

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."



## A Controversial Newsletter "The Printed Voice of Summit Theological Seminary"

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### Genealogies or Gapologies?

--By Terry Carter

Those who believe that the earth is older than 6,000 years are always looking for places to "find" the extra time that the Bible does not mention. One argument they make is that there are gaps in the genealogies.

They point out correctly that the word for "son" can also mean "descendant". It is further true that there are gaps in some genealogies. Those in **Matthew Chapter 1** and **Ezra Chapter 7** are examples. However, this is not as convincing of an argument as they would have you believe for the following reasons:

1. The gaps in Ezra's genealogy have no bearing on the age of the earth since they are not used in the calculation. They are usually mentioned only to help establish that there are gaps in some of the genealogies. But they need much more proof than that as you can see in the reasons below.
2. The only reason we know there are gaps in the Matthew genealogy is that they are filled in elsewhere. The same is true for the gaps in **Ezra Chapter 7**. Since these gaps have been filled in for us elsewhere, it is an assumption that all the gaps have not been accounted for. If there were other gaps, we would have no way of knowing it for sure. Further, once gaps have been filled in, they are no longer gaps.
3. Clearly Matthew is using a literary and memory device, as the lineage of Christ is divided into three groups of 14. This is not

intended to be a chronology, just a genealogy. The purpose of it is stated in verse one. It establishes Jesus as the descendant of David and Abraham. Similarly, the genealogy in **Ezra 7** is clearly not intended to be a chronology. It is simply to establish that Ezra had descended from Aaron.

4. Gaps in some genealogies do not prove, nor even imply, gaps in all genealogies. The old earth position demands that we do not have a complete genealogy anywhere. But this is a big assumption on their part.
5. The genealogies from Adam to Noah given in **Genesis 5** do more than trace lines of ancestry. They actually give a chronology in the way they are written. It doesn't matter if Enosh was Seth's son, grandson, or great grandson. Seth was still 105 years old when Enosh was born. That is a chronology and leaves no room for gaps. This leaves no doubt about the 1,656 years from creation to the flood. But this precisely is where most think that there is "missing time".
6. But they can't find room for the "missing years" between the flood and Abraham either. **Genesis 11** gives the chronology between Noah and Abraham. Like **Genesis 5**, it is more than a tracing of the lines of ancestry. It tells how old each man was when the next in line was born. This leaves no place to put the "missing years" at all.
7. The gaps in Matthew's genealogy are all after Abraham. This ought to be obvious since Matthew begins with Abraham and moves forward to Jesus. (In fact, they are several generations after David.) But this is precisely where both old and young earth adherents agree upon the dates. That is, that the dates arrived at for Abraham, by use of genealogies, has been confirmed as accurate by archaeology. Even old earth adherents admit

this. The only place where there is a disagreement is exactly where the Bible is specific about time and chronology. That is, prior to the time of Abraham. Similarly, the gaps in Ezra's genealogy are well after the time of Abraham since it only goes back to Aaron.

8. There are only ten generations from Adam to Noah (including both Adam and Noah). But we know that there are no gaps in the first seven generations from Adam to Enoch because Jude plainly says that Enoch was the seventh from Adam - **Jude 14**.

This agrees perfectly with the genealogy in **Genesis 5**. This leaves only three generations between Adam and Noah where there is even a possibility of gaps. If there are gaps between them, they have to be huge gaps to satisfy the old earth requirements.

9. Similarly, from Noah to Abraham there are only ten generations (not counting Noah since we counted him above). Again, if the "missing time" is here, the gaps must be huge. But as we said earlier, **Genesis 11** makes it clear that there are no time gaps here.
10. Counting the generations from Adam to Jesus through Joseph gives a total of 64 generations. Counting through Mary gives a total of 76. But there are only 20 generations from Adam to Abraham. Since the date of Abraham is not in dispute, we have either 44 or 56 generations without any significant time gaps by everyone's admission. Also the first 7 generations can have no gaps as stated earlier. This means that over 80% of the generations in the entire lineage from Adam to Jesus are without any "missing time". This ought to be a pretty good indication that the remaining 13 generations, (less than 20% of the total), are also without significant time gaps. Still, those who argue that the earth is older than 6,000 years want to squeeze anywhere from 4,000 to millions of years worth of gaps into these 13 generations. That's a lot of "missing generations". This is especially unlikely when you consider that there are only 4 missing generations in Matthew's genealogy (3 between Uzziah and Jotham and 1 between Josiah and Jeconiah) and only 6 in Ezra's (between Meraioth and Azariah).

In summary, both young and old earth advocates agree that the genealogies from Abraham forward can be used to accurately date Abraham's time. That leaves only 20 generations total in which gaps could possibly account for any "extra" time. Comparing **Genesis Chapter 5** with Jude eliminates any gaps in the first seven of these leaving only 13 generations with any possibility of gaps. But the Bible is very specific about the time frames of these remaining 13 generations listed in **Genesis 5 and 11**.

There simply is no way to hold that the Scripture is without error and believe that there are "missing" years to be found in genealogical gaps. Either we believe the Bible's account of time or we don't believe the Bible.

People often ask why all those genealogies are included in Scripture. This is one big reason why. We must choose to believe God's Word or man's. I know which I will choose.

The next time someone says to you that there are gaps in the genealogies, tell them there are gaps in their logic.