to Israelites marrying them, even though they were from different people groups.

Real Biblical “Interracial” Marriage

If one wants to use the term “interracial,” then the real interracial marriage that God says we should not enter into is when a child of the Last Adam (one who is a new creation in Christ—a Christian) marries one who is an unconverted child of the First Adam (one who is dead in trespasses and sin—a non-Christian).^{[38](#)}

Cross-Cultural Problems

Because many people groups have been separated since the Tower of Babel, they have developed many cultural differences. If two people from very different cultures marry, they can have a number of communication problems, even if both are Christians. Expectations regarding relationships with members of the extended family, for example, can also differ. Even people from different English-speaking countries can have communication problems because words may have different meanings. Counselors should go through this in detail, anticipating the problems and giving

specific examples, as some marriages have failed because of such cultural differences. However, such problems have nothing to do with genetics or “race.”

Conclusion

1. There is no biblical justification for claiming that people from different so-called races (best described as people groups) should not marry.
2. The biblical basis for marriage makes it clear that a Christian should marry only a Christian.

When Christians legalistically impose nonbiblical ideas, such as no interracial marriage onto their culture, they are helping to perpetuate prejudices that have often arisen from evolutionary influences. If we are really honest, in countries like America, the main reason for Christians being against interracial marriage is, in most instances, really because of skin color.

THE CHURCH COULD GREATLY RELIEVE THE TENSIONS OVER RACISM . . . IF ONLY THE LEADERS WOULD TEACH BIBLICAL TRUTHS ABOUT OUR SHARED ANCESTRY.

The church could greatly relieve the tensions over racism (particularly in countries like America), if only the leaders would teach biblical truths about our shared ancestry: all people are descended from one man and woman; all people are equal before God; all are sinners in need of salvation; all need to build their thinking on God’s Word and judge all their cultural aspects accordingly; all need to be one in Christ and put an end to their rebellion against their Creator.

Christians must think about marriage as God thinks about each one of us. When the prophet Samuel went to anoint the next king of Israel, he thought the oldest of Jesse’s sons was the obvious choice due to his outward appearance. However, we read in [1 Samuel 16:7](#), “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’” God doesn’t look at our outward biological appearance; He looks on our inward spiritual state. And when considering marriage, couples should look on the inside spiritual condition of themselves and each other because it is true that what’s on the inside, spiritually, is what really matters.

Footnotes

1. J.P. Rushton, professor of psychology at the University of Western Ontario, Lond, Ontario, Canada, Race, Evolution and Behavior, www.harbornet.com/folks/theedrich/JP_Rushton/Race.htm.
2. S.J. Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, Belknap-Harvard Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1977, 127–128.
3. Missing links with mankind in early dawn of history, *New York Tribune*, p. 11, February 10, 1924.
4. D. Monaghan, The body-snatchers, *The Bulletin*, November 12, 1991, pp. 30–38; Blacks slain for science’s white superiority theory, *The Daily Telegraph Mirror*, April 26, 1994.
5. For more information on the fallacious nature of this idea, see answersingenesis.org/go/embryonic.
6. E. Haeckel, *The History of Creation*, 1876, 363–363.
7. J. Bergman, [Ota Benga: the man who was put on display in the zoo!](#) *Creation* 16(1):48–50, 1993.
8. Keane, Arthur H.J., “Anthropological Curiosities - The Pygmies of the World”. *Scientific American Supplement* 64, no. 1650 (August 17, 1907): 99.
9. This is not to say that *evolution* is the cause of racism. *Sin* is the cause of racism. However, Darwinian evolution fueled a particular form of racism.
10. R.L. Hotz, Race has no basis in biology, researchers say, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, p. A3, February 20, 1997.
11. We’re all the same, ABC News, September 10, 1998, www.abcnews.com/sections/science/DyeHard/dye72.html.
12. S.C. Cameron and S.M. Wycoff, The destructive nature of the term race: growing beyond a false paradigm, *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 76:277–285, 1998.
13. N. Angier, Do races differ? Not really, DNA shows, New York Times web, Aug. 22, 2000.
14. In the original, [Ezra 9:2](#) refers to “seed,” [Romans 9:3](#) to “kinsmen according to the flesh.”
15. For more on this teaching, see chapter 6, [Cain’s Wife—Who Was She?](#)
16. Contrary to popular belief, mankind does not share an apelike ancestor with other primates. To find out the truth behind the alleged apemen, visit answersingenesis.org/go/anthropology.
17. W.C. Kaiser, Jr. et al., *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1996, 150.
18. Ref. 17, 644.
19. J.C. Gutin, End of the rainbow, *Discover*, pp. 72–73, November 1994.
20. Ref. 12.
21. Ref. 13.
22. Ref. 11.
23. Ibid.

24. Of course, melanin is not the only factor that determines skin shade: blood vessels close to the skin can produce a reddish tinge, while extra layers of adipose tissue (fat) in the skin yield a yellowish tinge. Exposure to the sun can cause increased melanin production, thus darkening skin, but only to a certain point. Other pigments also affect skin shade but generally have very little bearing on how light or dark the skin will be. The major provider of skin color is melanin.
25. Ackerman, *Histopathologic Diagnosis of Skin Diseases*, Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1978, 44; Lever and Schamberg-Lever, *Histopathology of the Skin*, 7th Ed., J.B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1990, 18–20.
26. The actual genetics involved are much more complicated than this simplified explanation. There are 4 to 6 genes with multiples alleles (versions) of each gene that operate under incomplete dominance, that is, they work together to produce an individual's particular skin shade. However, simplifying the explanation does not take away from the point being made.
27. Albinism results from a genetic mutation which prevents the usual production of melanin.
28. For more information, see answersingenesis.org/go/red-hair.
29. As they went, the family groups took with them the knowledge that had been passed to them about the creation and Flood events. Although these accounts have been changed over time, they reflect the true account found in the Bible. For more information, see answersingenesis.org/go/legends.
30. This assumes that each trait is independently inherited, which may not always be the case. Although there are many instances in which a certain trait shows up in a person of a different ethnic group (e.g., almond-shaped eyes in a woman with very dark skin, or blue eyes in a man with tightly curled brown hair and tan skin).
31. For more on how selection and mutations operate, see chapter 22 in this book.
32. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melanin.
33. See note on [Acts 17:26](#), in John Gill, D.D., *An exposition of the Old and New Testament*, London: printed for Mathews and Leigh, 18 Strand, by W. Clowes, Northumberland-Court, 1809. Edited, revised, and updated by Larry Pierce, 1994–1995 for Online Bible CD-ROM.
34. It is true that in some exceptional instances when a Christian has married a non-Christian, the non-Christian spouse, by the grace of God, has become a Christian. This is a praise point but it does not negate the fact that Scripture indicates that it should not have been entered into in the first place. This does not mean that the marriage is not actually valid, nor does it dilute the responsibilities of the marital union—see also [1 Corinthians 7:12–14](#), where the context is of one spouse becoming a Christian after marriage.
35. For more on this topic, see [The Genesis of a Legacy](#) by Ken Ham and Steve Ham, available from www.answersbookstore.com.
36. See [Genesis 9:18–27](#). Canaan, the youngest of Ham's sons, received Noah's curse. Why? The descendants of Canaan were some of the wickedest people on earth. For example, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were judged for their sexual immorality and rebellion. It may be that Ham's actions toward his father ([Genesis 9:22](#)) had sexual connotations, and Noah saw this same sin problem in Canaan and understood that Canaan's descendants would also act in these sinful ways. (The Bible clearly teaches that the unconfessed sin of one generation is often greater in the next generation.) The curse on Canaan has nothing to do with skin color but rather serves as a warning to fathers to train their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We need to deal with our own sin problems and train our children to deal with theirs.
37. For example: "We know the circumstances under which the posterity of Cain (and later of Ham) were cursed with what we call Negroid racial characteristics" (Bruce McConkie, Apostle of the Mormon Council of 12, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 554, 1958); "The curse which Noah pronounced upon Canaan was the origin of the black race" (The Golden Age, *The Watchtower* [now called *Awake!*], p. 702, July 24, 1929).
38. Examples of such "mixed marriages" and their negative consequences can be seen in *Nehemiah 9* and *Nehemiah 10*, and *Numbers 25*.

Native Americans and the Bible

by [Bodie Hodge](#) on May 28, 2010

How did Native American peoples get to North America after the Flood reduced mankind to eight people in the mountains of Ararat? Historically, the origin of all people groups begins at the Tower of Babel. [Genesis 10:32](#) says:

These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

All humans came through Noah and—prior to the Flood—ultimately Adam, which means we are all one family. However, this also means we are all sinners and in need of [Jesus Christ](#). For a more detailed look at the Babel dispersion, see the [Table of Nations](#) (PDF). But after the Tower of Babel, it becomes increasingly difficult to ascertain where everyone went. Generally, from the Middle East in the land of Shinar (modern day Iraq, where Babel was), Japheth's descendants went toward Europe, Ham's went toward Africa, and Shem's remained in the Middle East, moving into the surrounding areas. Of course, there were exceptions to this. For example, Ham's descendant through Cush (Nimrod) remained in the land of Shinar ([Genesis 10:8–12](#)). Also some of Japheth's descendants remained in the Middle East (Madai's descendants became known as the Medes and were often associated with the Elamites—otherwise known as the Persians). For years, I've been trying to trace some the routes of Noah's descendants who left Babel based on a number of factors.

Geographical Names

First, names of places and people groups tend to be concentrated in various places, which is a strong indication that a people group occupied a particular area early on. For example, the region known as Ararat by the Hebrew tongue or Armenia by the Greek tongue also contains the Araxes/Aras River. The ancient Urartu people also dwell in a portion of this land area. This name goes back to a common people group with these variations.

There are some that are easy to place, such as Noah's grandson Javan, which is still the Hebrew name for Greece, or Noah's grandson Mizraim, which is still the Hebrew name for Egypt.

However, when it comes to North America and even portions of South America, European settlers have usurped many names and places and provided new names.

Although some native names still exist [e.g., *Nebraska* (Sioux word for flat river, which they called the Platte River), *Illinois* (the French variant of the Illini tribe)], the bulk have been lost and forgotten. But this is still where correlations could help. Another issue here is that many geographical names may be derived from various descendants well beyond the names given in Genesis 10. In other words, these places may be named for great-grandsons of Noah's great-grandsons! If this is the case, there is no direct tie to a family unit leaving Babel without more information.

Logically, the farther away from Babel people traveled, the more likely the descendants were to “pick up the torch” and continue moving about and filling the earth as per [Genesis 9:1](#). Certain descendants of Noah, perhaps those listed in Genesis 10, would travel only so far, but their descendants were the ones to pick up tent and keep moving. So some names that do not appear in the Babel account become harder to trace back unless they were written down and documented, which many American tribes did not do.

Language Family Correlations

A second factor is based on language families. Of course, due to wars and migrations of people, languages often intermingle with other families. For example, because of Roman occupation, the Latin language infiltrated many areas, and so Spanish, Romanian, Portuguese, French, and modern-day Italian all belong to the same language family (these are called Romance Languages)—even English has extensive Latin influence.

Nations well beyond Rome's grasp offer a different story. In India, a whole host of languages and a number of language families exist, which is a strong indication that numerous descendants from Babel likely ended up in that area. This makes sense considering that the geography funnels people toward India on their way to Asia, Australia, or the Americas. It is simply an easier route than crossing mountains. Of course, a far northern route through Russia/Siberia could have been taken—which is possible, but the Ice Age may have made migration more difficult and dangerous.

A LANGUAGE FAMILY CONSISTS OF A NUMBER OF LANGUAGES THAT ARE ALL SIMILAR AND HAVE A COMMON ORIGIN—ULTIMATELY DATING BACK TO BABEL.

With regards to Native North Americans, a handful of language families seem to dominate, and this can give us clues (see this [off-site map](#) of major North American

language families). A language family consists of a number of languages that are all similar and have a common origin—ultimately dating back to Babel. Of course, languages are always changing.

One roadblock with determining Native Americans' heritage is the scarcity of a *written* language.¹ Such languages were passed on orally, which allowed for many changes.

Even in written language, consider that the English of 1,000 years ago is hardly recognizable to the modern English speaker. Consider also that Australian English did not even exist 200 years ago! So, although the language family may help identify relationships of various tribes and nations, it still may not be enough to tie these language families directly back to an ancestor from Babel.

Some rare cases may have a connection to Babel, though. The Olmec, who may have been the precursors to the Mayans (or possibly conquered by them), did have an ancient written language that has not been entirely deciphered yet.² And there is controversy at this stage as to whether this language is of African descent—specifically West African, as some linguists are claiming.³ If this claim is verified, then it has a Babel connection. Many in West Africa are descendants of Phut, Noah's grandson through Ham, who settled along the northwest of the African continent and spread around the coast (for example, the Moors of old and modern Mauritania, Morocco, and so on came from Phut). Others of Ham's descendants also inhabited Africa, such as Cush (Ethiopia) and Mitzraim (Egypt and Libya), and their descendants settled other parts of Africa too.

What we *can* learn is that there were several language families, which means that there were likely several family groups (or at least their descendants) that made it from Babel to North America. But without much written history over the past 4,000 years or so, although this is helpful, we need other angles.

Histories and Mythologies

From here, we need some discernment in evaluating the various oral histories of Native tribes and nations. Sometimes there is a nugget of truth waiting to be rediscovered behind the accounts—even in some of the mythologies.

For example, in Norse and Germanic mythologies, there is a person named Oden (Woden), and he happens to be found in post-Flood genealogies to lead to many royal houses throughout Europe.⁴ In Greek and Roman mythologies, there are a few correlations to the biblical Table of Nations, such as Chronos (or Saturn) being

Kittim/Cethimus under Javan. So mythologies often have a remnant of truth in them, but the stories are embellished.

This would be an exciting area of study for Native Americans to evaluate their historical traditions and to pick out the nuggets of truth in them—especially looking for any connections back to Genesis 10. Keep in mind language variations and the possibility that some of these traditions are farther removed from Babel.

A number of Native American legends are [posted on the Internet](#), but well-versed individuals may be familiar with others. Some of these legends obviously have ties as far back as creation, which we would expect. Naturally, the stories have deviated over several thousand years. This is where discernment is needed. And since God, the true Creator, was kind enough to provide a revelation to mankind as to what really happened when He created (the Bible, specifically Genesis), this invariably helps as the ultimate standard of truth and real history. And Genesis has not undergone changes—being written by Moses and ultimately the Holy Spirit. I encourage interested parties to study these legends and folklore in more detail in light of what Genesis says.

Conclusion

So, the short answer is that Native Americans originally came to North and South America as a result of the dispersion at the Tower of Babel. But to connect the migration route dots will require more diligent research, which, naturally, we encourage.

Footnotes

1. Keep in mind that written language goes back to Adam, likely given supernaturally by God, because we have the Book of the Genealogy of Adam listed by Moses in [Genesis 5:1](#). So it makes sense that written languages could easily survive until the Flood and even Babel, but were then lost in or abandoned by various people groups during their migrations. Those who traveled the farthest may well have been the ones who more likely to lose that abilities.
2. K. Kris Hirst, “[Undeciphered Scripts](#),” About.com.
3. This would not be a problem for biblical creationists who have openly taught that as people traveled to various parts of the world from Babel, they could have used boats (recall, Noah and his sons were master shipbuilders!).
4. See Bill Cooper’s book [After the Flood](#).