

DATES AND CHRONOLOGY OF SCRIPTURE

by Various

A study of biblical chronology examining the various dates and time periods mentioned in Scripture. The work seeks to understand and harmonize the chronological data found throughout the Old and New Testaments.

24 Chapters

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01 Introduction

Introduction The writer, in the following pages, has had no intention of forming a system of chronology. It is simply the result of his own study to understand the several passages of Scripture that give dates or periods of time. In doing this he was gradually led on, step by step, until the principal links of the whole chain of events from the creation passed under review, and are here given.

God may not have intended to give the material for a complete chronology; but He has given a great many links - many more than is generally supposed by those who have but cursorily examined the subject - leaving but few places really doubtful.

Yet, strange to say, that out of the many chronologists, scarcely two agree in their results. Two things have principally caused this disagreement: first, that when difficulties have arisen, the first thought seems to have been to suppose that Scripture is wrong, and then, of course, it was no longer a question of understanding the Scripture, or reconciling apparent discrepancies, but it gave ample room for the writer's opinion: and, secondly, that most chronologists seem to have approached the subject with some foregone conclusions; and these again think nothing of supposing the Scripture to be wrong. But the writer is desirous of understanding the Scripture, because he believes it is right - always right - inspired by God, who never makes mistakes. Mistakes there may be, of course, by copyists; but these are generally discoverable: this is not the question; but whether God so controlled the writers as to prevent them making mistakes. Assuredly He did, for nothing less would be worthy of God. It is, then, these inspired Scriptures we seek to understand.

Others have supposed that the difficulties of chronology may be overcome by some system of cycles, or recurring periods, at which great events have happened. But surely any one who has examined these systems (for there are several) must have noticed that whatever measure be taken, some event falls in at the right time, and is taken as a proof that the system is correct; while what one person thinks to be a cardinal point, another thinks to be of no importance: so that all are made to appear right, though they differ materially, and are destructive of each other.*

(* It may be well to give the reader an illustration: "The Temple," says Mr. H. Browne, in his "Ordo Saeclorum," p. 409, "we know was a type of Christ's body. The day on which He came to it, cleansing it, and declaring the sentence of its reprobation, was the Sunday or Monday before the Crucifixion, 13th or 14th of March, A.D. 29. The Temple began to be built on the 20th April, 1013 B.C. From the one of these days to the other are 1041 Julian years minus 38 days, or 1040.89 years, which is the square of 32.262, or 32 years, 96 days, which is precisely the period from Christ's nativity to that visitation of the Temple. In other words, the period from the foundation of the Temple to the day of its visitation is precisely the square of the period from the Nativity to that same day." "The sacerdotal cycle was completed, and had just begun afresh when the fatal firebrand was cast upon the Temple. From the Sabbath preceding the Passion to that day are 15,114 -16 days = 15,120 days; i.e., precisely ninety complete cycles (90 X 168)." The italics are

the author's own. After a great many similar calculations, the writer sums up with the conviction that such coincidences cannot be merely fortuitous, but that they raise what otherwise was probability into moral certainty. But this is precisely what each writer thinks of his own system, though, alas, perhaps no one else can see therein much else but imagination and invention.) The great danger of anything of the sort is, that if I have a system I am nearly sure to judge of Scripture by my cycles, instead of judging my cycles by Scripture. For instance, the LXX. and the Hebrew differ; and I want to know which is right. I am nearly sure to say that that is right which agrees with my cycles. This would be judging of Scripture by my system, and is surely false in principle.

Further, we do not find any such system of regular periods even in nature. The sun and moon are for days and years (Genesis 1:14), and yet a sidereal month (the revolution of the moon) is 27 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes, 11.5 seconds; and the average time from a new moon to a new moon is 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 2'9 seconds; and a year (the revolution of the earth round the sun) is 365 days, 6 hours, 9 minutes, 9.6 seconds: all very irregular, as man might think, and yet we are sure that in wisdom God made all His works (Psalms 104:24). It may be that this apparent irregularity was the result of the curse for man's sin ("for the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," Romans 8:22); but if it was, all the rest would also be involved in the curse.

So, by picking out the births of leading men, or by taking great leading events, we have been unable to discover that they took place according to any regular succession of periods.

It is God's Word, then, that we approach: not to call it in question, but to understand it; and "the meek will He guide in judgment" (Psalms 25:9).

02 From Adam to the Flood

From Adam to the Flood For this period we have the genealogy given in Genesis 5:1-32, from which we copy the ages of each when he had the son named, as they stand in the Hebrew, the Hebrew-Samaritan, and the LXX. texts:

HEBREW SAMARITAN SEPTUAGENT

NAMES.

Age at birth of son.

Rest of life

Whole life

Age at birth of son.

Rest of life

Whole life

Age at birth of son.

Rest of life

Whole life

Adam - - -

130

800

930

130

800

930

230

700

930

Seth - - -

105

807

912

105

807

912

205

707

912

Enos - - -

90

815

905

90

815

905

190

715

905

Cainan - -

70

840

910

70

840

910

170

740

910

Mahalaleel -

65

830

895

65

830

895

165

730

895

Jared - - -

162

800

962

62

785

847

162

800

962

Enoch - -

65

300

365

65

300

365

165

200

365

Methuselah -

187

782

969

67

653

720

167

802

969

Methuselah -

187*

782*

Lamech - -

182

595

777

53

600

653

188

565

753

Noah - - -

500

450

950

500

450

950

500

450

950

To the Flood

100

100

100

Total -

1656

1307

2242

(* These are from the Alexandrian copy of the LXX.; the rest are from the Vatican copy.) To persons who have not considered the subject, it may be right to explain what are the Hebrew-Samaritan and Septuagint texts. The Hebrew-Samaritan text is supposed to date from the time when the ten tribes revolted. As Jeroboam was anxious that his people should not go up to Jerusalem, he doubtless would obtain for them a copy of the law. It is not a translation, but an Hebrew copy in Samaritan characters. It is called the Samaritan Pentateuch, for it contains the first five books of the Old Testament only. If this text originated so early (though this is doubted by some) it is of importance, as showing what was then in their copy; allowance, of course, being made for any alterations, either willful or accidental. The Septuagint text is the whole of the Old Testament translated into the Greek language. The common account is, that it was nearly all translated in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, about the year B.C. 283. It is said to have been made by seventy or seventy-two persons, and this is why it is called the Septuagint or LXX. This account is doubted by some; but it is clear that it was made before the time of Christ. And what gives it increased importance is, that this translation is often quoted, instead of the Hebrew, in the New Testament. As to why this was done we shall have to consider as we proceed.

It will be observed that from this table we get an accurate measure of time from the creation of Adam to the flood, by adding up the ages of each when he had the son named. But the three copies do not agree, the difference in the total being considerable, and forms a part of what is called "the long chronology" and "the short chronology," according as you take the longer or shorter period. In the table it will be seen that in the LXX. Adam was 230 years of age when Seth was born, but in the Hebrew it is 130, the difference being 100 years; and so of five others there are 100 years' difference in each. The time after the birth also varies 100 years, so that the length of life is the same; but as the whole period is arrived at by adding the ages of each at the birth of his son, the difference in the two copies is 586 years from the birth of Adam to the flood. As to which of these copies is correct has been sharply contested, but it is not our intention to enter into

the discussion. It must suffice to make a few remarks.

1. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, and this, therefore, must have the first claim, and which we must never abandon without sufficient reason.

2. The uniform alteration of 100 years could not have been accidental; it must have been designed; but by whom altered, and for what purpose, is not known.

3. The examination of various Hebrew MSS. of the Old Testament, while it bears proof that mistakes were made by the copyists, does not establish the assertion that they willfully altered the text, except where they admit that it has been altered. The assertion that the Jews altered this genealogical list to make the nativity of Christ to appear to be in the fifth millenary instead of the sixth (there being a tradition, it is said, that the Messiah would come in the sixth) is entirely without proof. Besides, is it reasonable that they should do this, and leave untouched the much plainer prophecies that were literally fulfilled by Christ? Such as, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zechariah 9:9).

4. The Vatican copy of the LXX. (one of the oldest) is not consistent in itself, for it makes Methuselah to live 802 years after the birth of Lamech: thus outliving the flood by fourteen years! for from the birth of Lamech to the flood was only 788 years, according to the same copy; and 782 years, according to the Hebrew.*

(* As an illustration of how far skepticism may go, even in persons who profess reverence to Scripture, one writer actually quotes this mistake of the LXX. as a proof that the flood must have been only partial, for otherwise Methuselah could not have outlived the flood fourteen years.)

5. The Hebrew agrees mostly with the Samaritan copy, which could not be the case if the Hebrew had since been altered, unless it be supposed that the Samaritan had also been altered.

6. But if some of the Hebrew copies had been altered, might we not expect to find that one or more had escaped; but none are known to agree with the Septuagint.

165 years by 2 copies. 167 years by the Vatican and 18 others.

177 years by 1 copy.

187 years by the Alexandrian and 16 others.

And it has been supposed that the various hundred years were added to make the Scripture the better agree with what was then supposed to be demanded by Egyptian chronology.

Hebrew. Confirmed by Age of Jared when Enoch was born - - -

162

LXX. and Josephus.

Age of Methuselah when Lamech was born -

187

LXX. Alex. and Josephus.

Age of Lamech when Noah was born - -

182 -

Josephus.

For these reasons, then - but more especially because the Hebrew is the original, and we ought to keep to that, unless we have good proof that it is incorrect - we feel bound to prefer the Hebrew reckoning, and to conclude that from the birth of Adam to the flood was 1656 years, according to the authorized version of the Bible.

It has sometimes been asserted that the History by Josephus is a proof that it is the Hebrew that has been altered, because he says that he copied from the Hebrew, and yet his history is said to agree best with the LXX. But this will not bear investigation, because, 1. His books, as we now have them, are not consistent in themselves; differing so much that some think that he sanctions the long chronology, and others that he sanctions the short. 2. They have doubtless been altered by others; as it is not usual for a writer to state such opposite things. 3. Those who corrupted the Scriptures would not hesitate also to alter Josephus, to make it agree with their alterations.

It may be well, however, to consider an objection that has often been urged why the LXX. should be taken in preference to the Hebrew; namely, that the LXX., being so often quoted in the New Testament, is stamped with Divine sanction; and in some places where it differs from the Hebrew, it seems to be preferred to the Hebrew; if so, why not prefer its dates? The question of quotations from the Old Testament into the New cannot be fully discussed here. It must suffice to notice a few points.

1. That the Greek empire had had general sway for more than 100 years before the rise of the Roman empire, and this caused the Greek language to be commonly spoken.
2. That after the Roman empire was established the Greek language still continued to be commonly spoken in Palestine.
3. That at the time our Savior was on the earth the Greek language was the language commonly spoken in Palestine by the Jews - except perhaps in Jerusalem; though even in Jerusalem, in one case (Acts 21:40; Acts 22:2), they were evidently prepared to hear some other language (and what language could that be but the Greek?) rather than the Hebrew; for we read that they gave greater silence because Paul spoke to them in the Hebrew tongue..

There are recorded three interesting instances in which our Lord spoke in the Hebrew tongue: Mark 5:41, when He said to the damsel, "Tilitha cumi." But note that here it was with a ruler of the synagogue, and was in private. Mark 7:34, when He said to the deaf man, "Ephphatha." But here also it was "aside from the multitude." Mark 15:34 : "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani." Here He is addressing God. These cases in no way refute the assertion that the Greek language was commonly spoken.

4. That the Jews sanctioned the use of the Greek language. The Mishna says, "The Jews are not permitted to compose books in all languages; it shall only be permitted them to write books in the

Greek. This is a declaration of Rabbi Simeon, the son of Gamaliel, which was acknowledged as a statute. A bill of divorce might be written in Greek or Hebrew, or, if it were wished, in both languages, and might also be signed by the witnesses in Greek or Hebrew; in either language, and with either subscription, it was valid." *

(* Hug's "Introduction to the Writings of the New Testament," vol. 2:, p. 46, where the question of the use of the Greek language in Palestine is discussed.)

5. From all this it would follow, that those whom our Lord addressed outside of Jerusalem (and it must be remembered that Matthew, Mark, and Luke give us very little of what took place at Jerusalem) commonly spoke the Greek language, and were doubtless more familiar with the Old Testament in Greek than in Hebrew, the doctors, of course, excepted; and our Lord would naturally quote from the Scripture the people were most familiar with.

Take an illustration. Suppose our Lord were again to visit this earth, and to come to England, and address the Christians here, can there be a doubt that in quoting Scripture He would use the English authorized version? Granted that in some cases it may not be a strictly accurate translation of the original, still, if it gives the sense of the original, and thus answered our Lord's purpose, He would doubtless quote from it. It would at once be recognized by all Christians as Scripture, which would not be the case if some strictly accurate but unknown translation were to be quoted. And suppose, further, that after this had taken place, some nation, who up to that time had not had the New Testament in their vernacular tongue, determined to translate it; and in doing so they should say, "As our Lord was on earth, and used mostly the authorized English version, that must be correct, and we shall translate from that in preference to the original in Greek," would they not manifestly make a great mistake? And yet they would not be more inconsistent than those are who say, "Because our Lord when on earth quoted mostly from the LXX., therefore we shall prefer this to the original." An interesting illustration of how, in the New Testament, the LXX. was quoted instead of the Hebrew, where it gave the same sense, though not a strictly accurate translation, may be seen in Hebrews 10:5 :■

LXX. Psalms 39:6. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me," etc.

Hebrew. Psalms 40:6. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened."

New Testament. Hebrews 10:5. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me," etc.

Here at first sight appears a wide difference between "mine ears hast thou opened," and "a body hast thou prepared me." But it was usual for the Jews to speak of opening or uncovering the ear to signify "a listening to a command, followed by obedience;" and "a body hast thou prepared me" was the means adopted that Christ might give willing obedience to the will of God. Therefore, the sense in both is the same, though the words differ materially, and therefore God could quote either.

Again, then, we are driven to the conclusion, that as the Hebrew is the original, we are bound to adhere to it, until it can be proved to be in error. From Adam to the Flood, then, were 1656 years. Sixteen centuries: and their history is told in seven short chapters in the Book of Genesis! The

steps are, the creation, the fall, man driven from Paradise, man multiplies greatly, man sins universally, the ark is prepared, Noah is a preacher, Noah and his family shut in the ark, all else perish; and thus ends the first era of the earth.

"And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:13).

03 From the Flood to Abraham

From the Flood to Abraham HEBREW SAMARITAN SEPTUAGENT

NAMES.

Age at birth of son.

Rest of life

Whole life

Age at birth of son.

Rest of life

Whole life

Age at birth of son.

Rest of life

Whole life

Shem - - -

100

500

600

100

500

600

100

500

600

From the Flood

2

2

2

Arphaxad -

35

403

438

135

303

438

135

400

535

Arphaxad -

430*

565

Καὶν■v, - -

130

330

460

Salah - - -

30

403

433

130

303

433

130

330

460

Eber - - -

34

430

464

134

270

404

134

270

404

Eber - - -

370*

504

Peleg - - -

30

209

239

130

109

239

130

209

339

Reu - - -

32

207

239

132

107

239

132

207

339

Serug - - -

30

200

230

130

100

230

130

200

330

Nahor - -

29

119

148

79

69

148

179

125

304

Nahor - -

79*

120

208

Terah - -

70

135

205

70

75

145

70

135

205

Abram - -

His Call -

75

75

75

Total - -

367

1017

1247

* The smaller figures are from the Alexandrian copy of the LXX. In this table also (from Genesis 11:1-32) it will be seen that there are several alterations of 100 years, evidently made purposely, and not by accident. For the reasons already given we feel bound to take the Hebrew. But besides these alterations, the LXX. has a Cainan, with 130 years, which is not in the Hebrew or the Samaritan. A very grave question arises, Ought this to be inserted? If there was no such person, how has it crept into the LXX.? If there was such a person, how is it that it is omitted from the Hebrew? Were this the whole question, we should feel bound at once to reject it, and keep to the Hebrew; but this very name is quoted in Luke 3:1-38, and it therefore cannot be so easily disposed of. The genealogical list of which this second Cainan (so called to distinguish him from Cainan the son of Enos) forms a part, occurs four times in the Old Testament: namely, Genesis 10:24; Genesis 11:12; 1 Chronicles 1:18; 1 Chronicles 1:24. This Cainan does not occur in the Hebrew in any of these places, so that if it had been left out in one place by mistake, it must have been purposely omitted in the other three places to make them all agree. But this is a very grave fault to suppose. And further, it is not in the Samaritan Pentateuch, or in any of the early translations. In the LXX. it is in only three of the places (being omitted from 1 Chronicles 1:24), which thus makes the LXX. inconsistent in itself.

It is said, too, that it was not in the copies of the Bible used by such early writers as Berosus, Eupolemus, Polyhistor, Josephus, Philo, Theophilus of Antioch, Africanus, Origen, and Jerome.* (*See Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible:" Cainan.)

How it came to be copied into Luke 3:36 is really the difficulty. We have seen that where the LXX. gave the same sense as the Hebrew it was often quoted; but this would not be the case if no such person as this Cainan had existed. But it must be observed that in Luke it does not say that it is a quotation from Scripture, so that the list may be some accredited genealogical list known in the apostles' days (which was not inspired, and which was merely copied - though copied by inspiration - as it stood); and not be taken from the Old Testament at all. Or it may be an error of an early copyist. The word Cainan occurs in Luke 3:37, and his eye may have caught that word by mistake, and being copied he would not spoil his manuscript by an erasure. And it must be noticed that it is wanting in one of the earliest Greek manuscripts of Luke. In whatever way it got into Luke, it may from thence have been copied into the LXX. by those who were anxious for a longer chronology; and if they did not hesitate to alter the Scripture by adding the various hundred years, they would not be slow to add another name to which they could put a hundred and thirty additional years. Bearing in mind, too, that many held the inspiration of Scripture so loosely that it would not seem to them nearly so grave a fault as it surely was. On the whole, then, we feel bound to reject this Cainan, and to keep to the Hebrew just as it stands.

There is still one point in the table that demands a word: it is the age of Terah when Abraham was born. From Genesis 11:26, it would appear that Terah was seventy years old when Abraham was born (as is given in the table), but Abraham may not have been Terah's first-born, but have been put first because he became God's chosen man. And this would appear to be the case if we compare Genesis 11:32; Genesis 12:4, with Acts 7:4; because (1), Abraham left Haran after his father's death; (2), his father died 205 years old; (3), Abraham was seventy-five years old at that time; and (4), therefore Terah must have been 130 years old when Abraham was born.

Years

Then from the Flood to the call of Abraham, as in the Table, is

367

Terah, when Abraham was born

130

In Table

70

Difference

60

From the Flood to the call of Abraham

427

The moral links are ■ Noah steps forth into the new earth; and God establishes His covenant with him and with every living creature, and sets His bow in the cloud. Noah's descendants seek to become great in the earth and build cities; and, that they may get to themselves a name, they build the tower of Babel. God confounds their language, and scatters them - setting their bounds

according to the number of the then future children of Israel (Deuteronomy 32:8-9). Idolatry now appears (see Joshua 24:2), and God calls out Abraham, and makes an unconditional covenant with him and his seed.

04 From the Call of Abraham to the Exodus

From the Call of Abraham to the Exodus Here we meet with some inclusive periods, which we must seek to understand. In Genesis 15:13, it was said to Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years." Also quoted in Acts 7:6.

Notice that the pointing of this passage in our Bibles seems to restrict the four hundred years to their being afflicted. But it will be seen that this is not so: the 400 must apply to the whole sentence.

Again, in Exodus 12:40, we read, "The sojourning of the children of Israel was four hundred and thirty years."

These two passages seem to say that the time that the children of Israel were in Egypt was 400 or 430 years. But we read in Galatians 3:17, that the law was given 430 years after the promise to Abraham. Now the promise to Abraham was long before Israel went into Egypt; and the giving of the law was after Israel left Egypt: so that the actual sojourn in Egypt could not have been nearly so long as 430 years, according to Galatians 3:1-29 This difficulty has been often met in a very summary but ruthless manner, by supposing the passage in Galatians a mistake. But God never makes mistakes, and all Scripture is God-inspired. We must, therefore, seek for some explanation that will give to each passage its true meaning. In doing this it is well, at the outset, to see if there are any other passages that will throw light upon them. In Genesis 15:16, we read, respecting the sojourn of Israel in Egypt, that "in the fourth generation they shall come hither again." But in the ordinary course of things then existing there would be in 430 years about eleven generations instead of only four, reckoning that most persons married and had their first child when about forty years old.

Now we have a list of the generations, and we find exactly four. Thus (see Exodus 6:1-30 i6-20)
Generations

Jacob's son Levi

1

Levi's son Kohath

2

Kohath's son Amram

3

Amram's son Moses

4

Or, as Levi must not be reckoned (because he went into Egypt with Jacob), then we know, by Moses being 80 years of age at the Exodus, that there was ample time for another generation to have been born to make the fourth. Therefore, it seems literally correct that they were brought out in the fourth generation; but this would make the time much shorter than 430 years for the actual sojourn in Egypt.

Levi not being one of the four, would give an additional generation (and in some cases there may have been still another), and this would greatly aid in meeting the difficulty which some have felt in about seventy souls (besides the wives) increasing, in the supposed shorter period, to 603,550 males, "from twenty years old and upward," two years after the Exodus, and this, too, without the tribe of Levi (Numbers 1:45-47).

But, further, the mother of Moses (Jochebed) was Levi's daughter (Numbers 26:59); Amram having married his own aunt (Exodus 6:20). Now, Levi lived only 137 years in all; and supposing (it may be approximately proved) that he lived in Egypt 88 years, Jochebed was born during these years, and her son Moses was 80 years old at the Exodus; so that she must have been 262 years of age at least when Moses was born, if they continued in Egypt 430 years. But this is quite improbable, for Abraham was "old" to have a son when he was 100 years of age. But if Moses was born when his mother was about 47, then they could not have been in Egypt more than about 215 years. And if we thus suppose that the time of the actual sojourn in Egypt was 215 years, the other 215 years (to make up the 430 in all) is shown thus Years.

Jacob, when he stood before Pharaoh, was - - - - -

130

Isaac, when Jacob was born, was - - - - -

60

Abraham, when Isaac was born, was - - - - -

100

290

The promise was made to Abraham when he was - - -

- 75 215

Thus these two periods of 215 years each would well agree with Galatians 3:17, that the giving of the law was 430 years after the promise to Abraham.

But, if this is so, the other passages that seem to speak of 400 and 430 years as the duration of the sojourn still demand our consideration.

First, observe that Genesis 15:13, and Acts 7:6, do not mention Egypt at all: "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs;" and as this was spoken to Abraham as to his seed, it may not have included Abraham himself. And these passages say it was 400 years, which will agree very well with the above; for from the birth of Isaac to the Exodus would be about 405 years.

Exodus 12:40, is more definite, "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years. Observe that this passage does not say that they were in Egypt 430 years; but the sojourning of those who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years; so that there is no difficulty in the period named. The difficulty is in the words "Children of Israel," because we cannot strictly include in this term Abraham and Isaac, and without the sojourning of Isaac and that of Abraham from the promise we cannot make up the 430 years. The Samaritan Pentateuch and many copies of the LXX. have an addition here which altogether meets the difficulty. It reads, "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt, was 430 years." This may have been the true text; but if it was, it is difficult to account for its omission in the Hebrew; and it is also omitted from the Vulgate, Arabic, and Syriac versions; while it is very easy to conceive of the addition being made to meet the difficulty. We prefer adhering to the Hebrew text, and taking the term "Children of Israel" as including Abraham and Isaac, and the time of their sojourn, -as is certainly done in Galatians 3:1-29. The promise was made to Abraham, and he was the first of these separated people; and, though the name of Israel was given to his grandson, still the term "Children of Israel" became the common name for the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. Thus we find the Jews saying, "We have Abraham [not Isaac or Jacob] to our father." So that it does not seem to be doing violence to Scripture to include Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the common term "Children of Israel."

Thus we believe that the period of 430 years refers to the sojourn of Abraham from his call; the sojourn of Isaac; the sojourn of Jacob; and the dwelling in Egypt, until the Exodus. The line of blessing runs through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who is called Israel, and his children become the chosen nation of God (Deuteronomy 14:2). They sojourn in Egypt, and, being greatly oppressed, are brought out by God, judgment being executed on Egypt.

05 From the Exodus to the Temple

From the Exodus to the Temple This is acknowledged to be the most difficult portion of Scripture chronology, and affords another opportunity for some to choose a longer period and some a shorter. Our object being simply to understand Scripture, we must have no choice either for long or short.

We start with an inclusive period named in Kings 6:1, "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." Our work is to see how this passage agrees with other parts of Scripture, and how the 480 years agree with the details.

Years. In the wilderness (verse 18) - - - -

40

During the Judges (verse 20) -

450

Reign of Saul (verse 21) -

40

530

This with the reign of David -

40

Years of Solomon's reign -

3

573

Volumes have been written upon these two computations - the 480 of 1 Kings 6:1-38, and the 530 of Acts 13:1-52 Some have concluded that the one in Kings must be an error; and others have concluded that Paul must have made a mistake. But it is strange that so few have noticed that in Acts 13:20, there is a different reading in some of the earliest Greek manuscripts - a reading which, apart from all questions of systems of chronology, has been preferred by some of the best editors to the one in the common Greek text and the authorized version.

They believe that Paul said, "He divided to them their land by lot, about 450 years; and afterward he gave them judges:" and not 450 years during the judges: the difference being in a transposition of the words.

Years. Isaac, when Jacob was born (Genesis 25:26)

60

Jacob when he stood before Pharaoh -

130

Israel in Egypt - - -

215

Israel in the Wilderness - -

40

To the division of the land - -

7

(About 450 years.) - - -

452

But if this reconciles Acts 13:1-52 with 1 Kings 6:1-38, we have still to reconcile the 480 years with the various periods of the judges. It is well known that if all the periods of servitude and the times of the judges are put down consecutively, they amount to considerably more than 480 years.

There are several methods of meeting the difficulty.

1. By not reckoning the various periods of servitude, but considering them all as canceled. This would cut out the following oppressions: -

Years.

The King of Mesopotamia - - -

8

The Moabites - - -

18

The Canaanitish King Jabin - -

20

The Midianites - - -

7

The Ammonites - - - -

18

The Philistines - - - -

There may in prophecy (the seventy weeks for instance) be time that is not reckoned. If the prophecy is concerning the Jews as the people favored of God; and if for a season those people are declared to be not reckoned as God's people, that time may be overleaped in the prophecy. But this date in the book of Kings is history. Surely the words, "It came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt," etc., are too plain and literal to be taken in a mystical sense. It is plain history. Besides, if the servitudes are cut out, the time will not at all agree with the 300 years of Judges 11:26.

2. Others think that we may reckon from the settlement in the land, instead of from the Exodus. This would cut out the forty years in the wilderness, and the seven years to the division of the land. But though, morally, the coming out of Egypt, and the settlement in the land, may be the same, yet for a date in history it is hardly probable that the one would be used for the other.

3. Another mode is to translate the several passages that speak of the land having rest forty years, eighty years, etc., thus: "the land had rest the fortieth year," that is, forty years from the time that the land had rest before; and so of the other passages. The result of this would be that the forty years spoken of in Judges 3:11, would include the eight years of oppression that preceded it; and the eighty years of Judges 3:30, would include the eighteen years of oppression by the Moabites; and so on.

But, in the first place, it is doubtful whether the original will allow of the above translation, and one passage seems fatal to this mode of interpretation: "When the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge" (Judges 2:18). Now if the deliverance was all the days of each judge, it will not at all agree with the land having rest for a brief period in the fortieth year, in the eightieth year, etc.

4. Another way of reconciling the apparent differences is to suppose that all the periods named are not consecutive. And this appears somewhat probable; for, by a careful perusal of the book of Judges, it appears evident that often the land as a whole is not spoken of. For instance, one passage speaks of an oppression and a judge in the north, stretching towards the center, but not reaching to the south. Another passage gives an oppression and deliverance in the south, and reaching towards the center, but not affecting the north.

Again, take the song of Deborah: she only names a part of the tribes, and some of these she seems to chide for not assisting in the wars. Of Reuben she asks, "Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds to hear the bleatings of the flocks?... Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches" (Judges 5:16-18). Deborah does not name Judah or Simeon, either as fighting or staying away. These with Dan occupied the south; Reuben, the south-east.

Further, look at Gideon: he sent messengers to only three other tribes, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali (Judges 6:35). And after the battle he had to make an apology to Ephraim for not inviting them to the war (Judges 8:1).

Surely all these records, with several others, clearly intimate that the servitudes named did not affect the whole land at one time; and that the judges did not rule over the whole of the twelve tribes; while, on the other hand, when an occurrence embraced the whole, the word says, "all the tribes of Israel," "from Dan even unto Beer-sheba," etc. (Judges 20:1-2). From this it would follow, that it might be impossible to make out the chronology of the period with absolute certainty from the Book of Judges; and hence the value of the period of 480 years in 1 Kings 6:1, to guide us: indeed, with this inclusive date, it matters comparatively little whether we can fill in the details or not, except to prove the correctness of Scripture, and the consistency of one part with another.

If we take all that took place towards the north, and place it side by side with what took place towards the south, we shall find that the period is shortened too much, and will not at all agree with the passage in Judges 11:26, where Jephthah says they had had possession of the land 300 years. Therefore, although the servitudes and the judgeships appear to be only more or less partial, yet in the order in which they are related they may be consecutive; and the events recorded, though partial in extent, may have been the only events worth recording.

Judges 3:1-31 Gives the first group of Judges. Judges 4:1-24; Judges 5:1-31

A woman has to lead forth the army.

Judges 6:1-40

Israel had to hide in dens and caves.

Judges 6:30

Gideon's death demanded for destroying the altar of Baal.

Judges 8:1-35

Gideon scarcely escapes civil war.

Judges 9:1-57

Abimelech's treachery to his brethren.

Judges 9:1-57

Discord. Abimelech slain by a woman.

Judges 12:1-15

Forty-two thousand slain in civil war.

Judges 16:1-31

The Nazarite fails, and is betrayed to the enemy.

He falls and is slain.

Judges 17:1-13; Judges 18:1-31; Judges 19:1-30; Judges 20:1-48; Judges 21:1-25 are not in historical order, but show the moral condition of the people.

Now while keeping the order of events mostly consecutive, there is one passage that seems to allow of a departure from this rule, and which has been thought to give the key to solve the difficulty. It is in Judges 10:7 : "And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the children of Ammon." Here are named at one time two sets of oppressors: the Philistines on the west, and the Ammonites on the east. Judges 10, 22 and 12 then go on to describe the oppression of the Ammonites; and in Judges 13:1-25, we have an oppression of the Philistines. Now, if these two oppressions were at the same time, this fully meets the difficulty. And this may also throw light upon that difficult passage in Judges 10:8, which may speak of "the same year," and the passage be read, And God "sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hands of the children of Ammon. And they vexed and crushed the children of Israel the same year." The way Judges 13:1-25 introduces the Philistine oppression presents, however, some difficulty; for it seems to speak of it as a new declension and a new oppression. Therefore, the following arrangement of the details of the period, though given as being open to less objection than other modes, is not to be considered as altogether without objection.

THE 480 YEARS OF 1 Kings 6:1

From the Exodus to crossing the Jordan

40

From the Jordan to the division of the land*

7

Rest under Joshua and the Elders] ** (Judges 2:7)

12

Oppression by the King of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8)

8

Othniel judge - - - (Judges 3:11)

40

Oppression by the Moabites- (Judges 3:14)

18

Ehud and Shamgar - - (Judges 3:30)

80

Oppression by the Canaanitish King Jabin (Judges 4:3) 20

20

Deborah and Barak - - (Judges 5:31)

40

Oppression by the Midianites (Judges 6:1)

7

Gideon - - (Judges 8:28)

40

Abimelech - - - (Judges 9:22)

3

Tolu - - - - (Judges 10:2)

23

Jair- - - - (Judges 10:3)

22

[Eli priest forty years, 1 Samuel 4:18.]

In the West..

In the East.

Oppression by the Philistines, during which Samson is judge, and Samuel after Eli - - (Judges 8:1)
40 years

Oppression by the Ammonites (Judges 10:8)

18 ***

Jephthah - (Judges 12:7)

6

Ibzan - (Judges 12:9)

7

From Mizpeh (1 Samuel 7:12-13) to the anointing of Saul 9 years

Elon - - (Judges 12:11)

10

Abdon - (Judges 12:14)

8

Saul (in the former part of which Samuel was judge) Acts 13:21

40

David 1 Kings 2:11

40

Solomon 1 Kings 11:42

3

TOTAL

492

Deduct for parts of years being reckoned as full years

12

GRAND TOTAL

480

(* This is proved thus: It was two years before the spies were sent forth (Numbers 10:11-13); in the autumn of which year the spies were sent (Numbers 13:20). At this time Caleb was forty years of age, and at the division of the land he was eighty-five (Joshua 14:6-10): so that $45 + 2 = 47 - 40$ (in the desert) = 7 years.) (** These twelve years are not named in Scripture; but the narrative requires some years to be added here.) (***) To this point is about 329 years: the 300 years, in round numbers, of Judges 11:26.)

Observe that 1 Samuel goes back in the history to take up Eli and the birth of Samuel. It finds Israel under bondage to the Philistines, which is doubtless a part of the forty years' servitude of Judges 13:1 : for otherwise that period would have no termination, and the servitude of Samuel would have no commencement. It is uncertain when Eli became priest; and though he is said to have judged Israel forty years (1 Samuel 4:18), he would most probably have been ecclesiastical judge, and his time not be reckoned separately. In 1 Samuel it was certainly running on at the same time as the Philistine oppression. As to Saul, Acts 13:1-52 gives him forty years; while there is evidently a space between the deliverance at Mizpeh (where the period of 40 years' servitude expires, 1 Samuel 7:12-17), and where Saul began to reign. In the table nine years fall to this period, which is ample.

Josephus says that Samuel "held the supreme authority twelve years subsequent to the death of Eli." But this appears to be incorrect; because the taking of the ark coincides with Eli's death: the ark was with the Philistines seven months, and it was at Kirjath-jearim twenty years before Samuel led on the people to the victory of Mizpeh. So that Samuel must have had authority a much longer time than twelve years after the death of Eli. This is supposing we are correct in interpreting the twenty years named in 1 Samuel 7:2, "And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord." At first sight it would appear as if the passage stated that the ark was at Kirjath-jearim twenty years; but it is quite clear that it was there much longer, for it was taken there in Samuel's time, and it was not returned till David's time (2 Samuel 6:2), so that it must have been there more than forty years. But some authorities prefer to translate it, "and it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord." This removes all difficulty. In 1 Samuel 7:15, it is said that Samuel judged Israel "all the days of his life," so that he must have been judge many years after

Saul was proclaimed king (though it was then, perhaps, as ecclesiastical judge). And the verses that follow (1 Samuel 7:16-17) may refer to the period after Saul was anointed.

1 Samuel 7:1-15, presents a difficulty; for it appears to make it imperative that a long time must have elapsed between Mizpeh (1 Samuel 7:12), and the anointing of Saul, to allow for Samuel to have become old; to have appointed his sons; for them to have proved unfaithful; and for the people to have demanded a king. But the sons may have been appointed before "Mizpeh," and after "Mizpeh" we have nine years. On reading 1 Samuel 5:1-12; 1 Samuel 6:1-21; 1 Samuel 7:1-17, it will be seen that they form one continuous narrative, and that anything else that occurred during that twenty years could not have been introduced till after that narrative was closed. Another subject is then begun about the king, and there is nothing improbable in supposing that the sons were appointed before "Mizpeh," and there is ample time for all the rest. That the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1-38 is the actual duration of the period seems confirmed by the genealogy mentioned in Ruth 4:17; Ruth 4:21-22; 1 Chronicles 2:11-12; Matthew 1:5; and Luke 3:32.

Salmon and Rachab begat Boaz - 1

Boaz begat Obed - - 2

Obed begat Jesse - - - 3

Jesse begat David -- - 4

Now from the taking of Jericho to the birth of David would be about 350 years, which, for four generations, would be about eighty-eight years to each, which is a long period. But the difficulty is greatly increased by those who insist that the actual period was much longer than the four hundred and eighty years. The 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1, then, we believe to be the actual period, and but for which there is no other definite date given; and which is confirmed by the 300 years of Judges 11:26, and also by the above genealogy. The moral order is - Israel is redeemed out of Egypt, and the Law given. Through unbelief they cannot enter the land of promise, but they wander and die in the wilderness, and their children are brought into Canaan. They fall away continually, and the Lord delivers them into the hand of their enemies. But when they cry unto the Lord, He raises up a judge, and delivers them. In sin they demand a king, as the other nations (for God was their King), and Saul is given them; then David; then Solomon, and the Temple is built.

06 From Solomon to the Destruction of Jerusalem

From Solomon to the Destruction of Jerusalem The chronology of the time of the kings of Judah and Israel is not altogether devoid of difficulties. Any one who sits down for the first time to make a list of the kings after the division of the kingdom, placing each king at then appointed year of the contemporary sovereign, and giving to each the right length of reign, will be surprised to find that they will not agree. Still, the difficulties gradually lessen as they are patiently encountered.

It is necessary, of course, to remember that the Jews reckoned parts of years at the beginning and end of the reigns as complete years. This is proved, if proof is needed, by the reigns of Ahaziah and Joram (1 Kings 22:51; 2 Kings 1:17). Ahaziah is said to begin to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and to reign two years; and yet his successor is said to begin to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, proving that Ahaziah's reign of two years could have been only one year and a part of another, or indeed it may have been a few months only of each year. It is proved also in the saying that our Lord was three days and three nights in the tomb, when the actual time was an entire day of twenty-four hours and a part of two other days. Thus, when Scripture says that a king reigned twenty years, it may be right to reckon it only as eighteen entire years, or it may be as nineteen years, or it may be as the full twenty.

It has been thought, too, that Jeroboam, in devising of his own heart (1 Kings 12:33) times differing from Judah, also altered the beginning of the year by which the reign of the kings of Israel is reckoned; and this is probable, for the reigns in some instances seem to be a year out, and this would meet the difficulty.

Still, the making due allowance for all these different modes of reckoning will not, in some places, meet the difficulty.

Thus, if we start with Jehoshaphat, he is said to reign twenty-five years.

Ahaziah begins to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and reigns two years.

Jehoram succeeds Ahaziah in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, and reigns twelve years, according to 2 Kings 3:1; but begins to reign in the second year of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, according to 2 Kings 1:17.

Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, begins to reign in the fifth year of Jehoram, king of Israel (2 Kings 8:16).

Now, in the ordinary mode of reckoning it falls thus-

Jehoshaphat's

17th year is

Ahaziah's

1st year

Jehoshaphat's

18th year is

Jehoram's

1st year

Jehoshaphat's

19th year is

Jehoram's

2nd year

Jehoshaphat's

20th year is

Jehoram's

3rd year

Jehoshaphat's

21st year is

Jehoram's

4th year

Jehoshaphat's

22nd year is

Jehoram's

5th year

Jehoshaphat's

23rd year is

Jehoram's

6th year

Jehoshaphat's

24th year is

Jehoram's

7th year

Jehoshaphat's

25th year is

Jehoram's

8th year

Jehoram's

1st year is

Jehoram's

9th year

But Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, begins to reign in the fifth year of Jehoram, king of Israel, and not in the ninth year as above. And if we suppose that Jehoshaphat's reign was only twenty-three entire years, this would only bring it to Jehoram's seventh year. And Jehoram, king of Israel, is said to begin to reign in the second year of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, which is not at all according to the above. And further, 2 Kings 8:16 tells us that Jehoshaphat was still king of Judah when Jehoram, his son, began to reign in the fifth year of Jehoram, king of Israel.

Confused as all this may appear at first sight, it can be made to agree with all the passages, as follows: 914 Jehoshaphat begins to reign in the fourth year of Ahab (1 Kings 22:41), and reigns twenty-three complete years.

897 Jehoshaphat accompanies Ahab to Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22:4), and leaves Jehoram as regent. Ahab is slain, and Ahaziah succeeds (1 Kings 22:51).

896 In the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat (2 Kings 3:1), and the second year of Jehoram, his son (2 Kings 1:17), Jehoram, son of Ahab, begins to reign over Israel.

891 Jehoram formally succeeds Jehoshaphat (Jehoshaphat being still alive), in the fifth year of Jehoram (2 Kings 8:16). And the rest follows correctly, as may be seen in the chronological table.

Similar cases to this occur in other places, which may be made to agree in two ways: either by making the kings to be co-regents, or by placing an interregnum between two kings.

It may seem to be an objection to there being interregnums because Scripture is entirely silent as to them, and as to what occurred during the periods they occupy. But we need not be surprised at this when we observe that some of the entire reigns of the kings occupy only a few verses, and in these interregnums there may have been nothing which the Spirit of God thought well to record. But there is one passage of Scripture which seems to determine the point, a passage that gives an important inclusive period, and which agrees decidedly better with the interregnums being adopted, if we can rightly interpret the passage. In Ezekiel 4:4-6, the prophet is told to lie upon his left side 390 days, each day for a year, "so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel." And when this was accomplished, then he was to lie upon his right side forty days, each day for a year, to "bear the iniquity of the house of Judah." At first sight this might seem to point out the duration of each kingdom after the division; but this cannot be the meaning of it, for Israel, as a separate nation, existed a much less time than Judah. But it must be noted that in Ezekiel the term "Israel"

is often used to denote the nation as a whole, and "Judah" as Judah in distinction.

Thus, from the division of the kingdom in B.C. 975 to the destruction of Jerusalem in 588, we have 388 entire years, or the 390 current years of the above passage, by admitting the commonly adopted interregnums. The forty years in the above passage is not so easily made out. It was Judah as a separate kingdom that existed the 390 years, and therefore the forty years cannot refer to the duration of that kingdom. It may refer to the period of Manasseh's reign before his reformation. It is pointed out as the crowning sin of Judah, and for which they were sent into captivity. He not only set up idolatry, but actually brought it into the house of the Lord. And God says, "Because Manasseh, king of Judah, hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did;... therefore... I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down" (2 Kings 21:11 -13).

Now, Ezekiel had to lie forty days, a day for a year, to "bear the iniquity of the house of Judah;" and the reign of Manasseh in all is fifty-five years, so that he may have reigned forty years before his captivity and reformation, and the former part of his reign was emphatically the "iniquity of the house of Judah."

We therefore feel justified in placing an interregnum of eleven years after Jeroboam II in Israel; and an interval of anarchy of nine years after Hoshea killed Pekah before he began to reign.

Thus from the division of the kingdom to the destruction of Jerusalem is 390 current years or 388 entire years, from B.C. 975 to 588 inclusive. The details will be seen in the tables.

There are a few passages that now call for our attention.

2 Kings 15:30 states that Hoshea killed Pekah in the twentieth year of Jotham. But Jotham reigned only sixteen years, according to verse 33. This difficulty may be met by supposing that, though Jotham reigned only sixteen years, he did not die then; so that, although his son succeeded to the throne at the end of the sixteen years, the time might also be reckoned as the reign of the father while he lived. If this were so, verse 38 would still be true, that "Jotham slept with his fathers,... and Ahaz, his son, reigned in his stead."

Isaiah 7:8. It is here declared that from the time of the alliance of Pekah, king of Israel, with Rezin, king of Damascus, to invade Judah, in sixty-five years Ephraim as a people shall be broken in pieces.

Ephraim is here doubtless put for Israel generally, and this conspiracy would be about B.C. 742. But the taking of Samaria was in 721, which was only twenty-one years afterward. Now, though Samaria was taken thus early, and Israel ceased to exist as a kingdom, the mass of the people being taken captive, yet many may have been left, and Ephraim being "broken that it be not a people," may refer to when Esarhaddon planted a colony of foreigners in Samaria (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:2; Ezra 4:10). This would be in B.C. 678, which is just sixty-five years from 742. The dates of Ezekiel are mostly reckoned from the captivity in 599, when Jehoiachin was carried away, and not from the first captivity, in 606. This is proved by Ezekiel 40:1, which speaks of the twenty-fifth year of the captivity as being fourteen years after the city was smitten. Thus, the twenty-fifth year from 599 is 574; and fourteen years from 588, when Jerusalem was destroyed, is 574 also.

Ezekiel 33:21. In the twelfth year of their captivity one came and told the prophet that Jerusalem was smitten. The twelfth year of their captivity would be 588, and this is the year of the destruction of the city.

Ezekiel 1:1-2. The thirtieth year here named presents a little difficulty. It is evidently not reckoned in the usual manner, because the prophet also gives another date: the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity.

It is generally thought that this thirty years is reckoned from the passover of Josiah (in his eighteenth year, 624) when the book was read, and the threat of captivity was reiterated (2 Kings 22:16-17). But it is difficult to account for why this circumstance should be fixed on as a period to date from. Is it not much more probable that this date is reckoned from the founding of the Babylonian kingdom by Nabopolassar; that is, that it would be the common date of the kingdom in which they then were? It was founded in 625, and their year 30 would be 595, and this would be the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. In Jeremiah there are a few dates and synchronisms. In Jeremiah 25:1, the fourth of Jehoiakim is the first of Nebuchadnezzar (606).

Jeremiah 25:3. From the thirteenth of Josiah (628) the twenty-third year brings us again to 606.

Jeremiah 32:1 The tenth year of Zedekiah was the eighteenth of Nebuchadnezzar (589). The links of events in this period are - Israel is in peace and great prosperity under Solomon. The temple is finished and dedicated, and the glory of the Lord fills the house. But failure again comes in, and Solomon falls into idolatry. In consequence of this, at his death, the kingdom is rent in twain, forming the separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Both kingdoms fail, and certain prophets are sent to them; but their repeated sins at length bring down upon them the judgment of God. Samaria is taken, and Israel carried away captive. Then Judah is carried away, and Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed. Thus the kingdom of Israel, as a nation, is swept away.

07 From the Destruction of Jerusalem to the Close of Old Testament History

From the Destruction of Jerusalem to the Close of Old Testament History In this portion there are but a few connecting links that call for remark. In Jeremiah 25:1-38; Jeremiah 11:1-23; Jeremiah 12:1-17; and Jeremiah 29:10, there is an inclusive period given, namely, the captivity of seventy years. It commenced in 606 B.C., and terminated in the first year of Cyrus, 536 (Ezra 6:3). In Zechariah 1:12-16 another period of seventy years is named, and here it is Zion, and God's "house shall be built." The destruction was in 588; and though, on the return of the captivity, the building was begun, it was not continued. It was recommenced in the second year of Darius (Ezra 4:24), in the year B.C. 519, which would be seventy years from its destruction. vTHE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL.

Daniel 9:1-27 It is generally acknowledged that these seventy weeks are weeks of years; that is, 490 years in all.

It is also clear from the prophecy that the seventy weeks are divided into three parts: seven weeks; threescore and two weeks; and one week. The seven weeks (49 years) would seem to refer to the building of the city in troublous times. The sixty-two weeks (434 years) to the time after which Messiah was to be cut off.

Then the destruction of the city and sanctuary is mentioned. And then the last week. Our task here is not to enter minutely into the prophecy, but to see how its fulfillment agrees with chronology.

Observe, 1, that the seventy weeks begin when the command goes forth to build Jerusalem, and not to build the temple. The former was in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1), and the latter in the 7th year (Ezra 7:7). It must then be the 20th year. The date generally given for this is B.C. 446; but Usher gave B.C. 455, and Hengstenberg and others also contend for the same date.

Nearly all are agreed that Xerxes began to reign B.C. 485, the difference being as to how long he reigned, and consequently as to when Artaxerxes succeeded him; and the question resolves itself into this: Did Xerxes reign eleven years or twenty-one years?

Hengstenberg says, "We should probably have been spared the trouble of this inquiry altogether, had not the error of an acute writer, and the want of independence on the part of those who succeeded him, involved the question in obscurity. According to Thucydides, Artaxerxes began to reign a short time before the flight of Themistocles into Asia. Dodwell was led astray by certain specious arguments, and set down the year 465 as the date of both these events. The thorough refutation of these arguments by Vitranga was, strange to say, entirely overlooked by both linguists and historians.... The view expressed by Dodwell was adopted by Corsini in his *Fastis Atticis*,' and currently received.... The credit of having once more discovered the right road is due to Kruger, who, after an interval of more than a hundred years, by an entirely independent inquiry, arrived at the same result as Vitranga;... he places the death of Xerxes in the year 474 or 473, and the flight

of Themistocles a year later." And Hengstenberg then proceeds, in his "Christology," to give the direct and indirect proofs that this is the correct date. This would make the twentieth year of Artaxerxes B.C. 455; which date agrees well with the prophecy; whereas the commonly received date (446) does not. We have no hesitation, therefore, in adopting the date that agrees with the prophecy, and its fulfillment stands thus: Years.

Twentieth year of Artaxerxes- - - - B.C. 455 The Crucifixion - - - - -A.D. 29 484 Deduct
for adjustment of the Eras*-1 Sixty-nine weeks - - - - -483

(* It must be noticed that in adding any date B.C. to any date A.D. one year must be deducted. Thus, suppose I ask, How many years are there from January 1, B.C. 2, to January 1, A.D. 2? Simply adding them together would make 4; but this is incorrect; there are only 3, as will be manifest thus - January 1, B.C. 2 to January 1, B.C. 1 = 1 year.

to January 1, A.D. 1 = 2 years to January 1, A.D. 2 = 3 years)

After the cutting off of Messiah, we believe the remainder of Daniel 9:26 to have been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans ("the people of the prince that shall come,") the desolation still going on. The last week would thus still be future - the present time not being reckoned to the Jews; for they are now Lo-ammi, not God's people. This is proved in two ways. 1. After the crucifixion there was no one that made a covenant with the Jews for seven years, and broke it in the middle, and caused the sacrifice to cease, according to Daniel 9:27. Jerusalem was not destroyed till A.D. 70, forty-one years after the crucifixion. 2. The blessings named in Daniel 9:24 have not yet been made good to Daniel's people and the "holy city." The confirming a covenant for one week, but breaking it in the midst, is by some future prince, and not by Christ. But this does not come within our present subject.*

(* For a fuller consideration of the seventy weeks, see a separate tract: "The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, and its Fulfillment.") The prophetic parts of the Book of Daniel already fulfilled will be found in the table, with the various kings of the north and kings of the south therein referred to. Palestine is the center, and "north" and "south" are north and south of Palestine.

These kings referred to in Daniel reach down to B.C. 170. From this to the beginning of New Testament history a few links are added. As to what is future, and as to there being again kings of the north and south, we do not enter upon.

There are, however, three periods named in Daniel 12:1-13 which call for a passing remark.

Daniel 12:7 "A time, times, and a half." This is generally taken to be a year, two years, and half a year; in all, three years and a half, or 1260 days: or, if each day is for a year, 1260 years. It will be remembered that the same number of days is twice named in the Revelation (Revelation 11:3; Revelation 12:6).

Daniel 12:11 "A thousand two hundred and ninety days." These would be literal days or years.

Daniel 12:12 "The thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." This again may be days or years. In Daniel 12:11 it is said that the period shall be "from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate." This evidently refers to the same time as Daniel 9:27. And doubtless all these periods are connected with the last week of Daniel's

seventy weeks, and are still future. The three years and a half of Daniel 12:7 would be exactly half the week: thirty days more (the 1290 days of Daniel 12:11) would doubtless mark some further deliverance: and forty-five days more (the 1335 days of Daniel 12:12) would bring into blessing. There may have been a partial fulfillment of some of this in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes; but it could only have been partial, because universal blessing to the Jews was not brought in; and by the seventy weeks we see it must be after Messiah is cut off. At the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus desolation followed, not blessing; and if years be reckoned instead of days, it would only bring it to the fourteenth century, when there was still no blessing to the Jews as a nation. It must be still future. The links in this division of events are, that, the Jews being carried into captivity, God recognizes Gentile dominion in Nebuchadnezzar (the Babylonian empire, the first beast of Daniel 7:1-28), and a revelation is made to him of future events. But he and his successors impiously exalt themselves against God, who tears the kingdom from them, and the Medo-Persian kingdom succeeds (the second beast of Daniel 7:1-28). A portion of the Jews are now restored to Jerusalem, and in humble faith the city is repaired and the temple rebuilt. This closes Old Testament history. The Grecian empire succeeds (the third beast of Daniel 7:1-28); which is afterward divided into four parts, but which soon become two, the "north" and "south" of Daniel 11:1-45. The Jews again and again suffer under these, and especially under Antiochus Epiphanes. Judas Maccabeus delivers Jerusalem, and the Jews enjoy freedom for a short time. In the meantime Rome has been ascending in power, and become supreme (the fourth beast of Daniel 7:1-28); Judea is made tributary to Rome, and Herod is made king. And this brings us to the opening of New Testament history. vSUMMARY

We here give a general view of the various links in the chain of events from Adam to the Era of A.D. It will be observed that all but one are taken from Scripture.

Era

Years.

From Adam to the Flood - -

1656

This we arrive at by adding the ages of the patriarchs when the sons named were born.

From the Flood to the call of Abraham - -

427

This is found in the same manner; and putting Terah's age at 130 when Abraham was born.

From the call of Abraham to the Exodus - -

430

This is obtained from Exodus 12:40; and Galatians 3:17.

From the Exodus to the Temple - - -

479

This is stated in 1 Kings 6:1, as in the 480th year, or 479 complete years.

From the commencement of the Temple to the division of the Kingdom

37

Solomon reigned 40 years (1 Kings 11:42), and the Temple was begun in his 4th year: $40 - 3 = 37$.

From the division of the Kingdom to the destruction of Jerusalem.

388

Stated in Ezekiel 4:4-6, to be 390 years, or 388 entire years.

From the destruction of Jerusalem to the return of the captives, in the first year of Cyrus in Babylon

-

52

They were captives 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12; Jeremiah 29:10). This began in the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar, and Jerusalem was destroyed in his 19th, year, $70 - 18 = 52$.

From the 1st year of Cyrus to the 20th of Artaxerxes, when the 70 weeks of Daniel commence

81

This is not given in Scripture. Cyrus, 7 years; Cambyses, 7; Pseudo-Smerdis, 1; Darius, 36; Xerxes, 11; Artaxerxes, 19.

From the 20th of Artaxerxes to the Era of A.D. - -

454

From the 20th of Artaxerxes to the Crucifixion is, according to the prophecy of the seventy weeks (Daniel 9:1-27) 69 weeks = 483 years; from which deduct 29, the date of the Crucifixion: $483 - 29 = 454$

Total

4004

08 External Evidence

External Evidence

Scripture needs no confirmation: we do not believe it to be true because it is confirmed by any external evidence; but it is true because it is Scripture, inspired by God. It is therefore of very little consequence whether external evidence agrees with it or not. If it does agree, well and good; but if it does not, who is to have the first place? God or man? It is surprising how many professing Christians at once conclude that Scripture is wrong. We unquestionably assert that Scripture is right. In the chronology of early times there is very little external evidence that is worthy of being compared with Scripture.

It is well known that the ancient authorities disagree among themselves; most writers therefore pick out just what agrees with their theories, and leave the rest. Herodotus, Ctesias, and Xenophon do not agree; and volumes have been written to try and explain Manetho.

It was at one time thought that Egyptian chronology could trace back its dynasties to a far earlier period than Scripture allows, and though this is given up by many, it is still adhered to by some; and others think they see in it strong evidence that the chronology of the LXX. is preferable to the Hebrew reckoning. We therefore think it best to give a short summary of the data on which the supposed great antiquity of Egypt rests.

"The materials for historical chronology," says Mr. R. S. Poole, of the British Museum, "are the monuments and the remains of the historical work of Manetho. Since the interpretation of hieroglyphics has been discovered, the evidence of the monuments has been brought to bear on this subject, but as yet it has not been sufficiently full and explicit to enable us to set aside other aid. We have had to look elsewhere for a general framework, the details of which the monuments might fill up. The remains of Manetho are now generally held to supply this want.... The remains of Manetho's historical work consist of a list of the Egyptian dynasties, and two considerable fragments, one relating to the shepherds, the other to a tale of the Exodus. The list is only known to us in the epitome given by Africanus, preserved by Syncellus, and that given by Eusebius. These present such great differences that it is not reasonable to hope that we can restore a correct text. The series of dynasties is given as if they were successive, in which case the commencement of the first would be placed fully 5,000 years B.C., and the reign of the king who built the great pyramid, 4,000. The monuments do not warrant so extreme an antiquity, and the great majority of Egyptologists have therefore held that the dynasties were partly contemporary.... One great difficulty is that the character of the inscriptions makes it impossible to ascertain (without the explicit mention of two sovereigns) that any one king was not a sole ruler. For example, it has been lately discovered that the twelfth dynasty was for the greatest part of its rule a double line. Yet its numerous monuments in general give no hint of more than one king, although there was almost always a recognized colleague... The date of the first dynasty, which we are disposed to place a little before B.C. 2700, is more doubtful; but a concurrence of astronomical evidence points to the twenty-eighth century.... Some have supposed a much greater antiquity for

the commencement of Egyptian history. Lepsius places the accession of Menes B.C. 3892; and Bunsen, 200 years later. Their system is founded upon a passage in the chronological work of Syncellus, which assigns a duration of 3,555 [years] to the thirty dynasties. It is by no means certain that this number is given on the authority of Manetho; but apart from this, the whole statement is unmistakably not from the true Manetho, but from some one of the fabricators of chronology, among whom the pseudo-Manetho held a prominent place. If this number be discarded as doubtful or spurious, there is nothing definite to support the extended system so confidently put forth by those who adopt it." * (* Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible:" article, "Egypt.")

"The Egyptian monuments," says Professor Rawlinson, "contain no continuous chronology, and no materials from which a continuous chronological scheme can be framed." He then goes on to speak of the two conflicting lists of Manetho, as given above, and proceeds; "The monuments have proved two things with respect to these lists; they have shown, in the first place, that (speaking generally) they are historical, that the persons mentioned were real men, who actually lived and reigned in Egypt; while, secondly, they have shown that though all reigned in Egypt, all did not reign over the whole of Egypt, but while some were kings in one part of the country, others ruled in another. It is allowed on all hands - by M. Bunsen no less than by others - that no chronological scheme of any real value can be formed from Manetho's lists, until it be first determined, either which dynasties and monarchs were contemporary, or what deduction from the sum total of the dynastic years is to be made on account of contemporaneousness.... Manetho gave his Egyptian dynasties altogether about 30,000 years. This long space he divided, however, into a natural and a supernatural period. To the supernatural period, during which Egypt was governed by gods, demigods, and spirits, he assigned 24,925 years. To the natural period, which began with Menes, he gave, at any rate, not much more than 5,000." The writer then proceeds to relate how M. Bunsen had taken some from the supernatural part, and added it to the natural, and thus reached the date B.C. 9085, adding, "It is not obtained from the monuments, which have no chronology, or, at any rate, none earlier than B.C. 1525..."

"Even with respect to Menes, and the supposed date of B.C. 3892 (according to Lepsius), or B.C. 3623 (according to M. Bunsen), for his accession, on what does it really depend? Not on any monumental evidence, but simply on the supposition that in a certain passage (greatly disputed) of Syncellus he has correctly represented Manetho's views, and on the further supposition that Manetho's views were absolutely right. But is it reasonable to suppose that Manetho had data for determining with such exactitude an event so remote, even if it be a real event at all, as the accession of Menes?... Whether Menes was an historical personage at all, may reasonably be doubted. It is not pretended that he left any monuments. As a name closely resembling his is found in the earliest traditions of various nations, e.g., Menu in India, Minos in Crete, Mewls in Phrygia, Manes in Lydia, and Mannus in Germany, there is at least reason to suspect that he belongs to myth rather than to history.... It is plain and palpable, and moreover universally admitted, that between the ancient monarchy (or rather monarchies) of Egypt and the later kingdom, there intervened a time of violent disturbance - the period known as the domination of the Hyksôs [or Shepherd Kings] - during which the native Egyptians suffered extreme oppression, and throughout Egypt all was disorder and confusion. The notices of this period are so vague and uncertain, that moderns dispute whether it lasted 500, 600, 900, or 2,000 years."... Sir Gardner Wilkinson inclines to place the accession of Menes about B.C. 2690." * (* "Ads to Faith," pp.

252-256.)

Mr. W. Palmer, in his "Egyptian Chronicles," in endeavoring to interpret Manetho, has elaborately compared together the following:- 1. The Old Chronicle, preserved by Syncellus, "a writer of the ninth century, who gives it, probably from the Manetho of Africanus." 2. The original Manetho, as given by Eusebius. 3. Eratosthenes, who became chief librarian at Alexandria, about B.C. 226. "A list of Egyptian kings, called 'Theban,' was made out with the assistance of the priests at Thebes, from names and notices which they supplied, and rendered from their vernacular Egyptian into Greek, by Eratosthenes at the special desire of his sovereign. And a portion of this list, consisting of thirty-eight out of the ninety-one names of the whole series, has been preserved to us by Syncellus." 4. The Manetho of Africanus, "identifiable perhaps with Ptolemy of Mendes." 5. Greek authors: Herodotus, Plato, Eudoxus, etc., etc. With these materials - together with existing monuments and inscriptions - Mr. Palmer has endeavored to form a true list of Egyptian dynasties. The investigation has resulted in his placing the accession of the first king, Menes, at B.C. 2224. This is the sort of evidence presented, and in considering it, it is well to remark that none of the above writers adopt the Hebrew reckoning, and therefore they were in no way tempted to shorten the Egyptian chronology to bring it within the Hebrew. And yet one of the writers does this. Mr. Palmer places the first king at B.C. 2224. The Hebrew reckoning places the flood at 2348, which would give 124 years before the first king. The other writers place the accession of Menes at earlier dates, which cannot be reconciled with the Hebrew. But surely the reader must see that for several reasons the results arrived at are untenable. In the first place, no two of the writers named give the same date for the commencement of the real history of Egypt, and one candidly confesses that there is reason for supposing that Menes was not a man at all, but one of their demigods or spirits. Again, Mr. Palmer shows that the monuments prove again and again Manetho to be inaccurate - in some places several kings being omitted; and in other places some are inserted where there ought to be none. And further, it is very questionable as to how far the monuments are to be trusted as giving consecutive lists. Mr. Poole says of the twelfth dynasty, that the "monuments in general give no hint of more than one king, although there was almost always a recognized colleague." Therefore if the monuments do not mark out which kings were contemporaneous, and the lists do not - though all the writers admit that some kings did reign together instead of being consecutive - what certainty have we that all are now rightly placed? Indeed, the fact that each writer has arrived at a different conclusion must prove that there is no certainty in the results. But there are certain astronomical points connected with Egyptian chronology that have been thought to fix certain dates to some of Manetho's kings. We will give a specimen: "A fragmentary inscription of Takelut II., sixth king of Dynasty XXII., purports that, 'on the twenty-fifth Messori of the fifteenth year of his father (Sesonk II., according to Lepsius, but Osorkon II., according to Brugsch, Dr. Hincks, and 5: Gumpach), the heavens were invisible, the moon struggling....' Hence Mr. Cooper gathers that on the day named, in the given year of Sesonk II., there was a lunar eclipse, which he considers must be that of 16th March, 851 B.C. Dr. Hincks, who also at first made the eclipse lunar, and its date 4th April, 945 B.C., now contends that it was solar, and the only possible date 1st April, 927 B.C. In making it solar, he follows M. 5: Gumpach, who finds its date 11th March, 841 B.C. Unfortunately, the twenty-fifth Messori of that year was 10th of March. This is the only monumental notice supposed to refer to an eclipse: not worth much at the best." The reader will notice that there are in the above not less than four different dates given - there being more than 100 years' difference between the highest and lowest. No wonder that the

writer exclaims, "not worth much at the best." And if they could settle the date, they do not agree as to which of the kings is referred to. The writer proceeds to name some other points, the most definite of which perhaps is the following: "An astronomical representation on the ceiling of the Rameseum (the work of Rameses II.) has been supposed to yield the year 1322 as its date (Bishop Tomlinson; Sir G. Wilkinson), while Mr. Cullimore from the same gets 1138 B.C. The truth is, these astronomical configurations, in the present state of our knowledge, are an unsolved riddle. Lepsius's inferences from the same representations in the reigns of Rameses IV. and VI., are little more than guesses, too vague and precarious to satisfy any man who knows what evidence means."

Then as to the light thus supposed to be thrown on the lists of Manetho, the writer says, "It appears, then, that the supposed astronomical notes of time hitherto discovered lend but little aid, and bring nothing like certainty into the inquiry. We cannot accept the lists as they stand. How are they to be rectified? Until we have the means of rectifying them, every attempt to put forth a definite scheme of Egyptian chronology is simply futile. The appeal to authority avails nothing here. Lepsius, Bunsen, Rugsch, and many more, all claim to have settled the matter. Their very discrepancies - on the scale of which half a century is a mere trifle - sufficiently prove that to them, as to us, the evidence is defective. The profoundest scholarship, the keenest insight, cannot get more out of it than is in it: that which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." * (* Kitto's "Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature," third edition: article, "Manetho.")

Now, if with this we contrast the definite way in which Scripture marks the progress of events, by which we can from any definite point - say, for instance, from the taking of Samaria in B.C. 721 - reckon backward to the flood, surely we cannot hesitate which to believe, especially when we remember that the one is inspired, and the other is not?

Thus much, then, as to the supposed great antiquity of Egyptian dynasties. As to other ancient histories, Professor Rawlinson says, "Still less can it be argued that the records of other nations, so far as they have any pretension to be considered historical, conflict with the chronology of the Bible. The Babylonians, indeed the Indians and the Chinese, in their professed histories of ancient times, carry back the antiquity of our race for several hundred thousand years. But it is admitted that in every case these large numbers are purely mythical; and, in truth, the authentic histories of all these nations begin, even later than the Egyptian." * (* "Aids to Faith," p. 256.) This must suffice, then, as to the most ancient nations. There is really nothing which is at all plain, positive, and reliable, that in any way clashes with the Hebrew reckoning. We are not surprised at it: the surprise would be if it were otherwise. Monuments have been discovered, and inscriptions have been deciphered; but they do not contradict Scripture, they again and again confirm it.

Thus it is exceedingly interesting to find the names and events of Scripture on records inscribed at the time, coming to light after more than two thousand years. Of course, allowance must be made for exaggeration by those proud monarchs who often called themselves "King of kings," and for their suppression of all that did not redound to their glory. An Assyrian inscription of Sennacherib runs thus: "Hezekiah, king of Judah, who had not submitted to my government, forty-six of his strong fenced cities and lesser towns without number I destroyed. I carried away their women. I made [some words effaced] of his royal city Jerusalem. I cut off from his kingdom several fortified

cities. The people, whom I carried off from the middle of his land, I placed in my own kingdom. Afterward I made... the cities of Ascalon, Ekron, and Gaza. I conquered the land. An increase of their former fixed tribute, and of their gift of honor, and of their presents, I imposed upon them. [A line effaced.] Hezekiah had burnt with fire [?] my royal letters. Wherefore his best workmen and a thousand men of the zanakun of Jerusalem, his royal city, I carried away captive. Thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver, his coined money [?], the treasures of his palace [his sons], his daughters, the... men of his palace, his menservants and his maidservants I carried away captive into Nineveh, and in the service of my empire I placed them." * (* "Journal of Sacred Literature," July, 1856, p. 424.) But interesting as such inscriptions are, they will not help us in the subject of chronology. It is, however, said that some Assyrian tablets have been discovered of great importance, as marking the chronology of the period to which they refer; but which are said to prove the Scriptures to be wrong. "The numbers in the Hebrew text of the Bible will have to be altered," says Sir H. Rawlinson, adding that "no Christian scholar now-a-days maintains the literal inspiration of the holy text." * (* "The Athenaeum," May 18th, 1867, p. 661.)

Alas! alas! then are some clay tablets to prove the Bible to be in error? Thank God, that without being scholars we can be simple-minded Christians; and we can and do believe in the literal inspiration of the Scriptures. But let us look at what is gathered from these tablets; remarking that it must be carefully weeded from the writer's notes; which, it will be seen, are not very helpful; for the words "perhaps" and "probable," with some queries, will be found interspersed.

ABSTRACT OF DATES IN ASSYRIAN CHRONOLOGY.

B.C.

Commencement of Canon with Bil-anir II. -

909

Accession of Tiglath-i-Bar - - -

889

Accession of Asshur-izir-pat, builder of N.W. Palace, Nimrud - - - -

886

Accession of Siialmaneser II. Black, obelisk king

858

The Assyrians defeat the confederate forces of southern Syria, Egypt, Arabia, and Palestine at Aroer. Ahab, of Jezreel, associated with Benhadad, of Syria, in this fight. See 1 Kings 20:34, and 1 Kings 22:1. The Israelite contingent was 2,000 chariots and 10,000 men - - -

853

Death of Benhadad - - about

843

War with Hazael, king of Syria, and tribute taken from Jehu, son of Omri, of Samaria -

841

Accession of Shamsi-Bil - - -

823

Accession of Ril-anir HI. - . - -

810

Assyrians in Syria and the north of Palestine - - [Subjection of Mariha, of Damascus (son of Hazael?) at this time by Kim, of Assyria. Comp. 2 Kings 13:3-5 : "And the Lord gave Israel a savior, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians."]

797 to 795

Accession of Shalmaneser III. - - -

781

Assyrians in Damascus and Hadrach - - [Perhaps the notice of Shalman, Hosea 10:14, refers to this period.]

773 and 772

Accession of Asshur-danan - -

771

Assyrians again in Hadrach - - - -

765

Eclipse of the sun in month of Sivan (June) - -

763

Assyrians in land of Hadrach and Arphad

755 and 754

Accession of Asshur-anir - - - -

753

Accession of Tiglath-Pileser II. - - - -

745

Campaign in Syria against Arpad and its dependencies - - [At this time probably tribute was taken from Menahem, of Samaria, Rezin, of Damascus, and Hiram, of Tiro.]

743 to 740

Campaign in the country of Philistia (Palestine?) - - [If this identification of Palestine be correct, to this year must be assigned the plunder of the cities of Samaria, and the carrying away of the tribes

of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, 2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chronicles 5:26.]

734

Assyrians in Damascus for 2 years - - [Tribute taken from Yahu-Hazi (Ahaz?) of Judea, and defeat and death (?) of Rezin, of Damascus. See 1 Kings 16:9-10]

733 and 732

Accession of Shalmaneser IV. - - - -

727

Accession of Sargon - - - - -

722

Capture of Samaria, and deportation of the inhabitants. - See 2 Kings 17:6 -

721

Accession of Sennacherib - - -

705

Expedition to Syria, and attack on Hezekiah, of Jerusalem. See 2 Kings 17:13-16 - - -

700

Accession of Esar-Haddon - - -

681

The kings of Syria, among whom is Manasseh, king of Judah, and the Greek kings of Cyprus, send artificers to Nineveh - - - about

670

Accession of Asshur-bani-pal (Sardanapalus of the Greeks) - - - - about

664

A king of Judea again named as tributary to Assyria (probably Manasseh) - -

664

Recovery of Egypt from Tirhakeh, of Ethiopia, and establishment of Necho and his brother monarchs in power

663

Revolt of Egypt. Second attack by Assyrians. Death of Tirhekah; succeeded by his nephew, Ardumané (Rut-Ammon?) his defeat and flight - - -

662

Gyges of Lydia sends tribute to Assyria - - -

660

Probable accession of Ashur-uballit, son of Sardanapalus - - [No later Assyrian dates can be determined, even approximately.]

640

This, then, is the formidable list that is to prove the Bible is wrong! Let us look at it calmly, and examine it fairly. In the first place, the writer himself candidly states, "I may here repeat the warning that I have often before given to those interested in Assyrian research, that the reading of proper names, which are rarely or ever phonetically expressed, is the most difficult branch of the entire subject, and must always be received with caution, unless verified by a corresponding orthography in Hebrew, Greek, or Persian authorities." He then goes on to say that one name in the list is "little better than conjecture," and another is "merely provisional." Strange, indeed, if the Bible is to give way before such uncertainty as this! As to the tablets from which the above is compiled, it is supposed that the earliest of them was made in the time of Sennacherib, which would be two hundred years after some of the events recorded. They must consequently have been copied from some earlier documents. Now if we suppose that each king recorded the events of his own reign only, some one or more of these - especially where a king reigned but a short time, and nothing remarkable took place in his reign - may have been lost or omitted. We have no certainty that these later tablets are correct copies of all that had been previously recorded. But further, the whole of the dates are regulated by an eclipse that is mentioned on a tablet, and this eclipse is taken for granted to be in the year B.C. 763. If the eclipse of 763 is not the one named on the tablets, all the dates would be different.

Now it is well known that an error has comparatively lately been discovered in some of the tables by which the early eclipses had been computed, which has shown that some eclipses which were supposed to have been identified and settled, were not visible at all in the places named.

Take, for instance, the famous "eclipse of Thales, which, according to Herodotus, 1: 74, 103, occurring during a pitched battle between the Medes and Lydians, was the occasion of a peace, cemented by marriages between Cyaxares and Halyattes, after which, as Herodotus seems to imply, the former turned his arms against Assyria, and, in conjunction with Labynetus (the Nabopolassar of Berosus and the Canons), took and destroyed Nineveh. The dates assigned by the ancients to that eclipse lie between Ol. 48 and 50. Kepler, Scaliger, and Sir Isaac Newton, made it B.C. 585; Baily and Olmanns found it Sept. 30th, B.C. 610, which date was accepted by Ideler, Saint-Martin, and most subsequent writers. More recently it has been announced by Mr. Airy (1853), and Mr. Hind (1857), as the result of calculation with Hansen's improved tables, that in the eclipse of 610 the moon's shadow traversed no part of Asia Minor, and that the only suitable one is that of May 28th, B.C. 585, which would be total in Ionia, Lydia, Lycia, Pamphylia, and part of Cilicia. It has, indeed, been contended by Mr. Adams that the tables need a further correction, the effect of which, as Mr. Airy remarked (1859), "would be such as to render the eclipse of 585 inapplicable to the recorded circumstances." The Astronomer-Royal has since (1861) decided for the date 585.* (* Kitto's "Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature," third edition; article, "Chronology."

What certainty have we that the astronomical tables are now correct? and that the eclipse named on the tablet is the one that took place in 763? The learned are not agreed as to its date. Dr. Oppert believes that the eclipse named on the tablets is the one that took place B.C. 809. * Here is at once a difference of forty-six years! and goes to show that there is really no certainty in the matter.

(* "Revue Archéologique" for November and December, 1868, quoted in "Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Alterthumskunde" for January, 1869. But supposing that the date of the eclipse is correct, what guarantee have we that every individual year is marked on the tablets, so that all other dates can be accurately counted from the eclipse? It is said that a particular person was appointed yearly, called by chronologists an Eponyme, and that these Eponymes definitely mark out each and every year. But this may not be fully carried out. Suppose a year passed without any remarkable event redounding to the honor of the king, and the appointed officer in that year disgraced himself in any way, what more probable than that the whole year and the name of its Eponyme would be passed over and altogether omitted? Thus the tablets would be records of the various kings and honorable Eponymes, with many years omitted entirely.

We can easily understand such tablets being erected, without any thought of their being used for strict chronological purposes. That some great events are omitted from the inscriptions is certain. Take, for instance, the destruction by God of the army of Sennacherib. It did not redound to the honor of the king, and is therefore not named.

It has been further suggested that the records may not have been made yearly, but every few years, and that just as a king was about to have his records made up he may have died, and thus the unrecorded years be omitted - his successor caring only to record the events of his own reign - and thus several years would be lost. The supposition that some years are omitted is greatly strengthened by the fact that while some of the dates agree with the Hebrew chronology (such, for instance, as 721 for the capture of Samaria), others differ materially; and it should be observed that the farther we go backward from this date, the farther the dates are out. Thus, B.C. 841 for Jehu must be at least fourteen years out; while 853 for Ahab must be forty-three years out. And this would be the inevitable result if some years were here and there omitted: while, on the other hand, if this list is correct, Scripture must be wrong, not merely in some one place, but it must be wrong in several places! But another question is, Are the events rightly placed? It should be observed that, omitting the passages of Scripture and the notes and queries, there is no one tablet that contains the whole of the foregoing "Abstract of Dates." It is rather a compilation from the tablets that contain the Eponymes and from various inscriptions. But the events in the inscriptions were not placed chronologically. Dr. Hincks (one well versed in these matters) says it was "the custom in Assyrian inscriptions of that age to record the foreign events of the whole reign first, and the domestic events, though prior in points of time, subsequently." Mr. George Smith, of the British Museum, says, "The inscriptions of the various kings, giving their wars, although of great historical interest, are often unreliable as to the chronology. The duplicate copies in the British Museum in several cases give the campaigns in different order, and number them differently; this is particularly the case with the annals of Tiglath Pilezer II, Esarhaddon, and Assur-bani-pal." * Surely this proves that the records then made were never intended to be used for strict chronological purposes, and it must also make the placing of the events difficult if not uncertain.

(* Zeitschrift," etc., November, 1868.) But there is still another and a graver difficulty. Dr. Oppert charged Sir H. Rawlinson with suppressing from the foregoing Abstract the name (and of course the period) of Pul, King of Assyria, who is named in Scripture. But this supposed suppression is a mistake; for, strange to say, there is no mention of this king on the tablets. "The fact is (says Mr. George Smith) that no one has yet identified the name of Pul in the inscriptions, and we have no notice of his expedition against Samaria." * (*Zeitschrift," etc., January, 1869.)

Surely this fact alone must prove that the list is not a complete one. Pul may have been a usurper, and when the rightful heir came to the throne he would, doubtless, destroy all trace of the usurper. At any rate, Pul surely was king of Assyria as recorded in Scripture, and yet he is not named in this canon, which purports, by reckoning every year, to give a full list of the kings. With this fact one might almost dismiss the Abstract without further notice. Dr. Oppert inserts 47 years before Tiglath Pilezer. From all this it will surely be seen how little reliance can be placed on such tablets, particularly when they are contrasted with the definite way in which the reigns of the various kings of Judah and Israel of this same period are recorded in Scripture: in each case the year of the reign of the contemporary sovereign being given, and the duration of each king; besides the inclusive period named in Ezekiel 4:4-6, as the continuance of the kingdom. It is hoped that none of my christian readers will conclude, with no stronger evidence than these tablets, that the Scriptures must be in error.

However, let us now look through the list, remarking that the later dates are more likely to be correct than the earlier, and are more worthy of attention.

B.C. 853. Ahab. This date does not agree with Scripture.

B.C. 841. Jehu. This would not fall within the reign of Jehu.

B.C. 797 to 732. These are only queries and conjectures. The dates do not agree with Scripture.

B.C. 721. Capture of Samaria. This is most probably correct. It is the date given by Usher and others. It is generally thought that Samaria was taken by Shalmaneser; but Scripture does not say this, and it will be seen that these tablets name Sargon as having ascended the throne the year before. On referring to 2 Kings 17:1-41 it will be seen that Shalmaneser made Hoshea tributary; and in 2 Kings 18:9, he is said to have besieged Samaria, which lasted three years. But he may have died before the capture, and Sargon may have finished the siege and taken the place. It is thought that this is confirmed by Scripture. In 2 Kings 18:9, it says that Shalmaneser besieged Samaria; but in 2 Kings 18:10 it says, "and at the end of three years [not he, but] they took it." The tablets therefore may be correct here, and thus be made to harmonize with Scripture.

B.C. 705 to 682. Sennacherib. Now in 2 Kings 18:13, we read that in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, Sennacherib came against Judah; and to the reign of Hezekiah we have given 727 to 698. We have just seen that Samaria was taken in 721; and this was the ninth year of Hoshea, and the sixth year of Hezekiah, as is stated in 2 Kings 18:10. So that the fourteenth of Hezekiah must have been 713.

There has been much discussion as to Sargon and Sennacherib; some contending that they are one and the same person.* But this seems quite improbable now that both names are found on the same tablet. It seems far more probable that they were for a time co-regents. Indeed, the

interpreter of the tablets says, that "some uncertainty prevailed as to the commencement of the king's reign... and further, that the epithet arkú, 'after,' was appended to the king's name, perhaps to show that he was not regarded as 'king' when he first ascended the throne." Besides which it should be remarked that in 2 Chronicles 32:4, we read, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?" 'kings,' in the plural, implying that there were more than one then reigning.

(* It says, in Tob 1:15 [which may be true as history, though not inspired], that on the death of Shalmaneser his son Sennacherib reigned in his stead.)

Whether this be so or not, Scripture and the tablets may be made to agree by supposing that the attack of Sennacherib in the 14th of Hezekiah (Sennacherib being then co-regent) is not named on these tablets at all (though the longer inscription given on page 24 may refer to that event), and that the attack named on the tablets in 700 may be the second named in Scripture, and this second attack may have been a long time after the first, the illness of Hezekiah being between the two. Of course the words, "See 2 Kings 18:13-16," are not on the tablets, but are merely a conjecture of the translator: 2 Kings 18:17-37 and 2 Kings 19:1-37, would be the second attack. And, it is submitted, it is not doing violence to Scripture to suppose that all that had to be related about Sennacherib is continued and finished, without breaking the narrative to tell of Hezekiah's sickness. If this is correct, the chronological order would be: 1. 2 Kings 18:13-16 - - - - - Isaiah 36:1.

2. 2 Kings 20:1-19 - - - - - Isaiah 38:1-22; Isaiah 39:1-8 3. 2 Kings 18:17-37; 2 Kings 19:1-37 and 2 Chronicles 32:1-21 - - - - - Isaiah 36:2-22; Isaiah 37:1-38 And the attack on the tablets might be in 700, being the second attack, two years before Hezekiah's death. In support of this it must be remembered that Hezekiah's sickness must have been in his fourteenth year, for he lived after it fifteen years, and he reigned but twenty-nine years in all. Therefore, if the narrative in the Book of Kings is strictly chronological, the two attacks and the sickness must have occurred all in one year. The above solution seems to be further strengthened by the account in 2 Chronicles 32:1-21, which may be the second attack only. And this arrangement is further confirmed by seeing that on the second attack Sennacherib reproaches Hezekiah with leaning on that bruised reed, Egypt (2 Kings 18:21), which reproach would naturally be called forth by the visit of the ambassadors from Egypt, which took place after Hezekiah's sickness (2 Kings 20:12-13), but before the second attack.

There is, however, another mode of reconciling the tablets with Scripture. Delitzsch (on Isaiah 36:1-22) says that Sennacherib on a prism speaks of his third expedition in Syria; and the attack on the tablets may have been this third expedition, but of which Scripture speaks nothing.

One more date remains on the tablets.

681-664. Esar-haddon. This would fall within Manasseh's reign. The accession here put at 681 may be when he began to reign over both kingdoms, which differs only one year from the date given in the tables from other sources.

Thus much then for these tablets. We have been particular in going through them, because it was confidently asserted that they would prove Scripture to be wrong. But when we look at the great uncertainty that every year is recorded on these tablets; yea, almost the certainty that all are not recorded; together with the doubt as to the date of the eclipse; we have no hesitation in saying that

the tablets must be wrong in some places; or that the interpreter is wrong in deciphering them. We must remember that he himself cautions us as to the uncertainty there is in reading the proper names (and they are the important part of the whole); whereas with Scripture there is no uncertainty at all. The length of each reign is given with the year of the contemporaneous king, leaving no room for doubt, except it be in the two interregnums; but which we have seen to be needed to agree with the inclusive date of Ezekiel. But if these two interregnums were omitted it would not shorten the period enough to agree with these tablets. And if the tablets are right then Scripture must be wrong, not merely in one place, but in several! We fully believe that the tablets do not prove the Scripture to be wrong; they indeed cannot be said to prove scarcely anything chronologically.

It is remarkable, too, that in the earlier part of chronology many declare that Scripture makes the time too short; that Egyptian chronology, etc., demands it to be longer. And in the later part, it is asserted that the time is too long, and that Assyrian chronology demands it to be shorter. We answer both by saying, Scripture is right - it is inspired.

It will be seen, by the summary on page 19, that our investigation has resulted in finding the commonly accredited period of 4004 years from the creation to the era A.D. It is perhaps right to say that this was in no way aimed at. It has simply fallen out so by going through Scripture without any desire to arrive at this or any other particular result. We naturally like new results, but it is more satisfactory to find an old result confirmed by a fresh inquiry.

It may surprise some that we have not devoted a chapter to Jubilee years, which is a prominent subject with many chronologists. But we have failed to see that the Jubilee years at all help in the subject of chronology. The Jubilee was carefully laid down in Leviticus 25:1-55, but as far as we know no Jubilee year was ever kept by Israel. It will be kept when our Lord returns - a long and joyful Jubilee in the Millennium.

09 Jewish Months

Jewish Months

It is clear from Scripture that the Jewish months were lunar months. The beginning of a month corresponded as nearly as could be with the new moon.

Twelve lunar months would be only 354 days; consequently the next year would be $11\frac{1}{4}$ days in error all through: the second year $22\frac{1}{2}$ days; and so on. But this was adjusted and regulated by the harvest: the wave sheaf was always to be presented in the month of Abib; and when the year closed at the end of the month Adar, if there was no prospect of the wave sheaf being ripe in time, an extra month was added, called Ve-Adar (additional Adar) and this would again bring the year nearly correct. And this was done as often as the harvest required it. From this it is evident that it cannot be stated to which of our months the Jewish months correspond exactly, as the latter were always changing. We give them as near as may be.

All the names of the months do not occur in Scripture, the months being generally called first month, second month, etc. The names that do occur (before the captivity) are very significant: as Abib, 'ears of corn;' Zif 'blossom;' Bul, 'rain.'

First

Abib, or Nisan, corresponds to

April.

Second

Zif, or Jyar

May.

Third

Sivan June.

June.

Fourth

Tammuz

July.

Fifth

Ab

August.

Sixth

Elul

September.

Seventh..

Tisri, or Ethanim

October.

Eighth....

Bul, or Marchesvan

November.

Ninth....

Chisleu

December.

Tenth....

Tebeth

January.

Eleventh..

Sebat

February.

Twelfth..

Adar

March.

Ve-Adar (additional Adar).

10 The Seasons

The Seasons In Genesis 8:22, we read of six seasons: - Seed-time and harvest; cold and heat; summer and winter; which fell nearly as follows, not forgetting that the correspondence of the months with the seasons gradually got wrong till the VeAdar was added, as stated on page 28. Each season began about the middle of the month; thus harvest began in the middle of Abib, and reached to the middle of Sivan.

Abib

(Barley Harvest)...

Harvest.

Zif.

Sivan

(Wheat Harvest).

Summer.

Tammuz

Ab

....

Heat.

Elul.

Tisri

(Vintage)..

Seed-time.

Bul

(Former Rain)

Chisleu

Winter.

Tebeth

Sebat

Adar.

Cold.

Abib

(Latter Rain).

11 Hours and Length of Days

Hours and Length of Days The Jews divided the day, from sunrise to sunset, into twelve hours. The length of the hours varied with the length of the day; and the length of the day varied thus (approximately): -

Sun rises.

Sun sets.

21st of Adar

6 o'clock

6 o'clock = 12 hours.

21st of Sivan

5 o'clock

7 o'clock = 14 hours.

21st of Elul

6 o'clock

6 o'clock = 12 hours.

21st of Chisleu

7 o'clock

5 o'clock = 10 hours.

Twilight - before sunrise, and after sunset - would vary from three hours (an hour and a half both morning and evening) on the shortest day, to four hours on the longest day (two hours both morning and evening).

12 Jewish Feasts

Jewish Feasts Leviticus 23:1-44

These were appointed times, holy convocations, and were the ways of God in gathering and blessing His people. Though repeated yearly, they were typical of the ways of blessing from the cross to the millennium. The Sabbath - God's rest - is first named, on which the others were founded; then the list begins again at verse 4.

Antitypes.

Abib 14th

The Sabbath. Leviticus 23:1-3 (Evening) Passover killed 1. Passover Feast. Leviticus 23:5-44. Feast of Unleavened Bread

Christ our Passover slain.

15th

3. First Fruits (Barley) "day after the Sabbath." Leviticus 23:9-14

The Resurrection.

Zif Sivan

4. Pentecost: Feasts of Weeks: Feast of Harvest (Wheat). Leviticus 23:15-22.

Descent of the Holy Ghost and the Church formed.

Tammuz

Ab

[The present interval.]

Elul

Tisri 1st

Feast of Trumpets: holy convocation. Leviticus 23:23-25

Israel awakened; they afflict their souls; receive their Messiah, and are brought into blessing in the millennium.

10th

Day of Atonement. Leviticus 23:26-32

15th

Feast of Tabernacles: Ingathering of the VintageLeviticus 23:33-34

Bul

Chisleu 25th

[Feast of Dedication, instituted by Judas Maccabeus when the temple was re-dedicated, B.C. 166, John 10:22.]

Tebeth

Sebat

Adar 14th

[Feast of Purim. Esther 9:21.]

13 The Eras

The Eras

It is important to remember that the various eras do not exactly correspond with each other. Thus it is generally said that the year of Rome A.U.C. 754 agrees with A.D. 1; but it will be seen by the following that this is not always true, for any date in January, February, or March, A.D. 1, would be in A.U.C. 753, and not 754, so that in some cases the corresponding of the two eras will appear to be a year out. But for all ordinary purposes we say A.U.C. 754= A.D. 1. The years A.U.C. can be turned into the years B.C. by deducting the year A.U.C. from 754; thus A.U.C. 726 agrees with B.C. 28, because $754-726 = 28$. In like manner, to find the year A.D., deduct 753 from the year A.U.C. thus A.U.C. 783 agrees with A.D. 30, because $783-753 = 30$. We say Olympiad 195-1= A.D. 1.

January, B.C. 1 February March April May June July August September October November
December

Olympiads.

A.U.C.

Julian Period

4713

April 21

753

194-4

January, A.D. 1 February March April May June July August September October November
December

4714

April 21

754

195 - 1

A.D. 2

14 The New Testament

The New Testament vTHE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

It seems strange that the dates of the New Testament, occurring comparatively so late, are not at all agreed upon; yet so it is. Doubtless the world thought it beneath its notice to chronicle the events relating to the advent of our Lord. He, as it were, slipped in unobserved and unheeded, although He came to accomplish the greatest work this world ever witnessed, a work too in which the whole world is concerned. Yet no one knows when He was born! The rocks still bear witness to the achievements of the monarchs of the great nations who flourished long before the advent of Christ, telling forth their mighty deeds; but when God was manifest in the flesh there was no one to chronicle the event. All Jerusalem was troubled at the news, and the one who ruled in the name of Rome sought to put our Lord to death at His very birth. But Christ was born of a woman; and though the nations have not registered the birth, God has caused certain occurrences of the world to be recorded in His book which enable us to approximate very nearly to the true date.

We are certain that Christ was born before the death of Herod: we may then ask, when did Herod die? and how long before his death was Christ born? Herod was made king of Palestine B.C. 40, but he did not obtain actual possession till B.C. 37. Josephus says (Ant. 17: 8. 1), that Herod reigned thirty-seven years from the appointment by Rome, and thirty-four years from actual possession. This would bring his death to B.C. 4. Josephus further says that it was in the same year as an eclipse of the moon (Ant. 17: 6. 4), which is also calculated to have been in B.C. 4. And this date is generally received as the true time of Herod's death; it being borne out by other testimony besides that of Josephus.

It is also known to have been shortly before a passover, so that it is fixed to have been about April in that year. Our next question is, How long before this was Christ born? The commonly received date is December B.C. 5; four complete years before the common Era A.D. But this would be only four or five months before the death of Herod, which, as we shall see, involves serious difficulties. The first is, How can it be accounted for that, after careful inquiry of the magi when the star had appeared, Herod slew the children from two years old, if the star had been seen only four or five months previously? To this it is answered, that the star may have appeared to the magi before the birth of Christ, perhaps at his conception; which would have given ample time for the journey; and then they would have told Herod that they had seen the star about twelve months previously. But if this were so, another difficulty is, when, as to recorded events, could the visit of the magi have been made? For instance, was it just before or soon after the dedication in the temple? Not before, because immediately after the visit they fled into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15), and remained there till after Herod's death, and so could not have visited Jerusalem at the proper time for the dedication. Not after, because they went immediately from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and not back to Bethlehem (Luke 2:39).

We must, therefore, seek another solution; and the most probable is, that the visit of the magi was about twelve months after the birth of Christ; that Joseph and Mary paid, as we should say, a

casual visit to Bethlehem, probably at the anniversary of the birth, and at that time the magi arrived and found them there; all, of course, being arranged and ordered of God. The order of events, then, would be Birth at Bethlehem.

Adoration of the Shepherds.

Presentation in the Temple.

They go to Nazareth.

Return to Bethlehem at a later period.

Visit of the Magi.

Flight into Egypt.

Massacre of the Infants.

Death of Herod. With this arrangement there is one passage that seems to clash, namely, Matthew 2:1 : "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem." But this is acknowledged to be an inexact translation; it should be, "Now Jesus having been born in Bethlehem of Judaea," which leaves the time of the visit indefinite.

We believe therefore that the star appeared at the birth of Christ, and that the magi must have told Herod that they had seen it about twelve months previously. This would place the birth at the end of B.C. 6, or the commencement of B.C. 5; that is, five complete years before the common era of A.D.

Herod was at the time of the visit in bodily and mental suffering. He had put his own wife and two of his sons to death; he was waiting for permission from Rome to put another son to death; and in this his last illness he conceived the diabolical plan of confining the elders of Israel in the hippodrome, with orders that at his death they should all be massacred, to ensure there being mourning - for others, if not for himself. To be told during the last few weeks of his wretched existence that a King of the Jews had been born, would be sure to have called forth a cruel and determined effort to cut Him off. Leaving a large margin, he ordered the infants to be slain from "two years old and under." But God was watching over all, and Joseph was directed to go into Egypt with the child Jesus. On Herod's death the elders of Israel escaped the doom intended for them.

15 The Taxing of Luk_2:1-52

The Taxing of Luke 2:1-52 The next date that demands our attention is the taxing that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem.

Luke 2:1-2 : "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed (and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria)."

Now, there was a well-known census when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, about nine or ten years after this, and it has been thought that God caused the census to be ordered before the birth of Christ in order to bring Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem; but, that being accomplished, the census was deferred to the above-named period before it was actually carried out. But this does not seem to meet the difficulty. Because, 1. God, of course, could easily have brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem (as He took them to Egypt), without this census, if it was not then to be carried out.

2. It seems to have been to some extent actually carried out at the time. The narrative proceeds, "And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David" (Luke 2:3-5). And if it was to any extent carried out at the time, how could it be said to have been first carried out several years after?

3. This was most probably not really a taxing, but a census or enrollment, as it is called in the margin of our Bibles; whereas the well-known one afterward was a taxing, and is doubtless referred to in Acts 5:37. Josephus says (Ant. 18: 1, 1), "Cyrenius was charged with the business of taxing the people, and likewise directed to seize on the money and effects that had belonged to Archelaus. At first, the Jews were extremely uneasy at this mode of taxation, but they were at length induced to submit to it... About this time one Judas, a Gaulonite of the city of Gamala, began to distinguish himself. This man combined with a Pharisee named Sadducus, to entice the people to revolt. They urged that taxes were badges of slavery," etc. In Acts 5:37, we read, "After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him."

These evidently refer to one and the same event, and clearly mark out that it was an actual taxation in this latter case. The word in the Greek for "tax" is the same in Luke as in Acts, and was used for 'registering' both persons and property. But a mere enrollment is not likely to have caused a revolt, whereas Josephus explains that the Jews resisted the actual taxing, and that Judas chose this time of disquietude to revolt. While on the other hand a taxing, one would think, would not have caused each person to repair to his own city, as the enrollment in Luke did: though this was perhaps only a Jewish mode of carrying out the Roman edict: they still clung to "house and lineage." So that the two events appear to be altogether distinct and disconnected.

It seems far better to suppose that Cyrenius was twice governor: once, at the birth of Christ, and the other, at the taxing mentioned in the Acts.

Zumpt believes that this was so, and that he has evidence of it. The key to it is from Tacitus, who narrates that Quirinus (the Cyrenius of Paul and Josephus), soon after his consulship, which he held from January to August, B.C. 12, gained the honor of a triumph for reducing the fortresses of the Homonadenses, a tribe of Cilicia.

Zumpt believes this points to Syria.

He places the date of the first governorship at 4 to 1 B.C. But this is merely conjectural, and it may have been earlier; indeed, if it was soon after B.C. 12 it was most probably before the date he gives.*

(* The reader can see a summary of Zumpt's elaborate arguments in Wieseler's "Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels," translated by Venables.)

It should also be remarked that Justin Martyr three times asserts that our Lord was born under Quirinus, and appeals to some register as proof of it. * (*Apol. 1: 34, 46; Dial. 78. - Alford, on Luke 2:1-2.)

It seems then most probable that Cyrenius was twice governor of Syria, and carried out two distinct registrations: the one, that which brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem; and the other, when Judas raised an insurrection. The date of the first is unknown.

16 The Commencement of Christ's Ministry and of John's Ministry

The Commencement of Christ's Ministry and of John's Ministry

Luke 3:1, apparently points out the commencement of John's ministry, and here the evangelist gives the following list of coincidences, to which we add the best accredited dates.

Fifteenth year of Tiberius Canar, A.D. 26 or A.D. 28.

Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, A.D. 26 to 36.

Herod [Antipas] tetrarch of Galilee. B.C. 4 to A.D. 39.

Philip, tetrarch of Ituraea and Triconitis, B.C. 4 to A.D. 33.

Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene (unknown).

Annas, high priest about A.D. 7 to A.D. 14.

Caiaphas, high priest, about A.D. 17 to A.D. 37.

It is supposed that in this passage, as in others, that Annas was president of the Sanhedrim, and still retained a great deal of power, as Caiaphas was his son-in-law. It is probable that in their then disordered state Caiaphas was nominally high priest, but Annas was the one who really exercised the power. The principal editors agree in reading it, "Annas and Caiaphas being the high priest" (not high priests). The fifteenth of Tiberius is a disputed point, because he was associated with his predecessor, Augustus, two or three years; and the question is, was this the fifteenth year of his joint reign, or of his sole reign? He reigned alone A.D. 14 to 37, thus his fifteenth year would be 28. Or if we reckon from his joint reign it would be about 26.

We must see if any other passages will help us to determine the question.

Luke 3:22-23, would seem to intimate that our Lord when He was baptized "began to be about thirty years old."

Mark 1:9, says, after a few verses of introduction as to John's ministry, "And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan." Not very definite, it is true; but it would seem to intimate that our Lord's baptism was soon after John began his ministry.

Again, in Matthew, John is first spoken of in these words, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea.... Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.... Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him" (Matthew 3:1-13). This again speaks of the baptism of Christ as if following soon after the commencement of John's ministry.

We have concluded that our Lord was born B.C. 5, and in B.C. 28 He would be thirty-two years of age, but this will not agree with "He began to be about thirty years of age." But B.C. 26 is the date that agrees with this expression.

We, therefore, believe that the fifteenth year of Tiberius would be of his joint reign (which is B.C. 26), and this, as we have seen, will agree very well with the above passage in Luke 3:22-23.

Another coincidence appears in the early chapters of John's gospel in the following links: John 1:29, "the next day."

John 1:35, "again the next day."

John 1:43, "the day following."

John 2:1, "the third day."

John 2:12, "after this we went down to Capernaum.... And they continued there not many days."

John 2:13, "and the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."

Now John 1:33-34 shows that Jesus had then been baptized, so that the passover spoken of in John 2:13, would seem by the above links to be soon after His baptism, and would evidently be the first passover during His ministry. At this passover the Jews say, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" (John 2:20.) That is, up to that time the temple with its outer courts had been all those years in building, and, according to Josephus (Ant. 20: 9. 7), it was not completed till some years after that. Now if we can ascertain when this rebuilding was commenced we may get a date for the first passover, and also see if this agrees with the date we have fixed on for the baptism of Christ.

Now Josephus declares (Ant. 15: 11. 1) that Herod began to rebuild the temple in the eighteenth year of his reign. It is thought, however, that he contradicts this, for he also speaks of the temple being begun in the fifteenth year of Herod's reign. But this latter (Wars, 1: 21. 1) speaks more of repairing the temple, and may have referred to the outer courts, etc., or some repairs to the temple that were necessary, before he had fully determined to rebuild the edifice. It was evidently in his eighteenth year that he began to rebuild the temple as above stated, because it is linked on with events that had happened in his seventeenth year.

Herod* was declared king B.C. 40, but did not begin to reign till B.C. 37; so that his eighteenth year would be B.C. 20, and forty-six years would bring it to A.D. 26: the same date we have already fixed on as most probable when our Lord was baptized, and when He began His ministry; and John would have begun his ministry a few months earlier - both commencing when about thirty years old, and which corresponds with the age when the Levites began their service in the tabernacle (Numbers 4:3).

(* We subjoin a list of the FAMILY OF THE HERODS named in Scripture. "Herod" was a name common to several.) 11

Herod the Great married _____|_____IIII

Doris Mariamne Maianne Malthace Cleopatra I granddr. ofdr. of Simona Samaritan
 Hyrcanus I I 2 I 3 I 5 I

Antipater Aristobulus Philip I. Herod Antipas I Philip II

m. Bernice m. Herodias m. dr. of Aretas I m. Salome II m. Herodias I Salome 4 I Archelaus
 I

6 I 7 I I

Herod Agrippa I Herodia, Herod, King of Chalcis m. Cypros. m. Herod Philip
 I m. Mariamne I m. Herod Antipas. dr. of Olympias I m.
 Berenice I

8 I 9 I 10 I

Agrippa II Bernice Drusilla

m. Herod k. of Chalcis m. Axis, Kng of Emesa m. Polemo, k. of Cilicia m. Felix 1. Matthew 2:1-22;
 Luke 1:5.

2. Matthew 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19.

3. Herod the tetrarch, Matthew 14:1-6; Luke 3:1; Luke 3:19; Luke 9:7 : the King, Matthew 14:9 :
 King Herod, Mark 6:14-22; Herod, Luke 23:7-15 4. Matthew 2:22.

5. Luke 3:1 :

6. Acts 12:1-21.

7. Matthew 14:3-6; Mark 6:17-22; Luke 3:19.

8. Acts 25:13; Acts 26:1-32.

9. Acts 25:13; Acts 26:30.

10. Acts 24:24.

17 The Last Passover

The Last Passover We must now look at the difficulties presented in the four gospels as to the last passover. The main question to answer is, Did our Lord keep this passover on the same night as did the Jews? The first three gospels would appear to say that He did; whereas John speaks of the Jews at the trial refusing to go into the judgment hall "lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover" (John 18:28). Again, in John 19:14, we read, "and it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour."

If our Lord ate the passover at the same time as did the Jews, these expressions certainly present a difficulty; but it is believed that if we suppose, on the other hand, that it was not eaten at the same time, the difficulties are much greater. Because, 1. It is expressly stated in the three synoptical gospels * that the first day of unleavened bread had come (Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7), which could be no other time than when the Jews prepared for the passover. Mark adds that the day was "when they killed the passover;" and Luke, "when the passover must be killed;" evidently referring, not to themselves alone, but to the nation generally.

(*The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke give a more general synopsis of the life of our Lord than John's gospel does; and so they are often called the Synoptical Gospels.)

2. If the time had been anticipated by our Lord, He would have had to tell His disciples to go and prepare the feast, and we should doubtless have had some questioning on their part as to its being before the time; but both Matthew and Mark relate that the disciples came to Him, asking where they should prepare the feast; and this they did, as we have seen above, when the usual time had arrived - the first day of unleavened bread.

3. The first three evangelists all call it, "The passover."

4. The lambs could only be slain at the sanctuary (Deuteronomy 16:5-6), which the priests would not have sanctioned on any other day.*

(* The Jewish rabbis say, "They kill not the passover but in the court, even as the rest of the holy offerings" (Lightfoot, vol. 11: 137).) 5. We believe our Lord would not have broken the law by partaking of the passover at an acknowledged wrong time.

We therefore believe that our Lord partook of the passover with the Jews. Still the difficulties presented in John's gospel must be duly considered.

It is believed that these difficulties will be greatly lessened when it is remembered that though the lamb was eaten in one night, the paschal feast lasted seven days; and also that on the 15th Nisan there was the chagigah, or free-will offerings. From Numbers 28:19-24, we find that bullocks were offered at the paschal feast; and in Deuteronomy 16:2, we read, "Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd." The 'herd' could not refer to the paschal lamb, and yet both are called the passover. From this we learn that the term "passover" referred to the feast generally, and was not restricted to the paschal lamb.

Let us now look at the passages: 1. John 13:1 : "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come," etc.

It has been thought by some that this verse points out that the supper narrated in this chapter was at some time before the Jews ate the passover, indeed, before our Lord ate it. But if this is so, it does not really bear on our question; which is, Did our Lord eat the passover at the same time as did the Jews? But to make this supper a distinct occasion from when our Lord ate the supper is fraught with difficulty. It is true that the Lord's supper is not here named, doubtless for some wise reason, but this does not touch the question, as many other things which undoubtedly took place are also omitted. On the other hand, it is very improbable that the pointing out of Judas should have taken place on two separate but similar occasions, especially when we consider these words: "Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.... He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified," etc. (John 13:27; John 13:30-31). This is evidently the last time Christ met with Judas as a disciple; and in the other gospels it is also clearly marked out as being on the occasion of the paschal supper.

We must therefore conclude that the supper narrated in John 13:1-38 was the passover supper. The words "before the feast," in John 13:1, may mean no more than before commencing the feast, in contrast with "during supper" (as it should be rendered) in John 13:2.

2. John 13:29 : "Buy those things that we have need of against the feast." The feast, as we have seen, lasted seven days; this therefore is no real difficulty.

3. John 18:28 : "They themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover."

It is asked, How is this to be reconciled with the thought that they had already eaten the passover? But this is assuming that nothing but the paschal lamb is called the passover; whereas we have already seen that the herd for the feast was also called the passover, and the feast began on the fifteenth of Nisan, the very day in which they spoke.

Lightfoot considers that this passage is a proof that they had already eaten the paschal lamb, and were in the midst of the feast; because it was then early in the morning, and there would have been time to have washed away by ablution the impurity before the evening. But if in the feast, and just about to eat the free-will offerings, they could not. At any rate, we consider the passage quoted from Deuteronomy 16:2, removes the difficulty.

4. John 19:14 "It was the preparation of the passover." In John 19:31 it is again said, "It was the preparation." This latter verse refers to the Sabbath; it was the preparation for the Sabbath, or, as we should say, Friday, in relation to the Jewish Sabbath on Saturday; so that the common name for Friday became "Preparation-day"* (Mark 15:42). And so John 19:14 may mean that it was the day before the Sabbath in the Passover week: 'it was the preparation of the paschal Sabbath.'

Κυριακή Lord's-day Sunday. Δευτέρα

Second day

Monday.

Τριτη

Third day

Tuesday.

Τετραδη

Fourth day

Wednesday.

Πεμτη

Fifth day

Thursday.

Παρασκευη

Preparation-day

Friday.

Σαββατον

Sabbath

Saturday.

This may also illustrate "the Lord's-day" in Revelation 1:10.) 5. John 19:31 : "That Sabbath was a high day."

It has been thought that this implies that the passover must have fallen on the Sabbath; and if so, that Christ had eaten it, but that the Jews had not. But this is only a supposition, and we can easily understand that the Sabbath that fell in the passover week was always "a high day," especially when it fell on the fifteenth of Nisan, as in this case it did.

These then are the passages in John which seem to favor the thought that the Jews had not at the trial eaten the paschal lamb. The reader must judge whether they are satisfactorily explained; and there may, of course, be better ways of explaining them: while, on the other hand, it is thought impossible to interpret the plain statements of the first three gospels so as not to mean that the usual time for the passover had arrived. It is, therefore, believed that our Lord partook of the passover at the same time as did the Jews. To this, however, it has been further objected, that as Christ was the Lamb of God sacrificed for us - our Passover - He must have suffered on the right day, and, therefore, He must have kept the passover on a previous day.

It has been supposed that the paschal lamb might be slain any time between the evening of the 14th and the evening of the 15th, because we read (Exodus 12:6, margin) that it was to be slain "between the two evenings." But the same chapter says, "Ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning," clearly confining it to one evening and a night. Besides, the other passages where the same phrase occurs entirely precludes this meaning. Thus of the daily lambs we read, "The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other thou shalt offer between the two evenings"

(Exodus 29:39, Hebrew). The evening lamp too was to be lit "between the two evens" (Exodus 30:8, margin). The phrase, therefore, cannot embrace twenty-four hours. The Jewish writers are not agreed as to the exact time meant; some say it is between the beginning and ending of sunset; others, that it is between sunset and full darkness; but all confine it to the evening of one day. Josephus (Wars, 6: 9, 3) says that the time of killing the passover was from the ninth hour to the eleventh, which would be about three o'clock until five.

Another thing which confirms the restricting of the killing of the passover to one of our evenings is, that one of the feasts lasted twenty-four hours, and there the wording is quite different. The tenth day of the seventh month was the day of atonement, but it was to commence "in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath" (Leviticus 23:27; Leviticus 23:32). "From even unto even" is quite a different phrase from "between the two evenings;" and this latter, we believe, must be restricted to one of our evenings.

: Evening - 13th Nisan end 14th Nisan begins- Passover lamb killed. Night -

14th Nisan

Christ arrested.

Morning -

14th Nisan

Trial, condemnation, and crucifixion.

Noon -

14th Nisan

Darkness begins.

3 o'clock -

14th Nisan

Death of Christ

Evening -

14th Nisan ends. 15th Nisan begins.

And this perhaps sufficiently meets the difficulty. The chronological tables will give the events of the last passover and the trial of our Lord in detail. It may however be helpful to glance at the mode adopted by the Jews in taking the paschal supper at the time of our Lord being on earth, as given by Lightfoot and others.

1. When all were seated, the head of the feast gave thanks, and they drank off the first cup of wine mingled with water.
2. All washed their hands.
3. The table was spread with the paschal lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs, a dish of thick sauce (said to signify the mortar with which they made bricks in Egypt).
4. They all dipped a portion of the bitter herbs in the sauce and ate it.
5. All the dishes were removed from the table; and the children or proselytes were instructed in the

meaning of the supper. 6. The dishes were then brought back, and the president said, "This is the passover which we eat because the Lord passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt." And holding up the bitter herbs he said, "These are the bitter herbs that we eat in remembrance that the Egyptians made the lives of our fathers bitter in Egypt." He then spoke of the unleavened bread, and then repeated the 113th and 114th Psalms, concluding with a prayer. They all drank the second cup of wine. 7. The governor then broke one of the cakes of unleavened bread, and gave thanks. 8. They then all partook of the paschal lamb. 9. As a finish of the supper they took a piece of unleavened bread, and a piece of bitter herbs, dipped them in the sauce and ate them. 10. They afterward drank the third cup of wine, called the cup of blessing. 11. The governor rehearsed Psalms 115:1-18; Psalms 116:1-19; Psalms 117:1-2; Psalms 118:1-29., and a fourth cup concluded the whole.

It should be noted that in Matthew and Mark, Judas the betrayer is spoken of before the Lord's supper, but in Luke he is spoken of after the Lord's supper. Mark is the most exact as to chronological order; and we learn from 1 Corinthians 11:25, that it was when or after the paschal supper had ended that the Lord's supper was instituted. The paschal supper may be said to end with the piece of unleavened bread dipped in the sauce (No. 9 above). This was probably what our Lord handed to Judas, who went out immediately he had received the sop (John 13:30), being told to go by Christ. And so he would not be present at the Lord's supper. See the tables for the various details.

18 The Hours of the Trial and Crucifixion of Christ

The Hours of the Trial and Crucifixion of Christ The gospel of John again appears to differ from the other evangelists. In John 19:14, the trial is represented as still proceeding at the sixth hour. But in Mark 15:25, we read, "it was the third hour, and they crucified Him." And both Mark 15:33 and Luke 23:44 represent that after our Savior had been some time on the cross, there was darkness over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour.

It has been thought that these differences may be reconciled by supposing that Mark, when he says, "It was the third hour and they crucified Him," alludes to the day being divided into four parts: (1) 6 o'clock to 9; (2) 9 to 12; (3) 12 to 3; (4) 3 to 6; and that he refers to the third of these divisions. But from 12 to 3 was the time of the darkness, so that Christ must have been crucified some time before 12 o'clock, and therefore Mark must have said the second hour, and not the third. The day may have been divided into four parts, as in Matthew 20:1-34, but if so, they are not called the first, second, third, and fourth hours; but the third, sixth, and ninth hours: the same times being referred to as the hours of prayer, but still under the same names (Acts 2:15; Acts 3:1; Acts 10:9). Notice too that each is a definite period of time - an hour, and in no case are three hours called an hour. Besides, in the same chapter, Mark speaks of the sixth hour and the ninth hour in the usual way, and he surely would not have used the same term "hour" in connection with the same event in such conflicting senses. And further, this plan in no way reconciles the sixth hour of John, when the trial was proceeding, with Mark, etc., who represents the darkness as commencing at the sixth hour, Christ having been on the cross for some time. We cannot see this plan to be at all tenable.

We believe the difficulty is in John's gospel; for the other three gospels agree; and it would appear that John, when he represents the trial as still proceeding at the sixth hour, must have had some other meaning than the usual Jewish mode of reckoning the hours.

Mark says, "it was the third hour, and they crucified Him." Now, if we start from this and reckon backwards, there would be the preparations at the ground; then the going from the place of judgment to Golgotha - a slow procession, certainly, as the cross had to be borne; then the preparations before starting; then the trial of the two malefactors (who were most probably tried after Christ, for it was a law that criminals should be executed immediately after sentence); then the registration of the judgments given; and then the conclusion of the trial of our Lord: surely three hours, or a little less, are not too long to allow for all this, and this would bring it to about our six o'clock. May not John, therefore, have adopted our mode of reckoning, and have meant by the sixth hour our six o'clock? One thing is certain, that this must have been about the time, reckoning backwards from nine o'clock.

It seems an objection to this that Pilate should have been engaged in this trial so early - not later than five o'clock; and that Herod, too, should have been accessible not later than six o'clock. But it must be borne in mind that these early hours do not rest exclusively on John's statement. If John had given no hour at all, we must have concluded, from the crucifixion being at nine o'clock, and what actually took place before that hour, that the trial must have begun as early as six o'clock.

It is evident that our Lord was arrested in the night: they had torches to see their way. He was at once taken to Annas; Annas sends Him to Caiaphas, where elders are assembled: more arrive, and Christ is arraigned. In the morning, "as soon as it was day" (Luke 22:66), the fuller council meets, and they deliberate how to put Christ to death. While still early (John 18:28) He is brought to Pilate. After conversing with Him Pilate sends Him to Herod. Herod sends Him back to Pilate. After repeated efforts to release Him, the judgment-seat is set, and He is condemned.

It must be remembered what would be called "early" in that hot climate. Travelers frequently relate that they are up before the sun. Shows and spectacles were held quite early in the morning. "Herod Agrippa," to quote from Townson, "was in the theater of Caesarea as soon as it was day, and was making an oration when the sun rose, the reflection of which from his royal apparel, all covered with silver, was so splendid as to dazzle and astonish the beholders, and excite the profane acclamations of which both St. Luke (Acts 12:22) and Josephus (Ant. 19: 8. 2) take notice.

"Philo Judaeus has another instance of the early concourse of the people in the theater; for in relating the persecution of the Jews by the Alexandrians, he says that the spectacles first exhibited, from early in the morning even to the third or fourth hour, were the Jews scourged, suspended, tormented, condemned, and led to death through the middle of the orchestra."* (* Townson's Works, vol. 1:, p. 261.) The reader will not fail to see how these corroborate the earliness of the time of their meetings; and also how well the latter instance corresponds as to time with the trial, condemnation, and crucifixion of our Lord by the third hour. Here the fourth hour (10 o'clock) is the latest named. But if John used the mode of reckoning that we do, it may fairly be asked, How was it that John departed from the then usual Jewish mode of reckoning the hours? To this it has been answered, that he merely adopted the Roman method instead of the Jewish. But this has been thought to be a mistake, because it is known that the Romans did not commonly use this mode of reckoning the hours till long after John must have written his gospel. Still, it was used. "Pliny (to quote Macknight) says 'all the vulgar counted the hours from morning to night.' This implies that the better sort did not do so; for he adds, that 'the priests, and those who spoke of the civil day, reckoned from midnight to midnight,' and by consequence computed their hours accordingly. To this agrees the account given by Varro. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to suppose that in common conversation and familiar epistles the language of the vulgar may have been adopted even by people of fashion, especially when they spoke or wrote of labor, bathing, eating, and the like ordinary affairs in life.... Historians, however, and others who quote with precision, in reckoning the hours of the day, would for the most part make use of the civil form."* (* Macknight's "Harmony of the Gospels," vol. 1:, p. 25.)

It is said that there are two instances in early writers of this mode of reckoning. One in the apocryphal epistle of Smyrna to Philadelphia (written in the second century), which relates that Polycarp suffered death about the eighth hour. This, Dr. Townson argues, could not have been our two o'clock, but must have been eight o'clock in the morning. The other is that Pionius suffered martyrdom at the tenth hour; and this he says could not have been four o'clock in the afternoon, but must have been ten o'clock in the morning. So John may, from some source, have learned this mode of reckoning, and have used it in his gospel, guided of course by the Holy Spirit to do so for some wise reason. But another question naturally arises out of this, namely, If John adopted this mode of reckoning in John 19:1-42, would he not also have used it all through his gospel? and will this mode of reckoning suit every case? Let us see.

John 1:39 : "They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day;* it was about the tenth hour."

(* The editors omit the word "for.") This would be ten o'clock in the morning by this reckoning, and there is nothing in the passage inconsistent with this.

John 4:6-7 : "Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well; and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water."

Almost all are familiar with the use that is generally made of this 'sixth hour.' She was a woman of bad character and ashamed to come when the other women did, and therefore came in the middle of the day to avoid them. And really one hesitates to say anything that would spoil in any way the descriptions that are so often drawn of this sublime scene at Sychar's well: but it must be confessed that there is nothing in the passage which says that this was so. She was an abandoned woman, it is true, but this may not have been known; and this seems to be confirmed by the ready response there was to her invitation to the men of the city. And if it had been known, she might have come a little earlier or later than the other women rather than in the hot midday sun.

Why not then about six o'clock in the evening? It may have been after the other women had been to the well, and so Jesus had the opportunity of speaking to the woman alone. Their conversation would not have taken long, and there would have been ample time for her to have fetched the men from the city in the cool of the evening. In Matthew 14:15, we read that the five thousand were fed after the evening had set in; and Mark 1:32, shows that much was done after the sun had set.

Besides, is it not improbable that the disciples should have gone to buy food at twelve o'clock in the day: too late for their first meal, much too early for their chief meal? Why not about six o'clock in the evening? The whole narrative then seems rather to favor the thought that John here also used our mode of reckoning the hours; at least, there is nothing to contradict it.

John 4:52-53 "Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth." The question is, was this seventh hour' one o'clock or seven o'clock p.m.? Cana is about twelve miles from Capernaum, and if one o'clock was the time when Christ dismissed the nobleman, surely he would have started at once for home, anxious as he was about his child, and would easily have reached home the same evening. But seven o'clock p.m. would have been too late to undertake the journey that night. One thing is certain, that it was not till the next day that he met the servant. It is therefore submitted, that taking the time to have been seven o'clock p.m. agrees well with the narrative; and in this case also this mode of reckoning the hours may have been adopted by the evangelist.

These then are all the instances of hours mentioned in the gospel by John, and it is believed that in every instance our now common mode of reckoning the hours is quite consistent. May we not then suppose that it was the only system adopted by John, seeing, as we have done, that in the one instance where the question was raised (John 19:14) it cannot be according to the Jewish mode of reckoning? To this, however, it has been objected that John says, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" (John 11:9) and that if he adopted our mode of reckoning he would have said "twenty-four hours," as we have no "day" that is definitely twelve hours. But our day of twenty-four

hours includes the night; and in the above passage our Lord was specially referring to the day-time in which it is light, in distinction from the night; for which purpose John could not have said twenty-four hours: he doubtless gives the actual words our Lord used. The term "day" has various significations, and here it clearly means the time of light. This passage in no way proves that John did not adopt our mode of reckoning. The details will be seen in the chronological tables. We give a separate table (pages 131-2) from the last passover to the ascension, on account of its importance, in which the hours named in the trial, etc., are pointed out.

19 The Death of Christ

The Death of Christ The date of the crucifixion is much disputed. As our Lord slipped, as it were, into the world unobserved, so He was cast out unheeded and almost unrecorded. It matters comparatively little to fix a date to it, though it was the greatest event this world ever can witness, unless it be to see in it the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks: far more important that reader and writer should believe that in that death their sins were atoned for, and forever put away. But believing and knowing this, we may ask, When was it that our Lord was crucified? As has been observed before, nearly all Christians have, as it were, instinctively concluded that our Lord lived on the earth about thirty-three and a half years, and yet, curiously enough all our reference Bibles give the dates thus: The birth of Christ- - - B.C. 4 The crucifixion- - - A.D. 33 Being 37 years, or, at least, 36 years.

It has been attempted to decide the length of Christ's ministry by counting the Passovers mentioned in the gospels. But this would not decide it, because we are not sure that every passover is recorded, though all may be pointed out.

We have seen it as most probable that our Lord was baptized but a short time before a Passover; and they would perhaps stand thus: -

John 2:13, the first passover -A.D. 26 John 5:1, the second passover--27 John 6:4, the third passover ---28 John 13:1, the fourth passover--29

We say "perhaps," because the second is not called the passover, but "a feast," and it may or may not have been the passover. But nothing really hangs on the point, because if not the passover, there may have been another which is not named in John's gospel, as the first and third are not named in the other gospels.

Again, it has been made a great element in this inquiry to ascertain on what day of the week the 14th of Nisan fell in the various years near the supposed date, and then fix on the one that fell on a Friday as the true one. But surely such a calculation is perfectly useless, knowing as we do that they had no such corresponding reckoning. We know that their months did not make a full year, and that an extra month was occasionally added; and, therefore, unless we can ascertain exactly when about that time this additional month was added, we cannot even get an approximate date. (See the Jewish months, p. 28.) It is obvious, therefore, that all such calculations are only a waste of time.

We have already seen that in interpreting the Seventy Weeks (page 17), Messiah was to be cut off after sixty-nine weeks, and that this pointed to A.D. 29 for the crucifixion. In confirmation of the date given for the commencement of the Seventy Weeks (B.C. 455) a writer says, "It is satisfactory to know that the idea entertained by Archbishop Usher, of dating the commencement of Artaxerxes' reign nine years earlier than the canon of Ptolemy allows, grounded upon what Thucydides says of Themistocles' flight to Persia, has been confirmed by hieroglyphic inscriptions in Egypt, showing that Artaxerxes was associated with his father in the twelfth year of Xerxes'

reign, so that there ought to be no longer any doubt respecting that famous prophecy of Daniel, so far at least as regards the crucifixion."* (* "Journal of Sacred Literature," April, 1863, p. 136.)

Early Christian writers confidently appeal to a document which they call "The Acts of Pilate," and which is supposed to have recorded the trial and death of Christ, and these "Acts" point to the same date, A.D. 29. With common consent, the Latin Fathers relate that the crucifixion was in the year when the two Gemini were consuls. This is also A.D. 29.

Clement and Origen give the destruction of Jerusalem as forty-two years after the crucifixion. The destruction was A.D. 70, and this goes to prove that the crucifixion could not have been later than 29. From all this evidence we feel justified in concluding that the death of our Lord took place at the Passover in A.D. 29.

20 The Resurrection

The Resurrection

Many objections have been raised against the account of the resurrection in the four gospels, some persons supposing them to be irreconcilable, and a proof that the gospels are not fully inspired. But the great thing to remember is, that each gospel has a distinctive character; that God caused them to be written precisely as He wished; and therefore we ought to have confidence that what He has done He has done wisely and perfectly, whether we can understand them or not. With this confidence we can calmly look at the difficulties.

First, notice that the women began to prepare the spices on Friday evening before the Sabbath commenced, but rested during the Sabbath (Luke 23:56).

Then Matthew 28:1, is Saturday evening after the Sabbath (not Sunday morning, as often supposed). It was the "dusk of the next day after the Sabbath" when they come, and they then return and finish their preparations.

They rest Saturday night, and Mary comes while yet dark on Sunday morning to the sepulcher (John 20:1), but Christ has risen. Women are sometimes spoken of as "the women," in a general way, without specifying who they were. For further detail, refer to the chronological tables. All of course may not be exactly as the events occurred; but at least thus placed all difficulties disappear.

21 From the Crucifixion to the Destruction of Jerusalem

From the Crucifixion to the Destruction of Jerusalem

There are but few points here calling for consideration. The principal are those connected with the apostle Paul, and the dates when he wrote his various epistles.

It is a leading question whether Paul was released from prison and took another missionary journey, or was he put to death at the end of his first imprisonment? We must see what evidence we can bring, both external and internal, to bear upon the question.

We start with the crucifixion in A.D. 29. The day of Pentecost would also be 29. The next accredited date is in Acts 12:1-25, the death of Herod Agrippa. He began to reign in the first year of Caius (A.D. 37), and reigned seven years; so that he died in 44. Doubtless this marks out the date of Paul's visit to Jerusalem, as it was the time of the passover (Acts 12:3). This would be his second visit to Jerusalem (Acts 11:30); his first visit being pointed out in Acts 9:26 and Galatians 1:18. See chronological table. The next point of time is the recall of Felix succeeded by Festus. This is fixed A.D. 60. In the autumn then of A.D. 60 Paul left Caesarea. He would arrive at Rome in the spring of 61; and he lived in his own hired house two years (Acts 28:30). This would bring it to the spring of A.D. 63. But the evidence of Eusebius is that Paul did not suffer martyrdom till A.D. 67. Jerome says 68. The earliest date given by more modern writers is A.D. 64. So the external evidence is that there was sufficient time, taking the earliest of the above dates, for another journey after the close of the two years' imprisonment of the Acts before his death. With this the internal evidence seems also to agree. The passage in the Acts implies that Paul was in prison at that time not longer than two years: and then what? Put to death? If so, it is most probable that it would have been stated. If not put to death, and no longer kept in prison, he would have been liberated.

Further, Paul (1 Timothy 1:3) besought Timothy to remain at Ephesus while he proceeded to Macedonia. When was this? Not on Paul's first visit (Acts 18:20-21), for on his departure he goes to Jerusalem. Not on his second visit (Acts 19:10; Acts 19:22; Acts 20:31), for then he sent Timothy from Ephesus before he left himself. Then we must suppose, either that there was a visit to Macedonia which is not recorded in the Acts; or that Paul was liberated, and that this visit took place afterward. In order to solve this question we must look at three things in connection with Ephesus, namely: Paul's address to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:1-38).

Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians.

Paul's First Epistle to Timothy: Timothy being at Ephesus. And we must endeavor to find out the order in which these facts took place.

One thing seems certain, that the Epistle to the Ephesians was written during the two years' imprisonment of Paul at Rome.

It is also certain that the address of Paul to the elders took place as he was returning on his third missionary journey; and that he proceeded at once to Jerusalem by way of Türe, Ptolemais, and Cæsarea (Acts 21:1-40), so that this must have been before his Epistle to the Ephesians. The only question therefore is, When was the First Epistle to Timothy written? Now, unless Paul was liberated from imprisonment, his supposed visit to Ephesus - leaving Timothy there while he went to Macedonia - must have taken place before the address in Acts 20:1-38, because after the address he went, as we have seen, to Jerusalem, and was taken prisoner. On the other hand, Paul paid his first visit to Ephesus in Acts 18:19; so that the supposed visit must have been between this first visit and the address in Acts 20:1-38. The First Epistle to Timothy would appear to have been written soon after they parted, and that Paul hoped soon to be at Ephesus again: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long," etc., (1 Timothy 3:14-15). "Till I come give attendance to reading," etc., (1 Timothy 4:13).

So, those who hold with the supposed visit place the order thus: 1. A supposed visit to Macedonia in Acts 19:1-41, and the First Epistle to Timothy written soon after.

2. The address of Paul to the elders.

3. The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians after he reached Rome. And there seems to be no other way of placing them, unless we admit that Paul was liberated. But grave difficulties are presented in the above order. The state of the Ephesian church was in a good condition when Paul wrote to them his epistle, so that he - or rather the Holy Ghost through him - could open to them the mystery of the church "which in other ages was not made known" (Ephesians 3:3-5). In his address to the elders of Ephesus he warned them, as a future thing, that grievous wolves would enter in among them. But in the First Epistle to Timothy, Timothy was to use his authority to prevent some then there from teaching error. We believe, therefore, that the three addresses must be in this order; 1. The address to the elders.

2. The Epistle to the Ephesians.

3. The First Epistle to Timothy.

Then, if so, Paul would have been liberated from his imprisonment, and again have visited Macedonia. To this some objections have been made.

1. Paul in his address to the elders said that he knew they should see his face no more (Acts 20:25), and this would not be true if he was liberated, and again visited Ephesus.

It has been generally supposed that if Paul was liberated he again visited Ephesus. But Scripture does not say that he did so. The words in 1 Timothy 1:3, "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia," may have been a message from Paul to Timothy without Paul's actually being at Ephesus. It will be noticed that the wording is not so positive as in Titus 1:5, "I left thee in Crete;" and in 2 Timothy 4:20, "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." And the reference to Ephesus in 2 Timothy 1:18, may have been before Paul's first imprisonment. So that Paul's saying that he should not see their face again, may have been correct notwithstanding his liberation. As he would be near to Ephesus when at Miletus, it is natural to suppose that he would visit that city, and in 1 Timothy 3:14, he hoped to come shortly. But we know from 2 Timothy 1:15, that all they which were in Asia had turned away from Paul, and he may have been guided by God to break up

new ground instead of going to Ephesus. So that he may have been liberated, and yet not have visited that city again.

Besides, if Paul was not liberated, he would have been mistaken as to other things. Thus, while a prisoner he wrote to Philemon, "Prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (Philem. 22). And again to the Philippians: "I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly" (Php 2:24). Again, "I will come by you into Spain" (Romans 15:28).

2. Paul's being liberated, and writing his First Epistle to Timothy afterward, is inconsistent with his alluding to Timothy's youth (1 Timothy 4:12) at so late a date.

Timothy might have been about 30 to 35 years of age, and this may have been much younger than many in the church, especially the elders over whom he was evidently set (1 Timothy 5:1). Therefore this objection has really no weight. He was comparatively young. Besides, in the Second Epistle to Timothy (which all admit to have been written shortly before the death of Paul), he warns Timothy of "youthful lusts."

3. If the First Epistle to Timothy was not written till so late a date, it does not give time enough for the declension pointed out in the Second Epistle to have taken place between the two Epistles before Paul's death.

If the First Epistle was written in the first year after the liberation, there may have been three or four years before Paul's death, and this would suffice. Declension may certainly make great progress in less time than that. We therefore do not see any real difficulty in supposing Paul's liberation. In Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy there are several things which have been thought to give additional evidence both for and against the liberation. But the only thing that seems of real weight is in 2 Timothy 4:20 : "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." When could this be? Not when Paul went to Jerusalem, for Trophimus went with him (Acts 21:29). Not when Paul went from Caesarea to Italy, for Paul did not touch at Miletus. We believe this one passage to be very strong evidence that Paul was liberated, and paid a visit to Miletus, and departed thence, leaving Trophimus sick. This epistle was certainly written shortly before his expected martyrdom, and if he had not been liberated he could not have been at Miletus for some years previously. In Titus also (Titus 1:5) there is a passage: "For this cause also I left thee in Crete." When could this be? Surely not on the occasion named in Acts 27:7-15, when Paul was a prisoner. Again the difficulty is at once solved by supposing the liberation. On the whole, then, it seems most probable that Paul was liberated at the end of the two years; that he took another missionary journey, and soon wrote the First Epistle to Timothy, and the Epistle to Titus; that he continued his journey; that he was again arrested and imprisoned at Rome; and wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy a short time before his martyrdom.

22 Paul's Visits to Jerusalem

Paul's Visits to Jerusalem

There are two passages in the Epistle to the Galatians that claim our attention. Galatians 1:18 : "Then after three years I went' up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." Galatians 2:1 : "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem, by revelation, with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also."

It will be seen that in both passages the word "after" occurs, but after what is not stated. Doubtless the first is three years after Paul's conversion; but when Paul was converted no one knows with certainty. The second may be fourteen years after the first visit, or it may be after his conversion. By comparing all the dates it is believed to have been fourteen years after his conversion.

It is clear that Acts 9:26, refers to Paul's first visit to Jerusalem; for "he assayed to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him." This would be the same as Galatians 1:18. The next visit named in Galatians is evidently the same as in Acts 15:1-41. But this is the third visit named in the Acts; and it presents a little difficulty to suppose that Paul named his first and his third visits without noticing his second. But it must be observed that Paul in Galatians is pressing the fact that he received his gospel direct from God, and not from the other Apostles: "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12). And in his second visit (Acts 11:27-30; Acts 12:25), "elders" only are named. The mission of Barnabas and Paul was to hand in the collection; and we read that "when they had fulfilled their ministry," they left Jerusalem; so that they could leave immediately. Such a visit as this would not fall within the subject which Paul was enforcing in his Epistle to the Galatians, and would be passed by unnoticed.

It has, however, been objected, that this visit named in the Galatians cannot be the same as in Acts 15:1-41, because in Galatians it is said to have been a private meeting (Galatians 2:2), and in Acts 15:22 it was "the whole church". But the reader must again be reminded that Paul is insisting in the Galatians that he did not receive his gospel mission from the Apostles; so that what the Church did is not before him. And there is really nothing contradictory in the two accounts. Paul doubtless did what any godly man in the same circumstances would have done, namely, he first sought an interview with the Apostles and elders before it was brought before the Church generally, and this is really all the words imply: "I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation." And afterward, without noticing the public meeting of the Church, he names the Apostles Peter, James, and John as giving him the right hand of fellowship (Galatians 2:9). All through it is evidently the Apostles who were before his mind, and not the Church.

Paul's fourth visit to Jerusalem is but slightly alluded to in Acts 18:21-22. He "bade them farewell, saying [I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem; but] I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up,

and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch." Though the words above in brackets are of doubtful authority, being omitted by several editors, still the words "and gone up and saluted the church," doubtless refer to Jerusalem.

Paul's fifth visit is recorded in Acts 21:1-40, when he was arrested. (See the Chronological Tables.)

23 The Order in Which the Epistles Were Written

The Order in Which the Epistles Were Written v1 THESSALONIANS. Thessalonica was first visited by Paul in Acts 17:1-15, which passage also relates his leaving the place, and going to Berea; from Berea he goes to Athens; from Athens he sends Timothy to Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:1). Paul then goes to Corinth (Acts 18:1), and Timothy returns to Paul (Acts 18:5). Paul most probably writes this, his first epistle, at Corinth, Timothy and Silvanus being with him (1 Thessalonians 1:1). Though the name "Silvanus" does not occur in the Acts, yet the Silas of the Acts is doubtless the same person as the "Silvanus" of Paul's Epistles, and we know from 2 Corinthians 1:19, etc., that he had visited Corinth. If this be correct, the word "Athens" in the common subscription would be a mistake.*

(*It should be known that the postscripts or subscriptions to most of the Epistles, as to where they were written, etc., though found in some of the Greek manuscripts, are not to be depended upon: they were nearly all added without doubt by the copyists.) v2 THESSALONIANS. Timothy and Silvanus are still with Paul (2 Thessalonians 1:1). So that this Epistle was most probably written also from Corinth during the year and six months Paul remained there (Acts 18:11); and if so, the word "Athens" in the subscription would again be wrong. v1 CORINTHIANS. 1 Corinthians 16:5-9, tells us that Paul was at Ephesus when he wrote this Epistle, and that he was purposing to visit Corinth when he passed through Macedonia. This points to the visit to Ephesus in Acts 19:1-10, where he stayed two years. Acts 19:22 tells us that Paul had sent off Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, and the former was instructed to go to Corinth (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10). Here the common subscription must be wrong in saying "Philippi," as Paul himself says "Ephesus," as above. Being sent by "Timotheus" also must be wrong. vGALATIANS. There are no data by which to fix with certainty the time when this Epistle was written. In Acts 18:23, we read that Paul went in order over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia, "strengthening all the disciples." This was doubtless before the Epistle was written, and before they had fallen into Judaizing. After this he remained two years at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-10), and as far as we know never visited Galatia again. Now, he says, in his Epistle to them, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you" (Galatians 1:6). Paul had preached the Gospel to them on his second missionary journey; and he had confirmed the disciples on his third journey; and it is difficult to see how the Epistle can be very long after the latter for the Apostle to say "so soon." Therefore, it is probable that it was written, during the two years above-named, from Ephesus. If so, the subscription "from Rome" would be wrong: the external evidence, too, is strongly against it. v2 CORINTHIANS. Here he repeats his intention of visiting Macedonia (2 Corinthians 1:15-16). He had left Asia (2 Corinthians 1:8), and had come to Troas (2 Corinthians 2:12), when he expected to meet with Titus with tidings from Corinth; but not finding him he proceeded into Macedonia (2 Corinthians 2:13). Titus came to him there with tidings from Corinth (see Acts 20:1). Here he most probably wrote this Epistle. Timothy was with him (2 Corinthians 1:1). The subscription to this Epistle may be correct. vROMANS. In Romans 15:25, Paul says, "Now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints; for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the

poor saints which are at Jerusalem." This collection he had named in both his Epistles to Corinth, exhorting them in the Second Epistle to be ready when he came. This places the Epistle shortly before Paul's visit to Jerusalem. Doubtless it was written from Corinth (Acts 20:2), as Gaius is named (Romans 16:23), who dwelt at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:14); and Phebe, of Cenchrea (Romans 16:1), which is a port of Corinth; and Erastus (Romans 16:23), who dwelt at Corinth (2 Timothy 4:20). The common subscription may be correct. vEPHESIANS. Paul is now a prisoner (Ephesians 3:1; Ephesians 4:1; Ephesians 6:20); and by his freedom to preach (Ephesians 6:19), it was doubtless during his first imprisonment at Rome (Acts 28:30). It was sent by Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21). The subscription is doubtless correct. vCOLOSSIANS. Paul in this Epistle also is a prisoner (Colossians 4:10), and has the same freedom to preach (Colossians 4:3), as in Ephesians. It is also sent by the same messenger, Tychicus. The same time and place then suits this Epistle. The subscription is correct.

PHILEMON. Here the same circumstances are found, and the Epistle is sent by the same Onesimus that is mentioned in the Colossians as accompanying Tychicus (Colossians 4:9). This is also at the same time and place. The subscription is correct. vPHILIPPIANS. Paul is still a prisoner (Php 1:14); but as he was a prisoner for two years, this Epistle was probably written later than those to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. The palace and Caesar's household are now named for the first time (Php 1:13; Php 4:22); Epaphroditus had come from Philippi to Rome, and had been sick long enough for those at Philippi to hear of it (Php 2:25-27); Paul is now expecting a speedy release (Php 2:24); so that this Epistle was probably written near the close of Paul's two years' imprisonment. The subscription is correct. vHEBREWS. We have no means of telling with certainty when this was written, nor as to who wrote it. The title, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews," is acknowledged by all to be an addition; the early copies have only "To the Hebrews." Still Paul may have written it, and most probably did. This question in no way touches its inspiration.

It was probably written soon after Paul's liberation from the two years' imprisonment. If he was the writer, he says, "Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you." The subscription may be correct. vI TIMOTHY. This has already been discussed. It was most probably written during a journey taken by Paul after his liberation. The subscription may be correct. vTITUS. Most probably written about the same time as 1 Timothy. The subscription may be correct. v2 TIMOTHY. This is acknowledged by all to be the last of Paul's Epistles. He was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand (2 Timothy 4:6). The subscription may be correct. vTHE PASTORAL EPISTLES are those to Timothy and Titus. (See the Chronological Tables for the dates of Paul's epistles.) vTHE CATHOLIC OR GENERAL EPISTLES embrace from James to Jude; and are doubtless so called because they were not addressed to particular Churches. But it should be known that in none of the earliest manuscripts does the word "General" occur; it has been added by later hands. There is no means of telling when these epistles were written with certainty. We give the supposed dates from Home's "Introduction." vJAMES. It is generally supposed that this epistle was written by James, the son of Alpheus, or Cleopas. A.D. 61. vI PETER. What Babylon is referred to in 1 Peter 5:12-13, is not known. A.D. 64. v2 PETER. Peter was near his death (2 Peter 1:14). A.D. 65. vEPISTLES OF JOHN. A.D. 68 or 69. vJUDE. A.D. 65 or 66. vTHE REVELATION. - In the Revelation there are no dates. After "the things that are" the periods there mentioned are all future. But inasmuch as the Church now intervenes as a

sort of parenthesis, until that closes by the raising of the dead in Christ, and the catching away of the living saints, none of the periods even begin to run on. The duration of the period of the Church is nowhere stated, and every attempt to predict when it will close is entirely futile. Most suppose the Revelation to have been written A.D. 95 or 96. Some think it was earlier. vTHE GOSPELS AND THE ACTS. - We give the probable dates when these were written from Home and others: - Matthew, A.D. 37 or 38; Mark, 64; Luke, 63 or 64; John, 69; Acts, 63.

24 Conclusion

Conclusion

Thus ends our inquiry. As Christians, we are interested in looking back upon all that the sacred history gives of God's revelation of Himself, and of His ways with His chosen people Israel, and with man generally; for Jehovah is our God and Father.

We are interested in all the forms and observances of the Jewish ritual: for they were shadows of better things, and these better things are ours.

We are interested in all the pathway of our Lord on earth - God manifest in the flesh - who came to His own, but His own received Him not; but which hindered Him not from accomplishing His work of redemption on the cross, in which by faith we participate.

We are interested also with all that Prophecy unveils of the future; for Christ is the center of it all, and Christ is ours. But, as the Church was chosen before time began, so is it now apart from and above times and seasons. We have nothing to speculate about; we simply wait for our Lord from heaven at any moment. His word is, "Surely I come quickly;" our response is, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

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