

WRITINGS OF ERHARD HERMANN

by Erhard Hermann

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Erhard Hermann, compiled for study and devotional reading.

93 Chapters

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00.00. Hermann, Erhard - Library

Hermann, Erhard - Library
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Hermann, Erhard - Miracles and Archaeology Affirm the Inspiration of the Bible
Hermann, Erhard - Miracles in the Bible
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Hermann, Erhard - To Judge or Not to Judge
S. Genesis Short and Long Chronology

01.03. Introduction

Introduction This study will look at Genesis chapters one to eleven from a Biblical perspective based on the following verses being true. If this premise is not accepted, then it would be prudent to look at that issue prior to going through this study.

“But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (2Pe 1:20-21)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;” (2Ti 3:16) See also (Mat 15:6, John 10:35, Acts 17:11, Mark 12:24, 1Th 2:13, 2Ti 4:2, John 17:7, Isa 40:8, 1Pe 1:25)

Jesus’ use of Scripture indicates that He viewed it as absolutely authoritative: (Mat 4:4; Mat 4:7; Mat 4:10; Mat 12:3; Mat 19:4; Mat 21:16; Mat 21:42; Mat 22:29; Mat 26:31; Mark 2:25; Mark 9:12; Mark 12:24; Mark 14:27; Luk 4:4; Luk 4:8; Luk 4:12; Luk 6:3; Luk 20:17; Luk 24:25; Luk 24:27; John 10:34; John 19:28)

Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God? (Mark 12:24) The context for the writing of Genesis is:

The Israelites have just left Egypt where God, through powerful signs and wonders has taken them out of slavery. (1446 BC)

The Egyptians had their own gods and creation stories.

The land that they were going to possess had their own gods and idols.

Mesopotamia, where Abraham and his family came from, also had other gods and creation stories.

The Israelites have received the covenant with God and were to serve Him alone.

The first section will just be an overview of all of Genesis. After this, chapters one to eleven will be looked at in more detail.

01.04. Genesis Overview

Genesis Overview Gen 1:1-31, Gen 2:1-3

A summary of the days of creation to God resting on the seventh day.

Gen 2:4-25

An account of the creation of the plants, animals, Adam and Eve.

Gen 3:1-19

The deception of Eve and the sin of Adam.

Entry of evil, suffering, death and toil.

Knowledge of good and evil.

Gen 3:20-24

Expulsion from the garden of Eden.

Gen 4:1-16

Cain and Abel are born.

Cain kills Abel.

Gen 4:17-26

Account of Cain and descendants.

Birth of Seth.

Gen 5:1-32

Book of the generations of Adam.

Genealogy from Adam to Noah and his sons .

Gen 6:1-17

Mankind has become so corrupt that God is going to destroy the land animals and birds with a flood.

Gen 6:9-22, Gen 7:1-24, Gen 8:1-22, Gen 9:1-29

Records of the generations of Noah.

Account of Noah's life.

Institution of the death penalty for murder.

Gen 7:6-24, Gen 8:1-13

Flood account.

Gen 10:1-32, Gen 11:1-9

Records of the sons of Noah.

The dispersion from the tower of Babel.

Gen 11:10-26

Records of the generations of Shem.

Gen 11:27-32

Records of the generations of Terah.

Gen 12:1-20, Gen 13:1-18, Gen 14:1-24, Gen 15:1-21, Gen 16:1-16, Gen 17:1-27, Gen 18:1-33, Gen 19:1-38, Gen 20:1-18, Gen 21:1-34, Gen 22:1-24, Gen 23:1-20, Gen 24:1-67, Gen 25:1-10

Record of Abraham's life.

Move from Haran to Canaan.

Promise of God to Abraham that his descendants would possess the land of Canaan and that God would make nations of his descendants.

The covenant of circumcision is established.

Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Birth of Isaac.

Gen 21:3-34, Gen 22:1-24, Gen 23:1-20, Gen 24:1-67, Gen 25:1-34, Gen 26:1-35, Gen 27:1-46, Gen 28:1-22, Gen 29:1-35, Gen 30:1-43, Gen 31:1-55, Gen 32:1-32, Gen 33:1-20, Gen 34:1-31, Gen 35:1-29

Life of Isaac.

Testing of Abraham regarding Isaac.

Gen 25:12-17

Records of the generations of Ishmael.

Gen 25:1-34, Gen 26:1-35, Gen 27:1-46, Gen 28:1-22, Gen 29:1-35, Gen 30:1-43, Gen 31:1-55, Gen 32:1-32, Gen 33:1-20, Gen 34:1-31, Gen 35:1-29 Records of the generations of Isaac.

Birth of Esau and Jacob.

Gen 36:1-43, Gen 37:1

Records of the generations of Esau.

Gen 37:1-36, Gen 38:1-30, Gen 39:1-23, Gen 40:1-23, Gen 41:1-57, Gen 42:1-38, Gen 43:1-34,
Gen 44:1-34, Gen 45:1-28, Gen 46:1-34, Gen 47:1-31, Gen 48:1-22, Gen 49:1-33, Gen 50:1-26

Records of the generations of Jacob.

01.05. Observations on the overview of Genesis

Observations on the overview of Genesis

Generations There are 13 passages in Genesis that have the Hebrew word **דֹּת**. This word is translated “account” or “generation” and is defined as:

דֹּת n.f.pl. generations, esp. in genealogies = account of a man and his descendants — a. account of men and their descendants; successive generations (in) of families; genealogical divisions, by parentage. b. metaph. **דֹּת** **דֹּת** lit. begettings of heaven and earth, i.e. account of heaven and earth and that which proceeded from them.¹ It is used in the following verses in the book of Genesis:

“This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven.” (Gen 2:4)

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.” (Gen 5:1)

“These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.” (Gen 6:9)

“Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood.” (Gen 10:1)

“These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.” (Gen 10:32)

“These are the records of the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood;” (Gen 11:10)

“Now these are the records of the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot.” (Gen 11:27)

“Now these are the records of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s maid, bore to Abraham; and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael, and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam” (Gen 25:12-13)

“Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son: Abraham became the father of Isaac;” (Gen 25:19) “Now these are the records of the generations of Esau (that is, Edom).” (Gen 36:1)

“These then are the records of the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.” (Gen 36:9)

“These are the records of the generations of Jacob. Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.” (Gen 37:2)

Overall sense The overall sense of Genesis is that it is a historical account that primarily follows the history from creation to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the patriarchs of Israel. God included the information that He wanted us to have according to His Divine purposes just as any author includes the information that serves his purposes. (Isa 45:9-12) It establishes the reasons for

The existence of everything.

The worship of God.

The attributes of God.

Suffering, death and Evil.

Genders.

Marriage.

Weeds and toiling.

Relationships between men and women.

Different people groups and languages.

Knowledge of good and evil.

Reproduction of plants and animals.

Judgement for evil.

Death penalty for murder.

While there is a bit of information on other peoples or events, this is not the primary focus. The “table of nations” in Gen 10:1-32, Gen 11:1-32 primarily provides us with the ancestral lineage from Noah to Abraham. It also includes a couple of generations of Japheth’s descendants. There is a bit more information on the descendants of Ham, since these were the ones that were the primary people that they would be interacting with.

It would appear that one of the purposes of Genesis is to relate the truth about creation, God and all that we see around us, while refuting the false belief systems of the nations around them. It also provides the background for the future nation of Israel and some detail on their ancestors. God’s covenant with Abraham is the basis for the other books of Moses.

Type of literature The whole of Genesis is written as a historical narrative account as is evidenced by all the records of the generations and the information provided in them. Gen 1:1-31, Gen 2:1-3 is also written in the same fashion by providing the account of creation itself. Reading this as anything but a historical narrative is not good hermeneutics.

1 - Richard Whitaker et al., The Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament: From A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament by Francis Brown, S.R. Driver and Charles Briggs, Based on the Lexicon of Wilhelm Gesenius (Boston; New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1906).

01.06. Main Points in Chapters 1 - 11

Main Points in Gen 1:1-31, Gen 2:1-25, Gen 3:1-24, Gen 4:1-26, Gen 5:1-32, Gen 6:1-22, Gen 7:1-24, Gen 8:1-22, Gen 9:1-29, Gen 10:1-32, Gen 11:1-32

Day 1 On day one of creation:

God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was formless.

The Spirit of God was hovering over the surface.

God spoke light into existence.

God separated the light from darkness.

Day 2 On day two of creation:

God separated the waters of the earth from the water in the heavens.

Day 3 On day three of creation:

God separated the land from the seas.

God caused vegetation to grow.

Reproduction of vegetation was to be according to their kinds.

Day 4 On day four of creation:

God created the sun, moon and stars.

These were to serve as signs for seasons, days and years.

The sun was for the day and the moon for the night.

They were to separate light from darkness. We note that the original light is not the same as the sun, moon and stars. We do not know what the original light was. It may well have just been the presence of God. (Rev 21:23-24)

The sun and moon are called the greater and lesser lights. This may be because the nations around them worshipped the sun, moon and stars.

Day 5 On day five of creation:

Marine animals were created.

Birds were created.

Day six On day six of creation:

Land animals were created.

Adam was created.

Adam and Eve were made in the image of God.

No other creatures were made in the image of God.

God planted a garden (Eden).

The garden contained the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Adam was given the command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Adam named the animals and the birds.

God made Eve from the rib of Adam.

Marriage is instituted.

Mankind was to multiply and rule over the earth and subdue it.

Plants were to be the food for mankind and animals.

Everything that God had made was “very good”.

Day seven

God had completed His work and now rested. Rested does not mean that he was tired, but rather that He was finished with His work and stopped creating.

(š■bat). vb. rest, cease, stop. To cease or stop action, or to rest from action. On the seventh day God rested or ceased (š■bat; Gen 2:2-3) from the work of creating; for this reason Israel is to observe a Sabbath day and rest (š■bat) on it, ceasing from work (e.g., Exo 20:8-11). In contexts other than the Sabbath, the verb š■bat usually means “cease,” not “rest”: seasons will not cease (š■bat) after the flood (Gen 8:22); manna ceased (š■bat) when Israel entered the promised land (Jos 5:12); Israel is not to stop (š■bat) worshiping Yahweh (Jos 22:25); and Israel will not cease (š■bat) to be a nation (Jer 31:36).² The fall

Gen 3:1-24 details the temptation of Eve by Satan (through the serpent) and the sin of Adam. The resulting judgements were:

The judgement on the serpent.

The judgement on the woman:

increased pain in child bearing.

Her “desire” will be for her husband. The word translated desire is also used in Gen 4:7 where “sin is crouching at the door”. In looking at the context in both instances, desire would mean “desiring to control”. The second part affirms this meaning where she is told that “he will rule over you”.

This does not mean that the husband should be a tyrant or oppressive in any way. The woman was to be a “helper” to man. It was “not good for the man to be alone”, thus the woman was to be a

companion. See also Eph 5:25-29. The man had the authoritative role given to him, but he is not to abuse it, but love and protect his wife.

The judgement on the man is a curse on the ground so that he will have to toil. It is now going to be a lot more work to provide food.

Expulsion from the garden of Eden so that they could not eat from the tree of life and live forever.

The first Gospel?

Gen 3:15 is often considered the first reference to Jesus Christ and the Gospel. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." (Gen 3:15)

There would be hostility between Satan (and his followers) and the descendants of Eve. This looks forward to the serpent (Satan) inflicting a non-fatal wound on the Messiah. The Messiah, in turn afflicting a fatal wound (on the head).

Cain and Abel

Gen 4:1-16 details the account of Cain and Abel. Abel presented an acceptable sacrifice to God, whereas Cain presented one that was not acceptable. Cain became angry and killed Abel his brother. His judgement was to be a vagrant and wanderer. He went out from the presence of the Lord. More history about Cain and his family is recorded in Gen 4:17-24. Cain built a city and one of his descendants, Lamech also committed murder. The descendants of Cain had livestock, were musicians, worked with metal and made all sorts of implements. After Cain killed Abel, Seth was born.

Adam to Noah

Chapter five documents the genealogy from Adam to Noah. Here we have the story of a very godly man, Enoch, who so impressed God, that he was taken by God to be with Him without experiencing death. (Gen 5:24) Corruption on the earth Chapter six documents the level of corruption on the earth during the time of Noah. There are two parts to this.

Sons of God

Gen 6:2-4 records the "sons of God" took wives for themselves from the "daughters of men". The resultant offspring were called Nephilim. Nephilim really just means giants and the root word of giants means fallen ones ³. While there is some discussion on who the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men" were, the only real plausible explanation is that the "sons of God" were fallen angels and the "daughters of men" were women descended from Adam and Eve. A good discussion on this is found in this article by Dr. Douglas Petrovich.

Wickedness on the earth The "wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen 6:5) It was so bad that God regretted that He had made man and it grieved Him in His heart. God limited the time that He was going to put up with this to one hundred and twenty years. (Gen 6:3) God was going to destroy all the land animals, birds and mankind because of this evil. Only Noah was found to be righteous during this time and was chosen, along with his immediate family, to build an ark (large boat) to repopulate

the earth after the judgement by the flood. The ark was to be about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet tall. (It may have even been a bit larger, depending on exactly what the length of a cubit was at that point). He was to take the animals, that God would provide, on the ark. This judgement was to be worldwide. "Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. (Gen 6:17) The Flood When Noah completed the ark, God brought all the animals that He wanted to the ark. There were both clean and unclean animals in this group. It is interesting to note that it was not just rain but rather: all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. (Gen 7:11-12) The flood lasted about one year. This was a worldwide flood that destroyed all land animals, mankind and the birds. The water was at over twenty feet higher than the tallest mountains. (Gen 7:19-23) Shortly after the flood

After the waters had receded, Noah, his family and the animals left the ark. Noah presented an offering to God with some of the clean animals that were with him on the ark. God now established a few things.

He would never again destroy the world with a flood.

The rainbow was designated to be a sign that God would not destroy the world again by a flood.

The animals were now given to mankind as food in addition to the plants that were initially given at creation.

The death penalty was instituted.

They were to populate the earth abundantly.

Noah planted a vineyard, drank of the wine and became drunk. While he was uncovered in his tent, Ham came in and then told his brothers. His brothers covered Noah without looking at him. As a result of this, Noah cursed Canaan who was Ham's son. Note that the curse was really more prophetic, looking at the future descendants of Canaan.

Table of Nations

Gen 10:1-32 gives a list of descendants of Noah. There are about two generations listed for Ham and Japheth. Additionally, we are also told who the Philistines came from. One of the descendants of Cush was Nimrod. He established the first kingdom in the Mesopotamian area. The list then continues to Shem's descendants, with a list from Shem to Terah and Abraham. Appendix C – Table of Nations is a chart of the descendants that are listed.

Tower of Babel

Gen 11:1-9 relates the account of the tower of Babel and the dispersion of the nations. God had commanded Noah and his sons to populate the earth, but instead of doing so, they built a tower in order to keep from being scattered over the earth. As a judgement for this, God confused their language and were thus scattered over the face of the earth.

2 - Joshua Joel Spoelstra, "Rest," ed. Douglas Mangum et al., Lexham Theological Wordbook, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

3 - Thomas, Robert L., ed. Hebrew-Aramaic Dictionary of the New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance. Accordance electronic ed., version 1.0. La Habra: Lockman Foundation, 2020.

01.07. Specific points in Genesis 1 - 11

Specific points in Gen 1:1-31, Gen 2:1-25, Gen 3:1-24, Gen 4:1-26, Gen 5:1-32, Gen 6:1-22, Gen 7:1-24, Gen 8:1-22, Gen 9:1-29, Gen 10:1-32, Gen 11:1-32 The definition of the word day Context always determines the meaning of a word. The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew lexicon has the following definition for the word day as used in Gen 1:1-31 : d. day as defined by evening and morning⁴ Gen 1:5; Gen 1:8; Gen 1:13; Gen 1:19; Gen 1:23; Gen 1:31

While day does have different meanings in different contexts, morning and evening always refer to morning and evening of a 24-hour day. Day, when used with morning, evening and a number emphatically means a 24-hour day.

Analysis of a few verses

“God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” (Gen 1:5) In this verse, the word day is used twice. In the first case it refers to the daylight part of the day and in the second case when it is used with “evening and morning” and also a number, it can only mean a 24-hour day. Other verses which use “evening, morning and a number” are Gen 1:8, Gen 1:13, Gen 1:19, Gen 1:23, Gen 1:31.

Verses where day is used with a number or context to indicate a 24-hour day:

“By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.” (Gen 2:2)

Gen 2:2, Gen 2:3, Gen 5:1, Gen 5:2, Gen 7:4, Gen 7:10, Gen 7:11, Gen 7:12, Gen 7:17, Gen 7:24, Gen 8:3, Gen 8:4, Gen 8:6, Gen 8:10, Gen 8:12, Gen 8:14, Gen 15:18, Gen 17:12, Gen 17:23, Gen 17:26, Gen 21:4, Gen 21:8, Gen 21:26, Gen 22:4, Gen 24:55, Gen 30:32, Gen 30:35, Gen 30:36, Gen 31:22, Gen 31:23, Gen 31:43, Gen 31:48, Gen 33:13, Gen 33:16, Gen 34:25, Gen 39:11, Gen 40:7, Gen 40:12, Gen 40:13, Gen 40:18, Gen 40:19, Gen 40:20, Gen 42:13, Gen 42:17, Gen 42:18, Gen 42:32, Gen 48:15, Gen 50:3, Gen 50:10.

Verses where day is used to mean the daylight portion of a day:

“Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;” (Gen 1:14)

Gen 1:14, Gen 1:16, Gen 1:18, Gen 3:8, Gen 8:22, Gen 18:1, Gen 24:12, Gen 24:42, Gen 26:32, Gen 29:7, Gen 31:39, Gen 31:40, Gen 41:9, Gen 48:20.

Verses where day is used for an undetermined amount of time or a specified long period of time:

“This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven.” (Gen 2:4)

“The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;” (Gen 3:14)

Gen 2:4, Gen 2:17, Gen 3:5, Gen 3:14, Gen 3:17, Gen 4:3, Gen 4:14, Gen 5:4, Gen 5:5, Gen 5:8, Gen 5:11, Gen 5:14, Gen 5:17, Gen 5:20, Gen 5:23, Gen 5:27, Gen 5:31, Gen 6:3, Gen 6:4, Gen 6:5, Gen 8:22, Gen 9:29, Gen 10:25, Gen 11:32, Gen 14:1, Gen 18:11, Gen 19:37, Gen 19:38, Gen 21:34, Gen 22:14, Gen 24:1, Gen 25:7, Gen 25:24, Gen 26:1, Gen 26:8, Gen 26:15, Gen 26:18, Gen 26:33, Gen 27:2, Gen 27:41, Gen 27:44, Gen 27:45, Gen 29:20, Gen 29:21, Gen 30:14, Gen 30:33, Gen 32:32, Gen 35:3, Gen 35:20, Gen 35:28, Gen 35:29, Gen 37:34, Gen 38:8, Gen 39:10, Gen 40:4, Gen 41:1, Gen 43:9, Gen 44:32, Gen 47:9, Gen 47:23, Gen 47:26, Gen 47:28, Gen 47:29, Gen 49:1, Gen 50:4, Gen 50:20.

Rapidly matured creation During the creation week, there are a number of things that needed to be matured very quickly.

The food for the marine animals had to be mature or grow within a day.

The vegetation for the animals had to grow quickly (as in a day or 2).

The animals and birds had to be mature enough to fend for themselves.

Adam had to be formed mature enough to take care of himself and tend the garden.

Eve was fashioned mature from the rib of the man.

The sun, moon and stars had to be created in a way so that the light from them was visible for them to serve as lights and signs for days, seasons and years. God, as the all-powerful creator, can cause all of the star formations to happen very quickly on day four of creation, and to cause the light to get to earth in an instant as well. After this, He could then cause the “natural laws” that He put into place to take over.

The text specifically says that by the end of day six, the heavens, the earth and the heavenly lights were completed. (Gen 2:1)

Creation week processes

While Genesis is primarily a history book, it provides some clues as to what happened during the creation week. Miracles, including creation, are by definition not explainable by science.

God separated the light from the darkness. (Gen 1:4) Separating would appear to refer to a process. When someone separates something, it is a process.

God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse (Gen 1:7)

Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; (Gen 1:9) “Be gathered” refers to a process.

Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them" (Gen 1:11)

The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; (Gen 1:12) In these verses, we again see a process. According to the text, it would appear that this process happened within a day.

"Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind" (Gen 1:24) "Bring forth" is a process

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, (Gen 2:7) "formed" is a process

Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky (Gen 2:19)

The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, (Gen 2:22) The word "fashioned" really means to build.

As we examine these verses, we see that in the six days of creation, God accelerated the growing and maturing process. The question is asked regarding the stars and galaxies. Did all of what we see in the heavens really happen as actual history, or is it just a deception? To answer this question, we must first look at some presuppositions that we may have. Some possible ones:

Everything that has happened, has always done so in a uniform way.

The physical laws were in place from the beginning (day 1) of creation.

God is limited to doing things according to the physical laws that He has established for the universe.

While we do not know exactly how God created the heavens and what the actual explanation is for what we see (aside from what we are told – "God said or spoke" and it happened), there are some theories that people have come up with. However, we do get a possible explanation from Scripture which is likely a much better explanation:

It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens. (Jer 10:12)(Is 42:5; 45:12; 51:13; Jer 51:15)

It is highly likely, that on day four, when He created the sun, moon and stars, He created them, and caused all of what we see, to happen very rapidly on that day. Therefore, it is actual history in terms of what has happened; it is just that it happened extremely quickly on day four. As a side note, the secular model calls for the rapid expansion of the universe at the time of the "big bang" to have happened from about 10⁻³⁶ of a second to about 10⁻³² of a second⁵. During this tiny fraction of a second, the universe is supposed to have expanded from a singularity to many billion light years across. It would appear that the Biblical explanation is far more believable since it has a cause for all that happened. The whole of creation proclaims the attributes, power and divine nature of God.

"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." (Rom 1:20) The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. (Psa 19:1)

Since the creation had to be created mature (or rapidly matured) in order for it to function, it would have had the appearance of age. Some have said that God would be deceptive by saying that the universe is less than 10,000 years old when it would appear that it needs to be much older than this. There is no deception in this because He clearly states how long He took to create the earth and He provided us with a chronological record to date the universe. Everything that we see actually happened in history. He also states that His attributes and power can be seen in creation, but does not say that by looking at creation you can determine its age. Creation was a miracle, and just like other miracles, a scientific, naturalistic explanation is not going to work. Creation and miracles points to God.

Other Miracles in the Bible Miracles were frequently given for signs that point to God. Some examples:

Moses was given the sign of his hand being made leprous. (Exo 4:6-7) Normally, the process of becoming leprous or being healed from it would take time, but here it happened very quickly.

It would appear that God did not instantaneously make frogs, etc. appear, but rather that they reproduced very quickly.

The plague of the frogs (Exo 8:2-6).

The plague of the Gnats (Exo 8:16-19).

The plague of the Flies (Exo 8:20-24).

The plague of the Locusts (Exo 10:4-15).

Regarding the dust of the earth that became gnats; was this deceptive? Were the gnats real or not? It is obvious that by the power of God, the sand became gnats.

In Jos 10:12-14, God extended the length of the day about a whole day.

In Jon 4:6-7, God made a plant grow up very quickly and wither very quickly.

Jeroboam's hand withered very quickly, and after the man of God prayed, it was restored quickly. (1Ki 13:4-6)

Jesus turned water into wine. (John 2:6-9). This is a process that would normally take months, but it was done in a very short period of time.

Jesus fed the 5000. (Mat 14:15-21) Note here that it does not seem that a huge mountain of food appeared all of a sudden. As they passed out the food, there was always more in their basket to give.

Paul's sight restored (Acts 9:17-18).

As we look at these and the many other miracles that are recorded, we can see that some of the reasons for them is to point people to God and verify God's Word.

There is just no "scientific" way, and this includes our own observations, to explain miracles. What we call miracles are just a normal way of God working and we need to accept that. Creation itself is a miracle, so we cannot expect to be able to understand it.

If God were not telling the truth in His Word regarding the chronologies and the age of the earth, then He would be deceptive and lying. Jesus Himself said that:

“For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.” (Mat 5:18) (Luk 16:17)

Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God? (Mark 12:24) It is impossible for God to lie. in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, (Tit 1:2)

Paul writes:

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2Ti 2:15) Use of existing material for the composition of Genesis There are some indications that Moses had some sources that had been passed down to him.

This is the book of the generations of Adam (Gen 5:1) Here we have a specific mention of a source.

As already pointed out, there are a number of references that indicate that “these are the generations of). We note that the formula used is somewhat different in the various accounts. For instance,

Adam’s list follows a formula of father lived XXX years and became the father of son. He then lived XXX years and all the days of father were XXX years.

Shem’s list is similar but leaves out the total years lived. Father was XXX years old when he had son. Father lived XXX years after he became the father of son.

Terah’s list gives even less information, but with referencing other passages, we can determine all the ages from Terah to Joseph.

The other accounts generally provide more of a historical narrative and do not focus on the ages so much.

The verses that provide the data to establish approximately when creation happened is discussed in this PDF and in Appendix A

Genealogies – are there gaps?

Some claim that there are gaps in the genealogies of Genesis because there are gaps in other genealogies in other parts of the Bible. So, let’s take a look at that.

The list in Genesis 5 from Adam to Noah always specifies that the father was a certain age when he had a specific son. There is no place in this list that a gap can be inserted.

The list in Genesis 11 from Shem to Terah also always specifies the age of the father when he had a certain son.

From Terah on, we do not have a list as such, but we do have the records in various passages that either tell us the age of the father at the birth of the son, or it can be calculated from information

that is provided. The narratives make it clear that

Terah was the father of Abraham

Abraham was the father of Isaac

Isaac was the father of Jacob

Jacob was the father of Joseph (and the other brothers)

There are a couple of textual transmission problems that should be mentioned.

In the Masoretic text, which we have in our Bibles, (though the early church generally used the Septuagint) the name of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad is left out. Luke was using the Septuagint version when he was writing. While this has been used to support a gap in the genealogies in Genesis it is simply not true. Cainan was in the original text and sometime in the transmission of the text, a copyist, whether accidentally or on purpose deleted his name. Even if Cainan was not original in the text, it does not show a gap, but rather a textual transmission issue.

The Masoretic text and the Septuagint have some different numbers for some of the ages in the genealogies. It appears that the Masoretic text was changed (on purpose) sometime in the 2nd or 3rd century AD. There is enough textual evidence to get very close to reconstructing the original numbers. A brief overview is given in this PDF or in Appendix B. A more detailed discussion is found on the ABR Website. Regardless of which one is true, the possible range of creation is from about 4100 BC to about 5600 BC. This makes the universe less than 8000 years old.

There are places in other parts of the Bible where all the descendants are not listed. In each case, the age of the father at the birth of a son is not given since it is provided to show a lineage. For example, in Mat 1:8, Joram is listed as the father of Uzziah, but he omits three descendants between them. The obvious purpose of Matthew is to show the lineage of Jesus back to David and Abraham as the promised Messiah. The obvious intent of the Genesis chronologies in their context is to provide an actual historical account. Along with the rest of the historical narrative, the purpose may well have been polemic to refute the other creation accounts and the gods that they worshipped. We are still facing the same issue today. If the secular worldview, evolution and long ages are true, then the Bible is false. If the Bible is true, then the secular worldview is false.

Gap between Gen 1:1; Gen 1:3?

There are some that would suggest a long gap between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:3 in order to get some long ages inserted. Andrew Steinman refutes this:

Moreover, unless one posits an unmentioned (and, therefore, unlikely) gap in time between the creation of heaven and earth and God's activity beginning at 1:3, the creation mentioned in 1:1 is part of the activity that is later summed up by 1:5 as one day.⁶ The way that the first five verses are written (remembering that verse divisions did not exist until sometime from about 900 AD to 1300 AD) indicates that they were describing one day. Additionally, Gen 1:8 says "second" day, Gen 1:13 says "third day" etc. The obvious, plain reading is that Gen 1:1 to Gen 2:3 describes the first seven days of creation.

Aside from this account, God again says in Exodus that He created in six days, so there can be no gap here. (Exo 20:11, Exo 31:17) In both of these accounts, it specifically says that God was speaking. The Flood and the geological column The layers in the “geological column” are often used to support an old earth, but does the evidence really support this? While there is a lot of evidence to support the account of Noah’s flood in the time period stated, we will list just a few examples. More can be found on websites such as Answers in Genesis or books such as “Earth’s Catastrophic Past”⁷.

Marine fossils on high mountains.

Evidence of rapid burial of animals and plants.

Upright trees going through supposedly millions of years of sedimentation.

Marine animals in the Grand Canyon area were fossilized in an upright position.

Sedimentary layers were bent while still soft.

The Mount St. Helens eruption and subsequent events show how sedimentation and erosion can happen very quickly.

Flat coal seams.

Complex creatures are at the “bottom” of the geological column.

No evidence of transitional forms.

Soft tissue in Dinosaur fossils.

Satan’s deception

Note the deception that Satan used with Eve: “Did God really say?” He is still using this same tactic in relation to the historicity of the 6 days of creation and the global flood. The Bible clearly says in more than one place that God created in six literal days and that the flood was global with only those in the ark surviving. Satan is sowing doubt and seeks to undermine the authority and the message (gospel) of the Bible. If the historicity of the creation in six days and the global flood is compromised, the rest of the Bible will also fall because it is based on Genesis.

4 - Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 398.

5 - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inflation_\(cosmology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inflation_(cosmology))

6 - Andrew E. Steinmann, Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary, ed. David G. Firth, vol. 1, The Tyndale Commentary Series (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 2019), 50.

7 - Snelling, Andrew A. Earth’s Catastrophic Past. Volume 1 & 2. Green Forest, AZ: Master Books, 2009

01.08. Genesis 1 – 11 references in other parts of the Bible

Gen 1:1-31, Gen 2:1-25, Gen 3:1-24, Gen 4:1-26, Gen 5:1-32, Gen 6:1-22, Gen 7:1-24, Gen 8:1-22, Gen 9:1-29, Gen 10:1-32, Gen 11:1-32 references in other parts of the Bible (selected list)

Old Testament

"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. (Exo 20:11)

"It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed." When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God. (Exo 31:17-18) (notice in these passages that God specifically tells Moses that He made the universe in six days). By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host." (Psa 33:6) For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." (Psa 33:9) Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created." (Psa 148:5)

"For this is like the days of Noah to Me, When I swore that the waters of Noah Would not flood the earth again; So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you Nor will I rebuke you. (Isa 54:9)

New Testament

"For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Mat 24:37-39) (Luk 17:26-27)

(as it is written, "A father of many nations have I made you") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist." (Rom 4:17)

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned-- (Rom 5:12) So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (1Co 15:45) (refers to Gen 2:7 of God making man from the dust of the earth and breathing life into him) For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. (1Ti 2:13) By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." (Heb 11:3) By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Heb 11:7) who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. (1Pe 3:20) and did not spare the

ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; (2Pe 2:5) It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied (Jude 1:14)

01.09. Conclusion

Conclusion The text clearly indicates that Genesis one to eleven is actual history. It appears that Moses had some records that were passed down to him. Other information, regarding the history, was revealed to him directly by God, just as many other things relating to the law were revealed to Moses. The wording of the text makes it clear that God created in six literal days and that the Flood covered the whole world. No land animals or birds survived the flood other than those on the ark with Noah. It would appear that everything during the creation week happened at an accelerated rate. Everything from plants growing to the stars and galaxies being formed and light coming to earth happened much faster than the normal rate today. After the flood, the nations were dispersed with different languages. The scientific evidence affirms the account provided in the Bible. The first eleven chapters of Genesis provide the history of the universe, the global flood and the lineage from Adam to Abraham. It is a polemic against the false worldviews at the time. These chapters provide much of the basis for what we see today.

The whole universe and the operation of it.

Male and female of species.

The origin of sin and evil.

The reason for suffering, death and disease.

Diversity of languages and people groups.

Finally, consider Ephesians chapter six. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against all the spiritual forces of evil. The whole armor of God is primarily defensive, with only the sword being both defensive and offensive. Without the sword, which is the Word of God, we will be defeated at some point.

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2Ti 2:15)

01.10. Appendix A – establishing dates from creation to the temple

Appendix A

Reference verses to establish the dating from creation to the start of the building of the temple by Solomon, which is an established date.

Reference points During Old Testament times, dates are generally given in reference to a king or a significant event. For example:

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. (Gen 7:11)

Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (Exo 12:40-41)

Thus the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, (Num 9:1)

Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD (1Ki 6:1)

Gen 1:1-31 and Gen 2:1-25

Gen 1:1-5 describe the first day

Creation of heaven and earth

Light

Separation of light and dark

Definition of what a day means – evening and morning. In other words, a normal 24-hour day

Gen 1:6-8 describe the second day

An expanse is created between the earth and heaven

Gen 1:9-13 describe the third day

Dry land appears

The dry land is called earth and the water is called seas

Vegetation is created

Gen 1:14-19 describe the fourth day

Lights were made to be a sign for the seasons, days and years. (the reason for not specifying sun and moon is likely because they were worshipped by other people)

Stars are also made

Gen 1:20-23 describe the fifth day

Swimming creatures are made

Flying creatures are made

Gen 1:24-31 describe the sixth day

Land animals are made

Adam & Eve are made in the image of God

Man is given dominion over all the living creatures

Animals and mankind were given plants for food

God states that everything that he made was "very good"

Gen 2:2-3 describe the seventh day

By the seventh day, God had completed his work, rested and blessed the seventh day.

In the 4th commandment regarding the Sabbath, Exo 20:11 affirms that God made the heavens and the earth and all that is in them in 6 ordinary, 24 hour days.

Gen 5:1-32, Gen 7:1-24 & Gen 9:1-29 In this chapter we have the "book of the generations of Adam". We will use the Masoretic text numbers as they are represented in our Bibles. Later we will show the comparison of the Masoretic text and Septuagint numbers as the latter is more likely the correct version.

Considering the formula given for this list, it is quite obvious that God wanted us to be able to calculate the overall timeline, with the reference point being creation. For example, we read that when Adam was 130, he became the father of Seth. He lived another 800 years and the total years that he lived was 930.

Name

Age at birth of Son

Lived after birth of son

Total Lifespan

Adam

130

800

930

Seth

105

807

912

Enosh

90

815

905

Kenan

70

840

910

Mahalalel

65

830

895

Jared

162

800

962

Enoch

65

300

365

Methuselah

187

782

969

Lamech

182

595

777

Noah

502

448

950

For Noah, we need to look at a few verses.

Gen 5:32 tells us that Noah was 500 years old when he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth

Gen 7:6 tells us that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came

Gen 9:28 tells us that Noah lived 350 years after the flood

Gen 9:29 tells us that Noah lived a total of 950 years.

Gen 11:10 tells us that Shem was 100 years old 2 years after the flood

From this information, we can tell that Shem was not the first-born, but was born 2 years after either Japheth or Ham or both were born.

Gen 11:1-32 In this chapter we have the record of the generations of Shem. We have a similar formula in this list. The age of the patriarch is provided at the birth of the son and then lived another number of years.

Name

Age at birth of Son

Lived after birth of son

Total Lifespan

Shem

100

500

600

Arpachshad

35

403

438

Shelah

30

403

433

Eber

34

430

464

Peleg

30

209

239

Reu

32

207

239

Serug

30

200

230

Nahor

29

119

148

Terah

130

75

205

For Terah we need to look at the following verses since his first son was not Abraham.

Gen 11:32 gives the total lifespan for Terah as 205

Gen 12:4 gives the age of Abraham as 75 when he left Haran right after Terah died there

This makes Terah 130 when Abraham was born. (It also makes him 140 when Sarah was born to him by another woman)

Abraham to Joseph To get the numbers from Abraham to Joseph we go into a more detailed part of the text and find the references to compile this list.

Abraham was 100 years old at the birth of Isaac

Gen 17:1-27 records Abraham being 99 years old when he was given the promise of a child through Sarah his wife the following year.

Gen 21:5 records Abraham's age as 100 years old when Isaac was born.

Abraham lived to be 175 years old (Gen 25:7)

Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob was born (Gen 25:26)

Isaac was 180 years old when he died (Gen 35:28)

Jacob was 147 years old when he died (Gen 47:28)

Joseph's numbers need to be calculated a bit differently.

Jacob was in Egypt 17 years

Jacob entered Egypt when there were 5 years left in the famine (Gen 45:6; Gen 45:11)

Joseph was 30 years old when he came before Pharaoh (Gen 41:46). At this point the 7 years of plenty were just beginning.

Joseph died at 110 years of age (Gen 50:26)

So, to get Jacob's age at Joseph's birth we need to start from the time that Jacob entered Egypt. He was 130 Years old when he came to Egypt (Gen 47:9). From that, we subtract the 2 years of famine that have already occurred, so that makes him 128 at the start of the famine. From there we subtract the 7 years of plenty, making him 121 at the time of the start of the 7 years of plenty which is when Joseph was 30 years old, making Jacob 91 years old when Joseph was born. Joseph's sons were born prior to the years of famine. (Gen 41:50)

Name

Age at birth of Son

Lived after birth of son

Total Lifespan

Abraham

100

75

175

Isaac

60

120

180

Jacob

91

56

147

Joseph

31-36

74-79

110

Time in Egypt Exo 12:40-41 provide the total time in Egypt – 430 years to the day.

Time from the Exodus to the start of the Temple In 1Ki 6:1 we are told that in the 480th year after Israel came out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon, he began to build the temple. So here we have another reference point. The fourth year of Solomon's reign has been quite firmly established to be 967 BC (Steinmann 2011, Pg 37). This puts the Exodus at 1446 BC.

Putting all this together now we have

The Exodus in 1446 BC

Jacob (Israel) into Egypt in 1876 BC

Jacobs birth is 2006 BC

Isaac's birth is 2066 BC

Abraham's birth is 2166 BC

From there it is a fairly simple matter of charting all of this.

There is one more issue to deal with and that is the textual evidence of the Patriarchal numbers.

There has been an obvious changing of some of the numbers of the pre-flood and post flood patriarchs. A number of the ages when sons were born have been changed. There were also some copying mistakes. By looking at the textual and extra-Biblical evidence, the original numbers

can be reconstructed fairly well. The following chart represents the most likely original numbers. With the Masoretic text, we come up with a creation date of about 4174 BC and with the most probable reconstruction, we come up with 5554 BC. This provides us with the outside bounds of the date of creation, i.e. no farther back than 5554 BC and no less than 4174 BC. For a discussion on the textual evidence, please go to <https://biblearchaeology.org/abr-projects-main/genesis-5-11-project>

The other lifespan we are told about is that of Moses.

Moses was about 40 years old when he killed the Egyptian (Acts 7:23)

Moses was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus. (Exo 7:7)

Moses was 120 years old when he died. (Deu 34:7)

Since the Exodus was in 1446 BC, Moses would have been born in 1526 BC and died in 1406 BC.

Dating from Creation or our current calendar When God started to provide a timeline for us, He started with creation not with the calendar that we currently use. This could be compared to using degrees Celsius or degrees Kelvin. The Kelvin scale starts at absolute 0 (-273.15 C), which could be compared to dating from creation, since that is the starting point of time. Degrees Celsius could be compared to our current dating system of BC and AD with Jesus Christ being the reference point. From this reference point, whether it be the freezing point of water at 0 degrees or the birth of Jesus, you can go forward or backward. Just as you can convert from Celsius to Kelvin, so you can convert from absolute dates from creation to our present calendar.

Bibliography Steinmann, Andrew. From Abraham to Paul. St Louis, MO: Concordia, 2011.

01.11. Appendix B – overview of short and long chronologies

Appendix B An overview of the Short and Long Chronologies in Genesis The Chronologies in Gen 5:1-32 and Gen 11:1-32 have some differences in the various textual witnesses. This is only a very brief overview and more detailed information is available on the website of Associates for Biblical Research. Genesis 5, 11 Research Project This seems to be about the best and most comprehensive work on the subject.

Most modern Bibles have the “short” chronology, while the early church generally accepted the longer chronology. The short chronology is based on the Masoretic (MT) text which is generally the superior text. The longer chronology is mostly based on the Septuagint (LXX) which was translated from Hebrew into Greek in the 3rd century BC (~281 BC). Other early texts also illuminate the issue. It is obvious that “someone” has changed some of the numbers deliberately while some scribal errors are also present. The Biblical text gives us some clues as to which is more likely. When Abraham was about 99 years old, we have this text: now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' (Gen 18:11-13)

According to the MT text, when Abraham was 99 years old, Shem would have been 549 years old, Shelah 414 Years and Eber 384 Years. Since all of these people had siblings, we would reasonably expect that there were others that were still alive that also attained these longer ages. When Abraham was 140 years old, we have this text:

Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way. (Gen 24:1) At Abraham’s death we have this text:

Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people. (Gen 25:8) He was 175 years old. A visual representation comparing the length of the chronologies: (note they are based on what is called the “long sojourn” since Exo 12:40 records the time of Israel in Egypt as 430 Years and Gen 15:13 predicts an approximate 400 Years in Egypt. Dr. Douglas Petrovich has written a paper on this topic. (https://www.academia.edu/40790408/2019_Determining_the_Precise_Length_of_the_Israelite_Sojourn_in_Egypt) This chart is based on the MT

This is the longer chronology

This chart represents ages in the shorter (MT) chronology

Masoretic Text

Age at Abraham’s Birth

Lifespans

Abraham's age at Patriarch's death

Noah

Dead 2 Years

950

Shem

450

600

150

Arphaxad

350

438

88

Shelah

315

433

118

Eber

285

464

Outlived Abraham by 4 Years

Peleg

Dead 12 Years

239

Reu

221

239

18

Serug

189

230

41

Nahor

Dead 11 Years

148

Terah

130

205

75

Abraham

0

175

This chart represents the longer chronology

Long Chronology

Age at Abraham's Birth

Lifespans

Abraham's age at Patriarch's death

Shem

Dead 630 Years

600

Not Born Yet

Arphaxad

Dead 565 Years

565

Not Born Yet

Kainan

Dead 535 Years

460

Not Born Yet

Shelah

Dead 332 Years

533

Not Born Yet

Eber

Dead 231 Years

504

Not Born Yet

Peleg

Dead 262 Years

339

Not Born Yet

Reu

Dead 132 Years

339

Not Born Yet

Serug

Dead 9 Years

330

Not Born Yet

Nahor

Dead 1 Year

208

Not Born Yet

Terah

130

205

75

Abraham

A couple of additional comments that are interesting and may help illuminate the issue slightly. In the MT text, Noah and Shem (the two people who went through the judgement of the flood) lived past the tower of Babel over 200 years. The MT chronology puts the tower of Babel event only about 100 years after the flood. While we know that people do fall away from God fairly quickly, this would seem rather odd with both Noah and Shem still being alive and the memory and evidence of the flood quite fresh that we would see this large-scale rebellion so soon. Consider a possible parallel. The Israelites under Moses wandered in the desert and then entered the promised land under Joshua. They saw all the miracles and the working of God in their lives. Once the elders that outlived Joshua died, (Jos 24:31) we see that they started to fall away and rebel as recorded in the book of Judges. If we consider the longer chronology as true, then Noah would have passed on 181 years prior to Babel and Shem would have passed on 29 years prior to the Babel event. In light of this, it would make much more sense that Babel would have been over 500 years after the flood.

Additional Information

Henry B. Smith Jr. documents the following in his paper - The case for the Septuagint's chronology in Genesis 5, 11 (2018 ICC) Demetrius the Chronographer (ca. 220 BC) dated creation to 5307 BC Eupolemus (ca. 160 BC), who was a Jewish historian, came up with the same date of 5307 BC for creation.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (1st century AD) was originally written in Hebrew and has the longer numbers (with a few re-constructible scribal errors)

Josephus, writing after the fall of Jerusalem around 94 AD and working from a Hebrew text and translating it into Greek, comes up with a time of the written history of the Jews of about 5000 years. This would put creation around 5425 BC.

It appears that the Hebrew text was changed sometime in about the 2nd or 3rd century AD.

Based on this information, one needs to ask "which chronology fits the text and the evidence"?

It would certainly appear that the only way the text makes sense is if the longer chronology is correct, otherwise Abraham would not have died at a "ripe old age". Most of his ancestors lived longer than he did. (In the MT text, only Nahor would not have lived as long) By the time of Abraham, even 100 years was considered old according to the text. Also, consider that just over 100 years after Abraham's death, Pharaoh is seemingly quite intrigued by Jacob's age, indicating that the long lifespans had subsided by this time.

Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many years have you lived?" So Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; (Gen 47:8-9)

01.12. Appendix C – Table of Nations

Appendix C – Table of Nations

02.00. Basic Principles of Biblical Interpretation

Basic Principles of Biblical Interpretation The content of this book may be used for the Glory of God.

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Website <https://www.biblestudyhelps.ca/>

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02.03. Introduction

Introduction As I think back to the time when I first became a Christian starting to study the Scriptures, I look at what was taught and what was not taught in the Church, at Bible College and at the Seminary. This article is an attempt to provide some of the basics that I wish I would have had.

Whenever we study or evaluate anything, we have presuppositions that we may or may not be aware of. Since these presuppositions affect our evaluation and understanding of what we are studying, we must first uncover our presuppositions and then evaluate them. Once we have done that, we can then understand what we are studying in a more open and accurate way.

While much material has been written on the Scriptures and doctrines, we should really study the actual Scriptures first to understand what is written without being swayed by what others have written. Good resources would include maps, charts, timelines and a brief overview of the Bible. An electronic Bible such as E Sword is very helpful in searching for a specific Scripture and comparing Scriptures and words. A good Hebrew Lexicon (Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Definitions) and a Greek Lexicon (Thayer's Greek Definitions) is available for E Sword. The "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia" provides a lot of good information on many topics but has some theological and presuppositional biases. In terms of some commentaries, the following would be suggested, keeping in mind that they will have some doctrinal and presuppositional biases and should only be consulted after doing your own study. (These are all available free with E Sword)

David Guzik's Enduring Word Commentary

Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary

It is helpful to have Strong's Concordance or use a Bible that has Strong's numbers in E Sword such as the King James Version (KJV) or the New American Standard Bible (NASB). The KJV comes free with E Sword, whereas the NASB is a paid add on. With these, searches can be done on the original language words.

R. A. Torrey has written an excellent book on "How to Study the Bible"

In our studies, we need to keep Jesus' statement in mind as to our purpose in studying:

"And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.'" (Mat 22:37-40) As Micah has recorded:

"He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

02.04. Presuppositions and Worldviews

Presuppositions and Worldviews The first thing that we should do is eliminate all the wrong worldviews and presuppositions that go along with them. The laws of logic demand that only one worldview can be true since mutually exclusive views cannot be true. This is a brief list with a short description of each item. A list of resources is provided in the Bibliography for further study.

Atheism. There is no way to prove that God does not exist. Science requires that there be a “supernatural” creator.

Deism. There is no way to prove this. You would have to be God in order to know that God just created the universe and then left it.

Agnosticism. There is no way to know that you cannot know truth or that truth is not knowable. This is a self-defeating philosophy since by affirming that you cannot know truth or that truth is not knowable, you are in fact making a truth claim.

Polytheism. Any religion that proclaims multiple gods is false since the gods would all lack something that the others have and therefore not be truly God. In order to truly be God, God needs to be totally complete and be of a consistent character.

Pantheism. The belief that everything is a part of god does not work either. For example, people are different, with very different views. If they were all part of the same organism, then the views would be consistent. No one could proclaim anything to be true, since there are so many different views among people. Since we are finite beings, how can we be infinite at the same time? With this view there would be no such thing as stealing, since, if everything is a part of god, then it all belongs to everyone anyways. How do you kill a part of god? There is no such thing as relative truth since even stating that as a truth, violates its own statement.

Non-personal gods. As we have already stated, in order to know truth, you have to know past, present and future. Aside from this, a god would have to be a personal god in order to communicate to people. Without this communicating ability and actually communicating to people, we could never know anything. A non-personal god cannot communicate anything including truth, history, future or a worldview philosophy.

I have my truth; you have your truth. This is also a self-defeating view. If you have contradictory or mutually exclusive beliefs, then they both cannot be true. They can both be false, but not true. This is similar to saying that we should “tolerate” or “accept” all the different views. This is self-defeating in that accepting all views, you accept views that exclude your own view. They cannot both be true at the same time. In order to be able to intelligently discuss any of these ideas, we need to accept and use the laws of logic or the discussions become totally meaningless.

Science holds all truth. The Concise Oxford English defines “science” this way

1 the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment.

2a systematically organized body of knowledge on any subject. Of note here is that science studies the physical and natural world through observation and experiment. You cannot directly observe and experiment with the past or the future. You also never know if there will be something that does not fit the present hypothesis. The history of science shows this as theories from the past have been either rejected or modified. No one can ever know if we have discovered all relevant information. By its nature, science can never determine absolute truth, it can only provide low or high probabilities on any subject related to the natural universe. By this definition, the systematic and organized study of Scripture would also qualify as science.

Big Bang and Evolution. This is also rejected because of logic, reason and science.

This universe had a beginning and is running down in energy. Science does not allow for everything from nothing.

Life does not come from non-life.

Information does not come from non-information.

The fossil record demonstrates that complex life forms are in the “lowest” layers and appear fully formed. There is no evidence of the numerous transitional forms that would be required

If everything is just random, then you could never know anything or be able to assume that there are consistent patterns, yet “science” assumes and demands this uniformitarianism.

There would be no such thing as truth, right or wrong. No one would be able to assert anything at all since everything is just a random chemical process.

Judaism. While Judaism accepts the Old Testament, they also have other writings that they hold to. Jesus referred to this

“And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. ‘But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ “Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” He was also saying to them, “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.” (Mark 7:6-9)

Aside from this, the main issue is that the Hebrew text foretold the coming of the Messiah with many prophecies that were fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, they reject Jesus as the Messiah.

Islam. While Islam “accepts” the five books of Moses, the Psalms of David and the Gospels, they say that they are corrupted. There is no evidence to this effect. Consider that Muhammed came on the scene around 600 BC. Since he accepted these books at that time and we have texts that predate him, it is obvious that the texts that we have are not corrupted. While the Old Testament prophets and Jesus performed miracles to attest that they were proclaiming the Word of God, Muhammad did not perform miracles. Islam rejects the crucifixion of Jesus and His resurrection among other things.

After eliminating all of these proposed possibilities, the only viable candidate for a correct worldview is Christianity. It is the only worldview in which there is a cohesive, logical explanation for all that is and is the only one which has a viable way of knowing. God attested to His Word through the miracles that He performed, especially during the Exodus and the life and ministry of Jesus. The textual, archaeological and scientific evidence affirm the truth of the Scriptures.

02.05. Christianity

Christianity

Now that we have established that Christianity is the only viable option as a worldview, we can look at a few of the implications.

The creator God is all powerful, all knowing and present everywhere.

God is eternal and not of this natural realm that He has created.

God is the only complete source of truth and knowledge.

God has revealed himself to people.

All Scripture is inspired by God and God is the author. (2Ti 3:16, 2Pe 1:21-21, 1Th 2:13)

Because God is the author of Scripture, it is accurate and true in everything it touches on.

The history and events that are recorded in Scripture are accurate and refer to actual events and people.

Since God is not limited to the laws that he has established for His creation, He is free to perform signs and miracles. In fact, the definition of a miracle is something that is outside of the natural laws that this universe operates on. Creation was a miracle, as was the resurrection of Jesus. List of Miracles

Since Adam and Eve were the first humans that God created and because they were designed to live forever, their DNA would not have been corrupted as ours are. This would account for the long lives of the people prior to the flood and even down to Abraham. They would also have been quite intelligent and likely strong.

02.06. Reading and Understanding the Scriptures

Reading and Understanding the Scriptures

Now that we have established some background truths, we can proceed to the basic principles for reading and understanding Scripture.

The Scriptures were written by real people in history and record real events.

God is the author of the Scriptures and used people to write them. The Scriptures are written in the style of the writer, but the writer is not the author. (Whenever you see commentaries talk about Paul's or John's theology, a red flag should go up. Another red flag should go up when you read a commentary that talks about how Hebrew theology developed over time and how it "evolved" from other cultures around them). Any reading of the text that places man as the author rather than God sows the seed for doubt, change or rejection of God's Word and contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture.

The Scriptures should be read as plainly written and understood.

The Scriptures should be read and understood as the writer and the recipients would have understood them. A good example of this is in Genesis. For example, in Gen 1:5 we read:

God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. (Genesis 1:5) In Gen 2:1-25 we read: By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. (Gen 2:2) In addition to this, in Exo 20:1-26 :

"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. (Exo 20:11) As we look at these passages, we see that God defines the word "day" as an ordinary 24-hour day. He then specifically says that he rested on the seventh day and then re-affirms that He created in 6 – 24-hour days in Exodus as the basis for the sabbath.

It is important to look at the context and purpose of the text. Who wrote it? (human author) Who was it written to? What was going on at the time? What is the historical setting? The logical and generally the simplest reading is the correct one. Do other passages of Scripture shed light on the passage? Since the Bible is authored by God, we are not going to see contradictions and any interpretations that would impose contradictions are therefore false.

Once the Scripture is understood in its context, we should then see how it applies to our life and how we can Love God and others more.

02.07. Context

Context

One of the most confusing things when I first started to study was trying to figure out where people and places fit, especially since the books of the Bible are not arranged in a chronological order. In this section, I will try and establish some of that and include charts and maps to help visualize things. The first timeline is a really high level one showing some key events from creation to present. The following timelines present more specific periods.

This timeline is better viewed as a separate image. It shows the dominant kingdoms for different areas from the flood to about 250 AD.

Historical Books The “Historical” books of the Bible are

Old Testament

Genesis – covers from creation to 1805 BC. (The death of Joseph)

Exodus – covers from about 1600 BC to about 1444-5 BC.

Leviticus – during the Exodus period 1446 BC to 1406 BC. Primarily regulations.

Numbers – covers from the end of Exodus to 1406 BC.

Deuteronomy – recaps the events from Mount Sinai to the death of Moses in 1406 BC.

Joshua – continues from 1406 BC to his death sometime in the early 1300 BC time frame.

Judges – from the death of Joshua to the time just prior to Samuel around 1060 BC.

Ruth – is a story that fits into the time of Judges and tells of the ancestor of King David.

1st Samuel – records the history from Eli, the predecessor of Samuel to the death of Saul around 1010 BC or so.

2nd Samuel - continues to a time before David's death. Likely to about 970 BC.

1st Kings – Starts with the end of David's reign and to the reign of King Ahaziah. ~ 842 BC.

2nd Kings – starts with the death of Ahaziah and continues to the fall of Jerusalem - 586 BC.

1st Chronicles – starts with a number of genealogies and then proceeds from the death of Saul to the death of David. 1st and 2nd Chronicles are very much a parallel to Samuel and Kings.

2nd Chronicles – starts with the reign of Solomon and proceeds to the fall of Jerusalem (586 BC) and the edict of Cyrus of Persia allowing the exiles to return. ~ 538 BC.

Ezra – reports the return of the exiles about 458 BC and subsequent events.

Nehemiah – records his journey to go to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls. 446 BC to about 430 BC.

Esther – records the account of a plot against the Jews in the Persian time – about 470 BC – 480 BC.

New Testament

Matthew – recounts the events of Jesus' life.

Mark - recounts the events of Jesus' life.

Luke - recounts the events of Jesus' life.

John - recounts the events of Jesus' life.

Acts – records the events from the ascension of Jesus to Paul in Prison about 65 BC.

Prophetic Books

Old Testament

Isaiah – Lived in the 700 BCs – He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.

Jeremiah – Lived in the late 600s BC and early 500s BC. He prophesied during the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and the last king – Zedekiah. He was taken to Egypt after the fall of Jerusalem.

Lamentations – written by Jeremiah

Ezekiel- was one of the exiles taken by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. This places him in the early 500s BC.

Daniel – was one of the exiles and would have been young when he was taken to Babylon around 600 BC. He served several Babylonian and Persian kings.

Hosea – predated Isaiah and overlapped with him. He would have been active in the middle 700 BCs to the early 600s BC. He served during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

Joel – was likely written around 800 BC.

Amos – Dates to the reign of Uzziah around the early 700 BCs.

Obadiah – difficult to date – likely early.

Jonah – prophesied in the early to mid 700s during the reign of Jeroboam the 2nd.

Micah – prophesied in the late 700s BC to early 600s BC during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

Nahum – likely prophesied around the middle 600s BC.

Habakkuk – likely prophesied in the late 600s BC.

Zephaniah – prophesied during the late 600s BC.

Haggai – prophesied during the reign of Darius the Mede – late 500s BC.

Zechariah - prophesied during the reign of Darius the Mede – late 500s BC.

Malachi – wrote in the 400s BC.

New Testament

Revelation – was written by the apostle John around 95 AD.

New Testament Writers The names of the books reflect either the identity of the recipient or the identity of the writer. These books were all written between about 48 AD and 90 AD. The books generally address issues and doctrines. Only the letters by John the apostle were written after the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in 70 AD.

Romans

1st Corinthians

2nd Corinthians

Galatians

Ephesians

Philippians

Colossians

1st Thessalonians

2nd Thessalonians

1st Timothy

2nd Timothy

Titus

Philemon

Hebrews

James

1st Peter

2nd Peter

1st John

2nd John

3rd John

Jude

02.08. Overview of the Events recorded in Scripture

Overview of the Events recorded in Scripture When reading or studying Scriptures, it is helpful to have a high-level view and understanding of the flow of the whole Bible. This helps to provide context and reference points for the events that are recorded. The Bible starts with an account of the creation of the universe, the earth and all living things by God. God called His creation “very good”.

God planted a garden called Eden, put the man into it and gave some very basic commands

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so. (Gen 1:26-30)

Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." (Gen 2:15-17)

Adam and Eve did not obey the command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which resulted in the judgements and curses on people and the land. This is called the “fall of man” and led to the death, pain, suffering and groanings that we see all around us.

Cain murders his brother Abel and we see the increasing wickedness of people.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, walked with God and was taken to be with God without dying.

Because of the wickedness and evil of all people, God decided to destroy the world with a global flood. Only Noah was found to be righteous on the earth. God commanded Noah to build an ark for his family and the animals. The global flood then destroyed all on the earth and in the sky.

Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. (Gen 7:23)

After the flood,

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. "The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the

sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. "Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. "Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man. "As for you, be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it." (Gen 9:1-7)

The people did not disperse as God had commanded, rather they wanted to remain together and make a name for themselves, so we have the episode of the tower of Babel. God confused their language and they stopped building and were scattered.

We then move on to Abraham and his family. He is called out of Ur of the Chaldeans and led to Canaan. We come to the record of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness. Abraham intercedes for the cities to the point that even if ten righteous are found, God would not destroy it. Obviously, ten righteous were not found.

Abraham is promised a descendant by God. When this is taking a long time, Sarah suggests that she could have her descendant via Hagar, her maid. Ishmael is the result of this union and God said

"He will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand will be against everyone, And everyone's hand will be against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers. (Gen 16:12)

God then tells Abraham that Sarah will bear him a child and that His covenant will be with that child and his descendants. The child that Sarah bore was named Isaac. Isaac then fathered Esau and Jacob. Jacob then became the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Joseph, one of the 12 sons, is sold into slavery in Egypt where he ends up being second only to Pharaoh after he interprets the dream of Pharaoh regarding the seven good years to be followed by the seven very bad years.

During the bad years, Joseph brings his family to Egypt where they lived 430 Years.

They were subsequently enslaved by a later Pharaoh after which God sent Moses to lead the people out of Egypt into the promised land of Canaan. The Israelites frequently disobeyed, grumbled, and did not obey the command to enter the promised land. This led to the original group of men over 20 years old having to die in the wilderness prior to the Israelites entering the Promised Land.

Moses leads them until the conquest of the East side of the Jordan is completed. Joshua takes over and leads them through the dried-up Jordan and starts the conquest with the destruction of the heavily fortified city of Jericho where God caused the walls to fall down.

The Israelites serve God throughout the lifetime of Joshua and the elders that outlived him. After this, the tumultuous period of the Judges starts with the Israelites serving other gods and disobeying God. God then allows others to oppress them and, when the Israelites cry out to God, He sends a judge to deliver them. This pattern continues until the time of Samuel the prophet. As Samuel ages, the people want him to appoint a king over them.

Saul is then appointed as the first king. He however is not obedient, and God chooses David as the next king. David is called a man after God's own heart.

David's son, Solomon, takes the reigns after David and was given extraordinary wisdom. Under Solomon, the territory of Israel reached its maximum size. Solomon was not committed totally to God. His son Rehoboam does not listen to the advice of the elders, but rather follows the advice of his younger companions. The result is the division of the kingdom into the southern kingdom of Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel.

God keeps sending prophets to the people to urge them to turn back to Himself during the time of the Judges and Kings. Unfortunately, the people do not respond very well and thus they experience God's judgement many times over.

The northern kingdom rebels against God virtually right away and as judgement is exiled by Assyria in 722 or 723 BC.

Judah has a mix of good, bad and half-hearted kings and is exiled by Nebuchadnezzar starting in 605 BC down to 586/7 BC.

Under Cyrus, the Persian, the exiles are allowed to start to return and close to 50,000 go back to Jerusalem. While idolatry does not seem to be the problem anymore, disobedience to God and His commands certainly persisted.

It is during the time between the return from the exile and the start of the New Testament, that the Pharisees and Sadducees appear.

Jesus is born of the virgin Mary

The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. (Luk 1:35)

John describes Jesus in the following way

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. (John 1:1-4)

Jesus calls 12 disciples to Himself and goes about proclaiming the kingdom of God, teaching, performing miracles, healing people and casting out demons.

The Pharisees and Sadducees conspire to convict Jesus and have Him crucified.

Jesus is raised from the dead on the third day. He appears to his followers during the next 40 days and then ascends to heaven.

Jesus, being God Himself, was the only one who was sinless and could therefore pay the penalty for all of our sins, from Adam on forward.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the

world, but that the world might be saved through Him. "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16-18)

The Holy Spirit comes on the Disciples at Pentecost (50 days after Passover) and the disciples speak in tongues and proclaim Jesus to the people. They also start doing miracles by healing people.

The book of Acts records the growth of the church until shortly before the time of the Apostle Paul's death.

The letters of the New Testament are written to address questions, problems and doctrinal truths.

John writes the book of Revelation towards the end of his life. Here we have instructions and prophecies regarding the end times. The main take away from the book is to persevere and be faithful.

"For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Mat 24:37-39)

While many are always trying to figure out the exact time when Jesus returns, Jesus Himself said

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. (Mat 24:36)

"For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will. (Mat 24:44)

Revelation concludes with

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Rev 21:1-8)

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03.01. Gospels, Daniel and the End Times

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03.02. Introduction

Introduction With the variety of views relating to the end times and whether they are literal or spiritual, it seems good to look at what Scripture actually says. One very useful technique is to eliminate options that cannot be true based on the text. This study will be a very brief one and seek to establish the framework for all prophetic passages related to the end times. For the book of Revelation itself, see this article.

Daniel is told:

“Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. “Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. (Dan 12:9-10 NAS95) A principle that is established by this is that the wicked (unbelievers) will not understand the prophecies, but only those that have insight will understand.

We need to establish some historical events. Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah prophesied in the first year of Darius (about 538 BC). Antiochus IV Epiphanes desecrated the temple and slew pigs on it in about 167 BC. (1Ma 1:54, Josephus Antiq. 12:253) Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. John, the Apostle wrote the book of Revelation in about 95 AD. The view that the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation has been the main view from antiquity and therefore puts the prophecies into the future, i.e. future from 95 AD.

1 It is said that in this persecution the apostle and evangelist John, who was still alive, was condemned to dwell on the island of Patmos in consequence of his testimony to the divine word. 2 Irenaeus, in the fifth book of his work Against Heresies, where he discusses the number of the name of Antichrist which is given in the so-called Apocalypse of John, speaks as follows concerning him: 3 “If it were necessary for his name to be proclaimed openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him who saw the revelation. For it was seen not long ago, but almost in our own generation, at the end of the reign of Domitian.”ⁱ (Also Irenaeus V.XXX.1-3) External evidence for the earlier (Neronian) date is almost nonexistent.ⁱⁱ

This, as well as the text of Daniel, the Gospels, Revelation and recorded history rules out associating the end times events with the reign of Nero or Titus. Additionally, the decline of the Churches mentioned in Revelation and the likelihood that the Church at Smyrna was not founded until after Paul’s Death adds to the evidence.ⁱⁱⁱ Some of the prophecies were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. As we compare the Gospel accounts of the discussion that Jesus had with His disciples, we can see that not everything that was said by Jesus is recorded. It is safe to assume that more was actually said, but this was all that God wanted us to have. Looking at the various texts and prophecies is somewhat like assembling a jigsaw puzzle. You start with doing the corners so that you have some reference points and then see what fits. As you continue to assemble the puzzle, you get a clearer picture and there are less pieces to place. This process helps to put demarcation points in place so that we can eliminate certain possibilities.

03.03. Key Texts

Key Texts

Daniel The dream of Nebuchadnezzar found in Dan 2:1-45 refers to the kingdoms of Babylon, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks and then the Romans. The stone that struck the statue is the kingdom established by Jesus. His kingdom will endure forever. This kingdom that arose from the stone that struck the statue cannot be the second coming of Christ, according to the text, it has to be the first coming. Note the interpretation in Dan 2:36-45, Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold, which is the Babylonian empire. The second kingdom refers to the Medes and Persians. The third refers to that of the Greeks and the fourth to the Roman empire. Note specifically the following verse related to the Roman empire. It is in the “days of those kings”.

“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. (Dan 2:44 NAS95) “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ (Mat 10:7 NAS95)

“From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. (Mat 11:12 NAS95)

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.” (John 18:36 NAS95) The vision of the four beasts in Dan 7:1-28. The first three beasts have already passed, but the fourth one is placed into the end times.

‘He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ‘But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. (Dan 7:25-26 NAS95) The vision in Dan 8:1-26 with the ram and goat refers to the kingdom of the Medes and Persians being defeated by the king of Greece. Dan 8:11-14 refer to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in the time of the Maccabees. In Dan 9:24-27, Gabriel brings the decree for Daniel’s people (Israelites). It is important therefore to note that the seventy weeks all refer to the Jews. This is really important when we look at the book of Revelation to determine the start of the seven years. There is a time gap between the 69th week and the 70th week. Luke refers to this time as the “time of the Gentiles”. (Luk 21:24). It would therefore be more proper to refer to the age that we are in as the “time of the Gentiles”, rather than the “Church age”.

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of

distress. “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (Dan 9:24-27 NAS95) The vision of Dan 10:1-21, Dan 11:1-35 refers to the time of the Medes and Persians and then the Greek kingdoms to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.iv There is a shift at this point to looking at the end times.

“Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time. (Dan 11:35 NAS95) In verse 40, it is made really clear that the focus is now on the end times.

“At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through. (Dan 11:40 NAS95)

“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. (Dan 12:1-2 NAS95)

“But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.” (Dan 12:4 NAS95) And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be until the end of these wonders?” I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed. (Dan 12:6-7 NAS95)

“From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. “How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! (Dan 12:11-12 NAS95)

“But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.” (Dan 12:13 NAS95)

Let’s examine the texts to establish some key points. The seventy weeks references seventy sabbatical cycles. A sabbatical cycle is seven years. The first seven weeks therefore is seven sabbatical year cycles to form one Jubilee cycle. Thus, we have 69 weeks = 483 years from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah. (This by itself would rule out the time of the Maccabees). To any ancient Jew, the “weeks” of Dan 9:25, which were periods of seven years, would immediately bring to mind the sabbatical year cycles the LORD established in Exo 23:10-11 and Lev 25:1-55.v A number of other items from Daniel’s prophecy also do not fit with trying to put the “abomination of desolation” from Dan 9:27 into the time of the Maccabees. First, the Messiah comes and is killed. Next you need the city and sanctuary destroyed; This did not happen then.

The temple was destroyed previously by Nebuchadnezzar and after it was rebuilt, it was not destroyed until Titus did so in 70 AD. The matter of making a covenant with many (Jews) and after 3 ½ years, when the “abomination of desolation” comes, does not fit with either the Maccabees or Titus. Neither can it be said that there was an “increase of knowledge” either in the times of the Maccabees or the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. So, the time of the Maccabees is ruled out as is the time of Titus. The 483 years coincides with the coming of Jesus the Messiah. After the 62 weeks, the Messiah is cut off. So sometime after the arrival of the Messiah, He is killed. The next phrase is interesting and must be examined carefully. It is not the prince who is to come, but rather the people of the prince. So, who are these people of the prince who are to destroy the temple and Jerusalem after the Messiah is killed? History records that it was the Roman legions along with their auxiliaries that destroyed Jerusalem. While many assume that because it was Titus and the “Roman” legions that destroyed Jerusalem, that the ruler must come from a revived Roman empire. The fact is though that most of the soldiers in these legions and their auxiliary units were from the surrounding area. (See appendix A for citations) In light of this, it is most likely that the prince will be from the Middle East. This lines up with the book of Revelation where the armies come from the East and Babylon is mentioned, essentially, as the seat of power of this kingdom. The destruction by Titus in 70 AD also does not line up with Daniel’s prophecy. The Messiah had come and was killed, but Titus never made a covenant with the Jews that were in Jerusalem because the Jews refused. Not only that, Titus actually did not want to destroy the temple.^{vi} The Gospels The main sections are in Mat 24:1-51, Mat 25:1-46, Mark 13:1-37, Luk 17:22-36; Luk 21:5-36. The setting is just prior to his death and resurrection. The first passage from Luke is just prior to them going to Jerusalem. The rest are when Jesus and the disciples are walking in the temple area, the disciples point out the wonderful buildings, beautiful stones and dedicated gifts and proceed to the Mount of Olives. Jesus tells them that not one of these stones (of the temple buildings) will be left upon each other. The following is the account of this conversation and is a compilation of the synoptic Gospels in order to get the most complete information. Note that Jesus does not present everything in a chronological order. At one point He specifically says that “before these things”, “this will happen”. This first passage is set at the end of time. And He said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. “They will say to you, ‘Look there! Look here!’ Do not go away, and do not run after them. “For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. “But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. “And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. “It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. “It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. “On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. “Remember Lot’s wife. “Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. “I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. “There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left. [“Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other

will be left.”] And answering they said to Him, “Where, Lord?” And He said to them, “Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered.” (Luk 17:22-37 NAS95) Note that the last part of the last verse is similar to Mat 24:28 which is also placed at the end times. And as He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down.” And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, (Mark 13:1-3 LSB)

“Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?” (Mat 24:3 LSB) And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one deceives you. “For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. (Mat 24:4-5 LSB)

“And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.” (Luk 21:9 LSB)

“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. “But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains. (Mat 24:7-8 LSB) Here is a time marker. The following occurs prior to what was just said.

“But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name’s sake. “It will result in an opportunity for your testimony. (Luk 21:12-13 LSB) “The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. (Mark 13:10 NAS95) The following verse again takes a break from the chronology and is a general statement.

“And when they lead you away, delivering you up, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. (Mark 13:11 LSB) “At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. (Mat 24:10 NAS95)

“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. (Mark 13:12 NAS95) “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. (Mat 24:11 NAS95) “Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. (Mat 24:12 NAS95)

“You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. (Mark 13:13 NAS95) The following is a somewhat separate statement again. The indicator as to the time frame is “when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies”. That puts this set of verses into the time frame of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD. Note that verses 23 and 24 describe what happened and especially noteworthy is that Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. This is frequently referred to as the “Church age”, but Scripture calls it the “time of the Gentiles”. The following passage in Luke, therefore, cannot refer to the end times.

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. “Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the

city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled. (Luk 21:20-22 NAS95)

“Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people; and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. (Luk 21:23-24 NAS95)

We now come to another event to look at and determine its time frame. This section is set after the gospel has been preached to all nations. This places it towards the end or after the time of the Gentiles. Frequently, the previous passage in Luke is confused with the following one that is recorded in Matthew and Mark. The text makes a distinction in the time that each applies to. Luke’s marker is that Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, (Titus in 70 AD), Matthew and Mark put this in the context of “the end” and the marker is the “abomination of desolation” in the temple. These are therefore two different events that Jesus talked about and should not be confused. Another indicator that these are different events, is that in the Matthew and Mark accounts, it refers to a “a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will”. This cannot refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD, even though it was a horrific time, since that type of tribulation has occurred previously and the end times will see a greater tribulation. It is also at this time that Jesus returns and gathers the elect, which again does not fit for 70 AD. The great sign and wonders that Jesus talks about have not happened either.

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Mat 24:14 NAS95)

“Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. “Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. “Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. “But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! “But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. “Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. (Mat 24:15-22 NAS95)

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him. “For false christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. “Behold, I have told you in advance. “Therefore, if they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out, or, ‘Behold, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them. “For just as the lightning comes from the east and appears even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Mat 24:23-27 LSB) “But as for you, see! I have told you everything in advance. (Mark 13:23 LSB)

“But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and

then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (Mat 24:29-30 LSB)

“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Luk 21:25-26 LSB)

“And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven. (Mark 13:27 LSB)

“But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (Luk 21:28 LSB) After this, Jesus tells the parable of the fig tree.

Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its branches become tender and sprout leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you will know that He is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. (Mat 24:32-35 BEREAN) Jesus goes on to warn them to keep watch and be faithful. Note the parallel with Noah. All will be swept away. No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark. And they were oblivious, until the flood came and swept them all away. So will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. (Mat 24:36-39 BEREAN) But watch yourselves, or your hearts will be weighed down by dissipation, drunkenness, and the worries of life—and that day will spring upon you suddenly like a snare. For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of all the earth. So keep watch at all times, and pray that you may have the strength to escape all that is about to happen and to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luk 21:34-36 BEREAN)

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day on which your Lord will come. But understand this: If the homeowner had known in which watch of the night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. For this reason, you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour you do not expect. Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of his household, to give the others their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. (Mat 24:42-47 BEREAN) Jesus reinforces this with the parable of the ten virgins. The whole point being to prepare and be ready. But while they were on their way to buy it, the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. (Mat 25:10 BEREAN) “Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour. (Mat 25:13 NAS95)

Jesus then tells of the parable of the talents. The point of this one is to be faithful in doing the task that is assigned to each one. The one that was not faithful is rejected. His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ (Mat 25:21 ESV) And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (Mat 25:30 ESV) Jesus then

proceeds to talk about the final judgement by comparing people to sheep and goats. When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (Mat 25:31-32 BEREAN)

Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you looked after Me, I was in prison and you visited Me.' (Mat 25:34-36 BEREAN)

Then He will say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (Mat 25:41 BEREAN) And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'" (Mat 25:46 BEREAN)

Thessalonians

Paul addresses the issue of the return of Jesus. There are a few points that again will allow us to put some markers in place.

Now we ask you, brothers, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in your mind or be alarmed whether by a spirit or a word or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it has not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the sanctuary of God, exhibiting himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed—whom the Lord Jesus WILL SLAY WITH THE BREATH OF HIS MOUTH and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming— whose coming is in accord with the working of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of unrighteousness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. (2Th 2:1-10 LSB) The markers are:

The apostasy comes first.

The "man of lawlessness" (this would seem to refer to the beast in Revelation) comes and exalts himself above every "so-called" god.

He takes his seat in the sanctuary.

He will be slain by Jesus.

The take-ways from this are:

There has to be some kind of great apostasy that is different in magnitude from anything that we have seen in history. Apostacy means falling away or rebelling.

apostasía. Based on apostátēs (politically a “rebel,” religiously an “apostate”), this term signifies the state (not the act) of apostasy. Paul is accused of apostasy against the law in Acts 21:21. Eschatological apostasy is the issue in 2Th 2:3, either with or prior to the man of lawlessness. Resting on Jewish tradition, this will be the decline of Christians into error and sin in the last days (cf. Mat 24:11-12).vii

■ποστασία (apostasia). n. rebellion, apostasy, abandonment. Refers to rebelling or abandoning a former authority. The Greek word apostasia is the source of the English word “apostasy.” It is used only twice in the nt. Acts 21:21 reports a rumor that Paul is teaching Jews to abandon (apostasia) the teachings of Moses. 2Th 2:3 foretells a great “falling away” or “rebellion” (apostasia) from the Christian faith before the day of Christ.viii Jesus talks about this in Matthew as He talks about the end times and quite likely refers to the same event.

“And at that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. (Mat 24:10 LSB)

Even though many leaders have exalted themselves above all gods, this must be different from that.

In terms of timing, this one is really important. He has to take his seat in the sanctuary of God. This can only take place once the third temple is built. This places it in the future. Since he is going to be slain by Jesus on His return, the timing is at the very end of the age. This puts it squarely into the last years of the tribulation just prior to the return of Jesus and answers the concern of the believers regarding the second coming of Jesus.

03.04. Putting in the markers (the corners of the puzzle)

Putting in the markers (the corners of the puzzle)

It is time to start putting in some events as markers to eliminate those views that cannot be true. This is like starting with the corner pieces of a puzzle. There are only a few and then only the right pieces will fit. So, let's start with the corner and edge pieces.

Daniel places the arrival of Jesus at the proper time. In light of this, any views that put the abomination of desolation prior to Jesus cannot be true. Other items from Daniel's prophecy also do not fit with the historical account at the time of the Maccabees. The text of Daniel makes it clear that there is a time period between the 69th week and the 70th week. Daniel has a Jewish context and the 70th week is set in a Jewish context with a temple where there will be sacrifices and offerings. This necessarily then puts the 70th week into the future after the 3rd temple is built.

Luke states that there is a "time of the Gentiles" after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. So, we must conclude that we are presently in this "time of the Gentiles" since the 3rd temple has not been built and it is primarily the Gentile Christians that are currently present in the world. Considering that Israel is once again a nation, the stage appears to be set for the end of the "time of the Gentiles" and for the focus to return to Israel. Likely, the next significant event would be either the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem or the start of the removing of the seals by Jesus. This is in addition to the Church becoming apostate.

One item from Revelation gives us another marker at the opening of the 6th seal. saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the slaves of our God on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those having been sealed, 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: (Rev 7:3-4 LSB) The slaves (or servants in other translations) of God are to be sealed. Their total number of 144,000 is stated and they are all from the tribes of Israel. This must necessarily mean that the Gentile believers have been taken up in the rapture by this point (or have all become apostate). If the Gentile believers had not been taken up, they would be here at this point. If they were here, were they not marked or counted? The angel said that the servants of God were to be sealed, and that the total number was 144,000, so no other believers could be present at that point. All of the events after the sixth seal must be post "times of the Gentiles". Therefore, looking for the "mark of the beast", the identity of the "666", "the" "antichrist", "the" false prophet (yes, there were, and will be many false prophets) or the "revived Roman empire" is futile and really does not apply to our present age. The Seven Year Tribulation

We have already established that the 70th week of Daniel is in the future and that it is a seven-year period. Most charts that you see will have the tribulation period spanning from the beginning of the seven seals to the second coming of Christ. Is this the correct view though according to the text? Let's look at Daniel's text again.

"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal

up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. (Dan 9:24 NAS95) The seventy weeks apply to the Jewish people, not to Gentiles.

Now, looking at the book of Revelation, we have two 3 ½ year periods. The first begins with the arrival of the two witnesses at the end of the 6th trumpet. The second 3 ½ year period starts with the killing of the two witnesses and the beast being given authority to act for 3 ½ years. From the time of the opening of the seals to the arrival of the two witnesses, the judgements are on all of the earth. It is not until the arrival of the two witnesses, that the focus shifts back to Israel. In light of this, it is likely that the seven-year tribulation period proper does not start until the arrival of the two witnesses. That is not to discount the judgements nor their intensity from the start of the opening of the seals. This also provides for the time of the seal and trumpet judgements prior to the two 3 ½ year events that are listed. The apostasy that is referenced in 2Th 2:3 is a little harder to place, so this is a bit of speculation here. The apostasy has to be prior to, or associated with, the man of lawlessness, so it has to be no later than the middle of the Tribulation. Considering the severity of the judgements of the seals and trumpets, I would be inclined to think that it was prior to the opening of the first seal, so that going into the time of the judgements of the end, there would be very few Christians. More on this shortly.

03.05. The First Signs of the End of the Age

The First Signs of the End of the Age

While many people focus on the “antichrist”, “mark of the beast”, the “666”, the false prophet or what the identity of the identity of the nation (i.e., the revived Roman empire or Babylon) is, there is much that will happen prior to that. Other than the 144,000 Israelites that are sealed at the opening of the sixth seal, no believers from the present age will be around for all those events. We really need to focus on the present time period to the time of the rapture. So, what are the first signs that will appear? The first sign would likely be the re-establishing of the Jewish nation. This really is a pre-requisite for much that follows. You cannot have the 70th week until you have the Jewish nation re-established and the 3rd temple built. The establishment of the Jewish state happened in 1948. The second could be that the Gospel has been proclaimed throughout all nations, or virtually all nations. The third is the one that we should really focus on. As just mentioned, the “apostacy” has to come first. Apostacy refers to the falling away from and or rebelling. Is this apostacy the world or the Church or the man of lawlessness? In conjunction with this, Jesus said:

“And at that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. (Mat 24:10 LSB)

John MacArthur believes that it refers to the man of lawlessness^{ix}. It is somewhat interesting to look at his argument. He first establishes that “apostacy” means:

Thus, the word marks a deliberate defection from a formerly held religious position^x.

He then goes on to identify the apostacy with the man of lawlessness. The apostle identified the apostacy by naming the key character connected with it: the man of lawlessness. Understanding who that key person is, is a prerequisite to identifying the apostacy event. Anomia (lawlessness) literally means “without law”^{xi} he will drop all pretense and the previously hidden wickedness of his character will be fully disclosed. God and the Lord Jesus will not have appeared as his enemies until the time he is revealed.^{xii} Antichrist will lead the world astray into destruction (Rev 13:5-8).

After initially posing as the friend of religion (cf. Rev 17:13), Antichrist will suddenly reveal his true nature when he commits blasphemy against God and opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship^{xiii}

Since apostacy is a “deliberate defection from a formerly held religious position” then how do you apply this to the “man lawlessness”, since it is unlikely that he ever held to the true position of accepting God? Since this “man of lawlessness” seems to be identified with the beast in Revelation, and this beast was empowered by Satan, it seems unlikely that he held a godly view at any time. Thus, the only option for this view is to suggest that he was deceptive and made himself out to be godly, but does that really fit with the definition of apostacy? In this view, the apostacy would really have to apply to those who are deceived by the man of lawlessness and desert the

faith. He was given power to make war with the saints and overcome them in Rev 13:7. In this larger passage, it does not seem to say that the believers were deceived as the saints are called to persevere in this persecution. The ones that were deceived are those that dwell on the earth. This seems to refer more to the unbelievers than those that believed. Rev 13:13-14.

William Macdonald in the Believers Bible Commentary puts it after the rapture.

Now the apostle explains why they could not be in that Day. Certain events must take place first. After the Rapture, these events will begin to happen.

First of all there will be the falling away, or the apostasy. What does this mean? We can only surmise that it refers to a wholesale abandonment of Christianity, a positive rejection of the Christian faith.^{xiv}

He is likely right in that it is a wholesale abandonment of Christianity, but does it fit after the rapture? After the rapture, there will only be the 144,000 Israelites and then the 2 witnesses. I would suspect that those that come to Christ in that time period will likely be quite committed Christians as they are going through the judgments of God and have turned to God during those circumstances.

Michael Martin in the New American Commentary series makes the following observations: The temporal relationship between the rebellion and the man of lawlessness is not certain.^{xv} Paul's comments here are simply not detailed enough to make a certain determination on this point.^{xvi}

Neither did Paul elaborate on the nature of "the rebellion" (apostasias), which therefore must already have been a well-defined concept for the Thessalonians. Apostasia indicates an act of abandoning or moving away from a position formerly held.

Religiously it means to desert one's faith.^{xvii}

Thus it seems likely that the apostasy Paul had in mind expanded on Jewish apocalyptic expectations and envisioned a dramatic and climactic falling away from the worship of the true God (by both Jews and some portion of the Christian church) as a part of the complex of events at the end of the age.^{xix} Thomas Constable in the Bible Knowledge commentary states:

One major event is the rebellion (lit., "the falling away," ἡ ἀποστασία, from whence comes the English word "apostasy"). This is a revolt, a departure, an abandoning of a position once held. This rebellion, which will take place within the professing church, will be a departure from the truth that God has revealed in His Word. True, apostasy has characterized the church almost from its inception, but Paul referred to a specific distinguishable apostasy that will come in the future.^{xx} Knute Larson in the Holman Bible Commentary states:

Before that great day comes, Paul declared, the rebellion must occur. The word used here is apostasia, or apostasy. Before the day of the Lord, there will be a great denial, a deliberate turning away by those who profess to belong to Christ. It will be a rebellion. Having once allied themselves with Christ, they will abandon him. Within the recognized church there will come a time when people will forsake their faith. Throughout history there have been defections from the faith. But the apostasy about which he wrote to the Thessalonians would be of greater magnitude and would signal the coming of the end.^{xxi} In "The coming Apostasy" Mark Hitchcock and Jeff Kinley state:

The definite article appears before the word “apostasy” signaling that this is not just any departure from the faith but one that is unique and that the readers apparently knew about. It is the apostasy. This final apostasy will entail a large-scale, widespread falling away on the part of those who profess to know God^{xxii} G. K. Beale in his commentary states:

Such a meaning is apparent because of the immediate context of false teaching (2:1–2, 9–12) and the clear allusions to Daniel’s prediction of an end-time opponent who will bring about a large-scale compromise of faith among God’s people. The apostasy will not occur primarily in the non-Christian world but rather within the covenant community, as is clear from four observations. (1) A “falling away” assumes some sort of prior turning to God. (2) This is consistent with the above-noted usage of apostasia in the Old Testament. (3) It is also consistent with the immediate context of deception within the church. (4) It is supported by the closest verbal parallel to this passage, namely, Martyrdom of Isa 2:4-5, where “the angel of iniquity” empowers evil Manasseh “in causing apostasy [apostasia], and in the lawlessness [anomia] that was disseminated in Jerusalem,” that is, among God’s people.^{xxiii}

So, likely, we are looking for a general and widespread falling away from and rebelling against God by the Church that will be noticeably different from anything in the past. It is best though, not to be dogmatic about this point, as the main thrust of Paul was that it was prior to the second coming of Jesus.

Note also Paul’s statement to Timothy. But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by the hypocrisy of liars, who have been seared in their own conscience, ... (1Ti 4:1-2 LSB) But know this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, without gentleness, without love for good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, but having denied its power. Keep away from such men as these. For among them are those who enter into households and take captive weak women weighed down with sins, being led on by various desires, always learning and never able to come to the full knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, disqualified in regard to the faith. But they will not make further progress, for their folly will be obvious to all, just as theirs was also. But you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra. What persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2Ti 3:1-13 LSB) Peter states the following: knowing this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.” (2Pe 3:3-4 LSB)

Jude also writes in a similar way. This type of thing was already happening in the early Church, but this apostasy of the end times will be much more widespread and engulf virtually the whole Church. So, what would that look like? What types of things should we be looking for? In the early Church there were apostles, teachers and other Church leaders that would speak against the false

teachings and practices with authority and generally, the true doctrine was established. The end times would likely reflect a refusal to accept God's Word and truth by Church leaders, Seminaries, Bible Colleges and Christians in general. Jesus says that

"Many false prophets will arise and will deceive many. "And because lawlessness is multiplied, most people's love will grow cold. (Mat 24:11-12 LSB)

If there is any doubt that the religious leaders would become apostate, we just need to look back in history. Jeremiah talks about the prophet and priest being polluted. (Jer 23:11). Jesus addressed the false teachings and practices of the religious leaders of His day. The New Testament writers address false teachings and teachers and warn about future false teachers in the church. The early Church fathers wrote against heresies and the reformers confronted the false teachings of the Catholic Church. More information is in this article. As we look at these verses, we find some common themes. The first is false teaching. Here we find that:

Many Church leaders, Seminaries, Bible Colleges and parishioners no longer hold that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Holy Word of God. They generally do not accept the plain, obvious meaning of the text. While they may claim that they accept it they deny:

Genesis is an accurate, historical account of the supernatural creation by God in six literal, 24-hour days from nothing through His Word.

The flood of Noah's time was a worldwide flood.

The chronology established in Genesis means that the world is less than 8000 years old.

Israel was in Egypt for 430 years from approximately 1876 BC to 1446 BC.

God performed miracles in Egypt so that Pharaoh would let the Israelites go.

Israel went through the Red Sea on dry ground as water was on either side of them.

The miracles in the desert.

The conquest of Jericho in about 1406 BC.

The conquest of the land in the following years.

The reign of David and Solomon and the size and type of kingdom they governed.

Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible.

Various miracles throughout the Old Testament period.

The Virgin birth.

The death and resurrection of Jesus as the atoning sacrifice for sin.

The deity of Jesus.

The Trinity.

The miracles of the New Testament.

A literal heaven for the believers and a literal hell where the unbelievers will be punished for eternity.

They say you cannot understand the Old Testament unless you know other ancient near eastern literature and understand it.

They state that the Israelite religion “evolved”.

There are numerous other Scriptural truths that are denied or twisted.

When you deny the accuracy and authority of the Scriptures, you make Jesus and the New Testament writers out to be deceived and lying. This takes away the Deity of Christ and makes them an “antichrist”.

We also find that the Scriptures are not considered authoritative any more. The general thought is that people can interpret the Scriptures any way that they want, and everyone can have their own interpretation. The Reformation cry was “Scripture alone is authoritative”.

Paul says:

All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16 LSB) Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (2Ti 2:15 LSB) in all things show yourself to be a model of good works, with purity in doctrine, dignified, (Tit 2:7 LSB)

Peter says:

Know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes by one’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever made by the will of man, but men being moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2Pe 1:20-21 LSB)

Another telling sign is the focus on self. While we can expect that the unbelieving portion of society would be focussed on self, an increasing number of those within the Church are also focussed on self.

The Church and even the translations of the Bible are moving toward being politically correct. It is getting to be difficult to tell the difference between the Church and society in general.

Paul tells Timothy: For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. (2Ti 4:3-4 LSB)

While Peter is speaking in a somewhat different context, the principle seems to apply. Judgement starts with the Church. So, we should likely expect a judgement from God on the Church at the time of the apostacy referenced in Thessalonians. For it is time for judgment to begin with the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1Pe 4:17 LSB)

Thankfully, we still have some Pastors, Churches, Seminaries, Bible Colleges and Believers that hold fast to the Word of God and proclaim it accurately and faithfully.

03.06. The focus of Jesus

The focus of Jesus

We should look at what Jesus focused on, and what His commands were relating to future events and our life. If we look at Matthew's account, Mat 24:5-31 are the verses where He speaks about future events. Mat 24:32-51 and Mat 25:1-46 are the verses where He teaches them to be faithful, alert and ready. Those who are faithful will receive eternal life, those who are not will go to eternal punishment. We really need to keep Jesus' commands in mind and persevere in doing good to the end. Let's focus on doing what Jesus commanded us and persevere in doing good. And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." "This is the great and foremost commandment. "And the second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' "On these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets." (Mat 22:37-40 LSB) And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Mat 28:18-20 LSB) "But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. (Mat 24:13 LSB)

'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.' (Rev 2:7 LSB) ... However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luk 18:8 NAS95) in all things show yourself to be a model of good works, with purity in doctrine, dignified, (Tit 2:7 LSB) Will you and I be found faithful?

03.07. Appendix A

Appendix A Notes regarding the composition of the Roman army under Titus for the greatest part of the Roman garrison was raised out of Syria; and being thus related to the Syrian part, they were ready to assist it.xxiv But as to Titus, he sailed over from Achaia to Alexandria, and that sooner than the winter season did usually permit; so he took with him those forces he was sent for, and marching with great expedition, he came suddenly to Ptolemais, (65) and there finding his father, together with the two legions, the fifth and tenth, which were the most eminent legions of all, he joined them to that fifteenth legion which was with his father: (66) eighteen cohorts followed these legions; there came also five cohorts from Cesarea, with one troop of horsemen, and five other troops of horsemen from Syria. (67) Now these ten cohorts had severally a thousand footmen, but the other thirteen cohorts had no more than six hundred footmen apiece, with a hundred and twenty horsemen. (68) There were also a considerable number of auxiliaries got together, that came from the kings Antiochus, and Agrippa, and Sohemus, each of them contributing one thousand footmen that were archers, and a thousand horsemen. Malchus also, the king of Arabia, sent a thousand horsemen, besides five thousand footmen, the greatest part of whom were archers; (69) so that the whole army, including the auxiliaries sent by the kings, as well horsemen as footmen, when all were united together, amounted to sixty thousand, besides the servants, who, as they followed in vast numbers, so because they had been trained up in war with the rest, ought not to be distinguished from the fighting men; for as they were in their masters' service in times of peace; so did they undergo the like dangers with them in times of war, insomuch that they were inferior to none, either in skill or in strength, only they were subject to their masters. xxv

Upon the whole he sent this man to take upon him the command of the armies that were in Syria; but this not without great encomiums and flattering compellations, such as necessity required, and such as might mollify him into complaisance. (8) So Vespasian sent his son Titus from Achaia, where he had been with Nero, to Alexandria, to bring back with him from thence the fifth and tenth legions, while he himself, when he had passed over the Hellespont, came by land into Syria, where he gathered together, the Roman forces, with a considerable number of auxiliaries from the kings in that neighborhood.xxvi At the beginning of this same year Titus Caesar, who had been selected by his father to complete the subjugation of Judea, and who had already won distinction as a soldier while both were still private citizens, began to enjoy greater power and reputation, for provinces and armies now vied with one another in enthusiasm for him. Moreover, in his own conduct, wishing to be thought greater than his fortune, he always showed himself dignified and energetic in the field; by his affable address he called forth devotion, and he often mingled with the common soldiers both at work or on the march without impairing his position as general. He found awaiting him in Judea three legions, Vespasian's old troops, the Fifth, the Tenth, and the Fifteenth. He reinforced these with the Twelfth from Syria and with some soldiers from the Twenty-second and the Third which he brought from Alexandria; these troops were accompanied by twenty cohorts of allied infantry, eight squadrons of cavalry, as well as by the princes Agrippa and Sohaemus, the auxiliaries sent by King Antiochus, and by a strong contingent of Arabs, who hated

the Jews with all that hatred that is common among neighbours; there were besides many Romans who had been prompted to leave the capital and Italy by the hope that each entertained of securing the prince's favour while he was yet free from engagements. With these forces Titus entered the enemy's land: his troops advanced in strict order, he reconnoitred at every step and was always ready for battle; not far from Jerusalem he pitched camp.xxvii

03.08. Appendix B (chart of Revelation events)

Appendix B (chart of Revelation events)

03.09. End Notes

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04.02. Information

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04.03. Contents

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04.04. Introduction

Introduction This study seeks to look at the reasons that persuaded people to accept the writings in the Bible as Scripture that came from God. What persuaded them to accept the word of the prophets, apostles and writers of the books that are contained in the Bible as authoritative and inerrant? Do we have any remaining evidence to support the claims made in the Bible? While we live in a time where people want to re-write history, it cannot be changed since it happened in time and space, even if people distort or “cancel” some of it. It seems that people think that they more accurately know what happened in history, even if it contradicts the records of those times and want to be the arbiters of truth.

04.05. Creation

Creation

We will start by stating the obvious – we and this universe exist. Since the universe is finite, there has to be an eternal creator. The apostle Paul tells us in Rom 1:19-20 what we already know. The creation itself is evidence of the existence of God. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Rom 1:20)

Since God is the only one who was there at creation, He is the one that needs to tell us what happened and when it happened. Since there was a worldwide flood that destroyed everything, there is no pre-flood archaeology that we can access.

04.06. The Worldwide Flood

The Worldwide Flood The only people that experienced and survived the worldwide flood were Noah and his immediate family. (8 people in all) They would have been able to pass on the accounts of events prior to the flood and the flood account. There is much evidence of the flood as evidenced by the various scientific disciplines¹. We have evidence that the flood deposited the “geological column” and the fossils contained therein². Ministries such as Answers in Genesis, Associates for Biblical Research, Creation Ministries International have a lot of information on the subject.

It is interesting to note that written records start sometime after the flood. Dating of the earliest records dates to just a few hundred years after the flood which was about 3298 BC.³ (Comprehensive time line). It is during this time that we find accounts of creation and the flood^{4,5}. This is also when archaeology reveals the dispersion from Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq) as this is the approximate area where Noah and his descendants originally settled. Sargon of Akkad has been identified^{13/ 2013_Identifying_Nimrod_of_Genesis_10_with_Sargon_of_Akkad_by_Exegetical_and_Archaeological_Means”>13/ 2013_Identifying_Nimrod_of_Genesis_10_with_Sargon_of_Akkad_by_Exegetical_and_Archaeological_Means”>6 with Nimrod, a descendant of Ham. Abraham left Ur of the Chaldeans a few years prior to it being overthrown by the Gutians coming from the Zagros mountains. They incorporated a hit and run type of warfare in the area and were already doing this when Abraham was a young man.}

04.07. Moses and the Exodus

Moses and the Exodus The first books of the Bible were written by Moses during the wilderness wanderings (1446 BC-1406 BC). So, where did Moses get his information and why did he and the people believe that God was speaking to them?

We need to make a bit of a detour first. “Modern” people usually believe that people evolved and became more intelligent over time. This really contradicts the reality though. God made Adam and Eve in His own image and therefore they were likely the smartest people. As DNA copying errors appeared, there would be less capacity to think and perform as compared to the original couple. Aside from this, they also lived much longer, which gave them more time to learn and hone their skills⁷. Based on this, we can assert that the ancient people were quite skilled and would not have had any trouble keeping records. Some of the things that are recorded about the first generations in the Bible:

Cain built a city. Gen 4:17

Jabal was the father of all that played the lyre and pipe. Gen 4:21

Tubal-Cain was a forger of bronze and iron. Gen 4:22

Noah built the ark. The ark was around 450 -500 feet long with 3 decks. Gen 6:14-16

After the flood, they built a tower (ziggurat). Gen 11:3-4

When God dispersed these people, they took the skills that they had. We see the remnants of what they built in various places. The pyramids in Egypt are an example. The book “Ancient Man”⁸ documents many of these.

There are a number of places where Moses, the author of Genesis to Deuteronomy, lists sources that he was using⁹.

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. (Gen 5:1)

These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. (Gen 6:9)

Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood. (Gen 10:1)

Now these are the records of the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot. (Gen 11:27)

The variance in the construction of the records indicates that they were originally separate accounts that were likely passed down in written form. For example, the account from Adam to Noah gives the age at birth, remaining years and total years. The account from Shem to Terah

provides the age at birth and remaining years, but omits the total years lived. (Gen 5:1-32, Gen 11:1-32)

Aside from this, we need to remember that God was the primary author of the Scriptures. (2Ti 3:16, 2Pe 1:20-21, John 14:26, 1Th 2:13).

Signs for Moses

There are a number of signs that God gave Moses of convince him that it was indeed the creator God that was speaking with him.

"that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you." (Exo 4:5)

"If they will not believe you or heed the witness of the first sign, they may believe the witness of the last sign. "But if they will not believe even these two signs or heed what you say, then you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water which you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground." (Exo 4:8-9)

The account of the burning bush got the attention of Moses as it was burning, but not being consumed. (Exo 3:2-3)

Moses heard God calling him. (Exo 3:4-10)

Moses then has a discussion with God. (Exo 3:11-22, Exo 4:1-17)

Moses is given signs

Staff becoming a serpent. (Exo 4:2-4)

Hand becoming leprous. (Exo 4:6-7)

Signs for the Israelites prior to the Exodus Moses and Aaron assembled the elders of Israel and spoke to them. and Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. He then performed the signs in the sight of the people. So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD was concerned about the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, then they bowed low and worshiped. (Exo 4:30-31) Signs to Pharaoh and the Egyptians (witnessed by Israel)

Aaron's staff becomes a serpent. (Exo 7:10)

Aaron stretched out the staff over the Nile and the water was turned to blood. (Exo 7:19-21)

Aaron stretched out his staff over the waters of Egypt and frogs came up on the land. (Exo 8:6)

Frogs die out after Moses cried out to the Lord. (Exo 8:13)

Aaron stretched his staff out and gnats were all through the land. (Exo 8:17)

The plague of flies came only on the Egyptians. (Exo 8:22-24)

Upon Moses' request, God removed the swarms of flies. (Exo 8:30-31)

Pestilence on the livestock of the Egyptians but not the Israelites. (Exo 9:6-7)

Moses threw soot from a kiln toward the sky and it became boils on the Egyptians and their beasts. (Exo 9:10)

God sends Hail on Egypt but not where the Israelites were. (Exo 9:22-26)

Moses made supplication to God and the hail stopped. (Exo 9:33)

Moses stretched out his staff and God brought the locusts. (Exo 10:13-15)

Moses made supplication to God and the locust were driven out of Egypt. Exo 10:18-19)

God caused darkness to be on the land of Egypt for three days. Israel was exempted and had light. (Exo 10:21-23)

God struck all the firstborn of Egypt so that they died. (Exo 12:29-30)

The Plagues would have lasted about two to three months¹⁰. We can see that these events had a profound effect on the Israelites and the Egyptians. These were events that were witnessed by many people all at the same time. The Exodus The Exodus is possibly the most significant event that the Israelites experienced. Rahab makes mention of it 40 years later, attesting to the fact that the parting of the sea had become known to the inhabitants of Canaan. (Jos 2:9)

A pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night accompanied Israel as they journeyed. (Exo 13:21-22)

God parted the Red Sea (literally the Sea of Reeds). (Exo 14:16-31)

The bitter water at Marah was made drinkable. (Exo 15:23-25)

Manna and Quail were provided by God for the Israelites. (Exo 16:13-16)

The Manna was provided the whole 40 years of the wilderness wanderings. (Exo 16:35)

Water is provided at Massah and Meribah (by the rock at Horeb) Exo 17:7)

With the incidence of the golden calf, it can be seen that even though the people had rebelled, they still respected Moses and obeyed him by putting to death 3000 of the people that had rebelled. (Exo 32:25-28)

Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, were struck down for offering "strange fire".

When the people complained, the fire of the Lord burned among them. The people cried out to Moses and, after Moses prayed, the fire burned out. (Num 11:1-3)

Right after this, the people complained about only having Manna. They wanted meat, so God provided quail for them. Because of this, God punished them with a very severe plague. (Num 11:31-34)

Korah and his associates rose up against Moses and Aaron and wanted to be able to be priests. God judged them by having the ground open up and swallow them and their families. (Num 16:1-35)

The next day the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron and were assembling against them, God sent a plague against the people. Aaron put incense on the alter to make atonement for the people. 14,700 had died by that time.

When they went around Edom, the people again spoke against God and Moses. There was a bit of a change here. The people recognized that they had sinned after God sent fiery serpents among them. They asked Moses to intercede with God. God told Moses to make a bronze serpent. Anyone that was bitten was to look to the bronze serpent so that they would not die. (Num 21:4-9) Since this happened near the end of the wilderness wanderings, it would seem that the people had begun to realize that God spoke to Moses and that Moses could intercede for them.

As we can imagine, all of these miracles would have made quite an impact on the people. Even though they grumbled and complained, they did recognize that God was speaking and acting through Moses. The time that they journeyed through the wilderness was a training time for them.

Some archaeological evidence related to the Exodus and the Israelites wandering.

An inscription at the Egyptian temple at Soleb mentions "land of the nomads of YHWH". This dates to about 1400 BC¹¹. There are other inscriptions as well that refer to the nomads East of Egypt during the 18th dynasty¹². YHWH is the proper Hebrew name for God.

There is an inscription which mentions Balaam, son of Beor who was a prophet or seer¹³.

The archaeology books and websites listed in the Bibliography provide more information and discoveries.

This evidence affirms the existence of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness and gives credence to the account of Balaam being hired to curse the Israelites.

Summary of the time of Moses As the time came for the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham in Gen 15:1-21 to bring his descendants into the land of Canaan after about 400 years in Egypt, God chose Moses to be the person to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. He first had to convince Moses that He was God. This happened at the burning bush that was not consumed. God gave him some signs to give him the confidence that it was indeed God speaking to him and sending him. When Moses met with the elders of Israel, the signs that God gave Moses to perform, convinced them that it was indeed God that was concerned for them and was going to lead them out. The plagues that God sent on Egypt finally convinced Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. The plagues were also a testimony to Israel that God was taking care of them as the plagues from the flies on did not affect them.

Likely the miracle that most impressed the Israelites was the parting of the Sea of Reeds so that they could cross. It also impressed the people that lived in Canaan when they heard of the parting of the sea and made them afraid. As they journeyed in the wilderness, God provided food and water for them and they learned to obey. The combination of all of these miracles substantiated the words that God spoke to, and through Moses. This gives us the confidence that the Pentateuch is the word of God and that it is inspired, accurate and authoritative.

04.08. Joshua

Joshua

Joshua had led the military operations under Moses. As the time for Moses to die came near, Joshua was appointed as the leader to succeed Moses. In Jos 1:8, it specifically makes mention of the scroll of the law, indicating that the books of Moses had been written down and considered the Word of God. As we read in Jos 1:13-18, the people had learned and recognized that God was working through Moses and that it was God that provided the victory over their enemies.

God begins to exalt Joshua as he had exalted Moses in the sight of the Israelites. (Jos 3:7) God caused the Jordan River to stop flowing so that the Israelites could cross over. This would bring the crossing of the Sea of Reeds under the command of Moses to mind. (Jos 4:23-24) The Israelites crossing the Jordan River on dry ground caused great fear among the people living in the land. (Jos 5:1) The next miraculous event happened at Jericho where the walls fell down flat. Normally, when a city is attacked, the walls fall inward as the battering rams push the wall inward. In the case of Jericho, the walls fell outward, providing a ramp for the Israelites to enter the city and take it¹⁴. Archaeology affirms that the walls fell outward and that a section of wall remained standing. (The house of Rahab who had sheltered the spies was on the wall). After they had taken Jericho and Ai, there are several references to “the Law of Moses” again indicating that they had accepted the Pentateuch as the Word of God. (Jos 8:31-32; Jos 8:34-35). An interesting archaeological find is the discovery of two scarabs of Amenhotep III¹⁵. He was Pharaoh from 1408 BC to 1369 BC¹⁶. Since there were scarabs there of previous Pharaohs, but none after him, he would be the last one that reigned prior to the destruction of Jericho. This confirms the dating of the destruction to the Biblical date of about 1400 BC. Other evidence at Jericho confirms the time of year, that it was a short siege and that the food was not plundered, as there is evidence of much food in the city¹⁷.

There are other instances during the conquest of Canaan by Joshua where God miraculously intervened. For example, God threw hailstones on the army of the 5 kings of the Amorites (Jos 10:11) and the sun and moon stopped for about a whole day to allow the Israelites more time to fight the Amorites (Jos 10:12-14). There are many other mentions of the LORD providing the victory as they battled the Canaanites.

We can see this by this comment in the book of Joshua that the LORD performing the miracles had a profound impact on the people.

Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the LORD which He had done for Israel. (Jos 24:31) As we can see, the Israelites had come to the conclusion that their God was the creator and that they needed to follow Him. We can also see that the archaeological evidence supports the Biblical account of the events recorded in the book of Joshua.

04.09. Judges to Samuel

Judges to Samuel The time of the judges was a turbulent time for Israel. After the death of Joshua and the elders that outlived him, they did not fully obey the commands of God. The book of Judges chronicles the cycles of disobedience, oppression, crying out to God and then being rescued by God. During this time, especially towards the beginning, the Israelites were still living a more nomadic type of life as they had been accustomed to in the wilderness for 40 years.

Some archaeological evidence from the period includes:

The Merneptah Stele has an inscription on it in which the Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah describes a campaign, part of which states that the “Israel is laid waste and its seed (grain) is not¹⁸”

There are a series of “letters” (Amarna letters) to Pharaoh Akhenaten that were discovered in Egypt that are dated to about the time that the Israelites were coming into Canaan. These make mention of a people named as “Habiru” that were taking over,^{19,20} .

The destruction of Hazor by Joshua (Jos 11:1-13 and Deborah and Barak (Jdg 4:1-24) is verified by archaeological evidence²¹.

The destruction of Laish and immediate rebuilding (Jdg 18:7-30) is verified by the excavations of the site²²

Eglon, a Moabite king possessed Jericho for a time. (Jdg 3:12-30) A building which appears to be the residence of Eglon has been found²³.

There are a few miracles recorded during this time

Gideon was afraid and wanted to make sure that it was God that was commanding him. He asked for a sign using the fleece. God answered him and the first time the fleece was wet and the ground was dry and the second time the ground was wet and the fleece was dry. (Jdg 6:36-40)

The angel of the Lord ascended on the flame of the alter. (Jdg 13:20)

Water comes from the hollow that was split. (Jdg 15:19)

While there are not any miracles recorded for Samuel, we do read

Thus Samuel grew and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fail. All Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD. (1Sa 3:19-20)

There is one event that indicates a couple of things in 1Sa 7:8-12. The first is that the Israelites acknowledged that God was the one who could save them from the Philistines. The second is that they acknowledged Samuel being able to intercede for them. God answered them and the Philistines were defeated.

The archaeological evidence, while not extensive, again supports the Biblical account for this time period. During this time period, the Israelites were to obey the law as recorded by Moses. When the Israelites turned away from God, and went after other gods and were oppressed as a result, they finally called out to God, who then raised up a deliverer for them.

04.10. Kings

Kings The time of the kings covers the establishment of a cohesive Israelite nation by Saul, David and Solomon. After the death of Solomon (931 BC), the kingdom divides and the Northern tribes are exiled in 723 BC, while the Southern kingdom of Judah is exiled in 586 BC for their disobedience and sin. There is more evidence for this time period as the Israelites were now living in more permanent quarters. It is during this time that Elijah and Elisha perform a number of miracles. During the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah, God strikes down a large number of soldiers of the Assyrian army that was besieging Jerusalem.

There are a number of archaeological finds that corroborate the Biblical text:

The Stele at Tel Dan has an inscription dating to the 9th century BC that refers to the “house of David”²⁴. This verifies the Biblical account of David the king and the Davidic dynasty.

The Mesha Stele, dating to the 9th century BC, relates the Moabite victory over Israel under Jehoram. It also mentions king Omri and “house of David”²⁵. (2Ki 3:1-27)

The Stele of Shalmaneser III from 852 BC contains a reference to “Ahab, the Israelite” and mentions his contributions of soldiers and chariots to the battle.²⁶

The “seal of Jezebel” from the 9th century BC fits the Biblical account²⁷. (1Ki 16:31)

The black “Obelisk of Shalmaneser III” contains a reference to “Jehu of the house of Omri”. An illustrative panel also shows Jehu, king of Israel bowing down to him²⁸. (2Ki 9:1-37, 2Ki 10:1-36)

The “Bulla of Isaiah” from the 8th century BC seems to have belonged to Isaiah the prophet²⁹.

There is an inscription describing the construction of the water tunnel under the direction of Hezekiah³⁰.

The “Lachish Reliefs) show the siege of Lachish during the time of Hezekiah by Sennacherib of Assyria³¹.

The “Sennacherib Prisms” contain information about his campaign against the fortified towns. It also records the tribute paid by Hezekiah to Sennacherib. A really interesting note is that Sennacherib boasts of all the towns he conquered, but just says the “he shut up Hezekiah like a bird in a cage”. As we compare that of the Biblical account, we find out that the Angel of the Lord struck down 185,000 of his soldiers³². (2Ki 19:35).

The “Jerusalem Chronicle” of Nebuchadnezzar verifies some of the account that is in the Bible. It mentions the attack on Jerusalem in 597 BC and that he captured the king (Jehoiachin) and installed a king of his choosing (Zedekiah)³³.

While there are other finds that attest to the accounts to the Bible, these suffice for the present time.

There are a number of miracles and military victories attributed to God during this time. A few of them are as follows:

Jeroboam's hand withered and restored. 1Ki 13:4-6

Elijah says that there will be no rain or dew except at his word. 1Ki 17:1

Flour and oil do not run out. 1Ki 17:14-16

Elijah raises boy from the dead. 1Ki 17:17-24

Rain as a result of Elijah's prayer. 1Ki 18:45

Fire comes from the Lord and consumes 2 captains of 50 and their men. 2Ki 1:10-12

Elijah divides the Jordan. 2Ki 2:8

Elisha divides the Jordan. 2Ki 2:14

Water provided for armies. 2Ki 3:15-20

Elisha raises a boy from the dead. 2Ki 4:20-36

Elisha reveals the enemies plans to the king of Israel. 2Ki 6:8-10

Enemy army is struck with blindness. 2Ki 6:18

David defeats the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim. 2Sa 5:22-25

The LORD routed the Ethiopians before Asa. 2Ch 14:8-15

There are numerous references to the Law of Moses in one way or another during this time period. This indicates that, even though there were times of the people and leaders turning away from God, that there was the acknowledgement that the books of Moses were considered authoritative by those that followed God. At the same time, we can see that the people in general were rebellious against God and suffered the consequences. The miracles and military victories provided confirmation of God and His Word. A few of the Psalms, (Psa 78:1-72, Psa 105:1-45, Psa 106:1-38) also talk about the miracles that God performed so that they would have confidence in God and not forget God. These Psalms go through the history of Israel and speak of the things that God did. They also recount the rebellion of Israel and the consequences of disobedience. These Psalms really sum up the purpose of the miracles and the reasons to believe God, His Word and to have confidence to trust God.

04.11. New Testament

New Testament Jesus is a miracle and He also performed many miracles. Here is a selected list:

Jesus was born of a virgin. Mat 1:18-25, Luk 1:26-38

Jesus rose from the dead after being crucified. Mat 28:1-10, Mark 16:6, Luk 24:1-7, John 20:1-29

Jesus turns water into wine. John 2:6-11

Great quantity of fish caught miraculously. Luk 5:4-9

Jesus heals a man that was sick for 38 years at the pool of Bethesda. John 5:5-9

Jesus calms the sea. Mat 8:24-26

Jesus raises the son of a widow in Nain from the dead. Luk 7:11-15

Daughter of Synagogue official is raised from the dead by Jesus. Mat 9:18-25

Jesus feeds 5000. Mat 14:15-21, Mark 6:37-44, John 6:10-13

Jesus walks on the water. Mat 14:25-26; Mat 6:19

Jesus heals many at Gennesaret. Mat 14:34-36, Mark 6:53-56

Jesus heals many on a mountain by the sea of Galilee. Mat 15:29-31

Jesus feeds the 4000. Mat 15:32-38, Mark 8:1-9

Lazarus is raised from the dead. John 11:14-44

Jesus ascended to heaven 40 days after His resurrection in the sight of His apostles. Acts 1:9-10

Reminiscent of the way that God worked during the time of Moses, Jesus first performs miracles to convince his disciples. This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. (John 2:11) Jesus performed many miracles to substantiate His claim to be the Messiah and God. As we look at John 10:25-38, we see Jesus claiming to be God

"I and the Father are one." (John 10:30)

The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." (John 10:33)

"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." (John 10:37-38)

There are more verses where Jesus claims to be God:

But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. (John 5:17-18)

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59) The Jews clearly understood what Jesus was saying. Saying "I am" means "I am God". He was referencing this passage

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exo 3:14)

Jesus' disciples were convinced by His miracles and also performed miracles themselves.

Many signs and wonders performed by the apostles. Acts 5:12

Many were healed by Peter's shadow falling on them. Acts 5:15-16

Stephen performs great signs and wonders. Acts 6:8

Philip performs signs and casts out demons in Samaria. Acts 8:6-7, Acts 8:13

Peter heals Aeneas at Lydda. Acts 9:32-34

Peter raises Tabitha at Joppa from the dead. Acts 9:36-41

Signs and wonders performed by Paul and Barnabas at Iconium. Acts 14:3

A man is healed at Lystra by Paul. Acts 14:8-10

Paul casts out a fortune telling demon from a slave girl. Acts 16:16-18

God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. Acts 19:11-12

Eutychus raised from the dead at Troas by Paul. Acts 20:9-10

Paul heals the father of Publius at Malta Acts 28:8

Many others were healed by Paul on the island of Malta. Acts 28:9

Paul tells of having performed signs and wonders in the Power of the Spirit. Rom 15:19

Norm Geisler writes "There is overwhelming evidence that the New Testament is a reliable record composed by contemporaries and eyewitnesses of the events"³⁴.

In chapter 6 of "Evidence that demands a verdict" Josh and Sean McDowell go through the many references to Jesus and Christianity in Biblical, Christian and non-Christian sources. From this we can also see that Jesus was real and that Christianity was growing at this point.

Some notable quotes:

Josephus (a Jewish historian working for Rome) in "Antiquities of the Jews" book 18:3:3 writes

“Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, (if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure). He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was (perhaps)[the] Christ. And when Pilate,(at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us,) had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for (they reported) he appeared to them alive again (the third day) as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.” (See the discussion on this in Habermas page 192)

Tacitus (a Roman historian) in book 15 writes:

Therefore, to stifle rumour, Nero made scapegoats of, and marked out for most particular punishment, those whom the masses called Christians, and who were loathed for their abominations. Christus, from whom the name derived, had suffered the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by order of the procurator Pontius Pilatus; and the deadly superstition had been temporarily suppressed, only to erupt again not only in Judaea, the home of this evil, but even in Rome, to which all that is dreadful or shameful in the world flows and here is celebrated.

Pliny the Younger (a Roman official) in a letter to Trajan, a Roman emperor, talks about the Christians. He discusses:

Should they be punished just for being Christians

Real Christians would not renounce Christ

The issue of worshipping the image of the Roman gods and the emperor

The Christians met before daybreak; they recited a hymn among themselves to Christ as though he were a god.

their oath was to abstain from theft, robbery, adultery, and from breach of faith, and not to deny trust money placed in their keeping

For the contagion of this superstition has spread not only through the free cities, but into the villages and the rural districts, and yet it seems to me that it can be checked and set right. It is beyond doubt that the temples, which have been almost deserted,

New Testament Documents

Norm Geisler and Frank Turek state that there are about “5800 had written Greek manuscripts of the New Testament”. There are “some 20,000 manuscripts in other languages”

Some of the fragments that we have date to around the beginning of the 2nd century AD, which is extremely close to the time that the originals were written.

For a more in-depth discussion on the historicity of the New Testament Manuscripts see the section in the “Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics” also “The Historical Jesus” by Gary Habermas.

There are a number of early church fathers that wrote letters. These letters all attest to Jesus, his teachings and the other historical facts from the New Testament documents. They also show the

extent to which Christianity had spread.

Clement wrote in the 1st century AD

Ignatius (apparently a disciple of the apostle John) was martyred around ~107 AD.

Polycarp (likely date around the turn of the 1st century AD and apparently was also a disciple of the apostle John).

Justin Martyr was an apologist in the beginning to middle of the 2nd century.

Irenaeus wrote works against heresies in the second century AD.

Clement of Alexandria – late 2nd and early 3rd century AD.

Origen – early 3rd century

The accurate transmission of the text has been shown by comparing the early copies to each other and our present text. A number of books have been written on the subject. (Some are listed in the Bibliography)

New Testament Archaeology

The evidence of this period confirms the accuracy of the accounts in the New Testament.

There are several books that provide information on this subject:

Archaeology, New Testament³⁵

Evidence for the Bible³⁶

Biblical Archaeology^{37,38}

Unearthing the Bible³⁹

An article on the "Historical accuracy of the Book of Acts"⁴⁰

Websites that provide information and videos:

Associates for Biblical Research⁴¹

Digging for Truth episodes⁴²

Epic Archaeology⁴³

04.12. Conclusion

Conclusion As we can see, God performs miracles to substantiate and validate His Word. While God performed miracles throughout history, there are three major events that really stand out. The first is the world-wide flood at the time of Noah. God warned Noah about the upcoming judgement of the world. Noah believed God and obeyed by building the ark. The second major time is the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. Since this is when God revealed the history of the universe and the lineage from Adam to the Israelite people, He performed great miracles to validate His Word. The miracles also validated Moses and Joshua as people that heard God and that proclaimed His Word. God proclaimed his will and regulations. He also stated the consequences of obedience and disobedience. God would abundantly bless them if they worshipped Him and treated other people with love and respect. If they disobeyed, there would be severe consequences including being sent into exile and serving others. A good summary is found in Deu 27:1-26 and Deu 28:1-68. The third major time is that of Jesus' ministry and the ministry of the early church. The establishment of the "New Covenant" (Jer 31:31, Luk 22:22, 1Co 11:25, 2Co 3:6, Heb 8:8; Heb 8:13, Heb 9:15, Heb 12:24) required miracles to validate the replacement of the Sinai covenant. Jesus and His followers performed many miracles to establish that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, that he died and rose again.

We see that God proclaims His Word and verifies it with miracles. We can also see that He does not continuously repeat His requirements and perform miracles to substantiate it again. We do see that He has sent prophets to call His people back to Him and these at times did perform miracles to validate the Word of God that they were proclaiming to the people. Written records by those contemporary with the events provide the most accurate account of the past, especially when substantiated by the archaeological evidence. The record of the miracles and archaeology substantiate the Biblical account of History and God's Word, character, love and requirements. All this gives us the confidence to believe that the Scriptures are the true Word of God and the assurance of salvation.

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04.14. Endnotes

Endnotes 1(Snelling 2009) 2(Snelling 2009)

3(Smith 2018) 4(Anderson and Edwards 2018)2-3

5(Hodge 2020)

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37(Graves, Biblical Archaeology. An Introduction with Recent Discoveries that Support the Reliability of the Bible 2nd edition 2018)

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05.03. Miracles in the Bible

Miracles in the Bible A definition of a miracle is “an extraordinary event that is not explainable by natural, scientific processes”. In our case we may also want to add events that are miraculous due to the intervention of God such as women who were not able to have children being able to have children and possibly also the timing of certain events. Some people may not consider all of these as miracles while others would add more. There are also many instances where God blessed people, provided victory in war or intervened in other ways.

Old Testament 1.Creation of the universe. Gen 1:1-25 2.Creation of man in His image. Gen 1:26-27 3.Enoch being taken up to God without dying. Gen 5:24 4.The worldwide flood at the time of Noah. Gen 7:6-24 5.Confusion of the languages and dispersion of the nations at Babel. Gen 11:6-9 6.People in Sodom blinded. Gen 19:11 7.Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed by fire and brimstone. Gen 24:1-67, Gen 25:1-34 8.Lot’s wife turned into a pillar of salt. Gen 19:26 9.Abimelech’s household unable to bear children. Gen 20:17

10.God spoke to Jacob in a dream telling him what to do in regard to the mating of the flock so that he would get a good flock of his own. Gen 31:9-10 11.God made Joseph ruler over Egypt (second only to Pharaoh). Gen 41:1-44 12.The burning bush that did not burn up. Exo 3:2-3 13.Moses staff turned into a serpent. Exo 4:3 14.Moses had turning leprous and back to normal. Exo 4:6-7 15.Aaron’s staff turning into a serpent in front of Pharaoh. Exo 7:10 16.Water in the Nile turned to blood. Exo 7:20 17.Frogs in all the land of Egypt. Exo 8:6 18.Gnats in all the land. Exo 8:17 19.Flies in all the land of Egypt besides Goshen. Exo 8:24 20.Livestock of the Egyptians die. Exo 9:6 21.Boils on the Egyptians. Exo 9:10 22.Hail on the land of Egypt. Exo 9:23-26 23.Locusts on the land of the Egyptians. Exo 10:13-15 24.Darkness over the land of Egypt for 3 days. Exo 10:22-23 25.Firstborn of the Egyptians died. Exo 12:29 26.Pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. Exo 13:21-22; Exo 14:19-20 27.Parting of the Sea of Reeds and destruction of the Egyptian army. Exo 14:21-29 28.Bitter water made sweet at Marah. Exo 15:23-25 29.Quail and Manna for food. Exo 16:13-35 30.Water from the rock at Rephidim. Exo 17:6 31.Amalek is defeated as Moses holds up his hands. Exo 17:8-13 32.The Lord descended on Mount Sinai with fire and the mountain quaking violently Exo 19:18.

33.The glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai and appeared like a consuming fire. Exo 24:15-18 34.The Lord spoke from the midst of the fire on the mountain. Deu 4:11-15; Deu 5:22-27 35.God came and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle Exo 40:34-35 36.Fire came and consumed the offering Lev 9:23-24 37.Nadab and Abihu destroyed by fire from the Lord because of disobedience Lev 10:1-2

38.The fire of the Lord burned among the Israelites and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. Num 11:1-2 39.Quail provided for one month. Num 11:18; Num 11:31-32 40.Plague sent on the people for the greedy rabble. Num 11:4; Num 11:33-34 41.Miriam made leprous. Num 12:10-15 42.Spies who brought back a bad report about the land died of a plague. Num 14:36-38 43.Korah, Dathan, On and Abiram and families are swallowed by the earth. Num 16:1-33 44.Fire

form the Lord consumes 250 who wanted to take on the priesthood wrongly. Num 16:35 45.Plague destroys grumblers. Num 16:41-50 46.Aaron's rod budded, flowered and produced almonds. Num 17:8 47.Water from the rock at Kadesh. Num 20:11

48.Fiery serpents kill people, bronze serpent made so that those who were bitten could look at it and live. Num 21:6-9 49.Donkey talks to Balaam. Num 22:28-30

50.Plague on the people because of their joining themselves to Moab's gods and playing the harlot with their women. 24,000 died. Num 25:1-9 51.Jordan river flow stopped so that the Israelites could cross. Jos 3:15 to Jos 4:18 52.Walls of Jericho fall outward. Jos 6:15-21 53.Hailstones kill Israel's enemies. Jos 10:11 54.Sun and moon stand still. Jos 10:12-13 55.Fire from rock. Jdg 6:21 56.Gideon's fleece. Jdg 6:36-40 57.Angel ascends to heaven on a flame. Jdg 13:20 58.Samson's strength. Jdg 14:5 to Jdg 16:30 59.Water comes from hollow that was split. Jdg 15:19 60.Image of Dagon falls before the ark of God. 1Sa 5:2-4 61.Hand of God against Philistines because of the ark of God. 1Sa 5:6-12 62.50,070 Men of Beth-shemesh struck down for looking into the ark. 1Sa 6:19 63.Uzzah struck down for touching the ark. 2Sa 6:6-7, 1Ch 13:10 64.Jeroboam's hand withered and restored. 1Ki 13:4-6 65.Alter split apart. 1Ki 13:5 66.Elijah says that there will be no rain or dew except at his word. 1Ki 17:1 67.Ravens bring food for Elijah. 1Ki 17:4-6 68.Flour and oil do not run out. 1Ki 17:14-16 69.Elijah raises boy from the dead. 1Ki 17:17-24 70.Fire of the Lord consumes the offering. 1Ki 18:36-38 71.Rain as a result of Elijah's prayer. 1Ki 18:45 72.Elijah fed again. 1Ki 19:5-8 73.Fire comes from the Lord and consumes 2 captains of 50 and their men. 2Ki 1:10-12 74.Elijah divides the Jordan. 2Ki 2:8 75.Elijah went up in a whirlwind to heaven. 2Ki 2:11 76.Elisha divides the Jordan. 2Ki 2:14 77.Water purified. 2Ki 2:18-22 78.42 young people that mocked Elisha are torn up by 2 bears. 2Ki 2:23-24 79.Water provided for armies. 2Ki 3:15-20 80.A widow's oil is multiplied. 2Ki 4:5-6 81.Elisha raises a boy from the dead. 2Ki 4:20-36 82.Pot of stew made edible. 2Ki 4:40-41 83.20 loaves of bread feed 100 people. 2Ki 4:42-44 84.Naaman healed of leprosy. 2Ki 5:9-15 85.Gehazi made leprous. 2Ki 5:27 86.Axe head made to float. 2Ki 6:5-7 87.Elisha reveals the enemies plans to the king of Israel. 2Ki 6:8-10 88.Horses and chariots (angels) surround Elisha to protect him. 2Ki 6:16-17 89.Enemy army is struck with blindness. 2Ki 6:18 90.Army's sight restored. 2Ki 6:20 91.The Lord causes the Arameans to hear the sound of an approaching army. 2Ki 7:6-15 92.A man being buried touches Elisha's bones and comes to life again. 2Ki 13:21 93.The angel of the Lord puts 185,000 Assyrian soldiers to death in one night. 2Ki 19:35 94.Shadow goes back 10 steps as a sign to Hezekiah regarding his healing. 2Ki 20:5-11 95.God struck Uzziah with leprosy for being corrupt and unfaithful. 2Ch 26:16-21 96.Jonah in the fish for 3 days. Jon 1:15-17 97.Daniel's friends survive the furnace. Dan 3:16-27 98.Hand writes judgement on the wall against Belshazzar. Dan 5:5 99.Daniel is not hurt by the lions in the den. Dan 6:16-23

New Testament 100.Jesus is born of a virgin. Mat 1:18-25, Luk 1:26-38 101.Jesus is raised from the dead. Mat 28:1-10, Mark 16:6, Luk 24:1-7, John 20:1-29

102.Zacharias is made mute for a time for not believing the angel Gabriel regarding the birth of John the Baptist. Luk 1:11-22; Luk 1:60-64 103.Jesus turns water into wine. John 2:6-11 104.Great quantity of fish caught miraculously. Luk 5:4-9 105.Royal official's son healed. John 4:46-53 106.Jesus heals a man that was sick for 38 years at the pool of Bethesda. John 5:5-9 107.Jesus cast out a demon at Capernaum. Mark 1:23-27, Luk 4:33-35, 108.Peter's mother in-law

is healed. Mark 1:30-31, Luk 4:38-39, Mat 8:14-15 109.Many were healed in Peter's town. Mark 1:32-34 110.Jesus heals a paralytic that was let down by 4 men through the roof. Mark 2:3-12 111.Many are healed in the crowd that followed Jesus. Mark 3:10 112.Jesus heals many and casts out demons throughout Galilee. Mat 4:23-25, Mark 1:39 113.Jesus heals a leper. Mat 8:2-3, Mark 1:40-43, Luk 5:12-14 114.Jesus heals a centurion's servant at Capernaum. Mat 8:5-13 115.Jesus calms the sea. Mat 8:24-26

116.Legion of demons cast out across in the region of the Gadarenes and pigs run to their death. Mat 8:28-32, Mark 5:1-16, Luk 8:26-37 117.Jesus raises the son of a widow in Nain from the dead. Luk 7:11-15 118.Mary Magdalene had 7 demons cast out. Luk 8:2, Mark 16:9 119.Jesus heals a paralytic. Mat 9:1-6 120.Daughter of Synagogue official is raised from the dead by Jesus. Mat 9:18-25 121.Woman with hemorrhage is healed by touching Jesus. Mat 9:20-22 122.Jesus heals 2 blind men. Mat 9:27-30 123.Jesus heals and delivers a mute, demon possessed man. Mat 9:32-33 124.Jesus heals every kind of sickness and disease. Mat 9:35-36 125.The 12 disciples go out and heal people and cast out demons. Mat 10:1, Luk 9:1, Mark 6:7-13 126.Jesus heals a man with a withered hand. Mat 12:10-13 127.Jesus healed many. Mat 12:15 128.Jesus heals a blind, mute and demon possessed man. Mat 12:22 129.Jesus, while in the house of a Pharisee heals a man with dropsy. Luk 14:1-4

130.Jesus performed only a few miracles in His hometown because of their unbelief. Mat 13:54-58, Mark 6:1-6 131.Jesus heals many. Mat 14:14 132.Jesus feeds 5000. Mat 14:15-21, Mark 6:37-44, John 6:10-13 133.Jesus walks on the water. Mat 14:25-26; Mat 6:19 134.Peter walks on the water. Mat 14:29 135.Jesus heals many at Gennesaret. Mat 14:34-36, Mark 6:53-56 136.Jesus heals 10 lepers. Luk 17:11-14 137.Jesus casts out a demon from a Canaanite woman's daughter. Mat 15:22-28, Mark 7:25-30 138.Jesus heals many on a mountain by the sea of Galilee. Mat 15:29-31 139.Jesus feeds the 4000. Mat 15:32-38, Mark 8:1-9 140.Jesus is transfigured and Moses and Elijah talk with Him. Mat 17:1-4, Luk 9:28-35 141.Jesus drives out a demon from a boy. Mat 17:14-18, Luk 9:38-42 142.Tax money for Peter and Jesus from a fish. Mat 17:24-27 143.Jesus heals 2 blind men by the road. Mat 20:30-34 144.Blind and lame healed in the temple. Mat 21:14 145.Jesus curses fig tree causing it to wither. Mat 21:19, Mark 11:13-14 146.Jesus heals a man blind from birth. John 9:1-7 147.Jesus heals someone who was deaf and could not speak well in the Decapolis. Mark 7:31-35 148.Jesus heals the blind man at Bethsaida. Mark 8:22-25 149.Jesus heals the blind beggar, Bartimaeus. Mark 10:46-52, Luk 18:35-43 150.Lazarus is raised from the dead. John 11:14-44 151.Jesus heals the ear of Malchus after Peter cut it off. Luk 22:50-51 152.Second great catch of fish John 21:5-11 153.Many other signs that are not recorded John 20:30 154.Many saints were raised after Jesus' death. Mat 27:52 155.Darkness covers the land at Jesus' death. Mark 15:33 156.The Temple curtain is torn in two. Mark 15:38

157.Jesus presented Himself to the apostles with many convincing proofs after His resurrection for 40 days. Acts 1:1-5 158.Jesus appeared to more than 500 people at once. 1Co 15:6 159.Jesus appeared to James. 1Co 15:7

160.Jesus ascended to heaven 40 days after His resurrection in the sight of His apostles. Acts 1:9-10 161.The apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in different tongues. Acts 2:2-4 162.Peter heals the lame beggar. Acts 3:2-8 163.Ananias and Sapphira fall dead for lying to the Holy Spirit. Acts 5:1-10 164.Many signs and wonders performed by the apostles. Acts 5:12

165.Many were healed by Peter's shadow falling on them. Acts 5:15-16 166.Angel of the Lord freed the apostles from prison. Acts 5:19 167.Stephen performs great signs and wonders. Acts 6:8 168.Philip performs signs and casts out demons in Samaria. Acts 8:6-7, Acts 8:13 169.Philip moved from the road to Gaza to Azotus by the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:39-40

170.Jesus appears to Paul on the road to Damascus in a bright light and is rendered blind. Acts 9:3-7 171.Paul's sight is restored by Ananias. Acts 9:17-18 172.Peter heals Aeneas at Lydda. Acts 9:32-34 173.Peter raises Tabitha at Joppa from the dead. Acts 9:36-41 174.Holy Spirit falls on Gentile believers at Caesarea and they speak in tongues. Acts 10:44-46 175.Peter is rescued from prison by an angel. Acts 12:6-10 176.King Herod is struck down for not giving glory to God. Acts 12:23 177.Elymas the magician was struck blind for a while by the word of Paul. Acts 13:10-11 178.Signs and wonders performed by Paul and Barnabas at Iconium. Acts 14:3 179.A man is healed at Lystra by Paul. Acts 14:8-10 180.Paul casts out a fortune telling demon from a slave girl. Acts 16:16-18 181.Earthquake used to free Paul and Silas and Philippi. Acts 16:25-34 182.Ephesian believers receive the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues. Acts 19:6

183.God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. Acts 19:11-12 184.Eutychus raised from the dead at Troas by Paul. Acts 20:9-10 185.Viper's bite has no effect on Paul. Acts 28:3-6 186.Paul heals the father of Publius at Malta Acts 28:8 187.Many others were healed by Paul on the island of Malta. Acts 28:9 188.Paul tells of having performed signs and wonders in the Power of the Spirit. Rom 15:19 189.Signs and wonders the sign of a true apostle. 2Co 12:12, Heb 2:4

05.04. Barren Women having Children

Barren Women having Children 190.Sarah Gen 11:30, Gen 21:3 191.Rebekah. Gen 25:21
192.Rachel. Gen 29:31, Gen 30:22-24 193.Wife of Manoah. Jdg 13:2, Jdg 13:24 194.Hannah. 1Sa
1:2-5, 1Sa 1:17-20 195.The Shunammite woman (2Ki 4:12-17) 196.Elizabeth. Luk 1:7, Luk 1:57

05.05. Military Victories & Losses attributed to God's Intervention

Military Victories & Losses attributed to God's Intervention

There are several references not specific to battles which indicate that it is God that is at work in giving the Israelites victory or causing their defeat if they are disobedient. One theme that occurs throughout the Old Testament is that God is directing much of what goes on and judges people and nations for their disobedience. Eg. Deu 26:1; Deu 28:7; Deu 28:25; Deu 28:49; Deu 31:3, Jos 10:42, Jos 23:1, Isa 24:5-6, Isa 38:6, Jer 15:1-6; Jer 16:13; Jer 46:26, Eze 6:2-7, Amo 1:2 to Amo 3:15 1.Abraham defeats the four kings. Gen 14:15 2.Pharaoh's army destroyed in the Red Sea. Exo 14:24-28 3.Amalek is defeated. Exo 17:8-13 4.The Canaanite King of Arad is defeated. Num 21:1-3 5.Sihon, the Amorite king is defeated. Num 21:21-27, Deu 2:30-33, Num 32:4 6.Og, the Amorite king is defeated. Num 21:33-35, Deu 3:3 7.War against the Midianites. Num 31:1-8; Num 31:48 8.Jericho falls. Jos 6:20-27 9.Israelites are defeated by Ai because of sin. Jos 7:5-12 10.Ai is defeated by Israel. Jos 8:18-26 11.Five Amorite kings given into Joshua's hand. Jos 10:5-26

12.The rest of the battles listed in the book of Joshua are attributed to the LORD. Jos 21:43-44; Jos 23:9-13; Jos 24:3-18 13.Makkedah is destroyed by Joshua. Jos 10:28 14.Libnah is destroyed by Joshua. Jos 10:29 15.Lachish is destroyed by Joshua. Jos 10:32 16.Horam king of Gezer is defeated. Jos 10:33 17.Eglon is destroyed. Jos 10:34-35 18.Hebron is destroyed. Jos 10:36-37 19.Debir is destroyed. Jos 10:38-39 20.The rest of that area is struck by Joshua. Jos 10:40-42

21.Kings of the North cities and country defeated. (Hazor, Madon, Shimron and Achshaph etc.) Jos 11:1-12; Jos 11:16-17 22.Anakim from the hill country from Hebron, Debir, Anab etc. destroyed. Jos 11:21-23 23.Canaanites and Perizzites defeated by Judah and Simeon. Jdg 1:4-18 24.Bethel is taken by the house of Joseph. Jdg 1:22-25 25.Israel is given into the hands of plunderers because of disobedience. Jdg 2:11-15 26.Othniel defeats Cushan-rishathaim. Jdg 3:9-11 27.The LORD gave Israel into the hand of Eglon king of Moab. Jdg 3:12-14 28.Mab defeated by Ehud. Jdg 3:20-30 29.Shamgar saves Israel. Jdg 3:31 30.Israel handed over to Jabin, king of Canaan in Hazor. Jdg 4:1-2 31.Deborah and Barak defeat Jabin. Jdg 4:6-24 32.Israel given into the hands of Midian. Jdg 6:1-6 33.Gideon defeats Midian with 300 men. Jdg 7:7 to Jdg 8:12 34.God deals with Abimelech and the men of Shechem because of their wickedness. Jdg 9:56-57 35.The LORD hands Israel over to the Philistines and Ammonites. Jdg 10:7 36.The Ammonites are defeated by Jephthah. Jdg 11:32-33 37.The LORD gave Israel into the hands of the Philistines. Jdg 13:1 38.The LORD uses Samson against the Philistines. Jdg 14:19 to Jdg 16:30

39.Gibeah's sin and people "doing what is right in their own eyes" brings about the death of people of Judah and the majority of the Benjamites. Jdg 19:1 to Jdg 20:48 40.Philistines are routed at the time of Samuel. 1Sa 7:8-12 41.King Saul defeats the Ammonites. 1Sa 11:1-11 42.The LORD defeats the Philistines via Jonathon and Saul 1Sa 14:12-23 43.David kills Goliath. 1Sa 17:45-51 44.David prospers for the LORD was with him. 1Sa 18:14 45.David defeats the Philistines at Keilah. 1Sa 23:4-5 46.God did not allow Saul to kill David. 1Sa 23:14 47.Saul and the Israelites defeated by the Philistines. 1Sa 28:19; 1Sa 31:1-7, 1Ch 14:10-11 48.David defeats the Philistines

at Baal-perazim. 2Sa 5:19-20, 1Ch 14:13-16 49.David defeats the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim. 2Sa 5:22-25

50.David defeats the Philistines, Moab, Hadadezer, the Arameans, Ammonites, Edomites and Amalekites. 2Sa 8:1-14 51.David defeats the Ammonites and Arameans. 2Sa 10:6-19 52.God has "cut off" all of David's enemies. 1Ch 17:8, 1Ch 18:13 53.God routed Jeroboam for Abijah of Judah. 2Ch 13:15-16 54.The LORD routed the Ethiopians before Asa. 2Ch 14:8-15 55.The LORD delivers Israel under king Ahab. 1Ki 20:13-21 56.Ahab killed in battle. 2Ch 18:18-22; 2Ch 18:33-34

57.God caused the Reubenites, Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh to be exiled by Assyria. 1Ch 5:26 58.The Lord defeats the Edomites, Moabites and Ammonites for Jehoshaphat. 2Ch 20:20-23 59.Judah, under Jehoram, is struck because of his sin. 2Ch 21:5-19 60.The LORD delivers Israel again. 1Ki 20:27-30 61.Moabites given into the hand of the Israelites. 2Ki 3:18

62.In the reign of Uzziah, god helped him against the Philistines, Arabians and Meunites. 2Ch 26:5-7 63.Aramean army blinded. 2Ki 6:18 64.The LORD causes the Arameans to flee. 2Ki 7:6 65.Judah, under Ahaz, is defeated by Aram and Israel. 2Ch 28:5-8; 2Ch 28:19 66.The LORD starts cutting off parts of Israel. 2Ki 10:32, 2Ki 13:3 67.The LORD provides a deliverer for Israel. 2Ki 13:5 68.Israel (Northern Kingdom) is exiled. 2Ki 17:6-8; 2Ki 17:20; 2Ki 17:23 69.The Angel of the LORD killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. 2Ki 19:35, 2Ch 32:21, Isa 37:36 70.Chaldeans, Arameans, Moabites and Ammonites sent against Judah by the LORD. 2Ki 24:2-3 71.Judah is exiled to Babylon. 2Ki 24:10-20, 2Ch 36:16-20, Jer 27:6-7, Jer 44:2, Dan 1:1-2 72.The Babylonian kingdom under Belshazzar is given to the Medes. Dan 5:22-31

06.01. New Testament Background

New Testament Background Unless otherwise marked, Scripture quotations are from the NASB Bible.

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06.02. Charts and Maps

Charts and Maps

06.03. Introduction

Introduction To really understand the New Testament, we need to go back a long way to set the stage. History, culture, religion and world views all play into an understanding of the world of the New Testament. The Bibliography lists a number of resources that provide a more in-depth look at various subjects. The book of Genesis really sets the stage and provides the background information for much of the New Testament. Virtually all of the foundational doctrines stem out of Genesis, either directly or indirectly. Here we have established who God is, who man is, and because of man's rebellion, the need for Jesus to come and redeem mankind. At the tower of Babel dispersion, the emergence of the various people groups and languages started. With this dispersion there emerged the variety of religious beliefs and gods. People were generally polytheistic in their beliefs. This polytheism therefore allowed for all sorts of deities and beliefs, as polytheism is generally non-exclusive. This philosophy haunted the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob throughout history as they struggled with the reality of there only being one God. The exclusivity of monotheism also put them into conflict with their polytheistic neighbors and especially when rulers demanded worship. For example, the Pharaohs of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Greek rulers starting with Alexander the Great, and consequently some of the Roman emperors, especially Gaius and Domitian. The Greek culture and Roman rule set the stage for the New Testament.

06.04. The Beginnings of the Jewish People

The Beginnings of the Jewish People The genealogical records of Gen 5:1-32 and Gen 11:1-32 record the descendants of Adam down to Abraham. Abraham was called by God to go to the land of Canaan, (Gen 12:1-20) promised the land and that he would become a great nation. Genesis chapters 12 to 50 document the lives of Abraham and his descendants to the time of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt where they would live for 430 years. While Abraham had a number of sons, the lineage to the Jewish people was through Isaac and then through his son Jacob. The book of Exodus picks up several hundred years after their move to Egypt with Moses, who was to deliver the Israelites from Egypt and take them back to the promised land of Canaan. Joshua takes over after the death of Moses on the East side of the Jordan and crosses it to conquer the land.

06.05. Judges and Kings

Judges and Kings

After the death of Joshua, the people tended to forsake God and worship gods from the nations around them. They did not live according to the standard that was set before them by God through Moses. Throughout the time of the Judges and Kings, there were cycles of disobedience and then punishment. When the Israelites cried out to God because of the oppression, God would send them a judge to deliver them. Eventually, their rebellion was so bad that God sent them into exile. The Northern kingdom was the first to go in 723 BC and the Southern kingdom was exiled between 605 BC and 586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

06.06. Events between the Babylonian control and the beginning of the New Testament

Events between the Babylonian control and the beginning of the New Testament In approximately 538 BC, the Persians conquered the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to go back to Judea. Around 336 BC, Alexander the Great conquered the Persians. The significance of the Greek period is what is typically called the “Hellenization” of the people that they conquered. In order to unify the different people groups that the Greeks controlled, they tried to impose their culture, religion, language and identity on them. When Alexander died, his empire was divided among four of his generals. The two that concern us are the Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Asia. The area of Palestine was between them and was consequently fought over. The area of Palestine had different people groups in it. Some of the Israelites adopted the Greek customs and language. Others held on to the customs of their fathers. This of course produced strife. The priesthood suffered a decline as the high priesthood was often purchased with bribes. The high priesthood became more of a social status rather than adherence to the priestly office and following the Law of Moses.

One of the Seleucid kings was particularly bad. He was Antiochus IV and wanted to impose the Hellenistic views and practices on the Jews. In order to unify and strengthen his hold on the diverse territories of his far-flung empire, the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV instituted a policy of mandatory hellenization—conformity to Greek ways of living. He forbade many Jewish religious practices and converted the temple in Jerusalem into a pagan temple to the Greek god Zeus. He required all Jews to offer pagan sacrifices in local villages to demonstrate their loyalty to Antiochus and his policies.ⁱ In his daring madness, the Syrian king, Antiochus IV. (Epiphanes) had forbidden their religion, sought to destroy their sacred books, with unsparing ferocity forced on them conformity to heathen rites, desecrated the Temple by dedicating it to Zeus Olympios, ...and even reared a heathen altar upon that of burnt-offering. Worst of all, his wicked schemes had been aided by two apostate High-Priests, who had outvied each other in buying and then prostituting the sacred office of God’s anointedⁱⁱ

He desecrated the temple for a period of three years. This led to the revolt led by the Hasmonaean family who are also called Maccabees. The father, Mattathias and his sons appeared to have been loyal to their religion but the descendants after them were more interested in power and wealth. It was during this time that the different Israelite parties started to show up. The Pharisees and Sadducees seem to appear around 145 BC. In 67 BC, the two sons of Salome Alexandra vied for power after her death in 69 BC. The older was rather unambitious and was given the high priesthood. The younger, the ambitious Aristobulus was given the military command. Their father, Alexander Jannaeus, made Antipater (Antipas), an Idumean, governor of Idumea. This Antipater was the grandfather of Herod the Great. His son, also named Antipater, was quite cunning and feared Aristobulus so he worked to try and have Hyrcanus II, the older son made king even though the brothers had agreed that Aristobulus would be king. Antipater knew that Aristobulus hated him

for a long time.ⁱⁱⁱ Antipater was one of the leaders of Idumea who had wealth and authority.^{iv} He knew that he had to work with the Romans so that he could gain power and stature. The brothers and Antipater all used bribes with various people to help them. This conflict between the brothers brought about the Roman general Pompey subduing Judea and making it subject to Rome.^v The descendants of Aristobulus continued to rebel at times causing many casualties. Antipater continued to make himself useful to the Romans. He supplied a Roman army that was going against the Egyptians with money, grain and troops. He helped Julius Caesar when he was besieged in Alexandria and was made procurator of Judaea. Antipater also fought against Alexander, the son of Aristobulus. Antipater was a valiant warrior. Antipater's sons, Herod and Phasael continued the pattern of co-operation with Rome. Herod was himself a valiant warrior and rid the countryside of robbers. There was conflict between different factions among the Jews and with their neighbours.

Herod nevertheless showed himself an able, if ruthless, administrator, and throughout his reign the Romans had no reason to rue the day when they appointed him king of the Jews. He consistently upheld the interests of Rome at home and abroad, and indeed he found no contradiction between Rome's interests and those of his kingdom and subjects. Their interests, including the preservation of their religious freedom, would be best served, he believed, by integration into the Roman sphere of influence.^{vi}

Herod was a rich man and used it to obtain favour with Roman leaders. He was a great builder and built many structures in Judea and other places. He greatly expanded the temple in Jerusalem and made it a magnificent structure. His fame as a builder extended far beyond Judaea. He erected temples or other public buildings in Athens, Sparta, Rhodes and other great cities of the Greek world; he repaved the main street of Syrian Antioch and equipped it with a colonnade.^{vii}

Herod was politically savvy, and he was adept at supporting the right people at the right time during this most dangerous period.^{viii}

He had 10 wives and numerous children. One of the wives was a Hasmonaean princess who had two boys. There were many conflicts within the family and suspicions of who might try and take the throne in addition to rivalries between the various sons. He killed a number of them as well as Mariamme, the Hasmonaean princess. Herod became sicker towards the end of his life and about four or five days before his death had another son executed that had been conspiring against him.

It would appear that the taxes on the people were quite heavy. They not only had to pay taxes to Rome, but they also had the temple tax to pay. The religious dues were heavy enough; they included obligations (like the "first" and "second" tithes) which were originally alternatives, or one of which was intended to replace another, but which were now combined.^{ix} In the absence of data only an approximate estimate of the burden can be attempted, but F. C. Grant is not far wide of the mark when he calculates that "the total taxation of the Jewish people in the time of Jesus, civil and religious combined, must have approached the intolerable proportion of between 30 and 40 per cent; it may have been higher still."^x

Herod was ruthless when it came to protecting his own rule, and this was borne out in his slaughter of Bethlehem's children recorded in Mat 2:16-18.^{xi} In view of such executions, the emperor Augustus reportedly quipped, "It is better to be Herod's pig than son" (Macrobius,

Saturnalia, 2:4:11)

Prior to his death, he commanded all the principal men of the entire Jewish nation to be brought to him. Because he was afraid that nobody would mourn for him at his death, but rather rejoice, he ordered that they all be shut up in the hippodrome. He then commanded his sister and her husband to have them executed as soon as he died so that there would be great lamentations among the people. After he died, his sister did not carry out the order.xii,xiii

After his death, his kingdom was divided among 3 of his sons. Archelaus received Judea, Antipas received Galilee and Philip received an area on the east side of the Sea of Galilee, North of the Decapolis.

While the brothers were pressing their claims in Rome, there were many attempts at revolt in Palestine. The most serious was in Galilee, where an insurgent named Judas, whose father Hezekiah had been captured and put to death by Herod forty years before, raided the palace at Sepphoris and seized the armory.³⁸ This rising was not put down until Varus, imperial legate of Syria, marched south with two legions to crush it and to pacify the troubled land.^{xiv} Archelaus was a bad and oppressive ruler and was exiled in 6 AD by Caesar Augustus. Now Archelaus took possession of his ethnarchy, and used not the Jews only, but the Samaritans also, barbarously; and this out of his resentment of their old quarrels with him.^{xv} There were many factions during this time which caused much strife and divisions. The rapacity of many provincial governors is only too well attested in Roman records.^{xvi}

Popular resentment was felt not only against the Romans but against the wealthy landed proprietors who prospered at the expense of their poorer fellow countrymen.^{xvii} The land had a diverse population due to the various wars and even Herod bringing in mercenaries to help him. As Herod, well knowing his unpopularity, surrounded himself by foreign mercenaries, and reared fortresses around his palace and the Temple which he built, so he erected these fortified posts, which he populated with strangers, as so many outworks, to surround and command Jerusalem and the Jews on all sides. At the same time, the Herodian cities enjoyed not the same amount of liberty as the 'Hellenic,' which, with the exception of certain imposts, were entirely self-governed, while in the former there were representatives of the Herodian rulers.^{xviii} With the various wars and captivities, the Jews were scattered throughout many countries. Once they were allowed to return to Judea, most did not return but stayed where they were. Some were even settled in other places by those that ruled them.

Jewish slaves that were taken in war could at times get their freedom and were thus called "freedmen". Some stayed where they were and others returned to Judea. Some of the slaves and freedmen had very good positions and others were quite poor and had a hard time making ends meet.^{xix}

It is of interest that the Israelites did not seem to have the issue of idolatry after the Babylonian exile. Prior to the exile, they had frequent issues with idolatry. Holding on to their belief that they worshipped the only true God brought them into conflict with the Greeks and Romans. It may have also contributed to their hostility towards Jesus as He claimed to be God. They did not understand the nature of God being a triune God.

Really good resources that goes over the time from Abraham to the early second century are the “Crossway ESV Bible Atlas” and the “Holman Bible Atlas”. A detailed background is provided by F.F. Bruce in “New Testament History”. (The only caveat is that they use a secular timeline rather than a Biblical one from creation to a time after the flood.)

06.07. Languages of Israel and its Neighbours

Languages of Israel and its Neighbours

Initially, Israel used the Hebrew language. When they went into captivity, they started to speak the language of their captors. In Babylon, they spoke Aramaic. The conquest of the Greeks brought their language into the region. The Greek language became the universal language, similar to English in our time. The Romans spoke Latin and the neighbours of Israel spoke their own languages such as Arabic.

Instead of the characters anciently employed, the exiles brought with them, on their return, those now common, the so-called square Hebrew letters, which gradually came into general use. (Sanh. 21b) The language spoken by the Jews was no longer Hebrew, but Aramaean, both in Palestine and in Babylonia; in the former the Western, in the latter the Eastern dialect. In fact, the common people were ignorant of pure Hebrew, which henceforth became the language of students and of the Synagogue. Even there a Methurgeman, or interpreter, had to be employed to translate into the vernacular the portions of Scripture read in the public services, and the address delivered by the Rabbis. This was the origin of the so-called Targumim, or paraphrases of Scripture.xx We see the diversity of languages they spoke at Pentecost in the beginning of the book of Acts.

Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. ... “And how is it that we each hear them in our own language in which we were born? “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the district of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” (Acts 2:5-11 LSB)

06.08. Biblical and Religious Writings

Biblical and Religious Writings The Scriptures Proper The Old Testament was written primarily in Hebrew. Some of Ezra and Daniel have Aramaic portions.

There was a Greek translation of the Old Testament started about 270 BC (LXX). This translation was performed in Alexandria. The translation of the first five books is quite good. The other books vary in the quality of the translation.

Alfred Edersheim has a chapter on the origins of traditionalism, its character and literature. It seems necessary similarly to trace the growth of the 'traditions of the Elders,' so as to understand what, alas! so effectually, opposed the new doctrine of the Kingdom. The first place must here be assigned to those legal determinations, which traditionalism declared absolutely binding on all, not only of equal, but even greater obligation than Scripture itself.^{xxi}

Accordingly, so important was tradition, that the greatest merit a Rabbi could claim was the strictest adherence to the traditions, which he had received from his teacher. Nor might one Sanhedrin annul, or set aside, the decrees of its predecessors. To such length did they go in this worship of the letter, that the great Hillel was actually wont to mispronounce a word, because his teacher before him had done so.^{xxii}

Targums

Primarily the Targum, then, was intended as a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the vernacular Aramaean. Of course, such translations might be either literal, or else more or less paraphrastic. Every Targum would also naturally represent the special views of the translator, and be interesting as affording an insight into the ideas prevalent at the time, and the manner in which Scripture was understood. But some Targumim are much more paraphrastic than others, and indeed become a kind of commentary, showing us the popular theology of the time.^{xxiii} The origin of this practice is debatable. Some scholars trace it back to Ezra's reading of the Torah to the postexilic community in Jerusalem, which the Levites simultaneously translated into Aramaic (Neh 8:1-8). There is, however, no evidence in the Second Temple literature that Aramaic translations accompanied the reading of the Torah and the Prophets during synagogue worship.^{xxiv}

Mishnah But Palestine owed, if possible, a still greater debt to Babylonia. The new circumstances in which the Jews were placed on their return seemed to render necessary an adaptation of the Mosaic Law, if not new legislation. Besides, piety and zeal now attached themselves to the outward observance and study of the letter of the Law. This is the origin of the Mishnah, or Second Law, which was intended to explain and supplement the first. This constituted the only Jewish dogmatics, in the real sense, in the study of which the sage, Rabbi, scholar, scribe, and Darshan, were engaged.^{xxv}

According to one tradition, the Mishnah goes back to Mount SINAI, where God supposedly gave to MOSES oral instruction in addition to the tablets of the law, and that instruction was passed on by

word of mouth through the generations xxvi

Midrashim From the Hebrew root drs■, “to investigate, seek, search out, examine” (cf. Lev 10:16; Isa 34:16; 1Ch 28:8), midrash refers to a form and method of scriptural interpretation, and to compilations of rabbinic exegesis. In its broadest sense, the term is often used to refer to an interpretation of any text, sacred or secular, ancient or contemporary.xxvii

Collections of rabbinic midrash interpret large portions of the Old Testament (especially the Pentateuch), often in the form of commentaries or literary sermons. These commentaries interpret laws, answer difficult questions arising from the biblical text, address apparent contradictions, and “fill in the blanks” where more information seems necessary.xxviii

Rabbinic midrash must be seen as an essential element in the rabbinic worldview. For the rabbis, the Torah was their link between this world and God. A rabbi was a rabbi because he alone knew the totality of revelation, and the written and oral versions of the Torah, and it was his task, as a rabbi, to study and to actualize the Torah’s content. For the rabbis, midrash was, above all, a religious, God-centered, activity.xxix Its primary purpose is not to determine the plain meaning of the text, called peshat (“simple”), but to seek knowledge that can be gained through logical inferences, analogies, combinations of different passages, and the like. According to Ithamar Gruenwald, the goal of midrash “is not the mere act of understanding texts, but the creation of the meaning that is attached to them.xxx From the outset, Jewish theology divided into two branches: the Halakhah and the Haggadah. The former (from halakh, to go) was, so to speak, the Rule of the Spiritual Road, and, when fixed, had even greater authority than the Scriptures of the Old Testament, since it explained and applied them. On the other hand, the Haggadah³⁴ (from nagad, to tell) was only the personal saying of the teacher, more or less valuable according to his learning and popularity, or the authorities which he could quote in his support. Unlike the Halakhah, the Haggadah had no absolute authority, either as to doctrine, practice, or exegesis. But all the greater would be its popular influence,³⁵ and all the more dangerous the doctrinal license which it allowed. In fact, strange as it may sound, almost all the doctrinal teaching of the Synagogue is to be derived from the Haggadah—and this also is characteristic of Jewish traditionalism.xxxi These writings are what Jesus was referring to.

“Leaving the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” And He was also saying to them, “You are good at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. (Mark 7:8-9 LSB)... thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.” (Mark 7:13 LSB)

06.09. Sects and Groups

Sects and Groups

Hebrew Jews

Hebrew, or Aramaic speaking Jews generally considered themselves superior to Hellenistic Jews. The Pharisees would generally have been a part of this group.

Hellenistic Jews

Hellenistic Jews had adopted the language and possibly some of the culture of the Greeks. In Acts 6:1, the Hellenistic Jews complained that their widows were being overlooked in the distribution of food. These may have been captives or slaves in other regions, gained their freedom and returned to Palestine. They may also have gone to other places voluntarily.

Pharisees The Pharisees appear as a party during the time of the Maccabees. The Pharisees constituted the largest and most important group, Josephus stating that they numbered about 6,000.^{xxxii} they were a lay (not priestly) association who were thought to be expert in the laws; they were, in a sociological sense, “retainers” who brokered power between the aristocracy and the masses; they promoted a special living tradition in addition to the laws; they were very interested in issues of ritual purity and tithing; and they believed in afterlife, judgment, and a densely populated, organized spirit world. ^{xxxiii}

Sadducees The Sadducees also appear around the time of the Maccabees. The Sadducees were aristocrats. They were the party of the wealthy and of the high priestly families. They were in charge of the temple, its services, and concessions. They claimed to be descendants of Zadok, high priest of Solomon. True derivation of the term is unknown. In all our literature they stand in opposition to the Pharisees. They were social conservatives, seeking to preserve the practices of the past. They opposed the oral law, accepting the Pentateuch as the ultimate authority. The Sadducees were materialistic in their outlook. They did not believe in life after death or rewards or punishment beyond this life. They denied the existence of angels and demons. They did not believe that God was concerned with what people did. Rather, people were totally free. They were politically oriented, supporters of ruling powers, whether Seleucids or Romans. They tolerated no threats to their position and wealth, so they strongly opposed Jesus.^{xxxiv}

Essenes A movement within Judaism, known primarily in the late Second Temple period, especially from ca. 146 B.C.E. to ca. 70 C.E. They were a communal association, entered by initiation, and considered themselves the predestined remnant of those who truly observed God’s will. They pursued their own interpretation of Torah and prophecy.^{xxxv}

They are not mentioned in the NT. They were ascetics who practiced community of goods, generally shunned marriage, refrained from attending worship in the temple, and attached great importance to the study of the Scriptures. Many scholars associate the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947 with an Essene community.^{xxxvi}

Herodians

Josephus mentions the party of the king (Life 402, Wars 2:52 etc.) In the New Testament we also read of the Herodians. (Mark 12:13) It would appear that they were politically and militarily aligned with Herod the Great and his sons.

Scribes The scribes were those who studied and copied the law. They were the ultimate authority of spiritual and practical matters. They were the lawyers. They commanded respect and were very respected. This likely goes back to at least the time of Ezra after the exile.xxxvii

Samaritans The people living in Samaria were a mixture of Israelites and settlers that the Assyrians brought into the Northern Kingdom of Israel after they had conquered and exiled the Israelites. An Israelite priest was brought in to teach these newcomers the requirements of God after they were being killed by lions. (2Ki 17:1-41) These people were hostile towards the returning exiles.

Then the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to Yahweh, the God of Israel, so they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' households and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here." (Ezr 4:1-2 LSB)

It is impossible to write an accurate history of the Samaritans because their records are so scanty; the references to them are also highly contradictory. Their history began after the Assyrian capture of the city of Samaria in 721 B.C., and the deportation of 27,290 of Israel's population (these figures are taken from Sargon's record of the conquest).xxxviii

There must have been a number of Israelites left since Hezekiah, whose reign began in about 715 BC, sent messengers throughout the Northern Kingdom to invite them to the Passover celebration. (2Ch 30:1) The Samaritans have their own version of the Pentateuch and do not accept the other Old Testament writings. From the time of the return of the Southern Kingdom from their exile, there is fairly constant friction between the Samaritans and the Israelites.

John Hyrcanus, a Jewish governor and high priest, destroyed Shechem and leveled the Samaritan temple in 128 B.C., establishing the basis for a new bitterness in Jewish-Samaritan relations. Within ten years Shechem was decimated and most of the Samaritans returned to Samaria, leaving behind only a residual community at the foot of Mt. Gerizim in the towns of Sychar and Neapolis xxxix With the various wars, there would have been other groups within this area as well. In the New Testament times, John makes note that Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. (John 4:9)

Sicarii

These came on the scene in the late 50s, after Felix had got rid of a band of robbers that had operated for about twenty years. They continued on in the revolt against Rome and were the group that made the last stand at Masada. When the country was purged of these, there sprang up another sort of robbers in Jerusalem, which were called Sicarii, who slew men in the daytime, and in the midst of the city; this they did chiefly at the festivals, when they mingled themselves among the multitude, and concealed daggers under their garments, with which they stabbed those that

were their enemies; and when any fell down dead, the murderers became a part of those that had indignation against them; by which means they appeared persons of such reputation, that they could by no means be discovered. (War 2:254–255 JOSEPH) many were slain every day, while the fear men were in of being so served, was more afflicting than the calamity itself; (2.13.3) and while everybody expected death every hour, as men do in war, so men were obliged to look before them, and to take notice of their enemies at a great distance; nor, if their friends were coming to them, durst they trust them any longer; but, in the midst of their suspicions and guarding of themselves, they were slain. Such was the celebrity of the plotters against them, and so cunning was their contrivance. (War 2:256–257 JOSEPH)

Zealots

While the Zealots are not mentioned by name before A.D. 66, the rise of their party is commonly traced in the events of A.D. 6. After the deposition of Archelaus, when Judaea received the status of a Roman province, a census was held in the province by P. Sulpicius Quirinius, legate of Syria, in order to determine the amount of tribute which it should contribute to the imperial exchequer.xl The Zealots were the extreme wing of the Pharisees.xli Josephus describes their activities during the revolt of the Jews from 66 AD to the fall of Jerusalem.

Epicureans

Epicureans believed that there were gods, but that they were removed and unconcerned about people. Pleasure was the absence of pain. They generally had good morals. They did not believe that the world was created by divine power, but rather that everything can be explained by atoms moving through empty space. They did not believe in life after death.xlii They believed in a free will. The Epicurean quest for personal pleasure led to a retreat from public activities and participation in government, which was contrary to the Greek expectation that one should be active in public life. This philosophy was a system of thought focused on the individual and mostly unconcerned with society.xliii

Stoicism This was another group that Paul debated with in Athens.

Stoicism was one of the major philosophical traditions in NT times (cf. Acts 17:18) and arguably the most influential. Its aim was to teach people to attain happiness by being in control of their lives, emphasizing virtue as the only good to strive for, all other things being indifferent.xliv The general thrust of Stoicism was that one could best obtain happiness by discovering and then living according to the laws of nature. Stoics believed in an impersonal deity, inherent in all matter, which guides the universe with a kindly providence. All that befalls human beings is intended for their education.xlv

Stoic theology may be described as a monistic and materialistic pantheism, in which God permeates all of nature, from the cosmos as a whole down to the most lowly physical objectxlv

Nothing exists outside the world and its material principles; there is no spiritual world or world of ideas, such as in Platonism—hence the materialism of Stoicismxlvii

Everything is providentially arranged for the good of the world system as a whole. Such a deterministic view of the world does not allow for the existence of evil—even apparently bad events such as illness, pests or natural disasters contribute to the overall well-being of the

universe^{xlvi} This was basically a pantheistic view. For the Stoic, happiness consists in attaining one's goal (telos) as a human being, which is "to live in agreement with nature"^{xlix}

One comment may be made regarding people's perception of gods. They primarily seem to be super humans. The true God is all powerful, all knowing, eternal and cannot be defeated. These gods could be defeated, killed or coerced. An impersonal god that guides the universe is really an oxymoron. If something is impersonal, it cannot guide anything. In order to be concerned about people, a god has to be personal and cannot just be some "force".

06.10. General Conditions during the First Century AD

General Conditions during the First Century AD Upon Herod's death, there were a number of revolts and disturbances.

While the brothers were in Rome vying for the kingship, the Roman governor wanted to raid the temple. The fight that ensued claimed many on both sides. When Varus, the president of Syria came to his rescue, he killed many along the way and crucified about 2000 of those that appeared to have been leaders in the turmoil.

Some of Herod's veteran soldiers fought against those of the king's party.

Judas of Sepphoris led a large rebellion.

Simon from Perea burnt the royal palace in Jericho. He and his followers were killed. A number of other great buildings were also destroyed.

A shepherd named Athrongeus acted like a king and overran the countryside for a time. He killed Jews, Romans and those of the king's party.

In about 6 AD, Archelaus the son of Herod that received charge over Judea was banished. At this time, Judea became a Roman province. The other two brothers retained their respective territory. At this time, Judas revolted over the issue of taxation. Josephus describes this: so men received what they said with pleasure, and this bold attempt proceeded to a great height. All sorts of misfortunes also sprang from these men, and the nation was infected with this doctrine to an incredible degree; one violent war came upon us after another, and we lost our friends, who used to alleviate our pains; there were also very great robberies and murders of our principal men. This was done in pretense indeed for the public welfare, but in reality for the hopes of gain to themselves; whence arose seditions, and from them murders of men, which sometimes fell on those of their own people (by the madness of these men towards one another, while their desire was that none of the adverse party might be left), and sometimes on their enemies; a famine also coming upon us, reduced us to the last degree of despair, as did also the taking and demolishing of cities; nay, the sedition at last increased so high, that the very temple of God was burnt down by their enemy's fire. Such were the consequences of this, that the customs of our fathers were altered and such a change was made, as added a mighty weight toward bringing all to destruction, which these men occasioned by thus conspiring together; for Judas and Sadduc, who excited a fourth philosophic sect among us, and had a great many followers therein, filled our civil government with tumults at present, and laid the foundation of our future miseries, by this system of philosophy, which we were before unacquainted withal; concerning which I shall discourse a little, and this the rather, because the infection which spread thence among the younger sort, who were zealous for it, brought the public to destruction. (Antiq. 18:6–10 JOSEPH)

During the tenure of Coponius, (6AD - 10 AD) the Roman governor, some Samaritans came into Jerusalem and threw corpses into the cloisters in the temple area. At this, they were excluded from

the temple.

Pilate, who was governor from 26 AD to 36 AD, wanted to abolish Jewish laws and brought ensigns with images into Jerusalem. The Jews protested to him in Caesarea. Josephus records the following: and when the Jews petitioned him again, he gave a signal to the soldiers to encompass them round, and threatened that their punishment should be no less than immediate death, unless they would leave off disturbing him, and go their ways home. But they threw themselves upon the ground, and laid their necks bare, and said they would take their death very willingly, rather than the wisdom of their laws should be transgressed; upon which Pilate was deeply affected with their firm resolution to keep their laws inviolable, and presently commanded the images to be carried back from Jerusalem to Cesarea. (Antiq. 18:58–59 JOSEPH)

Another time, Pilate constructed an aqueduct and exacted money from the temple treasury to pay for it. When the Jews complained about him using the sacred money, his soldiers beat and killed many of them.

Towards the end of his tenure, one of the Samaritans persuaded others that they should go to Mount Gerizim where he would show them the sacred vessels that Moses had placed there. They armed themselves to go there but Pilate came against them and killed some and dispersed others. He took many alive and killed the most prominent ones.

Caius, the Roman emperor, ordered a statue of himself to be erected in Jerusalem. When the Jews found out about this, they petitioned Petronius, the president of Syria. Petronius threatened them with death and war, but the Jews bared their necks as being ready to die. They also did not till the ground during this time. Petronius relented and sent a letter to Caius explaining the situation. There had been a great drought for a year, but as soon as Petronius relented, God sent rain. The emperor was quite upset with Petronius and ordered him to commit suicide. The letter was delayed though and Petronius received word that Caius was killed prior to receiving the letter from the emperor. Petronius recognized that the God of the Jews had worked in these situations.

Around 40 AD, Fadus, the new Roman governor caught Tholomy, an arch robber and killed him. During his tenure, Judea was cleared of robberies. In the middle to late 40 AD period, there was great famine in Palestine. Many people died during this time. Helena, queen of Adiabene, (a kingdom East of the Tigris River) had embraced the Jewish Religion and provided food for the people in Judea. Her son, Izates, also converted to Judaism and trusted God for his deliverance even when a great army came against him. God diverted that army back to where it came from without harming Izates.

During this time, a magician named Theudas deceived many people and told them to follow him with their belongings. He told them he was a prophet and would divide the Jordan so that they could cross it. Fadus, the governor sent horsemen against them and killed many and took many others alive. Theudas had his head cut off.

During the tenure of Cumanus, during Passover, one of the Roman soldiers let down his breaches and exposed himself to the multitude. After the Jews protested, Cumanus sent his troops against them. As the people fled, at least 20,000 were killed. Some of those that had raised the tumult at the temple robbed a servant of Caesar. At the news of this, Cumanus ordered his soldiers to plunder the neighboring villages. As the soldiers did this, one of them destroyed a copy of the Law

of Moses. When the Jews complained to Cumanus, out of fear of more violence, he executed the soldier.

Following this, some Jews from Galilee were traveling through Samaria. As they were going through, some Samaritans fought with them and killed a number of them. When the Jews complained to Cumanus, he accepted a bribe from the Samaritans. At this, some of the Jews along with a robber named Eleazar were going to fight the Samaritans. Cumanus, along with soldiers and Samaritans slew many and took many alive. After this, Josephus records that Judea was overrun by robbers. Cumanus was governor from 48 AD to 52 AD.

Felix succeeded him and was governor from 52 AD to 60 AD. The Roman historian writes:

Antonius Felix, practised every kind of cruelty and lust, wielding the power of king with all the instincts of a slave; Josephus writes regarding this time period:

Now, as for the affairs of the Jews, they grew worse and worse continually; for the country was again filled with robbers and impostors, who deluded the multitude. Yet did Felix catch and put to death many of those impostors every day, together with the robbers. He also caught Eleazar, the son of Dineus, who had gotten together a company of robbers; and this he did by treachery; for he gave him assurance that he should suffer no harm, and thereby persuaded him to come to him; but when he came, he bound him and sent him to Rome. Felix also bore an ill will to Jonathan, the high priest, because he frequently gave him admonitions about governing the Jewish affairs better than he did, lest he should himself have complaints made of him by the multitude, since he it was who had desired Caesar to send him as procurator of Judea. (Antiq. 20:160–162 JOSEPH)

Felix then hired some robbers (Sicarii) to kill Jonathon the high priest. This group then went on to kill their enemies. They were also hired to kill others, even in the temple.

Josephus makes an interesting observation: And this seems to me to have been the reason why God, out of his hatred to these men's wickedness, rejected our city; and as for the temple, he no longer esteemed it sufficiently pure for him to inhabit therein, but brought the Romans upon us, and threw a fire upon the city to purge it; and brought upon us, our wives, and children, slavery,—as desirous to make us wiser by our calamities. These works, that were done by the robbers, filled the city with all sorts of impiety. And now these impostors and deceivers persuaded the multitude to follow them into the wilderness, and pretended that they would exhibit manifest wonders and signs, that should be performed by the providence of God. And many that were prevailed on by them suffered the punishments of their folly; for Felix brought them back, and then punished them. (Antiq. 20:166–168 JOSEPH) And again the robbers stirred up the people to make war with the Romans, and said they ought not to obey them at all; and when any persons would not comply with them, they set fire to their villages, and plundered them. (Antiq. 20:172 JOSEPH)

Upon Festus's coming into Judea, it happened that Judea was afflicted by the robbers, while all the villages were set on fire, and plundered by them. (Antiq. 20:185 JOSEPH) It basically just got worse and worse in the final years, prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.

06.11. Cities and Areas

Cities and Areas As the Jews had been dispersed throughout the nations, they set up synagogues in various places. When the apostle Paul went on his missionary journeys, he had a habit of going to the synagogues in the various places to proclaim the Gospel there. One of the earliest letters of the New Testament was written by James to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion. This most likely refers to those believers that had been scattered after the stoning of Stephen. They were likely residing in areas outside of Judea in places like Antioch, Cyprus, Phoenicia and the like. Peter writes to those who are scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.

Alexandria

Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great. A large number of Jews settled there and were given special privileges. It was here that the Greek translation of the Old Testament occurred.

Antioch

Antioch was in Syria at the Northeast edge of the Mediterranean Sea. Acts 11:20 records that Antioch was the place where those that were scattered because of the persecution associated with Stephen first proclaimed the Gospel to the Gentiles. This is where Barnabas and Saul (Paul) spent time teaching. This was also the “home base” for Paul’s missionary journeys.

Athens

Athens had a long history and during the New Testament times was full of idols. Much time was spent discussing new ideas. It would appear that in this environment, not many people accepted the Gospel.

Caesarea

Herod the Great built a magnificent city and harbour where an earlier town was. It became the official home of the Roman Governors after Archelaus was removed and exiled. It was located Northwest of Samaria.

Colossae Colossae was a city in Asia Minor. This is one church that Paul did not start. It was founded by Epaphras.

Corinth Corinth was a city in Greece. The church there was established by Paul. It had a reputation for being morally corrupt.

Ephesus

Ephesus is on the West coast of Asia Minor. The church there was established by Priscilla and Aquila. Paul spent about three years there.

Galatia Galatia is a region in Asia minor. Paul travelled through this region during his missionary journeys.

Philippi

Philippi is between Asia Minor and Greece. It became a Roman colony with many Roman veterans settling there. The church was founded by Paul on his second missionary trip.

Samaria

Omri, the king of Israel, purchased the hill and built the city of Samaria on it. During New Testament times, the name Samaria also applied to a larger region.

Thessalonica Thessalonica also lay between Asia Minor and Greece and was established by Paul.

06.12. Events prior to the Destruction of Jerusalem

Events prior to the Destruction of Jerusalem

Under the last governors, Felix, Festus, Albinus, and Florus, moral corruption and the dissolution of all social ties, but at the same time the oppressiveness of the Roman yoke, increased every year. After the accession of Felix, assassins, called "Sicarians" (from sica, a dagger), armed with daggers and purchasable for any crime, endangering safety in city and country, roamed over Palestine. Besides this, the party spirit among the Jews themselves, and their hatred of their heathen oppressors, rose to the most insolent political and religious fanaticism, and was continually inflamed by false prophets and Messiahs, one of whom, for example, according to Josephus, drew after him thirty thousand men. Thus came to pass what our Lord had predicted: "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall lead many astray."^{li} The Christians received a revelation telling them to leave: But the people of the church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella. And when those that believed in Christ had come thither from Jerusalem, then, as if the royal city of the Jews and the whole land of Judea were entirely destitute of holy men, the judgment of God at length overtook those who had committed such outrages against Christ and his apostles, and totally destroyed that generation of impious men.^{lii}

Epiphanius also records this flight. A comparison of his account with that of Eusebius shows a common source, which is undoubtedly Hegesippus. The words in italics appear to come from him.

Pella was beyond Jordan, and was then in the dominions of Herod Agrippa II. The Christians in Jerusalem could not be expected to show any sympathy to, or receive any from Jewish nationalists.

Josephus records a few interesting events just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.^{liii}

Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend, nor give credit, to the signs that were so evident and did so plainly foretell their future desolation; but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see, or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them. (War 6:288 JOSEPH)

Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. (War 6:289 JOSEPH) At the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus [Nisan], and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which light lasted for half an hour. (War 6:290 JOSEPH) At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. (War 6:292 JOSEPH)

Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner [court of the] temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron,

and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. Now, those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it: who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty, was able to shut the gate again. (War 6:293–294 JOSEPH) So these publicly declared, that this signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the twenty-first day of the month Artemisius [Jyar], a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared; I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sunsetting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. Moreover at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, “Let us remove hence.” (War 6:296–300 JOSEPH)

There was also a prophet that started to prophecy regarding the coming destruction of Jerusalem. He started four years prior to the start of the war. The leading people of the city punished him with many severe stripes, but he still continued warning the people. After this the Jewish rulers brought him to the Roman governor who had him whipped until his bones were laid bare. He just continued to say “Woe, woe to Jerusalem”. He never reproached those who beat him and scorned him. He continued this for seven years and five months. He was killed by a Roman projectile during the siege of Jerusalem.

Josephus records the events of the last years of Jerusalem in “Antiquities” Book 20 and “The Wars of the Jews” Book 2:250- Book 7. There was continual fighting, deceit, strife and corruption during this time. The last Roman governor, Gessius Florus, became a partner with the robbers He was a greedy and violent man. There is much more that happened during this time than can be recorded here in this short background study.

Tacitus, a Roman historian makes some interesting comments regarding the war. The Romans now turned to preparations for an assault; for the soldiers thought it beneath their dignity to wait for the enemy to be starved out, and so they began to clamour for danger, part being prompted by bravery, but many were moved by their savage natures and their desire for booty. Titus himself had before his eyes a vision of Rome, its wealth and its pleasures, and he felt that if Jerusalem did not fall at once, his enjoyment of them was delayed.^{lv} The population at this time had been increased by streams of rabble that flowed in from the other captured cities, for the most desperate rebels had taken refuge here, and consequently sedition was the more rife. There were three generals, three armies: the outermost and largest circuit of the walls was held by Simon, the middle of the city by John, and the temple was guarded by Eleazar. John and Simon were strong in numbers and equipment, Eleazar had the advantage of position: between these three there was constant fighting, treachery, and arson, and a great store of grain was consumed. Then John got possession of the temple by sending a party, under pretence of offering sacrifice, to slay Eleazar and his troops. So the citizens were divided into two factions until, at the approach of the Romans, foreign war produced concord.^{lv}

Josephus was a pharisee and a general in the Jewish resistance. He was captured by the Romans and then helped them by trying to get the Jews in Jerusalem to surrender. As part of a longer speech to the besieged people in Jerusalem, he said the following:

Indeed, what can it be that hath stirred up an army of the Romans against our nation? Is it not the impiety of the inhabitants? Whence did our servitude commence? Was it not derived from the seditions that were among our forefathers, when the madness of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, and our mutual quarrels, brought Pompey upon this city, and when God reduced those under subjection to the Romans, who were unworthy of the liberty they enjoyed? (War 5:395–396 JOSEPH) As for you, what have you done of those things that are recommended by our legislator! And what have you not done of those things that he hath condemned! How much more impious are you than those who were so quickly taken! You have not avoided so much as those sins which are usually done in secret; I mean thefts, and treacherous plots against men, and adulteries. You are quarreling about rapines and murders, and invent strange ways of wickedness. Nay, the temple itself has become the receptacle of all, and this divine place is polluted by the hands of those of our own country; which place hath yet been revered by the Romans when it was at a distance from them, when they have suffered many of their own customs to give place to our law. And, after all this, do you expect Him whom you have so impiously abused to be your supporter? (War 5:401–403 JOSEPH)

Josephus recognized two things. God brought the Romans against the Jews because of their evil deeds. The other was the division among the Jews brought about their downfall. Much can be learned by our present generation from this.

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07.02. Revelation

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07.03. Background

Background In 70 AD, the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman army and their auxiliary units. By that time, the Book of Acts and most of the books of the New Testament had been written. The Christian Church had greatly expanded. After this, the apostle John wrote his Gospel around 85 AD, his three letters around 90 AD and, while on the island of Patmos in exile, he received the “Revelation of Jesus Christ”. It is important to note that John recorded all that was told him and shown him. There are many mentions of “I saw”, “I heard” and the like. This is not something that John came up with or is “John’s theology”. There are also some things that are prophesied but not explained. For example, even in Dan 12:8-9, some things are concealed. The same happens in this book with the seven thunders. John was to refrain from writing those things down. God deliberately does not make His revelations so clear that everyone can see it. He uses imagery both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Jesus, in His earthly ministry, also used parables and imagery to obscure some of His teachings. Just as Jesus explained the parables to His disciples, so some of the imagery in Revelation is explained to John. Just as creation was a supernatural event that cannot be explained in “modern” scientific terms, so many of the events in Revelation cannot be explained “scientifically” since they are acts of God. Sometimes the same word has different meanings. For example, sometimes “stars” refer to angelic beings, other times to heavenly bodies. It is prudent not to try and explain every item in this book, since it will likely not be able to be explained until the events occur. For a look at the framework for the end times presented in Daniel, the Gospels and Thessalonians see the following: e-sword version: <http://www.biblesupport.com/topic/11599-reference-books-topx-hermann-erhard-framework-for-end-times-prophecy/> PDF version: <https://www.biblestudyhelps.ca/images/bible-studies/Gospels%20and%20the%20end%20times.pdf>

07.04. Introduction

Introduction The book of Revelation has frequently been avoided by us since it appears somewhat ominous. We may be missing out on a blessing by not reading and obeying.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it, for the time is near. (Rev 1:3 LSB)

“And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” (Rev 22:7 LSB) The book is an eyewitness account of a revelation from God (the father) given to Jesus who sent an angel to John. (This is John the apostle, as Irenaeus who lived in the second century attested). John describes what was shown and told to him. Note the following:

I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, saying, “Write in a scroll what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.” (Rev 1:10-11 LSB) I, John, am the one who was hearing and seeing these things. (Rev 22:8 LSB)

While some people work hard at trying to identify the various entities in the book, they may be missing out on the whole purpose of the book. The church will be raptured prior to the great tribulation. The latest that the rapture could take place is around the 6th seal, though it is likely prior to that. Consequently, present day believers will not be going through the trumpet and bowl judgements or the time of the beast and the mark “666” of the beast. With the severity of the judgements, it is quite possible that the structure and identity of the kingdoms during the tribulation period will be different from what we currently have. We should focus more on the message of the book. Jesus had summed up the Scriptures in Matthew: And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ (Mat 22:37 LSB) “And the second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ (Mat 22:39 LSB) When Jesus was discussing the end times and the tribulation, he said the following:

“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. (Mat 24:9 LSB) “But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. (Mat 24:13 LSB) “Therefore stay awake, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. (Mat 24:42 LSB) “Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know the day nor the hour. (Mat 25:13 LSB)

“And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’ (Mat 25:40 LSB)

“Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Mat 25:45-46 LSB)

“And you will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. (Mat 10:22 LSB) Enduring, persevering, and overcoming are themes

throughout the book. The word “saw” is used 44 times in the book indicating what John saw. The word “looked” is used 12 times to describe what he saw. This book describes what John saw and heard, not what he came up with on his own. Most commentaries paint the picture that John was coming up with the various word pictures, imagery, and symbolisms, rather than acknowledging that John was just recording what he saw.

Paige Patterson in the New American Commentary series says: An author of a biblical text may certainly disclose truth that reaches to insights given by the Holy Spirit transcending even what the prophet himself comprehended. But to insist that the text meant something entirely different from that which the author understood is asking far too much. Further, a fair reading of these texts will reveal that the prophets anticipated literal fulfillment—an actual fulfillment that included and focused on Israel as the recipient of the promises of God to Abraham.ⁱⁱ When studying the book of Revelation, it is prudent to stay within reasonable bounds of acknowledging what is said and staying away from speculating about those things that are not clearly identified and revealed. It is also important to stick with the obvious plain reading of the text and not come up with some fanciful, allegorical interpretations. For example, the 144,000 that are sealed in chapter seven, are very clearly identified as Israelites. Any notion that these might be the church or some other group can be ruled out with definite certainty. The book is written to the seven churches in Asia. (Rev 1:4) The greeting is from God the father, the Holy Spirit and Jesus. (God the Son)

07.05. The first Vision (1:9-20)

The first Vision (Rev 1:9-20)

While John is exiled on the island of Patmos, the first vision, or first part of the whole vision, if you will, is a vision of Jesus with the seven stars, the sharp two-edged sword and the seven golden lampstands. The letters are written to the “angels” (messengers) of the seven lampstands (churches) in Asia minor. These “angels” are best understood to be the leaders of these churches. There may also be a secondary reference to angels that are assigned to these churches or leaders. Jesus identifies Himself as the “first and last” and as “having been dead and being alive forever and ever”. This clearly confirms the deity of Jesus.

07.06. The Letters to the Churches (2:1-3:22)

The Letters to the Churches (Rev 2:1-29, Rev 3:1-22)

This section describes what John saw and heard regarding the seven churches of Asia.

Ephesus The Ephesian church was commended for their deeds and perseverance. They were also praised for staying doctrinally pure by testing false apostles and not willing for evil to be present. They rejected the teaching and deeds of the Nicolaitans. They were reprimanded for having left their “first love”. They are called to “repent and do what they did at first”. Their “first love” would refer to their love for God. The deeds would be the outworking of this love. John writes about this principle in John 13:35, 1Jn 3:17-18 and 1Jn 4:20. Luke, in Acts 4:32-35 also describes how loving God worked itself out through the generosity shown by the believers.

Smyrna

First, Jesus re-affirms his deity. He then affirms their tribulation and poverty and lets them know that they are about to suffer, that they will be tested and have tribulation for a time. Jesus encourages them to be faithful until death and they will receive the crown of life.

Pergamum

Jesus acknowledges that they live where “Satan’s throne” is and that they did not deny their faith even when one of them was martyred. They were reprovved for tolerating those that committed sexual immorality and sacrificed to idols. They also had some who followed the teaching of the Nicolaitans. They are commanded to repent. Tolerance of evil within the church leads to reproof by Jesus here and in Thyatira.

Thyatira This church is commended for their deeds, love, faith, service, and perseverance. They are reprovved for tolerating Jezebel, who proclaimed to be a prophetess and was deceiving and teaching sexual immorality and eating things sacrificed to idols. Regarding the “deep things of Satan, as they call them” John MacArthur writes: This pre-Gnostic teaching said that one was free to engage the sphere of Satan and participate in sins of the body without harming the spirit. Since the spirit belongs to God, their twisted logic went, what does it matter if the body attends idolatrous feasts and engages in sexual immorality? They imagined themselves to be free to explore the satanic sphere and then brazenly come to worship God.ⁱⁱⁱ Leon Morris concurs with this in his commentary.

They did not hesitate to engage in grossly sensual practices, maintaining that these concerned only their bodies but that their souls were pure. It could well be that we have here an early representative of this kind of teaching.^{iv}

Sardis This church had a reputation of being alive, yet was dead. The only commendation is that there are a few who are still upright. The church is called to repent.

Philadelphia This church is commended for their deeds, having kept the word of Jesus, and not denying Jesus. This church is promised that they will be kept from the “hour of testing” that is coming on the whole world. Many commentators take this promise to have a wider, secondary application in that the true believers will be raptured prior to the tribulation.

Laodicea This church is rebuked for being lukewarm. They had an attitude of self-sufficiency and smugness.

07.07. The vision in Heaven (4:1-11)

The vision in Heaven (Rev 4:1-11) In Rev 4:1-11, the transition to heaven takes place as John is called to “come up here” in order to be shown “what must take place after these things”. Here he sees a throne with someone sitting on it (God the father). There are 24 thrones around the throne upon which the 24 elders sat. Flashes of lightning and peals of thunder come from the throne. The Holy Spirit is present, as is described by the lamps of fire. There are four living creatures proclaiming praise to God. Jesus is then identified with the Lamb that looked like it had been slain. The Lamb has seven eyes which are said to be the “seven Spirits of God” (a reference to the Holy Spirit). This shows that, first, Jesus is God and second, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. The Lamb (Jesus) is worshipped by the angelic host. This clearly shows the divinity of Jesus, as only God is worshipped by the angelic host. The angels ascribe to both God the Father on the throne and the Lamb the same worship (Rev 5:11-13). Angels would never allow someone to worship them as is shown in other passages.

Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that! I am a fellow slave with you and your brothers who have the witness of Jesus. Worship God” (Rev 19:10 LSB)

07.08. Book with the seven seals (5:1-8:1)

Book with the seven seals (Rev 5:1-14, Rev 6:1-17, Rev 7:1-17, Rev 8:1) The Lamb then opens the seven seals that are on the scroll that God the Father gave to Jesus. This reflects back to the first verse where God the father gave the revelation to Jesus.

A white horse with one that conquers and overcomes went out.

A red horse went out and the rider was to take peace from the earth and make men slay each other.

A black horse, appears and the rider has a pair of scales. There is a lack of food and consequent famine.

Ashen horse with Death riding on it and Hades following behind. They kill ¼th of the earth with sword, famine, pestilence and wild animals.

John sees martyrs that are under the alter asking how long will God refrain from judging and avenging their blood? Each is given a white robe and told to rest longer.

When the sixth seal is broken, there is a great earthquake, the sun became black, the moon became like blood, the stars fell to the earth, the sky split apart, the mountains and islands moved out of their place and people hid themselves. This is an extremely catastrophic event, which obviously has not happened yet, so this is definitely in the future. After this, 144,000 of Israel sealed. The rapture must have taken place prior to this since the only believers left are the 144,000 Israelites that were sealed. While it is not possible to pinpoint the exact time of the rapture, it is most likely prior to the sixth seal being opened. (Many would place it prior to the first seal). A great multitude from all nations and tribes stand before the throne – these come out of the great tribulation which is about to occur. John MacArthur writes:

The elder's description of these believers as having come out of the great tribulation clearly distinguishes them from any other group of redeemed people in history. The term great tribulation refers to a specific time in the future that is unique in all of human history. It refers to the future eschatological day of divine judgment immediately before Jesus Christ returns to establish His earthly kingdom. v

The seventh seal ushers in the seven angels with seven trumpets. Another angel takes a censer filled with fire and throws it to the earth. Lightning, thunder, and earthquake follow.

No specific judgment is mentioned when the seventh seal is broken. The narrative moves directly to seven trumpet judgments. From this we infer that the seventh seal consists of the seven trumpets.

W. Graham Scroggie states, "The trumpets, therefore, do not double back over all or some of the seals, but lie under the sixth seal, and proceed from it" (The Great Unveiling, p. 111). He also holds that the bowls of the wrath of God (chap. 16) "do not double back over the seal and trumpet

judgments” (p. 112) vii

C.A. Blanchard holds the same position: “The series of three sevens are really included in one series of seven, that is, the seven trumpets are included under the seventh seal and the seven bowls are included under the seventh trumpet, so that we have in fact a single series in three movements” (Light on the Last Days, p. 58).viii

07.09. Seven trumpets (8:6-11:19)

Seven trumpets (Rev 8:6-13, Rev 9:1-21, Rev 10:1-11, Rev 11:1-19)

Hail and fire mixed with blood is thrown on the earth and one third of the earth, trees and all the grass is burned up.

Something like a great mountain burning with fire is thrown into the sea. This causes one third of the sea to become blood. Also, one third of the creatures in the sea died and one third of the ships are destroyed.

A great star (Wormwood) falls from heaven, burning like a torch and fell on one third of the rivers and springs. Many men died from the waters which were made bitter.

One third of the sun, moon and stars are struck.

First woe. A Star (angelic or spiritual being) from heaven had fallen to the earth and opened the bottomless pit (where fallen angels or demons have been kept).

A term for the underworld as a. the prison of the disobedient (Luk 8:31; Rev 9:1) and b. the realm of the dead (Rom 10:7).ix

Locusts came out and tormented those without the seal (144,000 Jews) for five months and could torment, but not kill. These would be demonic forces who had a “king” over them who was the “angel of the abyss”. Some think that this refers to Satan but as John MacArthur notes: This angel is better viewed as a high-ranking demon in Satan’s hierarchy.x Kendall H. Easley writes: his is neither the holy angel of God with the key (verse 1) nor Satan, who is introduced in chapter 12. This is some other archdemon that appears here in Scripture and perhaps also in 11:7.xi

Four angels are released to kill 1/3rd of mankind. There were 200,000,000 horsemen. A strong angel with a little open book cried out and seven peals of thunder uttered their voices, but this was not to be recorded. This would seem to indicate that there is another series of judgements that take place at this time. The angel says that there will no longer be any delay. John takes the book and eats it and is told to prophesy again concerning many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. Here, the two witnesses are introduced. These two witnesses prophesy for 1260 days. They will have power to cause plagues and kill those who would harm them.

David Guzik makes a good point: Who they are must not be terribly important, or we would have been told exactly who they are!xii

Warren Wiersbe puts the timing of these witnesses into the first half of the tribulation. This makes the most sense, since the beast that overpowers them rules for the second 3½ years. The place is Jerusalem and the time is the first half of the tribulation. Israel is worshipping again at its restored temple, built under the protection of the Antichrist, whose true character has not yet been revealed.xiii

After this, the beast that comes out of the abyss will overcome them and kill them. This would be the same beast that is described in Rev 13:1-18. After 3½ days they will rise and ascend to heaven. A great earthquake occurs. One tenth of the city (Jerusalem) fell. Seven thousand people are killed in the earthquake. The rest of the people were terrified and gave glory to God. This was the second woe, the third was to appear quickly. It would appear that the chronology for the events on earth continue in Rev 13:1-18. It would also appear that Rev 13:1-18 refers to the second half of the tribulation.

Forty-two months (1,260 days or times and time and half a time) is equal to three and one-half years or one-half of the tribulation period. Since the judgments seem to intensify from the opening of the seals to the sounding of the trumpets and finally to the sounding of the seven thunders and the outpouring of God's bowls of wrath, apparently the 42 months are the last 42 months of the tribulation period.^{xiv}

There are loud voices in heaven and elders worship God. The twenty-four elders fell on their faces and worshipped God. The temple of God in heaven was opened and there was lightning, thunder earthquake and hail.

07.10. Woman and dragon (12:1-17)

Woman and dragon (Rev 12:1-17) This is a bit of a side note in the sense that it does not follow the chronology, but rather explains some things.

A woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet with a crown of 12 stars. This woman represents Israel, from whom Jesus was born.

She was with child (Jesus). This dates to the time when Jesus was born.

The great red dragon (Satan) swept away 1/3rd of stars in heaven and threw them to the earth. This is sometimes taken to mean that 1/3 of the angels followed Satan in his rebellion against God. He stood before the woman about to give birth in order to devour the child.

The male child (Jesus) was to rule all nations with a rod of iron and was caught up to God and His throne.

The woman (Israel) fled to the wilderness where she would be nourished for 1260 days.

Paige Patterson notes: This temporal period described in Scripture as 42 months (Rev 11:2; Rev 13:5), or as “a time, times and half a time” (Rev 12:14), and sometimes as three and one-half years (Dan 9:27), is a consistent reference to the final three and one-half years of the 70-week prophecy in Daniel 9.xv The angel Michael and his angels fight Satan and his angels (demons). Satan and his host are defeated and are thrown down to earth. He knows he only has a short time and he persecutes the woman (Israel). This is in the middle of the Tribulation.xvi

Since Satan could not come against the woman, he makes war against the rest of her children (the church). Paige Patterson comments on this:

Unnoticed by many is the distinction in the final verse. The “offspring” of the woman and their identification as those who “hold to the testimony of Jesus,” make it virtually certain that two separate groups are intended. The radiant woman, representing ethnic Israel is one object of Satan’s fury. But the saints of the church—every follower of Jesus who bears his testimony—become the final object of satanic hatred. Since God remains beyond the reach of Satan, the devil’s wrath against God is transferred to the two objects still partially within his sphere; Israel and the church of Jesus the Christ.xvii The beast comes up from the sea and was given power, the throne and authority. One of his heads had a fatal wound that was healed. The world was amazed and followed him. Authority to act was given for 42 months. It was given him to make war against the saints and to overcome them. This calls for the perseverance of the saints. People have tried to identify the kingdoms, but ultimately it is best to wait to try and identify the nations and the one head (nation or person) that looked like it had a fatal wound. The book of Revelation gives no insight into the identity of these kingdoms, and such hypothesizing will not prove helpful.xviii A second beast comes and exercises the authority of the first beast and performs great signs. He is also able to make the image of the beast to speak. A mark is put on people’s forehead or hand so no one can buy or sell without it (666). The lamb stands with the 144,000 Jews on

mount Zion. An angel flies in midair and proclaims the gospel to every nation, tribe, and people.

Another angel proclaims that Babylon is fallen. A third angel proclaims that anyone receiving the mark will incur the wrath of God. This calls for perseverance of the saints and those who die in Lord from now on are blessed. The earth is harvested – the evil people were trampled in God's wine press. This reference to harvesting may be an overview of what is about to happen.

07.11. The seven last plagues (15:1-16:21)

The seven last plagues (Rev 15:1-8, Rev 16:1-21) Those who were victorious over the beast are with God singing the song of Moses.

Malignant sores on the people with the mark of the beast.

The sea becomes blood and everything in the sea dies.

The rivers and waters become blood.

The sun was given power to scorch the earth and people were scorched with fierce heat, but still would not repent.

The kingdom of the beast became darkened. This also brought about physical pain.

The Euphrates is dried up and unclean spirits (demons) perform signs and gather the kings of the world together for the great day of God (Har-Magedon).

There was lightning, thunder, a great earthquake, hailstones; mountains and islands were not found. The great city was split into three parts.

07.12. Judgment of the great harlot (17:1-18)

Judgment of the great harlot (Rev 17:1-18) An immoral Woman sitting on a scarlet beast (blasphemous names, seven heads, ten horns) The woman is identified in Rev 17:18 as the great city, which has a kingdom over the kings of the earth and as “Babylon the great” in Rev 17:5. We can then deduce that the woman also represents a false religion and all that is abominable and is contrary to all that is good according to God. It appears that the source will be the city of Babylon and this false religion and ideology will spread throughout the world. Rev 18:1-24 seems to affirm this. John MacArthur writes:

Some commentators deny that the great city is a literal city, preferring to see it as a symbol of the religious aspect of Antichrist’s empire. Some of those who view the great city as an actual city identify it as Rome, others as Jerusalem. But the angel quite clearly and repeatedly refers to Babylon on the Euphrates throughout Rev 17:1-18, Rev 18:1-24. Those allusions can be seen by comparing Rev 17:1 with Jer 51:13; Jer 17:2; Jer 17:4 with Jer 51:7; Jer 18:7 with Isa 47:5; Isa 18:2 with Isa 13:21 and Jer 51:8; Jer 18:4 with Jer 50:8; Jer 51:6; Jer 51:45; Jer 18:5 with Jer 51:9; Jer 18:6 with Jer 50:15; Jer 51:24; Jer 18:21 with Jer 51:63-64. The description of Babylon’s destruction (cf. Rev 18:10, Rev 18:18, Rev 18:21) also suggests that an actual city is in view.^{xix} John Walvoord sees the religious system of Babylon: This evil woman symbolizes the religious system of Babylon, and the waters symbolize “peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages” (Rev 17:15). The angel informed John that the kings of the earth had committed adultery with the woman; in other words, they had become a part of the religious system which she symbolized xx

The name on her forehead is “Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth”.

She is drunk with the blood of the saints.

The beast represents kingdoms and kings and will be defeated By Jesus.

Another angel proclaims that Babylon the great is fallen, God’s people are to come out of her and not participate in her sins. There is rejoicing in heaven and a great multitude of believers in heaven appear.

07.13. Jesus Returns (19:11-20:3)

Jesus Returns (Rev 19:11-21, Rev 20:1-3)

Jesus comes with the armies from heaven and fights against the armies of the kings of the earth and the beast and defeats them. He will rule them with a rod of iron. The symbolism is a sword coming from His mouth. The Word of God is portrayed as a sword (Eph 6:17, Heb 4:12) and thus it would appear that it is through His Word that Jesus defeats His enemies.

The beast and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire and the rest of the people were killed by Jesus.

Satan is thrown into the abyss for 1,000 years. The Thousand Year Reign of Jesus (Rev 20:4-6)

During the one-thousand-year reign of Jesus, those that have been martyred for the word of God and those who did not worship the beast or receive the mark of the beast during the tribulation will reign with Jesus. The rest of the dead will not come to life until after the end of the thousand-year reign of Jesus. The Final Battle (Rev 20:7-10)

Satan is released at the end of the thousand-year reign of Jesus and will deceive the nations. The nations will then come up against the camp of the saints where fire will come and devour them. At this point, Satan is thrown into the lake of fire.

Great White Throne judgement and the Judgement Seat of Christ

People are judged for what they have done, death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire. Anyone whose name was not in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented there for eternity. Believers will be in the "New Jerusalem" with God the father and Jesus (the Lamb). There is a vivid description of the city in Rev 21:1-27 and Rev 22:1-21. There is some disagreement as to whether there is just one judgment seat or more. Some of the passages that talk about the judgment seat of God or Christ.

"For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, (John 5:22 LSB) and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. (John 5:27 LSB)

"For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EACH ONE ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. (Mat 16:27 LSB)

"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. "And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; (Mat 25:31-32 LSB)

"And He commanded us to preach to the people, and solemnly to bear witness that this is the One who has been designated by God as Judge of the living and the dead. (Acts 10:42 LSB) For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. (Rom 14:10 LSB) For we must all appear before the

judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2Co 5:10 LSB)

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: (2Ti 4:1 LSB)

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sits upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. Then I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. (Rev 20:11-12 LSB) The things that these verses make clear are:

Jesus is the one who judges

People will be repaid for their deeds, whether good or bad.

For believers, this will not be a salvation issue, but rather one of reward or lack thereof. (1Co 3:11-15)

For unbelievers, it will determine the severity of the punishment and is not a salvation issue either. (Mat 10:15; Mat 11:22-24, Luk 12:47-48) William Macdonald writes regarding Mat 10:15

He warned that such rejection would bring severer punishment in the day of judgment than the perversion of Sodom and Gomorrah. This proves that there will be degrees of punishment in hell; otherwise, how could it be more tolerable for some than for others? xxi Writing on Luk 12:47-48, William Macdonald writes:

Luk 12:47-48 set forth a fundamental principle in regard to all service. The principle is that the greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility. For believers, it means that there will be degrees of reward in heaven. For unbelievers, it means that there will be degrees of punishment in hell. Those who have come to know God's will as it is revealed in the Scriptures are under great responsibility to obey it. Much has been given to them; much will be required of them. Those who have not been so highly privileged will also be punished for their misdeeds, but their punishment will be less severe. xxii

At the judgement, Jesus will separate the believers from the unbelievers.

There are some different views as to how many judgements there are and when they will happen. Some believe that the "bema" seat judgment in 2Co 5:10 is for believers only. Frequently this is said to occur at the rapture. This would present an issue – what about the tribulation and 1000-year reign believers. Some would also see another where the "sheep and goats" are separated. As we look at the above Scriptures, the most straight-forward, logical view would be that there is one judgment – the white throne judgment. Rom 14:10 says that we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. Paul quotes Isa 45:22-25 and it is quite clear there that "everyone" means everyone. The sure word of God is that every knee will bow before him and every tongue will swear allegiance to him (Isa 45:23 b). This includes Hebrews and non-Hebrews, all nations, all languages, and all people xxiii these verses contain an implicit forewarning: we must all appear before the judgment seat of God.706 It is this divine judgment seat (be■ma), not Pilate's (Mat 27:19; John 19:13), not Gallio's (Acts 18:12; Acts 18:16-17), not the court of public of

opinion, that ultimately counts. No one, including Christians, can escape it. xxiv The passage in Mat 25:31-46 sounds very much like the great white throne judgment as well, so most likely there is one judgement.

While the others are possibilities, we should not be too dogmatic on this.

New Jerusalem

Rev 21:1-27 and Rev 22:1-21 describe the New Jerusalem. It is brilliant like precious stones. The first heaven and earth have passed away at this point. There are twelve gates (which are pearls) with an angel at each one. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel are written on the gates. There were twelve foundation stones with the names of the apostles on them. The city is square, measuring about 2300 kilometers in each direction – width, length, and height. The walls are about 64 meters wide. The wall material is jasper and the city is pure gold. The foundation stones are of precious, beautiful material. A river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb with the tree of life being on either side of it.

07.14. The Deity of Christ in Revelation

The Deity of Christ in Revelation There are several passages that make it clear that Jesus is indeed God. In Rev 1:4, “the one who is, and who was and who is to come” is a reference to God the Father. In Rev 1:8, God the Father says that He is the “Alpha and Omega” and the one “who is and was and who is to come, the Almighty”. In this verse, Alpha and Omega and the one who is and was and is to come are equated with God. In Rev 1:17-18, Jesus references his identity again by stating that He is the “first and the last”, that He is the “living one who was dead and now is alive forever and ever”. As has already been established, Jesus is the one that Judges and sits on the throne at the great white throne judgment. In the scene in Rev 21:1-7, the new heaven and earth appear. The one sitting on the throne spoke. One of the things said is “I am the Alpha and Omega”. The question is who is on this throne? Is it Jesus, who was on the great white throne just prior or is it God the father from Rev 4:2? The most natural reading would be that this is God the Father on the throne. In Rev 22:13-16, Jesus is speaking and says that I am the “Alpha and Omega, the first and the last”. Here, Jesus proclaims that He is the Alpha and Omega, which previously has been used by God the father to describe Himself. Thus, the only valid conclusion is that both God the Father and Jesus, God the Son is God. Additionally, of course, the Holy Spirit is also identified as God, therefore we have a “triune” God – one God in three persons.

07.15. The Seven Year Tribulation Period

The Seven Year Tribulation Period The 70th week of Daniel is in the future and is a seven-year period. Most charts that you see will have the tribulation period spanning from the beginning of the seven seals to the second coming of Christ. Is this the correct view though according to the text? Let's look at Daniel's text.

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. (Dan 9:24 NAS95) The seventy weeks apply to the Jewish people, not to Gentiles.

Now, looking at the book of Revelation, we have two 3 ½ year periods. The first begins with the arrival of the two witnesses at the end of the 6th trumpet. The second 3 ½ year period starts with the killing of the two witnesses and the beast being given authority to act for 3 ½ years. From the time of the opening of the seals to the arrival of the two witnesses, the judgements are on all the earth. It is not until the arrival of the two witnesses, that the focus shifts back to Israel. Considering this, it is likely that the seven-year tribulation period proper does not start until the arrival of the two witnesses. That is not to discount the judgements nor their intensity from the start of the opening of the seals. This also provides for the time of the seal and trumpet judgements prior to the two 3 ½ year events that are listed. The apostasy that is referenced in 2Th 2:3 is a little harder to place, so this is a bit of speculation here. The apostasy must be prior to the man of lawlessness, so it must be no later than the middle of the Tribulation. Considering the severity of the judgements of the seals and trumpets, I would be inclined to think that it was prior to the opening of the first seal, so that going into the time of the judgements of the end, there would be very few Christians.

07.16. Our Focus

Our Focus

Considering all of this and seeing that God is in control and that the believer's final destiny is assured as is the defeat of Satan and all that follow him, we should concentrate on the commands that Jesus gave us. And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' (Mat 22:37-39 NAS95) And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Mat 28:18-20 NAS95) ... However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luk 18:8 NAS95) Will you and I be found faithful?

07.17. Revelation Time Line Chart

Revelation Time Line Chart

07.18. End Notes

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08.00. The Chronologies of the Pentateuch

The Chronology of The Pentateuch

08.01. Reference points

During Old Testament times, dates are generally given in reference to a king or a significant event. For example:

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. (Gen 7:11)

Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (Exo 12:40-41)

Thus the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, (Num 9:1)

Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD (1Ki 6:1)

08.02. Genesis Chapters 1 & 2

Gen 1:1-5 describe the first day

Creation of heaven and earth

Light

Separation of light and dark

Definition of what a day means – evening and morning. In other words, a normal 24-hour day

Gen 1:6-8 describe the second day

An expanse is created between the earth and heaven

Gen 1:9-13 describe the third day

Dry land appears

The dry land is called earth and the water is called seas

Vegetation is created

Gen 1:14-19 describe the fourth day

Lights were made to be a sign for the seasons, days and years. (the reason for not specifying sun and moon is likely because they were worshipped by other people)

Stars are also made

Gen 1:20-23 describe the fifth day

Swimming creatures are made

Flying creatures are made

Gen 1:24-31 describe the sixth day

Land animals are made

Adam & Eve are made in the image of God

Man is given dominion over all the living creatures

Animals and mankind were given plants for food

God states that everything that he made was “very good”

Gen 2:2-3 describe the seventh day

By the seventh day, God had completed his work, rested and blessed the seventh day.

In the 4th commandment regarding the Sabbath, Exo 20:11 affirms that God made the heavens and the earth and all that is in them in 6 ordinary, 24 hour days.

08.03. Genesis chapter 5, 7 & 9

In this chapter we have the “book of the generations of Adam”. We will use the Masoretic text numbers as they are represented in our Bibles. Later we will show the comparison of the Masoretic text and Septuagint numbers as the latter is more likely the correct version.

Considering the formula given for this list, it is quite obvious that God wanted us to be able to calculate the overall timeline, with the reference point being creation. For example, we read that when Adam was 130, he became the father of Seth. He lived another 800 years and the total years that he lived was 930.

Name

Age at birth of Son

Lived after birth of son

Total Lifespan

Adam

130

800

930

Seth

105

807

912

Enosh

90

815

905

Kenan

70

840

910

Mahalalel

65

830

895

Jared

162

800

962

Enoch

65

300

365

Methuselah

187

782

969

Lamech

182

595

777

Noah

502

448

950

For Noah, we need to look at a few verses.

Gen 5:32 tells us that Noah was 500 years old when he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth

Gen 7:6 tells us that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came

Gen 9:28 tells us that Noah lived 350 years after the flood

Gen 9:29 tells us that Noah lived a total of 950 years.

Gen 11:10 tells us that Shem was 100 years old 2 years after the flood

From this information, we can tell that Shem was not the first-born, but was born 2 years after either Japheth or Ham or both were born.

08.04. Genesis chapter 11

In this chapter we have the record of the generations of Shem. We have a similar formula in this list. The age of the patriarch is provided at the birth of the son and then lived another number of years.

Name

Age at birth of Son

Lived after birth of son

Total Lifespan

Shem

100

500

600

Arpachshad

35

403

438

Shelah

30

403

433

Eber

34

430

464

Peleg

30

209

239

Reu

32

207

239

Serug

30

200

230

Nahor

29

119

148

Terah

130

75

205

For Terah we need to look at the following verses since his first son was not Abraham.

Gen 11:32 gives the total lifespan for Terah as 205

Gen 12:4 gives the age of Abraham as 75 when he left Haran right after Terah died there

This makes Terah 130 when Abraham was born. (It also makes him 140 when Sarah was born to him by another woman)

08.05. Abraham to Joseph

To get the numbers from Abraham to Joseph we go into a more detailed part of the text and find the references to compile this list.

Abraham was 100 years old at the birth of Isaac

Gen 17:1-27 records Abraham being 99 years old when he was given the promise of a child through Sarah his wife the following year.

Gen 21:5 records Abraham's age as 100 years old when Isaac was born.

Abraham lived to be 175 years old (Gen 25:7)

Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob was born (Gen 25:26)

Isaac was 180 years old when he died (Gen 35:28)

Jacob was 147 years old when he died (Gen 47:28)

Joseph's numbers need to be calculated a bit differently.

Jacob was in Egypt 17 years

Jacob entered Egypt when there were 5 years left in the famine (Gen 45:6; Gen 45:11)

Joseph was 30 years old when he came before Pharaoh (Gen 41:46). At this point the 7 years of plenty were just beginning.

Joseph died at 110 years of age (Gen 50:26)

So, to get Jacob's age at Joseph's birth we need to start from the time that Jacob entered Egypt. He was 130 Years old when he came to Egypt (Gen 47:9). From that, we subtract the 2 years of famine that have already occurred, so that makes him 128 at the start of the famine. From there we subtract the 7 years of plenty, making him 121 at the time of the start of the 7 years of plenty which is when Joseph was 30 years old, making Jacob 91 years old when Joseph was born. Joseph's sons were born prior to the years of famine. (Gen 41:50)

Name

Age at birth of Son

Lived after birth of son

Total Lifespan

Abraham

100

75

175

Isaac

60

120

180

Jacob

91

56

147

Joseph

31-36

74-79

110

08.06. Time in Egypt

Exo 12:40-41 provide the total time in Egypt – 430 years to the day.

08.07. Time from the Exodus to the start of the Temple

In 1Ki 6:1 we are told that in the 480th year after Israel came out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon, he began to build the temple. So here we have another reference point. The fourth year of Solomon's reign has been quite firmly established to be 967 BC (Steinmann 2011, Pg 37). This puts the Exodus at 1446 BC.

Putting all this together now we have

The Exodus in 1446 BC

Jacob (Israel) into Egypt in 1876 BC

Jacobs birth is 2006 BC

Isaac's birth is 2066 BC

Abraham's birth is 2166 BC

From there it is a fairly simple matter of charting all of this.

There is one more issue to deal with and that is the textual evidence of the Patriarchal numbers.

There has been an obvious changing of some of the numbers of the pre-flood and post flood patriarchs. A number of the ages when sons were born have been changed. There were also some copying mistakes. By looking at the textual and extra-Biblical evidence, the original numbers can be reconstructed fairly well. The following chart represents the most likely original numbers. With the Masoretic text, we come up with a creation date of about 4174 BC and with the most probable reconstruction, we come up with 5554 BC. This provides us with the outside bounds of the date of creation, i.e. no farther back than 5554 BC and no less than 4174 BC. For a discussion on the textual evidence, please go to <https://biblearchaeology.org/abr-projects-main/genesis-5-11-project>

The other lifespan we are told about is that of Moses.

Moses was about 40 years old when he killed the Egyptian (Acts 7:23)

Moses was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus. (Exo 7:7)

Moses was 120 years old when he died. (Deu 34:7)

Since the Exodus was in 1446 BC, Moses would have been born in 1526 BC and died in 1406 BC.

08.08. Dating from Creation or our current calendar

When God started to provide a timeline for us, He started with creation not with the calendar that we currently use. This could be compared to using degrees Celsius or degrees Kelvin. The Kelvin scale starts at absolute 0 (-273.15 C), which could be compared to dating from creation, since that is the starting point of time. Degrees Celsius could be compared to our current dating system of BC and AD with Jesus Christ being the reference point. From this reference point, whether it be the freezing point of water at 0 degrees or the birth of Jesus, you can go forward or backward. Just as you can convert from Celsius to Kelvin, so you can convert from absolute dates from creation to our present calendar.

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09.01. To Judge or Not to Judge

To Judge or Not to Judge

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09.03. Introduction

Introduction

We often hear “don’t judge”, but what does that really mean? The Bible also tells us to judge and discern good and evil. To get a proper understanding of when to judge, how to judge and when not to judge, we must look at the relevant passages in context and look at the definitions of the words that are used. Just as the word “judge” has a wide range of meaning in the English language, there is also a range of meanings in the original languages. There are several words that are used in the original languages that are translated “judge” or similar. It would be good to keep the words of James in mind: For whoever keeps the whole Law, yet stumbles in one point, has become guilty of all. (Jas 2:10). This makes everyone a sinner and condemned since everyone has failed at least once. (Rom 5:12-14). Because of this, the only way that we can be justified is by accepting the payment for our sins by Jesus Christ by faith alone.

09.04. Definitions

Definitions Old Testament Hebrew In order to better understand judging, we need to look at the words that are used and what their meaning is. The two main Hebrew words that are used are:

H4941 מִשְׁפָּט mishpat From H8199; properly a verdict (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a sentence or formal decree (human or (particularly) divine law, individual or collectively), including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty; abstractly justice, including a particular right, or privilege (statutory or customary), or even a style: - + adversary, ceremony, charge, X crime, custom, desert, determination, discretion, disposing, due, fashion, form, to be judged, judgment, just (-ice, -ly), (manner of) law (-ful), manner, measure, (due) order, ordinance, right, sentence, usest, X worthy, + wrong.

H8199 שָׁפַט sha-phat A primitive root; to judge, that is, pronounce sentence (for or against); by implication to vindicate or punish; by extension to govern; passively to litigate (literally or figuratively): - + avenge, X that condemn, contend, defend, execute (judgment), (be a) judge (-ment), X needs, plead, reason, rule. The primary meaning relates to judging according to the law. This involves determining right and wrong and handing down a judgement. This judging is done by someone who has the authority to do it, especially and ultimately, God. Ruling and judging go hand in hand. Judging protects the oppressed, weak or innocent and can provide deliverance. God is the lawgiver.

New Testament Greek A number of words are translated judge, judging or similar in the Greek:

G2917 Κριμα krima From G2919; a decision (the function or the effect, for or against ["crime"]): - avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation, + go to law, judgment.

G2919 Κρινω krino

Properly to distinguish, that is, decide (mentally or judicially); by implication to try, condemn, punish: - avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

G2920 Κρισις krisis

(Subjectively or objectively, for or against); by extension a tribunal; by implication justice (specifically divine law): - accusation, condemnation, damnation, judgment.

G2923 Κριτης kriteis From G2919; a judge (generally or specifically): - judge.

G1252 Διακρινω diakrino From G1223 and G2919; to separate thoroughly, that is, (literally and reflexively) to withdraw from, or (by implication) oppose; figuratively to discriminate (by implication decide), or (reflexively) hesitate: - contend, make (to) differ (-ence), discern, doubt, judge, be partial, stagger, waver.

G1348 Δικαστης dikastes From a derivative of G1349; a judge: - judge.

There is a wider range of meanings in total from the Greek words that are used. The meanings of the words range from selecting or having an opinion, to judging according to the law. When a particular passage is looked at, the definition for the Greek word that is used needs to be looked at in a Lexicon and the context considered. For the most part in the New Testament, the usage is quite similar to the Old Testament meaning. The person, or group, that has authority decides or judges based on the law, whether that be the law of God or a law of the land.

09.05. Judging, Discerning

Discernment There is a difference between discerning and judging. For example, in Hebrews we read: But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to distinguish between good and evil. (Heb 5:14). Also, 1Th 5:20-21, 1Ki 3:9, Mat 7:15-20, 1Co 5:1-12, 1Ti 1:19-20, 2Th 3:6, Pro 14:7, Rom 12:3; Rom 15:14; Rom 16:17, 1Ti 6:3-11, 2Ti 3:1-9, 2Jn 1:7-11).

Discerning right and wrong is something that we need to do, starting with ourselves. We need to examine ourselves (1Co 11:26-32). The reference point for discernment is always the Word of God.

God is the ultimate judge God is the ultimate judge in that He instituted all laws and authorities. (Rom 13:1) **Governmental judging**

Because God has appointed rulers and authorities to govern people, they have the authority to judge. Because they are appointed by God, people must obey them. (Mat 23:2-3, Rom 13:1-2, Tit 3:1, 1Pe 2:13-15)

Church judging Passages related to not judging Mat 7:1-5, Luk 6:37 As part of the "Sermon on the Mount", Jesus says: "Do not judge (G2919), so that you will not be judged (G2919). "For in the way you judge (G2919), you will be judged (G2919); and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you." (Mat 7:1-2) He continues on to call them hypocrites in that those who are judging were doing worse than those that they were judging. (Mat 7:3-5). The judging here refers to a condemnation of the person. (Luk 6:37). Jesus illustrates this in Luk 18:9-14, where the self-righteous Pharisee looked down on the "sinner" (tax collector) that asked for mercy. Jesus says that the "sinner was justified, but the self-righteous was not.

Romans

There are a number of places in Romans that relate to judging. The whole message of the letter to the Romans needs to be considered as we look at these verses.

No one is righteous. (Rom 3:9-18; Rom 3:23, Rom 5:12, Rom 11:32)

No one is justified through the law. (Rom 3:20, Rom 3:28)

Righteousness is by faith. (Rom 1:16-17; Rom 3:22; Rom 3:26-30; Rom 4:9-16; Rom 5:1-2)

Christ died for us to pay the penalty of sin. (Rom 4:25, Rom 5:1-21)

Even though believers still do wrong, it is no longer the believer doing it, but sin indwelling the person. Therefore, there is no condemnation for those that are saved by faith in Jesus. Since God does not condemn believers, neither should other believers. (Rom 7:14-25, Rom 8:1-11)

Believers are to love and serve. (Rom 12:1-21; Rom 13:9-10)

Believers are to make “sound judgements”. (Rom 12:3)

Believers are to accept one another. (Rom 15:7)

The believers, those being full of goodness and knowledge, are able to admonish one another. (Rom 15:14)

God is the judge. (Rom 2:16, Rom 3:6, Rom 3:19, Rom 8:33-34, Rom 14:10-12)

The two main sections in Romans that deal with judging are in Rom 2:1-5 and Rom 14:1-23, Rom 15:1-7. In the first case, the focus is on those that are self-righteous, looking down and condemning others, all the while not realizing that they are also condemned and needing the grace and mercy of God themselves since there is “no one who is righteous”. In the second case, one group of people was looking down on, and condemning another for either being “weak” or for approving things that they considered wrong. This applies to those types of things such as food, special days or other things which are inherently neither right or wrong and are a matter of conscience. See also Col 2:16. This of course does not apply to the doctrines of the faith. He states “Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.” (Rom 16:17). In other letters, Paul and other writers are also quite clear that the true doctrines need to be preserved and false doctrines corrected. (Gal 1:6-8, Eph 4:14, Col 2:8, Col 2:18-23, 1Ti 1:3-10, 1Ti 4:1-7, 1Ti 4:13-16, 1Ti 6:3-5, 1Ti 6:20-21, 2Ti 2:14-16, 2Ti 3:13 to 2Ti 4:3, Tit 1:9-14, Tit 2:1, Tit 3:9-11, Heb 13:9, 2Pe 1:20 to 2Pe 2:1, 2Jn 1:6-11, Jude 1:4-16)

John 7:24

Here, Jesus is teaching at the temple. He is being accused of doing wrong by healing on the Sabbath. His basic teaching is that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, just as a baby is circumcised on the Sabbath, so He healed on the Sabbath. This is why He said: “Do not judge (G2919) by the outward appearance, but judge (G2919) with righteous judgment (G2920).” (John 7:24). The Jews had the “tradition of the elders” where they made up their own rules. It would appear that healing a person was considered work to them and superseded the greater law of loving your neighbor and doing good. More on this in the next section.

James

James talks about judging a couple of times. One of the themes in James is materialism, pride, envy and overall worldliness among the believers. In the first instance, some believers were treating rich people better than those that were poor. In doing so, they “made distinctions and became judges with evil motives”. (Jas 2:1-4). Note that this comes after Jas 1:9-10, where he is already setting the stage for the divisions based on affluence or lack thereof. The point that he makes is: If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the Law as violators. (Jas 2:8-9) Here, those who are judging based on material possessions or being partial in any way, are themselves being convicted by the Law. In the second instance, we read: Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. The one who speaks against a brother or sister, or judges (G2919) his brother or sister, speaks against the law and judges

(G2919) the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge (G2923) of it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge (G2923), the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you, judging (G2919) your neighbor? (Jas 4:10-12). James writes about speaking earlier already. In Jas 1:19, they are to be slow to speak and slow to anger. In Jas 1:26, bridling the tongue is the subject. In Jas 3:1-10, he focuses on the destructive power of the tongue and then relates it to “bitter Jealousy and selfish ambition”. (Jas 3:14). He continues on by condemning their materialism and focus on worldly passions. (Jas 3:15-18, Jas 4:1-5). James also writes against their arrogance and boasting. (Jas 4:13 to Jas 5:5). He re-iterates the point in Jas 5:9 : Do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. (Jas 5:9) Passages related to judging Judging if it is right to help people In the passage in John that was already discussed, Jesus tells them to “judge with righteous judgment.” (John 7:24). This related to Jesus healing on the Sabbath. The Jews were putting “keeping the Sabbath” according to their rules above the more important laws concerning loving your neighbor and doing good. Jesus discussed this more in Mat 12:10-13, Luk 6:6-10 and Mark 3:1-5. The “righteous judgement” then relates to obeying the “golden rule” “Treat people the same way you want them to treat you. (Luk 6:31). Jesus summed up the whole law by saying: And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ “This is the great and foremost commandment. “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ “Upon these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets.” (Mat 22:37-40). Therefore, not doing good in helping someone on the Sabbath breaks the greatest commandments. Judging correctly then is judging traditions and rules on the basis of the two greatest commandments and Scripture in general.

Judging sin in the church

1st Corinthians deals with this subject in detail. There was a situation in which a man was lying with his father's wife. It would appear that the Corinthians were arrogant in that they thought that they were being really spiritual by accepting this kind of immoral behavior. (1Co 5:1-13) Paul says that he has already judged the offender. (1Co 5:3). The church is to expel him from the congregation for the purpose of reconciliation and to prevent the spread of wickedness in the church. They were to not only expel him from their church meeting, but not to interact with him socially either. (1Co 5:4-7; 1Co 5:12-13). A related passage is in Mat 18:15-17, where Jesus gives instruction on the handling of sin, again for the purpose of reconciliation. In this passage, Jesus also tells them to refrain from interacting with them socially if they do not repent. (2Th 3:6; 2Th 3:14-15, Rom 16:17, 2Ti 3:5, 1Ti 5:19-20).

Paul lists a number of offenses that would qualify for expulsion:

Sexually immoral

Greedy

Idolator

Verbally abusive

Habitually drunk

Swindler

There are two main reasons for church discipline.

To encourage the believer to repent and be reconciled to God and the church. (1Co 5:5)

To prevent the spread of sin in the church. (1Co 5:6)

In the Corinthian situation, we see the both were accomplished. In 2nd Corinthians we read about the sinner that repented and that the church as a whole obeyed Paul's command. It would appear that there were some who did not as is implied by:

Sufficient for such a person is this punishment which was imposed by the majority, (2Co 2:6).

If we look at the original situation, where they thought that they were so loving and spiritual by accepting sin in their midst, it would appear that a minority of the congregation did not approve of the discipline and did not obey Paul. A second situation that arose in Corinth was the lawsuits among believers because believers were treating each other in a sinful way. (1Co 6:1-11). The believers were not to go to law against each other, but rather appoint someone from within the congregation to act as a judge (G1252) for their dispute.

There is also a requirement for two or three witnesses, both in Mat 18:16 and 1Ti 5:19.

Encouraging one another

Believers are to continue to meet and encourage one another. (Heb 10:24-26). In Heb 10:26 we see the purpose of encouraging one another is to avoid sin. In relationships, believers can share and encourage one another to love and good deeds, while keeping each other accountable and turning away from sin.

Judging those outside the church

Scripture is quite clear that believers have no business judging those outside the church. God will judge them. (1Co 5:12-13) Judging false doctrines

Keeping the church free of false doctrines falls primarily to the leadership as they should be the ones that know the Scriptures best. Every believer must also participate in the discernment of false doctrines and participate in maintaining the true doctrine in the church. Scripture is the standard by which everything is to be judged. (Mat 7:15-20; Mat 12:33; Mat 24:11; Mat 24:24, Luk 6:44, Acts 20:28-31, Rom 16:17, Eph 4:14, Gal 1:6-9, Col 2:8; Col 2:18, 1Ti 1:3-10; 1Ti 4:1-7; 1Ti 4:13-16; 1Ti 6:3-11; 1Ti 6:20-21, 2Ti 2:14-16; 2Ti 3:1-9; 2Ti 4:3, Tit 1:9-11; Tit 2:1; Tit 3:9-11, 2Pe 2:1-3 Heb 13:9, 2Pe 1:20-21, 2Pe 2:1, 2Jn 1:6-11, Jude 1:4-16) Judging prophecies As Paul addresses the Corinthians regarding speaking in tongues and prophesying, he commands them to do it in an orderly way. When a prophecy is made, the others are to pass judgement. (1Co 14:29). The first standard that a prophecy is to be judged against is the Word of God. In addition, others are to discern with their own spiritual gifts and understanding, if the prophecy is true and applicable. In the Old Testament, anyone that would lead others astray and away from God suffered severe consequences. (Deu 13:1-14). A good test for a prophecy is: does it draw us towards God, His Word, toward one another and encourage us not to sin.

Conclusion

Judging others in terms of salvation is condemned by Scripture. Looking down on those that have other opinions (that are not doctrinal in nature) and being partial to those that are considered better in terms of worldly stature is not allowed. Speaking against believers is also condemned.

Judging is for those to whom it has been given, whether that be God, as the ultimate judge, governmental officials or church officials. On the other hand, discerning truth, confronting false doctrines and keeping the church pure is a responsibility for everyone. Confronting sin and, if necessary, disciplining an individual is always to be for the purpose of reconciliation and repentance to bring the person into a right relationship with God. This protects both the individuals in the church as well as the whole church from falling into sin and being violated by those that are sinning.

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S. Genesis Short and Long Chronology

Short and Long Chronology Overview The content of this article may be used for the Glory of God. The only copyright restrictions are the scripture verses.

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Website <https://www.biblestudyhelps.ca/> This article is available as a PDF The Chronologies in Gen 5:1-32 and Gen 11:1-32 have some differences in the various textual witnesses. This is only a very brief overview and more detailed information is available on the website of Associates for Biblical Research. Genesis 5 & 11 Research Project This seems to be about the best and most comprehensive work on the subject.

Most modern Bibles have the “short” chronology, while the early church generally accepted the longer chronology. The short chronology is based on the Masoretic (MT) text which is generally the superior text. The longer chronology is mostly based on the Septuagint (LXX) which was translated from Hebrew into Greek in the 3rd century BC (~281 BC). Other early texts also illuminate the issue. It is obvious that “someone” has changed some of the numbers deliberately while some scribal errors are also present. The Biblical text gives us some clues as to which is more likely. When Abraham was about 99 years old, we have this text: now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' (Gen 18:11-13)

According to the MT text, when Abraham was 99 years old, Shem would have been 549 years old, Shelah 414 Years and Eber 384 Years. Since all of these people had siblings, we would reasonably expect that there were others that were still alive that also attained these longer ages. When Abraham was 140 years old, we have this text:

Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way. (Gen 24:1) At Abraham's death we have this text:

Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people. (Gen 25:8) He was 175 years old. A visual representation comparing the length of the chronologies: (note they are based on what is called the “long sojourn” since Ex 12:40 records the time of Israel in Egypt as 430 Years and Gen 15:13 predicts an approximate 400 Years in Egypt. Dr. Douglas Petrovich has written a paper on this topic. (<https://www.academia.edu/40790408/>

2019_Determining_the_Precise_Length_of_the_Israelite_Sojourn_in_Egypt) This chart is based on the MT

This is the longer chronology

This chart represents ages in the shorter (MT) chronology

Masoretic Text

Age at Abraham's Birth

Lifespans

Abraham's age at Patriarch's death

Noah

Dead 2 Years

950

Shem

450

600

150

Arphaxad

350

438

88

Shelah

315

433

118

Eber

285

464

Outlived Abraham by 4 Years

Peleg

Dead 12 Years

239

Reu

221

239

18

Serug

189

230

41

Nahor

Dead 11 Years

148

Terah

130

205

75

Abraham

0

175

This chart represents the longer chronology

Long Chronology

Age at Abraham's Birth

Lifespans

Abraham's age at Patriarch's death

Shem

Dead 630 Years

600

Not Born Yet

Arphaxad

Dead 565 Years

565

Not Born Yet

Kainan

Dead 535 Years

460

Not Born Yet

Shelah

Dead 332 Years

533

Not Born Yet

Eber

Dead 231 Years

504

Not Born Yet

Peleg

Dead 262 Years

339

Not Born Yet

Reu

Dead 132 Years

339

Not Born Yet

Serug

Dead 9 Years

330

Not Born Yet

Nahor

Dead 1 Year

208

Not Born Yet

Terah

130

205

75

Abraham

0

175

A couple of additional comments that are interesting and may help illuminate the issue slightly. In the MT text, Noah and Shem (the two people who went through the judgement of the flood lived past the tower of Babel over 200 Years. The MT chronology puts the tower of Babel event only about 100 years after the flood. While we know that people do fall away from God fairly quickly, this would seem rather odd with both Noah and Shem still being alive and the memory and evidence of the flood quite fresh that we would see this large-scale rebellion so soon. Consider a possible parallel. The Israelites under Moses wandered in the desert and then entered the promised land under Joshua. They saw all the miracles and the working of God in their lives. Once the elders that outlived Joshua died, (Jos 24:31) we see that they started to fall away and rebel as recorded in the book of Judges. If we consider the longer chronology as true, then Noah would have passed on 181 years prior to Babel and Shem would have passed on 29 years prior to the Babel event. In light of this, it would make much more sense that Babel would have been over 500 years after the flood.

Additional Information

Henry B. Smith Jr. documents the following in his paper - The case for the Septuagint's chronology in Genesis 5 and 11 (2018 ICC)

Demetrius the Chronographer (ca. 220 BC) dated creation to 5307 BC

Eupolemus (ca. 160 BC), who was a Jewish historian, came up with the same date of 5307 BC for creation.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (1st century AD) was originally written in Hebrew and has the longer numbers (with a few re-constructible scribal errors)

Josephus, writing after the fall of Jerusalem around 94 AD and working from a Hebrew text and translating it into Greek, comes up with a time of the written history of the Jews of about 5000 years. This would put creation around 5425 BC.

It appears that the Hebrew text was changed sometime in about the 2nd or 3rd century AD.

Based on this information, one needs to ask "which chronology fits the text and the evidence"?

It would certainly appear that the only way the text makes sense is if the longer chronology is correct, otherwise Abraham would not have died at a "ripe old age". Most of his ancestors lived longer than he did. (In the MT text, only Nahor would not have lived as long) By the time of Abraham, even 100 years was considered old according to the text. Also, consider that just over

100 years after Abraham's death, Pharaoh is seemingly quite intrigued by Jacob's age, indicating that the long lifespans had subsided by this time.

Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many years have you lived?" So Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; (Gen 47:8-9)

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