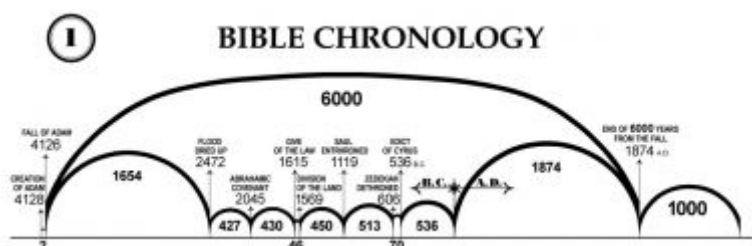


Bible Chronology (2/22)

"Bible Chronology" (published in April, 1974). Part I - Chronology of the Divine Plan of Ages

CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS

From the foregoing list of Bible dates (see part 1), we find that the chronological chain is composed of nine main periods or links of different lengths. Each link will stand close investigation, when examined in the light of the Scriptures themselves. It is most important, that they should be thoroughly tested, for correct interpretation of the time-prophecies entirely depends upon the true chronology.



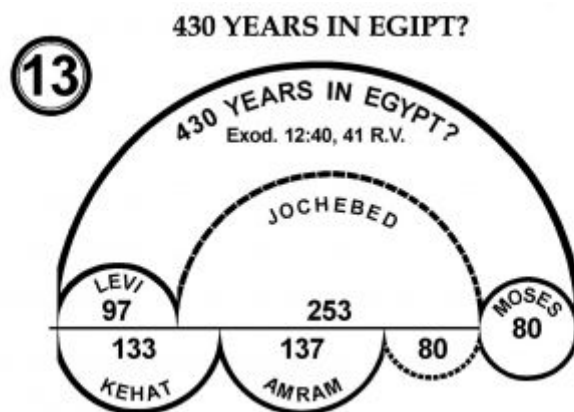
The period of 1656 years from the creation of Adam to the flood, does not require much comment, for it is based upon the records of the original Hebrew Scriptures. As has been pointed out by many eminent chronologists, the addition in the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament of exactly 100 years to the ages of most of the patriarchs, is quite evidently a forgery. We could not imagine a reason why the Hebrews in Palestine should desire to shorten their ancient chronological records; but it is easy to see why the Greek Jews in Egypt were induced to lengthen them when translating the original Hebrew into Greek. They desired to make their history appear as ancient as possible in their Greek translation, in order to compare favourably with their Egyptian neighbours; for the Egyptian historians claimed immensely long eras for their past records.

It is well to note that Egyptologists admit that Egyptian historical chronology is a difficult subject, owing chiefly to an insufficiency of facts in connection with the reigns of the kings of the 7th to 11th, and 13th to 17th, dynasties. The original list of kings compiled by the Egyptian priest and historian, Manetho, in the first half of the 3rd century B.C., is lost; and the copies of it which are preserved in the writings of Julius Africanus and Eusebius (both of the 3rd century A.D.) are conflicting. Nor do any of the later excavated tablets and papyri records contain a complete chronological list of kings. For many of the kings of Egypt neither the order of succession, nor length of reign is known, and therefore it is impossible for an accurate chronological history of Egypt to be compiled. Many systems of chronology, of course, have been put forward; but the difficulty of arriving at any reliable conclusion is apparent from the vast diversity of opinion. The date proposed for the beginning of the first dynasty by six principal authorities ranges over a period of 2554 years! or all the way between 5869 B.C. and 3315 B.C. The latter date, 3315 B.C., is the latest deduction; and it is hopeful to observe that as the work of excavation in Egypt progresses, constantly bringing to light additional data for investigation, a steady reduction in the dates are found necessary, thus bringing them more nearly in accord with Bible testimony. The uncertainty which attends Egyptian chronology, equally applies to that of Assyria and all other ancient countries. We therefore have great confidence in the Hebrew chronology, which gives us a connected history from the time of Adam down to the year 536 B.C. where secular history begins to be reliable.

The period of 427 years from the flood to the date of God's covenant with Abraham, is, like the period already considered, based upon the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. It has been supposed that this period should be reduced 60 years because of the statement in Gen. 11: 26, that "Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." This would give a period of 145 years between the birth of Terah, and the covenant with Abraham; for Abraham was 75 years of age, according to Gen. 12:4-7, when he entered Canaan and so secured the promise, and $70 + 75 = 145$. But those who contend for the shorter period overlook the clear statement of Stephen (Acts 7:2-5), that it was after Terah, Abraham's father, was dead, that Abraham entered Canaan. According to Gen. 11:32, Terah died at 205 years of age. We must not, therefore, understand that the three sons of Terah were all born in the same year, but that the begetting of these sons began when he was 70. Abraham although the youngest was the most important of the three, and is therefore mentioned first.

The period of 430 years from the Abrahamic Covenant, to the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Law, is expressly stated by the inspired Apostle in Gal. 3:17 (The words "in Christ" should be omitted, - see R.V.). From this inspired statement of the Apostle Paul, we know that the 430 years' sojourn of the children of Israel, mentioned by Moses in Exod. 12:40, 41, includes the sojourning of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the land of Canaan, which, although promised to them for an inheritance, was still a "strange land" (Acts 7:4,5).

As the Bible dates show a period of 215 years between the Abrahamic Covenant and Jacob's entrance into Egypt, it is evident that the children of Israel's actual residence in Egypt was 215 years ($215 + 215 = 430$). Most authorities think that a period of 215 years is too short for the great multiplication of the Israelites during their residence in Egypt, forgetting that the Scriptures indicate that this increase was miraculous (See Exod. 1:1-22; Psa. 105:23, 24, 37, 38). Rejecting the inspired testimony of the Apostle Paul in Gal. 3:17, the translators of the Revised Version changed the sense of Exod. 12:40, in order to increase the number of years in Egypt. They made the passage to read: "The sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in Egypt, was 430 years." In thus altering the text the R.V. translators fell into a peculiar error as is demonstrated by the accompanying diagram No. 13.



This diagram shows the genealogy of Moses. Moses was 80 years old at the Exodus (Exod. 7: 7). His mother, Jochebed, was the daughter of Levi (Num. 26: 59). Levi lived for 137 years (Exod. 6:16), but he cannot have spent more than the last 97 of them in Egypt for he was older than Joseph (Gen. 37:3), and Joseph was 39 when Jacob and his sons entered Egypt (Gen. 41:46-54, compare with Gen. 45:3-11). It follows from these facts that if the period of the Israelites' residence in Egypt was 430 years as the R.V. translators assume, Jochebed must have been at the very least 253 years old when Moses was born!

Again, Moses' father, Amram, was the son of Kohath, and Kohath was one of those who entered Egypt with Jacob. Kohath lived 133 years, and Amram lived 137 years (Gen. 46:8, 11; Exod. 6:18, 20). If, now, we were to allow that Kohath was a new born babe when he entered Egypt, and that Amram was born the year his father died, there would still remain a gap of 80 years between the death of Amram and the birth

of Moses!

The statement made by Jehovah to Abraham (Gen. 15:13,15), quoted by Stephen (Acts 7:6, 7), that Abraham's seed would be afflicted 400 years, is often taken to mean that the affliction in Egypt was to be 400 years. The Apostle Paul, however, points out that this foretold affliction began when Ishmael "mocked" or "ill-treated" Isaac at the time of the feast when Isaac was weaned (Gal. 4:28-30; Gen. 15:5-12). As the Bible dates show that Isaac was born 405 years before the Exodus, he must have been five years of age when he was weaned. That Isaac was not "weaned from the milk" till he had reached the age of five years seems unaccountable to people of Western countries, but in Palestine this is the common practice even at the present day. The women of Palestine believe that the longer the child is suckled the stronger he will grow, and the weaning never takes place under two years, but frequently in the case of a favourite man-child such as Isaac was, he is kept at the breasts for four or five years, and even longer. The "babes and suckling" of the Bible are old enough to sing, and are ready to be taught knowledge (Matt. 21:15,16; Isa. 28:9; 1 Sam. 1:21-23).

Jehovah's further intimation to Abraham that his seed would come out of bondage in the fourth generation, and that the nation who had held them in bondage would be judged (Gen. 15:14-16; Acts 7:7), was fulfilled when Moses delivered the Israelites after inflicting the ten plagues upon the Egyptians. The four generations began with Jacob when he entered Egypt, Levi and Jochebed being the second and third, and Moses the fourth generation.

The Samaritan and Septuagint versions of the Old Testament render Exod. 12:40 emphatically in support of the inspired Apostle's statement in Gal. 3:17, - "the dwelling of the sons of Israel, and of their fathers, which they dwelt in the land of Canaan, and in the land of Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years."

The period of 46 years from the Exodus to the division of the land among the twelve tribes of Israel, is made up from two periods of 40 and 6 years.

The 40 years from the Exodus until the nation crossed the river Jordan to take possession of the promised land, is exact to a day (Exod. 12: 42-51; Deut. 29:5; Josh. 4:19; 5:10; Num. 14:34).

The period following the forty years in the wilderness, during which the Israelites conquered seven nations and then divided the land of Canaan among the tribes (Acts 13:17-19), is proved to be 6-years by the following texts: Num. 33:3, 9:1; 10:11, 12; 13:1-3; 13:25, 26; 32:8; Josh. 14:10.

In the Book of Joshua (14:5-7, 10) we read that when Joshua was dividing the land, Caleb came to him and said: "Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh Barnea" - namely, that he would live to inherit part of the land - "Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of God sent me from Kadesh Barnea to espy out the land (...) and now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years (...) and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old." We are informed in Num. 10:11, 12, that in the 20th day of the 2nd month of the 2nd year (i.e., 1 year, 1 month, 20 days) after leaving Egypt, the people journeyed from Sinai to the wilderness of Paran; and it was from Kadesh Barnea in Paran that Caleb and the other spies journeyed forth (See Num. 13:1-3, 25, 26; 32:8). It was, therefore, a little over a year after the Exodus that Caleb was sent to spy the land, and 45 years later the land was conquered and divided, altogether a period of 46 years.

The Period of 450 years of the Judges is said by the Apostle Paul to have extended from the time of the division of the land, till Samuel the prophet (Acts 13:19, 20). It is generally acknowledged that without this inspired statement in the New Testament the continuity of the Old Testament chronology would be broken. Nor could we know the period of Saul's reign, were it not that the Apostle again supplies this information, enabling us to connect up the chronological chain (Acts 13:21). The Old Testament does, indeed, furnish an indication of the time which elapsed between the Exodus and the period of the kings,

but owing to an evident error on the part of a copyist, or a translator from the original Hebrew manuscripts, the matter has been involved in a measure of obscurity. With the aid of the Apostle's figures we know that the total period from the Exodus to the commencement of the erection of the Temple in Jerusalem was 580 years. In 1 Kings 6:1 we read in our Bible that the period in question was 480, or 100 years less than the sum of the periods given in the other Scriptures (40 + 6 + 450 + 40 + 40 + 4 = 580).

The ease with which this mistake in 1 Kings 6:1 crept in, whereby 580 was made to read 480, is very apparent when the Hebrew letter which stands for 4 "ד" is compared with that for 5 "ה". Although in all existing Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament (none of which date earlier than the 10th century A.D.) numbers are written out at length, it seems certain that the writers of the originals, and all the ancient copyists, employed the letters of the alphabet to denote numerical values.

It is well-known that this method was used by the Greeks, and, indeed, by all ancient Eastern nations. Maccabean coins prove conclusively that this shorter method of recording numbers was in vogue among the Hebrews after the Babylonian captivity (536 B.C.), and there is no reason to doubt that it was in use from the beginning.

Because of the similarity of certain letters in the Hebrew alphabet, copyists have mistaken one for another, in spite of their proverbial care, and thus have in some cases given rise to much misunderstanding. It is wonderful, indeed, that such errors are not more frequent in the Bible; the Lord has so overruled matters that the errors which have crept in are corrected by the testimony of other Scriptures.

The numerical value of the word "Judges" provides additional evidence:

$$\text{ה שׁוֹפֵטִים} \\ 40 + 10 + 9 + 80 + 6 + 300 + 5 = 450$$

THE HEBREW ALPHABET THE NUMERICAL VALUES OF LETTERS								
Letter	Name of letter	Numerical value	Letter	Name of letter	Numerical value	Letter	Name of letter	Numerical value
א	ALEPH	1	ט	TETH	9	פ	PE	80
ב	BETH	2	י	YOD	10	צ	SADHE	90
ג	GIMEL	3	כ	KAPH	20	ק	QOPH	100
ד	DALETH	4	ל	LAMED	30	ר	RESH	200
ה	HE	5	מ	MEM	40	ש	SIN	300
ו	WAW	6	נ	NUN	50	שׁ	SHIN	
ז	ZAYIN	7	ס	SAMEKH	60	ת	TAV	400
ח	HETH	8	ע	AYIN	70			

The period of 513 years of the kings of Judah, dating from Samuel the prophet when the 40 years of Saul's "space" began, till the dethronement of Zedekiah the last king, is derived entirely from the Book of Chronicles, the reign of Saul being the only exception (Acts 13:21).

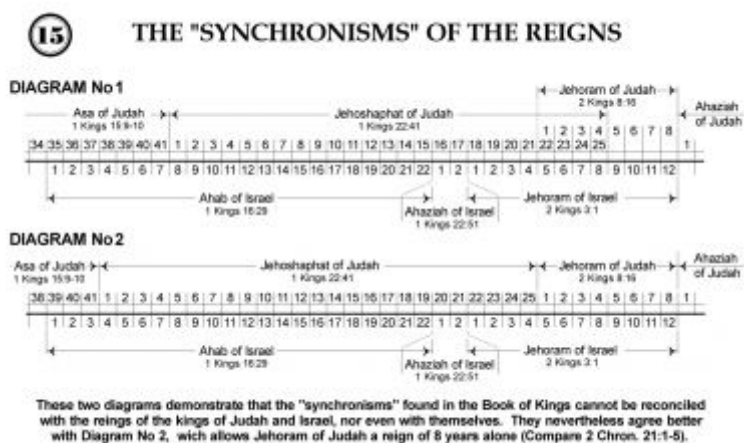
The chronological chain cannot be carried through the line of the kings of the ten tribes, without reference to the line of Judah, for two breaks occur in the succession of the reigns of Israel's kings. There is a gap of ten years after Jereboam II (2 Kings 14:23; 15:8); and a second gap of ten years after Pekah (2 Kings 15:27; 17:1).

The reigns of the kings of Judah as given in the Book of Kings, agree exactly with those given in Chronicles.

Chronologers (as Ussher) who have attempted to base this period of Bible Chronology upon the synchronisms¹⁾ found in the Book of Kings, have caused much unnecessary confusion; for it is well known that these synchronisms cannot be reconciled with the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, nor even with themselves.²⁾ It is now generally agreed that these synchronisms were added to the Book of Kings by

a later hand, and are not to be considered as original independent chronological data. The fact that the writer of Chronicles (which is held to be the last written of the books of the Old Testament) ignored the lengths of the reigns of the kings of Israel (the ten tribes which broke away from Judah into idolatry after the death of Solomon), and confines himself entirely to the line of the kings of Judah, should give us confidence that the Lord intends us to continue the chronological chain through the kings of Judah (See 1 Chron. 3:9-16).

¹⁾ A Synchronism is a statement to the effect that "A," king of Judah, began to reign in a certain year of the reign of "B," king of Israel; or vice versa - See 2 Kings 15:32 for an example.



²⁾ As an example of the disagreement in synchronistic statements, we read in 2 Kings 15:30 that Hoshea slew Pekah in the 20th year of Jotham, and reigned in his stead. This statement is quite manifestly an interpolation, because Jotham did not reign more than 16 years (2 Chron. 27:1); nor did Hoshea reign instead of Pekah even in the 20th year after the accession of Jotham (which would be the 4th year of Ahaz) as is suggested by Ussher according to the marginal note in many Bibles, for in 2 Kings 17:1 it states that Hoshea began to reign in the 12th year of Ahaz.

The synchronism of 27 years mentioned in 2 Kings 15:1 cannot possibly be true; and many other synchronisms are erroneous.

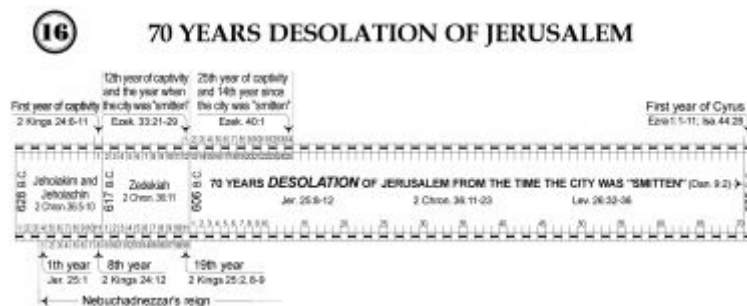
In 2 Kings 8:16, the words: "Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah" are omitted in a number of Hebrew manuscripts and in many versions (See note in the Variorum Bible). If the synchronistic statements in 2 Kings 8:16 and 3:1 were true (thus making Jehoram of Judah reign only 4 years alone, and therefore shortening the chronological chain by 4 years), then other synchronisms as 1 Kings 16:29; and 22:41, etc., are not true. This shows that many of the synchronisms in the Book of Kings are conflicting, and strengthen the belief that they are interpolated (Contrast diagrams No.1 and No. 2 showed above).

The period of 70 years desolation of the land of Judea and Jerusalem, from the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple at the dethronement of Zedekiah, till the first year of Cyrus, is easily found by comparing the clear statements of the following Scriptures: Lev. 26:33-35; Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10; Dan. 9:2; 2 Chron. 36:19, 20. As this period of the Old Testament chronology is much misunderstood, and as it is important to have it firmly established, we have thought it advisable to enter into the details somewhat fully. We suggest that the reader verify for himself the numerous Scriptural references.

It is evident from a consideration of the above texts, that the 70 years of desolation spoken of by Jeremiah was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Moses, that the land might enjoy its sabbaths of rest, because when the people were in the land they would not let it rest. When Zedekiah was taken captive to Babylon in the 4th month of his 11th year (Jer. 39:2), it appears that some of the poorest of the people were left in the

land (Jer. 39:10), over whom Nebuchadnezzar set Gedaliah as governor (2 Kings 25:22). And when the Jews who had escaped to other lands heard that Gedaliah was made governor over this remnant, they returned and joined him (Jer. 40:11,12). But we read that in the 7th month Gedaliah and many others were slain (Jer. 40:15, 16; 41:1-3); and although the Lord promised to protect the very few who yet remained if they would obey him (Jer. 42:10-12), they were now so afraid of the Chaldeans that they would not settle in the land, but fled into Egypt (Jer. 43:1-7). Thus, toward the end of the 11th year of Zedekiah the land of Judea was desolate (Jer. 44:2, 6, 7, 22; 2 Kings 25:25, 26). This abject fear of the small number who were left after Gedaliah's death, was foretold by Moses, who said that they would flee out of the land and perish among their enemies (Lev. 26:36-39), and that then the land would enjoy her sabbaths while she lay desolate without them (Lev 26:33, 34, 43), to fulfill, or accomplish, 70 years.

Although the teaching of the Scriptures regarding this period of 70 years desolation is very clear, it has been strangely obscured by Ussher and other chronologers. They have imagined that the 70 years began in the 3rd or 4th year of the reign of Jehoiakim, 19 or 18 years before Zedekiah's dethronement. This, of course, would shorten the chronological chain previous to A.D. 1, and thus make the six millenniums from the creation of Adam end 19 or 18 years after 1872 A.D. *But the Scriptures are emphatic that no captivity began in the 3rd or 4th year of Jehoiakim (the son of Jehoiakim), also named Jeconiah and Coniah (2 Kings 24:6-18).* The prophet Ezekiel (who was among those carried to Babylon with Jehoiachin), always reckoned the captivity as dating from the time when Jehoiachin was taken captive, 11 years before the final captivity and *desolating* of Jerusalem and the land (Ezek 1:2; 33:21; 40:1; See diagram No. 16).



It was therefore upon the head of Jehoiachin (Coniah) that the collective sin of his fathers was visited (Jer. 22:24, 25; 36:30, 31). We read that it was at that time (11 years before Zedekiah's dethronement) that Nebuchadnezzar and his servants came and besieged Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:8-11); and Jehoiachin (son of Jehoiakim) evidently thought it hopeless to resist, and surrendered himself with all his princes and all the chief of the land into the hands of the king of Babylon (2 Kings 24:10-17). This, the *first deportation* of captives to Babylon, took place in the 8th year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:12; Jer. 24:1-10); and *the second and final deportation* was at the dethronement of Zedekiah eleven years later, in the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:18, 19; 25:1-11). Although a few cities in Judea still remained unsubdued after the first captivity, which were desolated at the final invasion by Babylon (Jer. 34:1-22), this final captivity is spoken of as being more a captivity of Jerusalem (Jer. 1:3; 32:1-5), from which time, therefore, the 70 years desolation of Jerusalem began (Dan. 9:2).

The question arises: on what basis did Ussher claim that there was a captivity of Judah 18 years before the dethronement of Zedekiah? Not by following Josephus,¹⁾ but by endeavouring to harmonize the Scriptural records with the Astronomical Canon of Ptolemy, which seems to gain support by Dan 1:1-4.

It cannot be admitted that the 70 years desolation of Jerusalem and the land began in the 3rd year of Jehoiakim, for according to the Scriptures "desolation" implies "without an inhabitant," and Jerusalem and the land were not without inhabitants until after the dethronement of Zedekiah (See Jer. 4:7; 6:8; 9:11; 26:9; 32:43; 33:10,12; also Zech. 7: 5, 14).

It is because of deference to the Canon of Ptolemy that Dan 1:1-4 is supposed by some to support the idea that the 70 years began in the 3rd year of Jehoiakim. But this reading of Dan 1:1-4 is in direct conflict with all the historical accounts of the captivities contained in the books of Kings, Chronicles, and Jeremiah, which we have already considered. We cannot reject the combined prophetic and historical testimonies of these books simply on the strength of this doubtful reading of Dan 1:1, more especially as this text conflicts with Dan 2:1.

Because of this disagreement between Dan 1:1, and 2:1, and because of the disagreement of both of these texts with the chronological order of the captivities narrated in the other books of the Scriptures, a number of commentators suggest that the 3rd year of Jehoiakim in Dan. 1:1 should be understood as meaning the 3rd year of his vassalage to Nebuchadnezzar, when he turned and rebelled and thus brought the king of Babylon against Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:1); for it is certain that Jehoiakim was not taken captive to Babylon.

In Dan. 2:1 the number 2 has evidently arisen out of the number 12. A similar mistake is seen by comparing 2 Kings 24:8, with 2 Chron. 36:9, where the number 8 in Chronicles has arisen out of the original number 18 preserved in Kings. The reading in the Variorum Bible for Dan. 2:1 is *twelfth*. With this correction of a probable error in Dan. 2:1, and with the understanding that the 3rd year of Jehoiakim in Dan. 1:1 is to be reckoned as the 3rd year of his vassalage to Nebuchadnezzar²⁾, the narratives in Daniel fall into line with the records of the captivities as presented in the other Scriptures.

¹⁾ The words of Josephus regarding the 70 years period are: "He [Nebuchadnezzar] reduced them all, and set our temple which was at Jerusalem on fire [Compare 2 Chron. 36:19 21]; nay, and removed our people entirely out of their own country, and transferred them to Babylon; when it so happened that our city was desolate during the interval of seventy years, until the days of Cyrus king of Persia" (Apion, 1:19). In another place he says: "But the king of Babylon, who brought out the two tribes [Judah and Benjamin], placed no other nation in their country, by which means all Judea and Jerusalem, and the temple, continued to be a desert for seventy years" (Ant. X, 9:7).

Although we cite these two passages to show that Josephus evidently understood the seventy years as a period of *desolation*, beginning with the burning of the temple and destruction of Jerusalem at the dethronement of Zedekiah, we nevertheless recognise that he is in general very unreliable in chronological matters, contradicting himself as he does in many places in his writings.

²⁾ Although the Scriptures do not say when Jehoiakim began to pay tribute, they by the foregoing texts indicate indirectly that it was in his 8th year. The great Jewish historian Josephus corroborates this, saying distinctly that it was in Jehoiakim's 8th year that he became tributary to Babylon, rebelling three years later, i.e., in his 2th and last year (See Ant. X, 6:1-3)

The period of 536 years from the end of the 70 years desolation of Jerusalem and the land of Judea, till the beginning of the year A.D. 1, rests upon the testimony of secular history.

After the end of the 70 years till the close of the canon of the Old Testament, the Scriptures, when marking events of historical importance, indicate in what year of the reigning Gentile king such events transpired; but as the Scriptures do not record the lengths of the reigns of those Gentile kings in that consecutive order in which they record the reigns of the kings of Judah, we must here rely upon the pages of secular history.

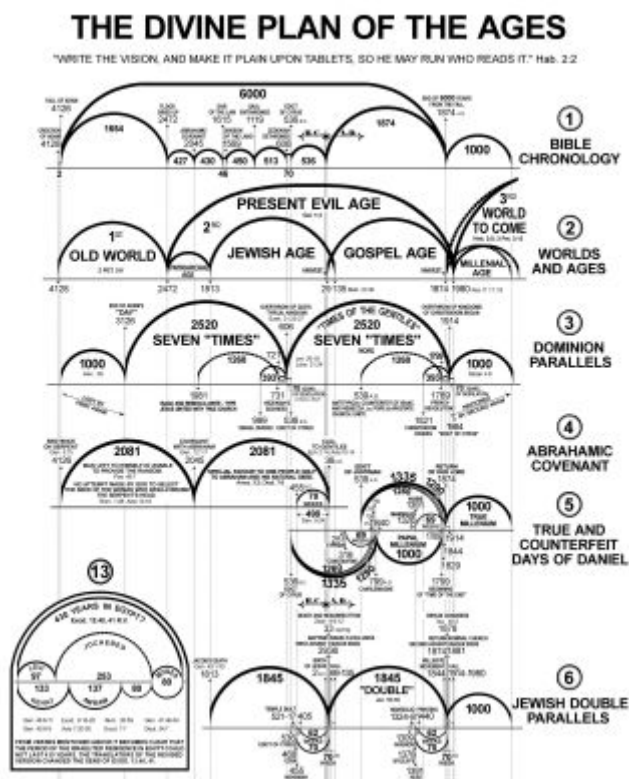
As we should expect, seeing that God has here left us to our own resources, it is at this period of the world's history that chronology rests upon the surest foundations, both because we have at command several distinct eras which can be compared, and also because we have the writings of many contemporary authors of different nations. Secular history from the end of the 70 years desolation of Jerusalem down to our day is, therefore, in marked contrast with regard to the reliability of its chronology to that of history previous to the 1st year of Cyrus; for in the earlier period secular chronology is more or less built upon speculations, and there is no unanimity of opinion. Were it not that God has specially provided, by means of his inspired writers, the necessary data to enable us to connect the reliable period of secular history with the chronological chain of the Bible, we would be absolutely unable to locate our position on the stream of time. For this reason, if for no other, the reverent student of the Word of God will do well to keep close to the Bible chronology, placing his reliance upon the records of secular history

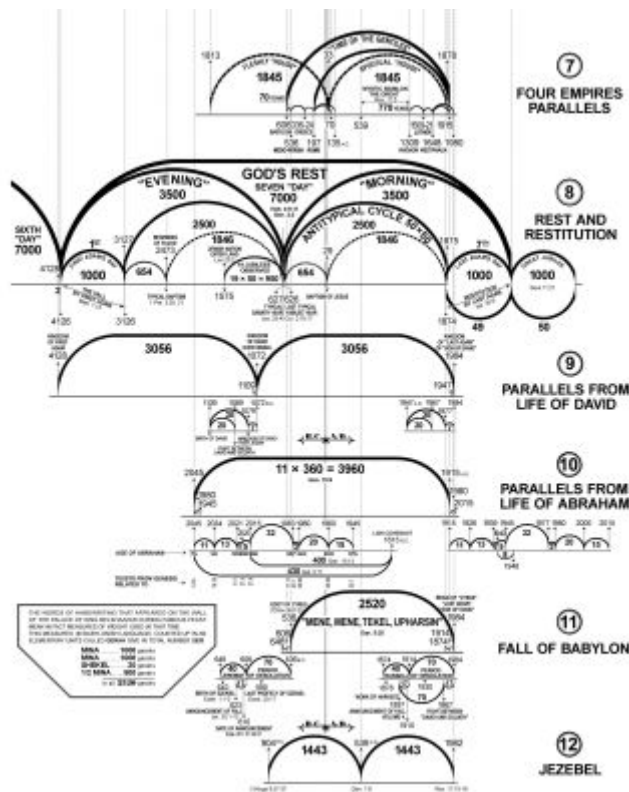
only where they are not at variance with those that are inspired, and where, as in this instance of the 1st year of Cyrus, he is directly referred thereto. We may rest assured that wherever our heavenly Father refers us to secular history, he has so overruled matter as always to provide that the historical evidences necessary to enable us to fix our dates, have been preserved by trustworthy writers.

In 2 Chron. 36:19-23, and Ezra 1:1-11, we read that it was in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the Jews were permitted to return to Jerusalem. The overthrow of the Babylonian kingdom by the Medes and Persians (Elam) had been foretold by Isaiah more than 180 years previously (Isa. 13:1, 17-19; 21:2, 9), as well as by Jeremiah (Jer. 51:11). Belshazzar was the last of the Chaldean kings, and when he was slain at the time of the capture of the city of Babylon by Cyrus, "Darius the Mede took the kingdom" (Dan. 5:25-31). Darius the Mede has been identified in secular history as Cyaxares II, who was the uncle of Cyrus. Sometimes the reign of Cyrus the Persian is dated from his capture of Babylon in 538 B.C., but he was then merely acting under the authority of Darius as general of the army. Thus, the Medish monarch, in connection with a Persian, brought the kingdom of Babylon to an end according to the prophecies. So long as a Mede sat on the throne the Persians were second in importance, but on the accession of Cyrus, the Persians became predominant. This transference of the sovereign power from the Medes to the Persians was illustrated in Daniel's vision of the ram with the two horns (symbolical of two powers) one of which was higher than the other, and the higher (the Persian) came up last (See Dan. 8:3, 20).

The date when Cyrus became king is universally agreed to be 536 B.C. Immediately on gaining authority, Cyrus, in fulfillment of the prophecies concerning him (Isa. 44:28; 45:1, 13), issued an edict which allowed the captive Jews to return to Jerusalem, and thus end its long seventy-year period of Desolation.

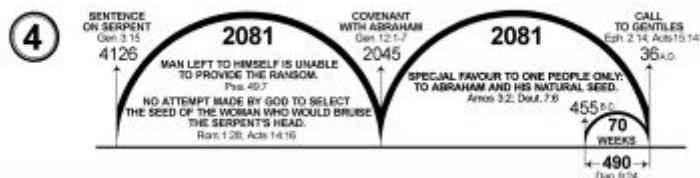
The period of 1872 years, when added to the sum of the preceding periods, completes six millenniums from the date of the creation of Adam. But the Scriptures indicate that Adam's fall and condemnation took place two years after his creation; so that, dating from the Fall, 6000 years ended in 1874 A.D.





ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

The honour of becoming members in the great spiritual Seed of Abraham was the *exclusive* privilege of the people of Israel till the end of their "seventy weeks" of favour (See "Studies in the Scriptures," Volume II, chapter 3; also diagram No. 4).



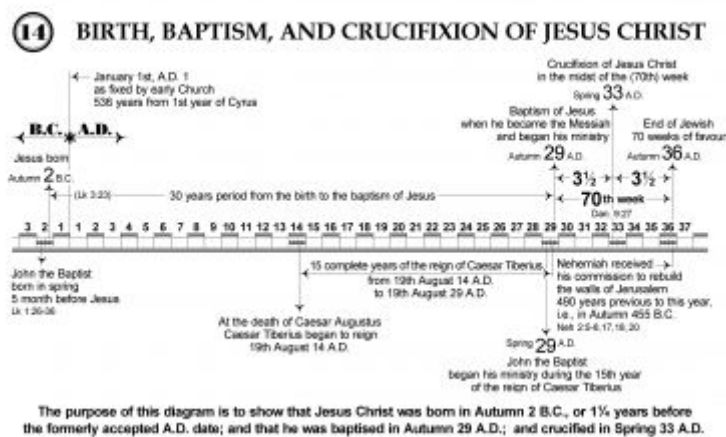
It is interesting to note that the complete period of 4162 years of the world's history from the time of Adam's fall till the end of Israel's 70 weeks, is equally divided into two grand periods of 2081 years, the central point of division being signalized by God's great promise to Abraham, namely, that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (See accompanying diagram, which in itself explains this feature¹⁾).

The 70 weeks (490 years) began to count from the time when Nehemiah received his commission and built the walls of Jerusalem. This was in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia (Compare Dan. 9:24 -25, with Neh. 2:1-20; 6:15). Artaxerxes ascended the throne in 474 B.C., and that his 20th year was, therefore, 455 B.C.

The Prophet Daniel foretold that the Messiah would come at the end of the first 69 of these symbolical "weeks," and in fulfillment of this, namely, in Autumn 29 A.D., God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and thus declared him to be the Messiah.

During the 70th and last week, in the midst of which the Messiah was "cut off" in sacrifice (See diagram No. 14, part 1), the Gospel favour went forth to the Nation of Israel, first as a whole through its

representatives, and then, after the death and resurrection of the Lord in Spring 33 A.D., to the individuals of the Nation; but in Autumn 36 A.D. the exclusive favour to Israel ceased, and the Gentiles were now given equal opportunity to become members in Abraham's *spiritual* seed.



When the law was "taken out of the way" by Christ, and the faithful among the Jews were ushered into the favour of the Gospel Dispensation, they gladly began the ascent and exulted in the freedom of the high-calling, so different from the bondage of the law covenant under which they had been labouring.

But the majority of the nation, the "chaff" class, through willful unbelief, turned aside and ceased to enjoy the exclusive favour of the invitation to jointheirship with the Messiah. After the end of the "harvest" period the Nation entered the destruction condition (Matt. 23:37, 38).

¹⁾ According to the custom of ancient nations previous to the giving of the law (See part 1 - "The year, its beginning and length"), the beginning of the year of Adam's fall is 4126,25 B.C., and the beginning of the year when Abraham received his covenant of promise is 2045,25 B.C. (4126,25 - 2045,75 = 2081); and from the beginning of the year of Abraham's covenant, till the full end of the exclusive Gospel favour to his natural seed, is a period of similar length (2045,25 + 35,75 = 2081).

Added by: Andrzej