

OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 1:

Introduction; The Date of Creation and The Chronology of the Patriarchs

June 15, 2003

Introduction

As one studies the Bible it quickly becomes clear that God has been working out His purpose over a long sweep of time. Understanding Biblical Chronology is both an indispensable and unavoidable task in the study of the Bible. This class will focus on the chronology of the Old Testament 1) because it is more unfamiliar to us than the New Testament; 2) because of the vast scope of time that it covers in relation to the New Testament; and 3) because the chronological issues are more numerous than those found in the New Testament.

The Importance of Old Testament Chronology

- *What is Old Testament Chronology?*

The word *chronology* comes from the classical Greek word CHRONOS, which signifies time viewed as a flowing stream—a stream that cannot be stopped, but can be measured. Chronology is simply the dating of historical events within the “stream of time.” [The Bible Almanac, p. 44] Chronology can be defined as “*the science that treats historical dates and arranges them in order; a table of events and dates.*” Therefore, Old Testament Chronology 1) seeks to correlate Old Testament events into an orderly historical arrangement; and 2) attempts to understand and solve the chronological issues within the Old Testament.

- *Why study Old Testament Chronology?*

One of the most confusing problems in Old Testament studies is that of reconciling the chronological data given with that found in ancient history and determining a consistent chronological structure for the Old Testament. Since the theology of the Old Testament is most clearly understood in its historical context, it becomes increasingly important to understand the chronological notations found in the pages of Scripture. If the historical background of a passage is misunderstood then it is possible that the theology of the passage might be misunderstood as well. In other words chronology is to history as the skeleton is to the body. The study of Old Testament Chronology is necessary to an accurate understanding of the historical background of the events of the Old Testament, and thus aids in arriving at an accurate interpretation of the Old Testament Scripture.

The Sources for Old Testament Chronology

- *What are the materials that God has given us with which to construct an Old Testament Chronology?*

There exist basically two kinds of sources in determining an Old Testament Chronology: 1) biblical data and 2) extra-biblical data.

Biblical Data Certainly the primary source for the knowledge of biblical events is the Bible itself. The Bible is considered the primary source because it is God-breathed. In its original manuscripts, the Bible is God's inerrant word. There is a wealth of chronological detail in the Old Testament that aid in constructing a chronology for the Old Testament.

- The most prominent data is found in the various genealogies throughout the Old Testament (i.e. Genesis 5:1-32 & Genesis 11:10-26).
- There are also various lists such as the succession years of the judges and the reigns of the kings, which make it possible to arrive at fairly reliable dates for Hebrew history.
- We are also given long dates that serve to establish major milestones in Old Testament history (i.e. Exodus 12:40 informs us that Israel was in Egypt for 430 years; and 1 Kings 6:1 tells us that the laying of the foundation for Solomon's temple occurred 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt).

Extra-Biblical Data Also important in constructing a chronology for the Old Testament is the various extra-biblical data (data found from archaeological sources outside of the Bible). Data can be found from Sumerian, Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian sources. Artifacts such as receipts can indicate time references. It was the early practice to describe a year by listing its most notable event (i.e. a receipt tablet from the forty-sixth year of King Shulgi of Ur indicates the date by "the year in which Kimash and Numurti were destroyed"), while the later practice was to date events by the years of the reigns of kings currently on the throne. Astronomical references in Egyptian or Mesopotamian records furnish additional evidence for absolute dating and aid in developing an accurate chronology for the Old Testament.

The Limitations in Determining an Old Testament Chronology

- *What limitations exist that hinder the construction of an Old Testament Chronology?*

There are two kinds of limitations in studying Old Testament Chronology: 1) Those that are spurious, because they are only perceived; and 2) Those that are legitimate difficulties.

Spurious Limitations These are false limitations because they are based on what is perceived rather than on factual data. These include:

- 1) The perceived inaccuracy and undependability of the biblical data (a great many scholars who study in the areas of chronology, archaeology and geology come from liberal points of view and do not believe in the inerrancy of God's Word).

2) The perceived ignorance and uncritical attitude of ancient peoples, including the writers of Scripture.

- **IMPORTANT:** *Basic to our study throughout this class will be this simple two-fold proposition:*

1) The autographa of the Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, are fully inerrant in all that they state, including historical and chronological data.

2) The human writers of the Scripture were deliberate and purposeful in all they recorded, and thus they intended their readers to understand even the chronological notations they included.

Legitimate Limitations There does exist a number of legitimate difficulties in constructing an accurate Old Testament Chronology. These include:

- 1) A limitation on pre-Abrahamic chronological computations because of the possibility of gaps in the genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11.
 - 2) The absence of fixed anchor dates (identifiable and unambiguous points of reference) for some chronological notations.
 - 3) The use of various systems of computing the passage of time, of reckoning units of time etc.
- NOTE: Sometimes these notations are the more difficult simply because today's student of Scripture cannot be entirely familiar with a given system of calculating the passage of time, or cannot be entirely certain which of several possible systems might be being employed in a given passage.

The Basis of Old Testament Chronology

- *What fixed point of reference can be established in order to construct a chronological frame of reference for the Old Testament?*

Because the chronological data of the Old Testament are relative rather than fixed, it is necessary to establish a fixed point of reference from which to compute. This fixed point of reference is found in the Assyrian eponym lists. *Eponym* means "nickname" or "honorific title." The Assyrians had a habit of assigning a title to every one of their calendar years. They are important in determining a fixed point of reference for the Old Testament because they mention an eclipse of the sun, which is extremely calculable (i.e. it can be astronomically dated), and because they mention two kings of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Jehu and Ahab).

The entire system of Old Testament chronology for the kings of Israel and Judah can be interlocked at vital points with the astronomically verified absolute chronology of the Assyrian eponym lists. [John C. Whitcomb, *Chart of OT Kings and Prophets*]

- See handout "The Basis of Old Testament Chronology" by Eugene H. Merrill

The fixed Old Testament date is calculated as follows:

Datum	Source/Calculation	Chronological Notation	Result/Comment
Eclipse of the Sun	Mentioned in eponym list; can be astronomically calculated, thus a fixed date	June 15, 763 BC	Anchor date from which to work in determining Old Testament Chronology
Battle of Qarqar: King Ahab of Israel fights Shalmaneser III of Assyria	Mentioned in Assyrian eponym list for year equivalent to 853 BC	Calculated to be 853 BC	Demonstrates that King Ahab of Israel was still on throne in 853 BC
King Jehu of Israel pays tribute to Shalmaneser III of Assyria	Mentioned in Assyrian eponym list for year equivalent to 841 BC	Calculated to be 841 BC	Demonstrates that King Jehu came to the throne of Israel by 841 BC
There were a minimum of 12 years between the death of King Ahab and the inauguration of King Jehu	Ahab succeeded by Ahaziah (reign 2 yrs, 1 K. 22:51); Ahaziah succeeded by Jehoram (reign 12 yrs, 2 K. 3:1); Jehoram succeeded by Jehu		By assuming overlapping dating and perhaps co-regencies, it can be determined that there were no fewer than 12 years between death of Ahab & reign of Jehu
<p>Implications of above data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 853 BC must have been the final year of reign for King Ahab of Israel 2) 841 BC must have been the first year of reign for King Jehu of Israel <p>Thus: These figures can be used to calculate the dates of other monarchs and events in the Old Testament with certainty all the way back to Abraham's birth.</p>			

By taking these figures and working backwards, it can be determined that the division of the kingdom took place in 931 BC. From this point the other periods of Old Testament History all the way back to the birth of Abraham in 2166 BC can be determined with some certainty.

Consideration #1: The Creation of the Earth to the Birth of Abraham

The first chronological period, which we will study begins with the creation of the earth and ends with the birth of Abraham. In Old Testament History this period is usually referred to as The Beginnings or as Primeval History. This period is covered in Genesis 1-11. Four great events are emphasized during this period: 1) Creation; 2) The Fall; 3) The Flood; 4) The Confusion of languages at Babel.

As mentioned previously an element of certainty exists for the chronology of the Old Testament from the birth of Abraham and on due to the fixed astronomical date of June 15, 763 BC. However, prior to Abraham's birth about 2166 BC, it becomes very difficult to arrive at dates with great certainty. This is primarily due to the fact that the materials we possess with which to determine the chronology of this period are very limited. In fact they consist of two genealogies found in Genesis 5:1-32 and Genesis 11:10-26. Genesis 5:1-32 serves as the formal connecting link between the first man, Adam and the Flood of Noah, while Genesis 11:10-26 links the Flood with the birth of Abraham and the beginning of Patriarchal History. The biggest challenge that must be faced is the possibility of gaps in the genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11.

It seems that the earliest attempt at assembling the Bible's chronological data was made by Julius Africanus, whom was a Christian writer living in Palestine during the second century AD. According to his work, the first year of the world's history was 5502 BC.

The most well known system of Biblical Chronology was attempted by James Ussher, the Archbishop of Armagh in Ireland (1581-1656). His Biblical Chronology was first published about 1650-54. He determined that the flood came in the year 2349 BC, 1656 years after the creation of Adam in 4004 BC. In fact these chronological notations were inserted into the 1611 King James Version and exist today in many KJV Bibles. It is important to note that Ussher held to a very strict chronology of the genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11. This date of 4004 BC has been long considered the traditional date for the creation of the earth.

While this traditional date of 4004 BC has been widely accepted in the past, contemporary scholarship has rejected it. The primary issue at hand when seeking to arrive at an exact date for creation of the earth is the idea of gaps in the genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11.

Arguments in Favor of Gaps in Genesis 5 & 11:

Argument #1: Other genealogies in the Scriptures clearly include gaps!

There are examples of other abridged genealogies in Scripture:

- Matthew 1:8: Azariah & Joash are omitted.
- Matthew 1:11: Sheoakim is omitted.
- A comparison of 1 Chronicles 6:13-14 and Ezra 7:1-5 suggests that at least Jehozadak is missing from the Ezra list.

Just because you can prove a gap in one genealogy does not necessarily mean that you have gaps in the other. The genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11 are more specific (listing how old the person was when they begat the next generation) and cover a shorter period of time than the Matthew and Luke genealogies. One might conclude that with the prior existence of the earlier, more complete genealogies that the later genealogies can have gaps and still be discernable precisely because those who receive the later genealogies already possess the earlier, more complete genealogies.

Argument #2: One generation that of Cainan is clearly omitted in Genesis 11.

The argument is derived from a comparison of Luke 3:36 with Genesis 11:10, 12. The Luke genealogy lists the name Cainan between Arphaxad and Shelah, while Genesis 11 does not record it at all. However the Greek Septuagint (an early Greek Translation of the Hebrew Old Testament) does include the name *Cainan* in its genealogy of Genesis 11. While the Hebrew Masoretic Text that we possess is more reliable than the Greek Septuagint, the appearance of the name in the Luke genealogy of the New Testament is significant.

Argument #3: The inclusion of data irrelevant to establishing a chronology demonstrates that the genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11 are intended to fulfill a purpose other than simply establishing a time-period.

There are four purposes that are often suggested for these genealogies:

1. To show how God guarded the Messianic line, even in times of great apostasy (i.e. Genesis 6:1-12; 11:1-9).

2. To demonstrate the grandeur of humanity (life spans) during that time.

3. To demonstrate the fulfillment of the curse by the melancholy repetition of the phrase "and he died."

4. To demonstrate the tightening grip of sin through the declining life spans.

If you are going to have four purposes, why not a fifth? It is important to note that there is one piece of data that occurs in these two genealogies that does not generally occur in others: the age of the individual when he begets the next generation, which seems irrelevant to all of the above suggested purposes of these genealogies.

Argument #4: The term "beget" has trans-generational implications in other places in the Scriptures.

This is notable in other genealogies like that of Matthew 1, where names are omitted yet the term is still used. Surely no one can deny the fact that the term is sometimes used in a trans-generational sense. However the term itself does not necessarily refer to trans-generational ancestry.

Argument #5: The LXX (Septuagint) and the Samaritan Pentateuch have different numerical notations in Genesis 5 & 11.

The Hebrew Masoretic text has 352 years from the Flood to Abraham, the Samaritan Pentateuch has 942 years, while the LXX has 1142 years. The argument is that even these very early scholars were conscious that more time passed between the Flood and Abraham than what is suggested by Genesis 11.

However the Hebrew Masoretic text, which our English Old Testaments are translated from is clearly superior to the other translations. It is possible that the other translations inserted numbers for symmetry.

Argument #6: The strict chronology simply does not allow sufficient time between the Flood and the tower of Babel.

If the chronology is strict in Genesis 11 then the postdiluvian patriarchs, including Noah, would have been alive when Abraham was 50 years old. Some see this as inconsistent with the idea that Terah was serving other gods (cf. Joshua 24:2). However, just because a Father serves God, does not guarantee that the son will.

Others suggest that it is difficult to fit all of Egyptian history into the short period of time between the Flood and Abraham. However, when one notices that some of the Egyptian dynasties overlap rather than being chronological (one right after the other), it no longer becomes impossible to make it fit.

Arguments in Favor of a Strict (Short) Chronology:

Argument #1: The most natural, objective reading of the text would suggest that both genealogies are strict. These are more detailed than other genealogies.

Argument #2: The genealogies of Genesis 5 & 11 seem to suggest that a direct father/son (first generation male descendant) relationships are at stake. Especially since the Adam to Seth and Terah to Abraham relationships can be supported by other verses outside these genealogies.

Argument #3: The Hebrew term YALAD certainly can mean first generation father/son relationship especially when in the Hiphil (causative) stem.

א man's part in the production of a child is generally represented by the Hiphil, but sometimes the Qal is used. It is likely that the different forms mean different things. In most every instance actual paternity is represented by the Hiphil and a more general relationship uses the Qal. [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, I:379]

Argument #4: Jude 14 speaks of Enoch as the seventh from Adam, suggesting a short or strict chronology of Genesis 5.

Argument #5: The fact that the age of the father at the birth of the son is given in the genealogies suggests that chronology is at least part of the focus of the passages.

Argument #6: Writing has only been traced to about 3500 BC; if man has existed from 8,000-10,000 BC, why is it that there are no records of writing from before 3500 BC?

Clearly this debate could go on forever. Because we know of some gaps in genealogies does not mean that they are useless to us in biblical chronology. After all, the reason we know that gaps exist in genealogies is because the missing names are supplied elsewhere in the Bible. Also, the gaps that exist are fairly minor, not many thousands of years. So with that being said, we can determine that man was created at least 6,000 thousand years ago, sometime before 4000 B.C. Therefore, we can reasonably conclude that the universe was created only several thousands of years ago not long ages ago (see Valley Bible Position Paper on Creationism).

Consideration #2: The Chronology of the Patriarchs

This consideration is very brief with no real disagreements over its chronology. The section of the Old Testament covered by this period of chronology is Genesis 11-50 and is often referred to as Patriarchal History. The chronology of this period deals with four individuals: 1) Abraham; 2) Isaac; 3) Jacob; 4) Joseph.

The chronology of this period is based on the fixed date of June 15, 763 BC, an astronomically dated eclipse of the sun identified in the Assyrian Eponym lists. By using this fixed date and the mention of Ahab and Jehu from the eponym list one can work backward through the divided kingdom, to determine that the Kingdom was divided about 931 BC. The Kingdom divided after Solomon's death due to the oppressive nature of Rehoboam, Solomon's son.

Since Solomon reigned for 40 years (1 Kings 11:12), he must have become king about 971 BC. By taking note of 1 Kings 6:1, Solomon began building the temple during his fourth year as king (966 BC) 480 years after the Exodus. This would place Israel's Exodus from Egypt about 1446 BC. Exodus 12:40 tells us that Israel was in Egypt for 430 years. So the year that Jacob went down to Egypt can be dated at 1876 BC. Jacob states that he was 130 years old when he appeared before Pharaoh (Genesis 47:9), so his birth can be dated at about 2006 BC. Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born (Genesis 25:26), so his birth would have been about 2066 BC. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 (Genesis 21:5), which suggests that Abraham would have been born about 2166 BC. So the Patriarchal Period of the Old Testament highlighted in Genesis 11-50 can be dated from 2166 BC at Abraham's birth to 1876 BC when Jacob and his family moved to Egypt due to famine.

The Patriarchal Period								
Birth of Abraham	75 years	Abraham To Canaan	25 years	Birth Of Isaac	60 years	Birth Of Jacob	130 years	Jacob To Egypt
2166 BC		2091 BC		2066 BC		2006 BC		1876 BC

- See chart from *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament* by John H. Walton.

OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 2:

The Chronology of Israel's Bondage in Egypt & Exodus from Egypt

June 22, 2003

Review

Remember that the basis for Old Testament Chronology comes from the fixed date of June 15, 763 BC, an astronomically dated eclipse of the sun identified in the Assyrian Eponym lists. By using this fixed date and the mention of Kings Ahab and Jehu of the Northern Kingdom of Israel from the eponym list, one can work backward through the divided kingdom, to determine that the Kingdom was divided about 931 BC. The United Kingdom of Israel divided after Solomon's death due to the oppressive nature of Rehoboam, Solomon's son (cf. 1 Kings 12). Since Solomon reigned for 40 years (1 Kings 11:42), he must have become king about 971 BC. By taking note of 1 Kings 6:1, Solomon began building the temple during his fourth year as king (966 BC) 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt. This would place Israel's Exodus from Egypt about 1446 BC. Remember also that Exodus 12:40 tells us that Israel was in Egypt for 430 years. This would place the year that Jacob went down to Egypt at 1876 BC. Jacob states that he was 130 years old when he appeared before Pharaoh (Genesis 47:9), so his birth can be dated at about 2006 BC. Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born (Genesis 25:26), so his birth would have been in 2066 BC. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 (Genesis 21:5), which suggests that Abraham would have been born about 2166 BC. So the Patriarchal period of the Old Testament highlighted in Genesis 11-50 can be dated from 2166 BC at Abraham's birth to 1876 BC when Jacob and his family moved to Egypt due to a famine in the land.

Remember that it is more difficult to determine a Chronology for the period from Creation to Abraham due to the limited number of materials in which to determine a chronology. The primary resource in order to determine a date for the creation of the earth is that of the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. As we discussed last week, it is best to take these genealogies in a strict or short manner without gaps. Of course there is the one possible exception noted from Luke 3:36. This as you remember does not open the case for other gaps, nor does it make it possible to insert thousands of years. At best we can determine that one generation might have been left out of the Genesis 11 genealogy. So with that being said, we can determine that man was created at least 6,000 years ago, sometime shortly before 4,000 BC.

Overview of Contemporary Egyptian History

Before addressing the issues of Israel's bondage in Egypt and the dating of the Exodus from Egypt, it is necessary to have an accurate understanding of contemporary Egyptian History. In particular the history of Egypt after the death of Joseph through the time of the Exodus.

Egypt after the death of Joseph:

- At the time Jacob went down to Egypt (1876 BC), Egypt was ruled by the Twelfth Dynasty. Dynasty Twelve ended in Egypt about 1786 BC; with the demise of that dynasty the greatness of the Middle Kingdom was over.
- The Thirteenth Dynasty was very weak. The central authority was greatly diminished, which made the incursion of great numbers of Asiatics into Egypt possible.
- One such Asiatic family usurped power in Egypt and established themselves in firm control. These people were known by the name, The Hyksos. This term is a corruption of an Egyptian term, which means, "Rulers of Foreign Countries."
- These Asiatic invaders are known to historians as Dynasties Fifteen and Sixteen and ruled in Egypt from 1730 BC to 1570 BC.
- It is possible that from these Hyksos rulers was the king who knew not Joseph (Exodus 1:8), since Joseph died about 1800 BC.
- About 1570 BC, the native Egyptian rulers at Thebes (Upper Egypt) succeeded in expelling the Hyksos from the Delta. These rulers had established the Seventeenth Dynasty, which was shortly followed by the Eighteenth Dynasty (in rule during the time of the Exodus).

Egypt prior to Israel's Exodus:

The rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty united the country and inaugurated the greatest period in all of Egyptian History, the New Kingdom. The following is an overview of the reigns of the pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who impact the history of Old Testament Israel.

AHMOSE I (1570-1546 BC)

- He was the founder of the 18th Dynasty, brother of the last king of the 17th Dynasty.
- He completed the expulsion of the Hyksos, which had been largely accomplished by the pharaohs of the 17th Dynasty.
- He reigned 24 years; quite effective; crushed sedition against his family.
- It is also possible that this might be the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph.

AMENHOTEP I (1546-1526 BC)

- He was the son of Ahmose I; succeeded at the death of his father.
- He completed the consolidation of power begun by his father.

- He reigned 20 years and established the Thebean dynasty in control of the entire land of Egypt.
- He brought Egypt to the threshold of a new golden age.

THUTMOSIS I (1526-1518 BC)

- Amenhotep died leaving no heir; one of his female relatives (sister or daughter) was married to a prominent general, and the crown passed to that general under the name of Thutmosis I
- He was a very strong Pharaoh who led a raid deep into Syria-Palestine
- He is probably the Pharaoh who instituted the killing of Hebrew baby boys (Moses was born about 1525 BC)
- He reigned about 7 years; died with no heir in place; however he did have a daughter, Hatshepsut.

THUTMOSIS II (1518-1504 BC)

- Because Hatshepsut was a female, it was considered inappropriate for her to rule; so she was compelled to marry her half brother, Thutmosis II.
- Thutmosis II was a son of Thutmosis I by a lesser wife, whereas Hatshepsut was the daughter of Thutmosis I and his primary royal wife.
- The 14 years of Thutmosis' rule were very undistinguished.

HATSHEPSUT (1504-1482 BC)

- Thutmosis II died without an heir; a son by a secondary wife was named as King Thutmosis III, but as he was only a lad, Hatshepsut seized the real power and ruled for 22 years.
- Thutmosis III was forced into the background during the years of Hatshepsut's dominance, but he did not entirely disappear from the scene.
- Hatshepsut was a very colorful ruler. She sent trading expeditions throughout the world, building a beautiful temple at Deir el-Bahri, and conducted at least four military campaigns, which were very successful.
- After 22 years of rule, Hatshepsut disappeared from the scene--whether by natural reasons or by foul play it is hard to say.

"The general picture of Hatshepsut leads us to identify this bold queen as the daughter of Pharaoh who rescued Moses. Only she of all known women of the period possessed the presumption and independence to violate an ordinance of the king and under his very nose at that! Though the birth date of the daughter of Thutmose I is unknown, she was probably several years older than her husband, Thutmose II, who died in 1504 while in his late twenties. She may have been in her early teens by 1526, Moses' birth date, and therefore able to effect his deliverance." [Eugene Merrill, Kingdom of Priests, p. 60.]

"For a woman to assume such a position in that day was most unusual, but Hatshepsut was a most unusual person. She had a strong personality and a remarkable gift for leadership, which she used in advantageous circumstances to claim the throne... We may safely think of Moses, then, as having been reared by this remarkable woman. It was she who found him in the river and later received him into the place at Thebes as her adopted son." [Leon Wood]

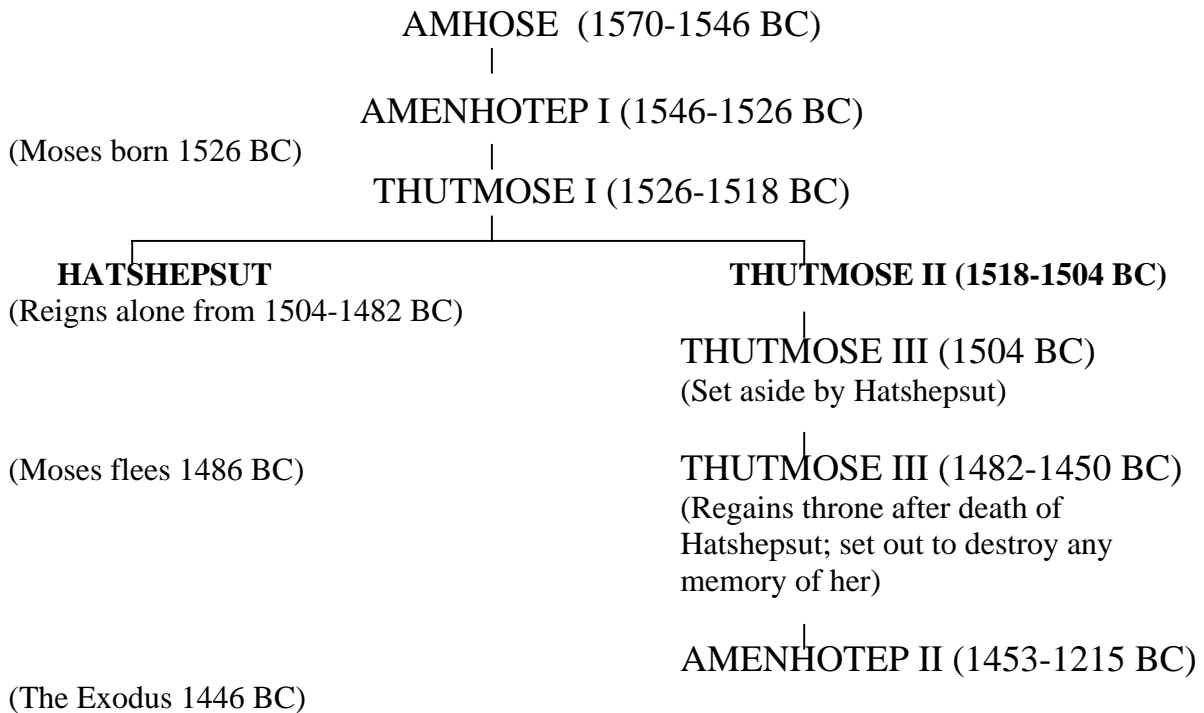
THUTMOSIS III (1504-1450 BC)

- Including all the years from coronation to death, Thutmosis III ruled 54 years. However, his effective reign was 1482-1450 BC.
- Thutmosis III was one of the most talented and brilliant rulers in Egyptian history. He led 17 campaigns, mostly Syria-Palestine, creating an Egyptian empire in the Levant.
- Late in life (about 1453 BC), Thutmosis III made his son Amenhotep II, co-regent with him. After 3 years of co-regency, Thutmosis II died, leaving Amenhotep II on the throne.

AMENHOTEP II (1453-1415 BC)

- He was a very militaristic king, but led only three campaigns in years 3, 7 and 9 of his reign (about 1450, 1446, 1444 BC).
- This fits well with Old Testament narrative and the Pharaoh of the Exodus.
- Thutmosis IV, a son of Amenhotep II took the throne in 1415 BC. However, Thutmosis IV was NOT the firstborn son of Amenhotep II, thus fitting well with the Old Testament narrative.

The Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt



Consideration #3: Israel's Sojourn in Egypt

The next chronological issue that must be dealt with is that of Israel's bondage in Egypt. In particular the issue involves the duration of that bondage in Egypt. The problem at hand is that there are passages of Scripture that mention various lengths for Israel's sojourn in Egypt. As a result of this confusion, there are three main positions: 1) The sojourn lasted 215 years; 2) The sojourn lasted 400 years; 3) The sojourn lasted 430 years. "The length of the sojourn of Israel in Egypt has crucial ramifications for a proper understanding of the patriarchal and Joseph narratives. A 215-year sojourn, for example places Joseph in a Hyksos milieu whereas a 430-year sojourn places him in a native Egyptian dynasty." [Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, p. 75] We will attempt to examine the biblical passages; evaluate the main positions and estimate the length of Israel's sojourn in order to arrive at an accurate Old Testament Chronology.

Examining the Scriptures

Passages, which mention a 400-year sojourn:

- Genesis 15:13 *"And {God} said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years."*
- Acts 7:6 *"But God spoke to this effect, that his OFFSPRING WOULD BE ALIENS IN A FOREIGN LAND, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE ENSLAVED AND MISTREATED FOR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS."*

Passages, which mention a 430-year sojourn:

- Exodus 12:40-41 *"Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came about at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."*
- Galatians 3:17 *"What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise."*

A Passage, which mentions a 450-year sojourn:

- Acts 13:17-20 17) *"The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it. 18) "And for a period of about forty years He put up with them in the wilderness. 19) "And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance — {all of which took} about four hundred and fifty years. 20) "And after these things He gave {them} judges until Samuel the prophet."*

Evaluating the Positions

Position #1: 215 years of bondage in Egypt

This position takes Galatians 3:17 as stating that the 430 years are from the giving of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:3 to the giving of the Law in Exodus 19. It views 215 years from the covenant with Abraham until the time Jacob went down into Egypt and another 215 years from the time Jacob went down into Egypt until the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. The key text for this position then is Galatians 3:17.

The Call of Abram at 75 years old.....	0
Isaac born when Abram is 100 years old.....	25
Isaac was weaned & Ishmael cast out [400 years begin].....	5
Jacob & Esau born when Isaac was 60.....	55
Jacob 130 when he goes down into Egypt.....	130
	Subtotal 430 15
Remaining years in Egypt.....	215
	Grand total 430 30

Notice that the advocates of the 215-year sojourn usually distinguish between the 400 years of Genesis 15:13 and the 430 years of Exodus 12:40-41. The 430 years begin when Abraham is called and the covenant is made in Genesis 12:3, but the 400 years begin when Isaac is weaned, thus becoming the heir of the promise (Genesis 21:9).

Arguments in favor of this position:

- It seems to best fit the point of Galatians 3:17 that 430 years elapsed from the giving of the Abrahamic covenant until the giving of the Law in Exodus 19.
- Exodus 6:16-20 and Genesis 15:16 emphasize that they would return to their land in the fourth generation. A 215-year sojourn would seem to be more reasonable than a 430-year span.
- Some will refer to a variety of quotations from the early church fathers to support this position.

Objections to this position:

- Paul's statement in Galatians 3:17 does not necessarily have to refer back to the first time the covenant was made. In fact there is a renewal of the covenant on several occasions. (cf. Genesis 46:3-4)

Paul's reference to the period between the Abrahamic promise and the Mosaic covenant does not unequivocally point to the first time the promise was made. It was in fact affirmed and reaffirmed several times to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the last occasion being precisely on the eve of Jacob's departure for Egypt (Genesis 46:3-4). Paul may be speaking not of Abraham per se, but of that Abrahamic promise, the last expression of which was to Jacob exactly 430 years before the exodus.

- The genealogy of Exodus 6:16-20 is a representative genealogy, not a complete one. Nearly all scholars agree that there are gaps in this genealogy. It is also possible that the term "generations" in Genesis 15:13 could mean "lifetimes" and thus could refer to a period of 430 years.
- The quotations from the early church fathers are very ambiguous and do not offer any substantial support for this position.
- The inclusion of the weaning of Isaac is really weak in order to corroborate the distinction between 400 and 430 years.
- A 215-year sojourn does not allow enough time for the rapid population growth of Israel from 70-75 family members to 600,000 men (cf. Exodus 12:37), not to mention women and children.

Position #2: 400 years of bondage in Egypt

This position holds that the Egyptian bondage is a period of 400 years as stated in Genesis 15:13 and Acts 7:6. They emphasize that the 430 years mentioned in Exodus 12:40-41 and Galatians 3:17 cover the time period from the confirmation of the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 35:9-13 to the confirmation of the Mosaic covenant at Mt. Sinai and easily reconciles with a bondage in Egypt of 400 years.

Arguments in favor of this position:

- A literal rendering of Genesis 15:13 and Acts 7:6.
- Galatians 3:17 specifically dates the 430 years from the confirmation of the covenant. If the final confirmation is Genesis 35:9-13 then the confirmation was 430 years before the Exodus. (They are reconciling the statements of 400 years with those of 430 years)
- This position uses Acts 13:19-20 as a major support.
 - 1) Acts 13:19-20 states that the stay in Egypt, the wilderness wanderings (40 years), and the conquest of Canaan (7 years) all consumed a period of 450 years.
 - 2) A 430 year bondage means a total of 477 years.
[430 yrs + 40 yrs + 7 yrs = 477 years]

- 3) A 400 year bondage means a total of 447 years.
[400 yrs + 40 yrs + 7 yrs = 447 years]
 - 4) The latter figure is much closer to the “about 450 years” of Paul in Acts 13:19-20.
- This position gives sufficient time for the increase of population among the Jews in Egypt.

Objection to this position:

- Exodus 12:40-41 seems to be an explicit statement that the children of Israel were actually in Egypt for 430 years. Being that this is a direct literal statement of their time in Egypt made in the context of the Exodus, it seems best to hold to a 430 year sojourn and reconcile the other passages in light of this clear statement.

Position #3: 430 years of bondage in Egypt

This position holds to a literal rendering of Exodus 12:40-41 and a 430 year sojourn in Egypt. This fits with the 1876 descent of Jacob and his sons into Egypt and the 1446 Exodus date. This position reconciles the passages that mention a 400-year sojourn as rounded figures. It reconciles Galatians 3:17 in that the covenant promises was affirmed and reaffirmed several times to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The last such rendering comes in Genesis 46:3-4 just before Jacob’s departure to Egypt.

Arguments in favor of this position:

- Exodus 12:40-41 specifically states that the sojourn in Egypt lasted 430 years. “*Now the time that the sons of Israel **lived in Egypt** was four hundred and thirty years. And it came about at the end of four hundred and thirty years, **to the very day**, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.*” The best sense of this verse is a literal 430-year sojourn in Egypt. There is really no other satisfactory way to render such a specific statement. This statement seems to be concerned specifically with the chronology of the sojourn in and the Exodus. The fact that it is in the context of Israel’s Exodus out of Egypt strengthens a literal interpretation of these verses.
- Genesis 15:13 predicts that the descendants of Abraham would be in a land not their own for 400 years. The 400-year figure is simply a general statement referring to the sojourn. It is an approximation of which Exodus 12:40-41 emphasizes its fulfillment as exactly 430 years. Acts 7:6 is simply a quotation of Genesis 15:13 and is therefore taken as a round number as well.

Leon Wood, *Survey of Israel’s History*, p. 84

“As to the figure used here being 400, rather than the more exact 430 of Exodus 12:40, tis is an employment of a round number, something not uncommon in Scripture. The mention in Genesis 15:16 that the return would be in the fourth generation, may be explained in terms of the length of a generation in Abraham’s experience. God knew that Abraham would be one hundred at Isaac’s birth and here employed this length of time in a multiple of four to stress how long Abraham’s posterity would remain in Egypt.”

- This position allows enough time for the population to increase from the 70 to 75 family members to 600,000 men (cf. Exodus 12:37) while in Egypt. If you begin with the 41 grandsons of Jacob and figure 10 generations of 40 years each, assuming that from each married couple an average of three sons and three daughters for the first six generations and two sons and two daughters for the last four, then by the tenth generation there would be 478,224 sons over the age of twenty with 125,326 sons from the ninth generation still living for a total of 603,550 men by the 400th year. The 430-year sojourn clearly allows enough time for Israel's population to increase and to be able to reconcile Exodus 12:37.

After examining all of the data, It would be best to interpret Exodus 12:40-41 in a literal manner. Exodus 12:40-41 is an explicit statement that Israel was in Egypt 430 years. It is clear that Genesis 15:13 is a general statement predicting this event in the future. In so doing the sojourn is simply rounded off to 400 years. As a result Acts 7:6 is simply quoting Genesis 15:13 rather than making an exact statement about chronology. This 430-year period began with the renewal of the covenant promise to Jacob in Genesis 46:3-4 just prior to the descent to Egypt. This position best reconciles the biblical data. That would place the period of the Sojourn in Egypt from 1876 BC until the Exodus in 1446 BC.

Consideration #4: The Date of Israel's Exodus from Egypt

The date of Israel's Exodus from Egypt is probably one of the most debated topics of Old Testament Chronology. Although the biblical evidence seems to settle the question of the date of the Exodus, most of Old Testament scholarship have rejected this evidence for an early date of 1446 BC and settled for a late date of the Exodus. Surely the date of the Exodus is a crucially important question because the Exodus is a central historical and theological event in the Old Testament and the interpretation of both antecedent and subsequent history will be greatly affected by the date assigned to the Exodus. [cf. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, p. 66-67] In other words an accurate Old Testament Chronology rests on the date we assign to the Exodus.

Although there are many interpretations for the date of the Exodus, there exist two major positions: 1) The Late Date for the Exodus is about 1266BC; 2) The Early Date for the Exodus is 1446 BC.

THE LATE DATE: ABOUT 1266 BC

Many Old Testament scholars support a late date of the Exodus sometime after 1300 BC.

- Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, p. 193-194: According to the best information presently available the reign of Ramses II is probably dated 1304-1237 BC, and a date for the exodus not too long after 1300 seems more probable.
- John Bright, *History of Israel*, p. 123: We may be fairly certain that the exodus took place no earlier than the thirteenth century.

Arguments in Favor of a Late Date for the Exodus:

- Lack of sedentary settlement of Transjordan:

Eugene Merrill, p. 69:

“For many years Nelson Glueck, the eminent explorer and archaeologist, argued on the basis of pottery finds on the surface and on the slopes of mounds throughout the Transjordan and the Negev that these areas had no sedentary population between 1900 and 1300 BC. Practically all Old Testament authorities accepted this judgment and therefore concluded that references to settled peoples encountered by Moses and Joshua necessitated a date after 1300 BC for the wilderness journeys. It follows that the exodus also could not have been much earlier than that date.”

Response:

It is necessary to note that Glueck’s conclusions are almost universally rejected today. At any rate, the Edomites and Moabites encountered by Israel in Numbers 21-21, may well have been nomadic peoples, leaving little or no archaeological trace.

- Israelite construction of the city of Rameses (cf. Exodus 1:11):

Eugene Merrill, p. 70:

“A Second basis for the late date is found in the biblical text itself. Exodus 1:11 points out that the Israelites, when they were reduced to slavery, constructed certain cities for Pharaoh, including Pithom and Rameses. These cities were originally known as Pi-Atum and Per-Ramesse respectively, and in any case were not built, but rebuilt by the Israelites. The contention that this verse is relevant to the date of the exodus rests on the assumption that the city Rameses was named for Rameses II, the famous king of Dynasty 19. That he did build or rebuild a city by this name (Per-Ramasse) and that he did so with the use of ‘apiru slave labor may be conceded (though the papyrus to which appeal is always made, does not expressly make this assertion.”

It is suggested by these scholars that this construction took place either during the reign of Seti I (1308-1290 BC) or Rameses II (1290-1224 BC).

Response:

1) The name Rameses is much earlier than Dynasty 19; in fact it can be traced all the way back to the Hyksos. So there is the possibility that the Israelites rebuilt a city called Rameses long before the kingship of Rameses II.

2) The name Rameses in Exodus 1:11 is an anachronism; the name at the time of the Israelites labor there was Avaris, but a later editor of the story changed the name to Rameses so that his contemporaries could understand it. Unger theorized that Rameses replaced

Avaris so that later readers would understand the location, because they would not know the location of Avaris. If such a change indeed took place, then the city of Rameses in Exodus 1:11 would cease to support a late date for the exodus. (cf. Genesis 14:14; Joshua 19:47 & Judges 18:29)

- Evidence in Canaan of a thirteenth-century conquest:

Eugene Merrill, p. 71-72:

“The third and by far most commonly adduced argument in support of a thirteenth-century date for the exodus is archaeological evidence of a massive and widespread devastation of the cities and towns of central Canaan during that period. Since there appears to be incontrovertible attestation of such destruction and since, so the argument goes, the only known historical event anywhere near that time which could account for it is the Israelite conquest, the conclusion is drawn that the conquest was in fact the cause of the destruction and that the exodus therefore must have been only slightly earlier.”

Note: a corollary of this argument is the absence of any archaeological evidence of widespread destruction or burning in Canaan from the early fourteenth century BC. When the conquest would have occurred according to the reconstruction of the early date advocates.

Response:

There is a clear Biblical reason why there is no evidence of widespread destruction in the fourteenth century. Compare Joshua 11:13, *“However, Israel did not burn any cities that stood on their mounds, except Hazor alone, {which} Joshua burned.”* In fact the biblical record in Joshua is clear that only Jericho, Ai and Hazor were destroyed. This is in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 6:10-11, *“When it shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant.”* There is clearly no record of destruction for the conquest, because there was very limited destruction in the conquest.

The Bible does offer an explanation as to the archaeological record of widespread destruction in Canaan during the late thirteenth century BC. The book of Judges makes it very clear that Israel was overrun and oppressed time and time again by enemy peoples from within and outside of the land. This certainly would serve as a valid explanation for the layers of destruction during this time frame.

THE EARLY DATE: ABOUT 1446 BC

Although many Old Testament scholars have supported a late date for the exodus, both biblical and archaeological evidence clearly supports an early date around 1446 BC for the exodus.

Arguments in Favor of an Early Date for the Exodus:

- 1) Two explicit statements of Scripture support a mid-15th century BC date:

1 Kings 6:1 *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.*

As mentioned earlier the fixed date from the Assyrian Eponym Lists of an astronomically dated solar eclipse help pin-point the beginning of Solomon's reign around 970/971 BC, which would place the fourth year of his reign around 966/967 BC. The explicit statement of Scripture is that the Exodus was 480 years prior to this date, which is conveniently 1446 BC.

Judges 11:13-27 In this passage Jephthah has set out to destroy the Ammonites. He remonstrates them for contesting Israel's right to land, which they have held for 300 years. In fact Jephthah explicitly dates those 300 years from the initial entrance into Canaan. Jephthah's defeat of the Ammonites occurred at the end of the twelfth century (about 1100 BC), a date which is widely acknowledged. This would once again seem to support an early date. If Exodus was 1446 BC and the Conquest was 40 years later at about 1406 BC then Jephthah's defeat of the Ammonites would nicely fit about 1106 BC.

The late date advocates have to explain away both of these figures in order to make their chronology work.

- 2) Contemporary Egyptian history permits a mid-15th century BC date:

Obviously as discussed earlier, Egyptian history fits very well with the early date of the Exodus.

The political/societal upheaval which was associated with the reign of the Hyksos consists well with the terror of the Egyptian ruling family at the growth of the Jewish people and with the antipathy felt toward the Jews when a new king arose.

Hatshepsut, daughter of Thutmose I and pretender to the throne of Egypt is the only woman in all of Egyptian history who fits the profile of the daughter of Pharaoh who found the child Moses and reared him in the palace and she fits that profile perfectly.

Thutmose III fits precisely with the Biblical data concerning the king who longed for Moses's death (Exodus 2:23; 4:19). Further the struggle between Thutmose III and Hatshepsut explains Moses's error when his slaughter of the Egyptian taskmaster was discovered. Thutmose might have perceived Moses to be his greatest rival.

The chronology of the Biblical narrative of Moses's time in Midian (40 years) demands that the Pharaoh of the Exodus be immediately preceded by a Pharaoh, who reigned about 40 years. Thutmose III reigned alone after the death of Hatshepsut (1482) for 32 years (1482-1450), and died less than 5 years before Moses returned to Egypt as God's deliverer.

Amenhotep II spent much of his life in the delta region in the northern portion of Egypt; thus he would have been easily accessible to Moses. In addition, he was a great military conqueror early in his reign, but had no expeditions toward his latter years. Plus there is evidence that the eldest son of Amenhotep II did not survive and this could be explained by the 10th plague.

- 3) Contemporary events in the land of Canaan suggest a mid-15th century BC date:

Since Israel fled Egypt about 1446 BC, then the Conquest of Canaan would take place about 40 years later about 1406 BC. Many find that there is evidence for an invasion of Canaan at that time from the Armana Letters. These letters describe Abdihibba, governor of Jerusalem, who wrote numerous letters to Akhnaton beseeching Egyptian aid against the encroaching Habiru, if the country were to be saved for Egypt. The conclusion is that these Habiru are in fact the Hebrews and the reference is to the conquest of Canaan by Israel under Joshua. This coincides nicely with the early date of the Exodus.

- 4) Archaeological evidence from the city of Jericho favors a mid-15th century BC date in that there exists a layer of destruction at about the time of the conquest for the early date of the exodus.

Clearly the best argument is in favor of the Early Date of the Exodus around 1446 BC. The weight of any argument must be supported clearly by the pages of Scripture. 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:15-27 clearly pave the way for the early date. Furthermore, Egyptian history and archaeological evidence add to the support of this date. Jacob likely went down into Egypt around 1876 BC. For 430 years the Israelites lived in Egypt until Moses led them out around 1446 BC. For the next 40 years they would wander through the wilderness until Joshua led them into the Promised land about 1406 BC.

OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 3:

The Chronology of The Wilderness Wanderings, The Conquest, and The Period of The Judges; The Hebrew Calendar

June 29, 2003

Remember that the basis for Old Testament Chronology comes from the fixed date of June 15, 763 BC, an astronomically dated eclipse of the sun identified in the Assyrian Eponym lists. By using this fixed date and the mention of Kings Ahab and Jehu of the Northern Kingdom of Israel from the eponym list, one can work backward through the divided kingdom, to determine that the Kingdom was divided about 931 BC. The United Kingdom of Israel divided after Solomon's death due to the oppressive nature of Rehoboam, Solomon's son (cf. 1 Kings 12). Since Solomon reigned for 40 years (1 Kings 11:42), he must have become king about 971 BC. By taking note of 1 Kings 6:1, Solomon began building the temple during his fourth year as king (966 BC) 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt. This would place Israel's Exodus from Egypt about 1446 BC. Remember also that Exodus 12:40 tells us that Israel was in Egypt for 430 years. This would place the year that Jacob went down to Egypt at 1876 BC. Jacob states that he was 130 years old when he appeared before Pharaoh (Genesis 47:9), so his birth can be dated at about 2006 BC. Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born (Genesis 25:26), so his birth would have been in 2066 BC. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 (Genesis 21:5), which suggests that Abraham would have been born about 2166 BC. Assuming short or tight chronology of the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11, the creation account could be placed sometime shortly before 4000 BC. We have discussed three distinct periods of Old Testament Chronology thus far:

- 1) The Primeval period from Creation to Abraham's birth highlighted in Genesis 1-11 can be dated from just before 4000 BC to 2166 BC.
- 2) The Patriarchal period of the Old Testament highlighted in Genesis 11-50 can be dated from 2166 BC at Abraham's birth to 1876 BC when Jacob and his family moved to Egypt due to a famine in the land.
- 3) The Period of Israel's Sojourn in Egypt can be dated from 1876 BC when Jacob and his family went down to Egypt until about 1446 BC at the Exodus from Egypt.

<u>Primeval History</u>	<u>Patriarchal History</u>	<u>Sojourn in Egypt</u>
Creation to Abraham's Birth	Abraham's Birth to Jacob's descent into Egypt	Jacob's descent into Egypt to the Exodus from Egypt
Just before 4000 BC-2166 BC	2166 BC-1876 BC	1876 BC-1446 BC

Consideration #5: The Period of the Wilderness Wanderings

This particular time period is non-controversial and quite clearly laid out in the Scripture. For our purposes here this time period will cover the events from the exodus out of Egypt until the entrance into Canaan. The length of time between the departure from Egypt and the entrance into Canaan is about 40 years. The following is a list of the verses that mention this 40-year period of Israel's history:

Exodus 16:35; Numbers 14:33-34; 32:13; 33:38; Deuteronomy 1:3; 2:7; 8:2-4; 29:5; Joshua 5:6; Psalm 95:10; Amos 2:10; 5:25; Acts 7:36 & 42; 13:18; Hebrews 3:9 & 17

The following chart overviews the chronology of this period:

<u>Events</u>	<u>Month/Day/Year</u>
1) Passover observed (Exodus 12:2)	1/14, 1446 BC
2) Departure from Egypt after 430 years (Exodus 12:41-42; Numbers 33:3)	1/14, 1446 BC
3) To the Wilderness of Sin, manna is given (Exodus 16:1)	2/15, 1446 BC
4) Arrival at Sinai (Exodus 19:1)	3/14, 1446 BC
5) Encampment at Sinai for 11 1/2 months. During this time: --Moses is on the mount with God twice for 40 days each time (Exodus 24:18; 34:28) --The instruction was given concerning the tabernacle, and that structure was put up.	
6) The Tabernacle was set up for the first time (Exodus 40:1, 2, 17)	1/1, 1445 BC
7) Passover observation commanded (Numbers 9:1-2)	1/?, 1445 BC
8) Passover observed (Numbers 9:5) —evidently first time since the night of Exodus	1/14, 1445 BC
9) Numbering of the men (Numbers 1:1-2) [took 20 days]	2/1-20, 1445 BC
10) Departure from Sinai (Numbers 10:11-12)	2/20, 1445 BC
11) Spies sent out from Kadesh-Barnea at time of first ripe grapes (Numbers 13:17-20)	6/? 1445 BC
12) Spies return 40 days later; because of disbelief, Israel is sentenced to 40 years of wandering (Numbers 13:3; Deuteronomy 2:7; 8:2, 4; 29:5)	7-8/? 1445 BC
13) From Kadesh-Barnea to the crossing of the Zered River, 38 years of wandering (Deuteronomy 2:14)	
14) Arrival at the wilderness of Zin; Miriam dies (Numbers 20:1; Numbers 33:36-38)	1/?, 1407 BC
15) Aaron dies at Mt. Hor at 123 years of age (Numbers 20:28; 33:38)	5/1, 1407 BC
16) Israel mourns Aaron for 30 days, departs Mt. Hor, sets out through Edom (Numbers 20:29; 21:4)	5 th month, 1407 BC
17) Israel captures the land of Sihon in Transjordan (Numbers 21:21-35; vs. 25-28, 30) (This is where the 300 years of Judges 11:26 begins)	Probably Fall, 1407 BC
18) Moses' final address to Israel (Deuteronomy 1:3)	11/1, 1406 BC
19) Moses' death (Deuteronomy 34:7)	12/?, 1406 BC
20) Israel spends 3 days preparing to cross the Jordan River (Joshua 1:11)	1/?-?, 1406 BC
21) Israel crosses the swollen Jordan under Joshua (Joshua 4:19)	1/10, 1406 BC
22) Passover is observed for the first time in Canaan (Joshua 5:6, 10, 11; cp. Numbers 14:33; 32:13)	1/14, 1406 BC
23) The manna ceases two days after the 40 th anniversary of the Exodus (Joshua 5:10-12)	1/16/ 1406 BC

- Note: Keep in mind that the months listed are according to the Hebrew calendar (i.e. first month fourteenth day), while the years are an attempt to identify with our modern calendar.
- It is also important to note that it is believed that Moses finished writing the books of the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy just prior to his death around 1405-1406 BC)

Consideration #6: The Conquest & Division of the Land of Canaan

The Scriptural record of the Conquest of the Land is found in Joshua 1-12, while the dividing up of the land among the 12 tribes is recorded for us in Joshua 13-24. The length of the Conquest can be determined based off the chronological material furnished in Joshua 14:7-10 regarding the age of Caleb.

- Joshua 14:7-10

7) "I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought word back to him as {it was} in my heart. 8) "Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear; but I followed the LORD my God fully. 9) "So Moses swore on that day, saying, "Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God fully." 10) "And now behold, the LORD has let me live, just as He spoke, these forty-five years, from the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, when Israel walked in the wilderness; and now behold, I am eighty-five years old today.

It appears that at this point, Caleb is 85 years old (v. 10). At the time they were sent out to spy the land he was 40 years old (v. 7). So 45 years have passed since that time (v. 10). Since Israel spent about 38 years wandering after their refusal to enter the land (Deuteronomy 2:14), then the Conquest of Canaan must have taken about 7 years. Thus the dates for the Conquest can be dated about 1406 BC to 1399 BC.

<u>Chronological Considerations for the Conquest of Canaan:</u>		
Caleb was 85 years old at this point.	Joshua 14:10	85 years
Caleb was 40 years old when he spied out the land at Kadesh-Barnea.	Joshua 14:7	-40 years
The time that had elapsed between these two events.	Joshua 14:7	45 years
Israel had wandered in the wilderness for about 38 years.	Deuteronomy 2:14	-38 years
Leaving about 7 years for the actual Conquest of the Land.		7 years left

The following is an overview of the events of this time period:

<u>Events in Joshua: Conquering and Dividing the Land</u>		
Entering The Land	Conquering The Land	Dividing The Land
-Nation crosses the Jordan, camps at Gilgal, and celebrates the Passover	1-Central Campaign (6-8) 2-Southern Campaign (9-10) 3-Norther Campaign (11)	-Assignment of the Land to the Twelve Tribes -Joshua's final charge & death
Joshua 1-5	Joshua 6-12	Joshua 13-24
1406 BC	1406 BC-1399 BC	1399 BC-?

Note: The seven years of the conquest only take us through the first half of the book of Joshua. The problem is that there is no specific indication as to the time that elapsed between the end of the Conquest (1399 BC) and the first oppression during the time of the Judges (Judges 3:8).

However there are some general indications of time given:

- 1) According to Joshua 24:31 Israel did serve the Lord all the days that Joshua lived, and all the days of the elders (cf. Judges 2:7).
- 2) In Judges 11:13-27 Jephthah has set out to destroy the Ammonites. He remonstrates them for contesting Israel's right to land, which they have held for 300 years. In fact Jephthah explicitly dates those 300 years from the initial entrance into Canaan. [see event 17 in chart on p. 23]. It is likely that event, which Jephthah is referring to and thus begins the 300 years until the time of the Ammonite Oppression of Judges 10:8. The point is that there is a great deal of material to fit into this 300 year period so the time period between the division of the land, and the death of Joshua and the elders could not be too long.
- 3) By the same token, there is a great deal of material to fit into the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1. Thus the time period of righteousness during the life of Joshua and the surviving elders was probably not any longer than necessary. However it is at this point that it is impossible to determine the exact length of time that passes. All we can do is speculate.

However, one clue might be found in Joshua 15:17. Shortly after Caleb captured the cities given him, he gave his daughter as wife to Othniel. This would have been around 1399 BC immediately after the division of the land. Later on according to Judges 3:11, Othniel judged for 40 years following an 8 year oppression by the King of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8).

The point: If much time is allowed for the period of righteousness in Judges 2:7, then Othniel must have been awfully old when he began to judge. The likely conclusion based on a careful chronology of the judges is that there may have been as few as 11 years for the period of righteousness in Judges 2:7.

Division of The Land	Othniel marries (about age 15)	The Period of Righteousness	First Oppression Begins	Othniel Begins To Judge
1399 BC	1399 BC	1399-1388 BC	1388 BC	1380 BC

Consideration #7: The Period of the Judges

As stated above the period of the Judges likely followed the time period of Joshua and the elders rather closely due to the chronological notations of Judges 11:26 and 1 Kings 6:1. Judges 11:26 states that there were 300 years between the time when Israel captured Ammon (Fall of 1407 BC) and the time when Ammon reclaimed the area (thus, about 1107 BC). The problem exists in how best to reconcile the rules of the various Judges and allow for a time of righteousness (Judges 2:7) before the first oppression. The following is an attempt to put the various Judges into some sort of a chronology. It is necessary to note that not all of the Judges were national

Judges. Some of the Judges were only over a particular region. With this understanding, it becomes evident that there might be a bit of overlapping taking place.

A Chronology of The Period of the Judges:			
Event:	Reference:	Years:	Projected Date:
Oppression by Mesopotamians	Judges 3:8	8	1388-1380 BC
Deliverance & Rest under Othniel	Judges 3:10-11	40	1380-1340 BC
Oppression of Eglon of Moab	Judges 3:14	18	1340-1322 BC
Deliverance and Rest under Ehud	Judges 3:30-31; 4:3	80	1322-1242 BC
* Note that it is during the 80 year deliverance and rest under Ehud that the Judgeship of Shamgar and the 20 year oppression of Jabin take place. It is at this point that there appears to be some Overlapping.			
Deliverance & Rest under Deborah/Barak	Judges 5:31	40	1242-1202 BC
Oppression by Midian	Judges 6:1	7	1202-1195 BC
Deliverance & Rest under Gideon	Judges 8:28-33	40	1195-1155 BC
Usurpation of Abimelech	Judges 9:22	3	1155-1152 BC
Judgeship of Tola	Judges 10:1-2	23	1152-1129 BC
Judgeship of Jair	Judges 10:3-5	22	1129-1107 BC
* Note it is at this point that Jephthah refers to the 300 years in Judges 11:26. If you take the number of the preceding years of the oppression and Judges (281), plus 7 years for the conquest and 1 year in the Transjordan before Israel crossed the Jordan then the remaining 11 years of the 300 must have been the period of righteousness mentioned in Judges 2:7.			
Oppression by the Ammonites	Judges 10:8	18	1107-1089 BC
Oppression by the Philistines	Judges 10:6-7; 13:1	40	1088-1048 BC
* Note that it is during this 40-year Philistine oppression that the following events take place and also that Samuel arrives on the scene as the last Judge.			
Deliverance and Rest under Jephthah	Judges 12:7	6	1089-1083 BC
The Judgeship of Ibzan	Judges 12:8-10	7	1083-1076 BC
The Judgeship of Elon	Judges 12:11-12	10	1076-1066 BC
The Judgeship of Abdon	Judges 12:13-15	8	1066-1058 BC
The Judgeship of Samson	Judges 16:31	20	?
The Judgeship of Samuel			
Samuel Anoints Saul as first King			1051 BC

In conclusion, the period of the Conquest and Division of the Land along with the rule of Joshua and the elders apparently ended sometime around 1389-1388 BC just prior to the first oppression by the King of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8). Thus the period of the Judges begins with this first oppression around 1388 BC and ends with the anointing of Saul as King and the beginning of the United Monarchy of Israel around 1051 BC. The following chart gives an overview of this period:

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES														
Joshua 24:31	Judges 1-21											1 Samuel 1-8	1 Samuel 9	
Death of Joshua's generation.	O T H N I E L	E H U D	S H A M G A R	D E B O R A H	G I D E O N	T O L A	J A R	J I P H T H A H	I B Z A N	E L O N	A B D O N	S A M S O N	Samuel leads the nation of Israel.	Samuel anoints Saul as Israel's first King.
About 1389-1388 BC													1051 BC	

Consideration #8: The Hebrew Calendar

Before moving forward and examining the United & Divided Monarchies and the Exile & Return, it is necessary to briefly overview the Hebrew Calendar and their reckoning of time. Because the Hebrew method of reckoning time was sufficiently distinct from that which is familiar to us, we will briefly survey some of the more idiosyncratic elements of the Hebrew Calendar. These include:

- 1) Issues regarding the beginning of the Hebrew Year
- 2) Issues regarding the reckoning of a day in the Jewish Calendar
- 3) Issues regarding the months of the Jewish Calendar
- 4) Issues regarding the year in the Jewish Calendar

Issues regarding the beginning of the Hebrew Year

It is important to distinguish between the civil year and the religious year in the Hebrew reckoning of time. The religious year begins in the spring around our March/April, while the civil year starts in the fall around our September/October. So the Hebrew year does not begin on our January 1st.

In addition to that the Hebrew year does not begin on the same day each year. The reason for this is that the Hebrew Calendar is based off a lunar year. In other words it runs according to the cycle of the moon. Because of this the Hebrew Calendar will have to add an extra month every few years. The range of the first day of the civil year is sometime from mid-September to mid-October.

Issues regarding the reckoning of a day in the Jewish Calendar

The reckoning of the day in a Jewish calendar can be quite confusing. There is much evidence to suggest that in the Biblical world the cycle of the day was from evening to the evening (i.e. sunset to sunset).

- Exodus 12:8 *On the first {month,} on the fourteenth day of the month **at evening**, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month **at evening**.* ◊

- Leviticus 23:32 *It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath.*
- Numbers 19:16 & 19 *Also, anyone who in the open field touches one who has been slain with a sword or who has died {naturally,} or a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean for seven days. Then the clean {person} shall sprinkle on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify him from uncleanness, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe {himself} in water and shall be clean by evening.*
- Other passages that give the order of evening and then morning and thus demonstrate that the cycle of the Hebrew day is night and then day: Deuteronomy 1:33; 28:66; 1 Samuel 25:16; 1 Kings 8:29; Ezra 4:16; Mark 4:27; 5:5; Luke 2:37.

However at the same time there seems to be biblical evidence, which suggests that the cycle of the day was also reckoned from sunrise to sunrise.

- Sometimes the day is listed before the night: Genesis 1:14, 16, 18; Numbers 14:4; 1 Kings 8:59; Acts 9:24.
- Sometimes expressions such as *the same day* or *the next day* are used in a context, which demonstrates that the night in question belongs to the first day, and not to the following day: Genesis 19:34; 1 Samuel 19:11; Acts 4:3; 20:7, 11; 23:32.
- Matthew 28:1 is often taken by many to be an explicit reference to sunrise-to-sunrise reckoning of a day.

Conclusion: So which is it? In most cases it is the pattern of sunset to sunset, which is favored. Some scholars have concluded that the Galilean Jews reckoned from sunrise to sunrise, but the Judean Jews reckoned from sundown to sundown.

Issues regarding the months of the Jewish Calendar

There are two terms used for month in the Old Testament:

- YARACH *Which means moon or month (sometimes used as a cycle of the moon). Deuteronomy 33:14*
- CHADESH *Which means that which shines and comes from a root that means new. 1 Samuel 20:5*

The commencement of the month was based of the lunar cycle. The length of that cycle is 29 days, 12 hours, 24 minutes and 2 seconds or 29.53 days. The new month was proclaimed if the sliver of the new moon was sighted on the evening of the 29th day of the cycle. The sighting had to be verified by credible witnesses. It also needed to be made during certain hours and from a certain place in Jerusalem (or wherever the leadership of Judaism was centered). If they saw a

sliver of the moon on that 29th day then the month was over and the next day was a new month. If they could not see it then they would wait one day and then start the new month. Therefore the length of the months were either 29 or 30 days. There were 12 months in a year, but there is some distinction between the names before and after the exile.

The Jewish Calendar

Religious Year (Spring to Spring)	Modern Correlation	Civil Year (Fall to Fall)
1. Nisan	March/April	
2. Iyyar	April/May	
3. Sivan	May/June	
4. Tammuz	June/July	
5. Ab	July/August	
6. Elul	August/September	
7. Tishri	September/October	1. Tishri
8. Marchesvan	October/November	2. Marchesvan
9. Kislev	November/December	3. Kislev
10. Tebeth	December/January	4. Tebeth
11. Shebat	January/February	5. Shebat
12. Adar	February/March	6. Adar
	March/April	7. Nisan
	April/May	8. Iyyar
	May/June	9. Sivan
	June/July	10. Tammuz
	July/August	11. Ab
	August/September	12. Elul

Note: The names and cycle of the months in the postexilic calendar are represented in the chart above.

Issues regarding the year in the Jewish Calendar

The length of the Jewish year as most clearly implied by 1 Kings 4:7 is 12 months. The problem with this is that the Jewish year was based off a cycle of lunar months, which lasts only 354 days leaving them 11 days short of a 365-day solar year. So how did the Jews reconcile this difference?

They used a method of inter-calation, which means to insert something in the calendar. Just as we insert a leap day every four years so the Hebrews had to make an adjustment to their calendar so that the harvest times fell at the right time during their calendar. They would do so by adding a second month of Adar about 7 times every 19 years. They would add this second month of Adar immediately following the regular month of Adar. They had no formal system for doing so. The month would be added based on three grounds:

- On account of the premature state of the wheat crops; and/or
- The premature state of the fruit trees; and/or
- The lateness of the cycle of religious feasts.

When attempting to determine an accurate chronology of the Old Testament, it is necessary to take into account the Hebrew calendar and the Jewish reckoning of time. Certainly these issues can make a difference in the outcome.

OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 4:

The Chronology of The United and Divided Monarchy; The Exile and Return

July 6, 2003

Where we have been:

- 1) The Primeval period from Creation to Abraham's birth highlighted in Genesis 1-11 can be dated from just before 4000 BC to 2166 BC.
- 2) The Patriarchal period of the Old Testament highlighted in Genesis 11-50 can be dated from 2166 BC at Abraham's birth to 1876 BC when Jacob and his family moved to Egypt due to a famine in the land.
- 3) The Period of Israel's Sojourn in Egypt can be dated from 1876 BC when Jacob and his family went down to Egypt until about 1446 BC at the Exodus from Egypt.
- 4) The Period of Israel's Wilderness Wanderings can be dated from the Exodus in 1446 BC until the Conquest of Canaan in 1406 BC.
- 5) The Period of Israel's Conquest of Canaan can be dated from 1406 BC to 1399 BC.
- 6) The Period of Righteousness (Judges 2:7) can be dated at the division of the land around 1399 BC until the Period of the Judges and the first oppression by the king of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8) around 1388 BC.
- 7) The Period of the Judges can be dated from the first oppression (Judges 3:8) until the anointing of Saul as King of Israel about 1051 BC.

<u>Primeval History</u>	<u>Patriarchal History</u>	<u>Sojourn in Egypt</u>	<u>Wilderness Wanderings</u>	<u>Conquest of Canaan</u>	<u>Joshua and The Elders</u>	<u>The Period of The Judges</u>
Creation to Abraham's Birth	Abraham's Birth to Jacob's descent into Egypt	Jacob's descent into Egypt to the Exodus from Egypt	From the Exodus to the Conquest of Canaan	From the entrance into the land to the division of the land.	From the division of the land to the period of the Judges	From the first oppression to the anointing of King Saul
Just before 4000 BC- 2166 BC	2166 BC- 1876 BC	1876 BC- 1446 BC	1446 BC- 1406 BC	1406 BC- 1399 BC	1399BC- 1388 BC	1388 BC- 1051 BC

Consideration #9: The Chronology of The United Monarchy

The Matter of Absolute Dates for the Old Testament

In order to determine the dates of the first three kings of Israel (i.e. the kings of the United Monarchy), it is necessary to work backward from the absolute date that is used as the fixed date for all of Old Testament Chronology. As we work backward from the fixed date, we will consider several kings who followed the United Monarchy in order to determine the dates of the United Monarchy.

The matter of an absolute or fixed date for Old Testament Chronology can be determined based off the historical records of the Assyrians. The Assyrians based their history on the data of astronomy. We can check the Assyrian data against the movement of the stars, which our present knowledge enables us to plot accurately. Then we can use that information to pinpoint the dates mentioned in those lists, which show up in the Old Testament.

As stated before, one important source of information are the Assyrian Eponym lists. The term *eponym* means *nickname* or *honorific title*. The Assyrians named each year to honor a certain individual within the government. Clay tablets from Nineveh and other Assyrian cities list the names of these individuals, along with consecutive years of Assyrian history.

These years give us a history from 892 BC to 648 BC. During that time, several Assyrian leaders made contact with Hebrew Kings. At one place, the Assyrian lists mention Bur-Sagale, governor of a region called Guzana. The record says that an eclipse of the sun occurred during his term. Astronomers date that eclipse on June 15, 763 BC. Therefore, Bur-Sagale governed in 763 BC, and using that figure it is possible to date the other Assyrian leaders from the eponym lists very exactly.

One of the Assyrian tablets states that Daian-Assur governed during the sixth year of Shalmaneser III. In that same year, the Assyrians fought an important battle at Qarqar, near the Mediterranean seacoast, and the tablet lists King Ahab of Israel among the combatants. [The Old Testament does not mention this battle.] Other information in the Assyrian lists places the date of that battle and the death of King Ahab as 853 BC.

Another eponym list states that a certain King A-a-u of Israel began paying tribute to Shalmaneser III in the 18th year of Shalmaneser's reign. This was almost certainly King Jehu of Israel. This event can be dated to occur about 841 BC.

Thus, the eponym lists have supplied us with two fixed dates in Old Testament history:

- 853 BC the year of the death of King Ahab of Israel.
- 841 BC the year Jehu took the throne of Israel.

The Matter of dating systems used in the Old Testament

There are three specific matters that must be recognized with regard to the dating systems used in the Old Testament.

- 1) *The matter of divergent systems of figuring dates.*

After the division of the kingdom at the death of Solomon, the chroniclers in the southern kingdom of Judah evidently used a method of figuring the dates of kings, which was different from that used in the northern kingdom of Israel. The conclusion is that the method used in Judah was to figure the dates based off the beginning of the civil year, while the method used in Israel was to figure dates based off the religious year.

Note: There is no Scriptural passage, which clearly indicates that Israel used the religious year to figure dates. However, Edwin Thiele insists that if we assume the above divergence of method, the perplexing discrepancies with the reigns of the kings of the divided monarchy disappear and a harmonious chronological pattern results.

- 2) *The matter of divergent systems of figuring elapsed time.*

The issue at hand is the method employed in reckoning the regnal years (years of a king's reign) for the kings in Israel and Judah. There are two distinct systems of counting the years of a king's reign: 1) the non-accession year system and 2) the accession year system.

- 1) The non-accession year system: If a king termed the year in which he ascended the throne his first official year, that is called non-accession year dating or antedating. If a king assumed the throne in mid-year then that portion of the year is considered to be the first year of the king's reign.
- 2) The accession year system: If a king termed the year commencing with the new year day after his accession to the throne, the first official year of his reign and the portion of the year in which he came to the throne his accession year, then he used accession year dating or postdating.

Two Divergent Dating Systems for Regnal Years:			
Nonaccession-year system	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year
Accession-year system	accession year	1 st year	2 nd year

Evidently, a king would decide for himself, which system would be used by his chroniclers. Generally, the non-accession year system was used in Israel, while the accession year system was used in Judah.

The following chart will highlight the differences between the two types of reckoning that Israel and Judah seemed to follow:

Begins with New Year Nisan 1 (in spring) ⇒	Northern Kingdom of Israel: Non-Accession Year Reckoning	Southern Kingdom of Judah: Accession Year Reckoning	← Begins with New Year Tishri 1 (in fall)
	1 st year	accession year	
	2 nd year	1 st year	
	3 rd year	2 nd year	
	4 th year	3 rd year	
	5 th year	4 th year	

The possibility of the non-accession year system being used in the northern kingdom of Israel can be noted with the reigns of the two kings between Ahab and Jehu. According to the eponym lists, Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser III in 841 BC, which was 12 years after King Ahab fought in the battle of Qarqar. The Old Testament places two kings between Ahab and Jehu. According to 1 Kings 22:51, Ahaziah ruled 2 years, while according to 2 Kings 3:1, Joram ruled 12 years. Together they would total 14 years; a figure that does not match the separation of 12 years between Ahab and Jehu from the eponym lists. However, assuming the non-accession year system, one year should be deducted from each reign, bringing the total to 12 years, which is what the eponym lists indicate.

The kings of Judah seem certainly to have used the accession year system, except when that kingdom came under the close influence of Israel, as in the days of Jehoram, who married Athaliah, princess of Israel, and walked in the way of the kings of Israel (2 Kings 8:18; 2 Chronicles 21:6).

- 3) *The matter of co-regencies in determining the dates of the kings.*

In order to assure that his chosen son would succeed him as king, a monarch would often appoint that son as his co-regent late in his life. So the son's first years of reign would be the same as his father's last years of reign. Co-regencies are not explicitly chronicled, but they are often indicated, and they make it possible to reconcile seemingly divergent data.

Given the absolute dates fixed above (reigns of Ahab and Jehu), along with taking into account the three matters relating to the dating systems and the reckoning of time, we can begin with those established dates and figure backward to the kings of the united monarchy.

The following chart attempts to use the above criteria and work backwards from the fixed dates to the united monarchy.

The Kings of Israel	The Kings of Judah
<p><u>Jehu</u> -anchor date: began his reign in 841 BC</p>	<p><u>Ahaziah</u> -2 Kings 8:25-26, became king in 12th year of Joram (11th, because Judah using non-accession year system); ruled 1 year -841 BC took the throne -both Joram and Ahaziah died in 841 BC</p>
<p><u>Joram</u> -died in 841 BC -2 Kings 3:1 ruled 12 years [11 years] -841 + 11 = 852 BC took the throne</p>	
<p><u>Ahaziah</u> -died in 852 BC -1 Kings 22:51 reigned 2 years [1 year] 852 + 1 = 853 BC took the throne</p>	<p><u>Jehoram</u> -died in 841 BC -2 Kings 8:17, reigned 8 years (7 years) -Co-reign with father for 5 years (2 Kings 8:16; cp. 2 Kings 3:1; 1:17) -841 + 7 = 848 BC took the throne</p>
<p><u>Ahab</u> -died in 853 BC -1 Kings 16:29 ruled 22 years [21 years] 853 + 21 = 874 BC took the throne</p>	
<p><u>Omri</u> -died in 874 BC -1 Kings 16:23 ruled 12 years [11 years] -874 + 11 = 885 BC took the throne</p>	<p><u>Jehoshaphat</u> -died in 848 BC -1 Kings 22:41-42, ruled 25 years -848 + 25 = 873 BC took the throne -Co-reigned with his father for 3 years; sole reign began in 870 BC</p>
<p><u>Zimri</u> -reigned for 7 days in 885 BC (1 Kings 16:15)</p>	
<p><u>Elah</u> -died in 885 BC -1 Kings 16:8 ruled 2 years [1 year] -885 + 1 = 886 BC took the throne</p>	<p><u>Asa</u> -died in 870 BC -First Kings 15:10, ruled 41 years -870 + 41 = 911 BC took the throne</p>
<p><u>Tibni</u> -1 Kings 16:21-24 He was a rival during the days of Omri for about 6 years; does not advance the chronology of the period.</p>	
<p><u>Baasha</u> -died in 886 BC -1 Kings 15:33 ruled 24 years [23 years] -886 + 23 = 909 BC took the throne</p>	
<p><u>Nadab</u> -died in 909 BC -1 Kings 15:25-31 ruled 2 years [1 year] -909 + 1 = 910 BC took the throne</p>	<p><u>Abijam</u> -died in 911 BC -1 Kings 15:2, ruled 3 years -911 + 3 = 914 BC took the throne</p>
<p><u>Jeroboam</u> -died in 910 BC -1 Kings 14:20 ruled 22 years [21 years] -910 + 21 = 931 BC took the throne</p>	<p><u>Rehoboam</u> -died in 914 BC -1 Kings 14:21, ruled 17 years -914 + 17 = 931 BC took the throne</p>
<p>Solomon's death and the division of the Kingdom in 931 BC</p>	

The Three Rulers of the United Monarchy

After working our way backward through the divided monarchy to the division of the kingdom after Solomon's death, it becomes quite easy to deal with the three kings of the United Monarchy.

Solomon

- Solomon's death: Solomon would have died in 931 BC just prior to the division of the kingdom and the reigns of Rehoboam in Judah and Jeroboam in Israel.
- Solomon's reign: According to 1 Kings 11:42, Solomon's reign was 40 years.

Thus the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

So Solomon took the throne around 971 BC and ruled until 931 BC bringing the United Monarchy to a close.

David

- David's death: David would have died in 971 BC.
- David's reign: According to 2 Samuel 2:11 and 1 Kings 2:11, David reigned 40 years (7 1/2 years in Hebron over the tribe of Judah only and 33 years in Jerusalem over all 12 tribes).

2 Samuel 2:11, And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

1 Kings 2:11, And the days that David reigned over Israel {were} forty years: seven years he reigned in Hebron, and thirty-three years he reigned in Jerusalem.

So David's total reign would have been from 1011 BC to 971 BC, while his reign from Hebron would have been from 1011 BC to 1004 BC and his reign in Jerusalem would have been from 1004 BC to 971 BC.

Saul

- Saul's death: Saul would have died in 1011 BC.
- Saul's reign: Saul's reign lasted 40 years, according to Acts 13:21 (cp. 1 Samuel 13:1).

And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

So Saul's reign would have been from his anointing in 1051 BC until his death in battle against the Philistines about 1011 BC.

EXCURSUS: The problem concerning the text of 1 Samuel 13:1

The problem here is that the Hebrew Masoretic text manuscript appears to omit the number. The verse reads, "Saul was the son of 1 year when he became king, and he reigned two years over Israel." The construction is identical to 2 Samuel 5:4 regarding David's reign except that it omits the actual age of Saul when he began to reign. The various renderings are simply attempts by the translators to fill in the missing information based on other biblical texts. This is not an error in the text, but a possible omission, which creates some difficulty in determining an accurate chronology. The following is how the various versions translate the verse:

KJV

Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel

NKJV

Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, [1]

LIVING BIBLE

By this time Saul had reigned for one year. In the second year of his reign

RSV

Saul was . . . years old when he began to reign; and he reigned . . . and two years over Israel.

NIV

Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years.

NASU

Saul was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty two years over Israel.

NET BIBLE

Saul was [thirty] years old when he began to reign; he ruled over Israel for [forty] years.

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned for forty-two years.

ASV

Saul was forty years old when he began to reign; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

NASB

Saul was {forty} years old when he began to reign, and he reigned {thirty} -two years over Israel.

NEW ENGLISH BIBLE

Saul was fifty years old when he became king, and he reined over Israel for twenty-two years.

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

Saul was a young man when he became king, and he ruled Israel for two years.

Three questions arise when dealing with this difficulty:

- *How long did Saul reign as king of Israel?*

Clearly Acts 13:21 gives us the indication that his reign over Israel was 40 years. According to 1 Samuel 14:49, Saul had 3 sons when he became king, and Ishbosheth is not mentioned. According to 2 Samuel 2:10, Ishbosheth succeeded Saul, when Saul died and Ishbosheth was 40 years old at that time. Assuming that Ishbosheth was born soon after Saul became king, then Saul's reign had to be at least 40 years.

- *How old was Saul when he became king over Israel?*

It is impossible to say for certain how old Saul was when he became king. Saul is referred to as a "young man" in 1 Samuel 9:2, but this is a very ambiguous term. Many have guessed him to be about 30, but his son Jonathon was grown and well matured (cf. 1 Samuel 13:2) shortly after Saul became king, so that perhaps is a bit too young. So the suggestion that he would be around 40 years old would fit the situation better.

- *How much time intervened between Saul's becoming king and the events of chapter 13?*

The answer to this question depends first of all upon how the second half of 1 Samuel 13:1 is understood. Is that sentence defining the length of Saul's reign (i.e. Saul reigned ___ years over Israel) or is it establishing how long a time intervened between his coronation and the events of chapter 13 (i.e. After Saul had reigned ___ years over Israel)? It is really impossible to determine which of these two alternatives is to be preferred. At any rate, it seems the events of 1 Samuel 13 occur shortly after Saul becomes king, as he moves to further fortify and solidify the boundaries of his kingdom.

It seems best to rely upon the explicit statement of Acts 13:21 and that the reign of Saul was 40 years. Thus he assumed the throne in 1051 BC and reigned until his death in 1011 BC.

The following chart overviews the chronology of the United Monarchy:

The Kings of the United Monarchy		
Saul	David	Solomon
Acts 13:21	2 Samuel 2:11 & 1 Kings 2:11	1 Kings 11:42
1051 BC to 1011 BC	1011 BC to 1004 BC over Hebron 1004 BC to 971 BC over all Israel	971 BC to 931 BC

Consideration #10: The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy

There are three matters previously discussed that must be taken into consideration when determining the dates of the Hebrew kings: 1) whether the religious or civil calendar was in use; 2) whether an accession year reckoning or a non-accession year reckoning was in use; and 3) whether a co-regency was in place or not. As previously discussed working backward from the fixed date of June 15, 763 BC and the reigns of Ahab and Jehu, the date of the division of the kingdom can be determined and likewise the entire chronology of the Hebrew Kings for the

Northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah can be determined. A reconstruction of this period is quite difficult. However, the following chart is an attempt to place the data into an accurate chronology.

	Kings of Israel		Kings of Judah		
1 Kg 12:25-14:20	Jeroboam	931-910 BC	931-914 BC	Rehoboam	1 Kg 14:21-31; 2 Ch 10:1-12:16
1 Kg 15:25-28	Nadab	910-909 BC	914-911 BC	Abijah	1 Kg 15:1-8; 2 Ch 13:1-14:1
1 Kg 15:33-16:7	Baasha	909-886 BC	911-870 BC	Asa	1 Kg 15:9-24; 2 Ch 14:2-16:14
1 Kg 16:8-10	Elah	886-885 BC	873-848 BC	Jehoshaphat	1 Kg 22:41-50; 2 Ch 17:1-20:37
1 Kg 16:10-20	Zimri	885 BC	853-841 BC	Jehoram	2 Kg 8:16-24; 2 Ch 21:2-20
1 Kg 16:21-28	Omri	885-874 BC	841 BC	Ahaziah	2 Kg 8:25-29; 2 Ch 22:1-9
1 Kg 16:29-34 ^E	Ahab	874-853 BC	841-835 BC	Athaliah	2 Kg 11:1-20
1 Kg 22:51-53	Ahaziah	853-852 BC	835-796 BC	Joash	2 Kg 11:21-12:21; 2 Ch 22:10-24:27
2 Kg 2:19-8:15	Jehoram/Joram	852-841 BC	796-767 BC	Amaziah	2 Kg 14:1-22; 2 Ch 25:1-28
2 Kg 9:1-10:35	Jehu	841-814 BC	792-740 BC	Azariah/Uzziah	2 Kg 15:1-7; 2 Ch 26:1-23
2 Kg 13:1-9	Jehoahaz	814-798 BC	750-732 BC	Jotham	2 Kg 15:32-38; 2 Ch 27:1-9
2 Kg 13:10-25	Jehoash	798-782 BC	735-715 BC	Ahaz	2 Kg 16:1-20; 2 Ch 28:1-27
2 Kg 14:23-29	Jeroboam II	793-753 BC	715-686 BC	Hezekiah	2 Kg 18:1-20:21; 2 Ch 29-32
2 Kg 15:8-12	Zechariah	753 BC	697-642 BC	Manasseh	2 Kg 21:1-18; 2Ch 33:1-20
2 Kg 15:13-16	Shallum	752 BC	642-640 BC	Amon	2 Kg 21:19-26; 2 Ch 33:21-25
1 Kg 15:17-22	Menahem	752-742 BC	640-609 BC	Josiah	2 Kg 22:1-23:30; 2 Ch 34:1-36
2 Kg 15:23-26	Pekahiah	742-740 BC	609 BC	Jehoahaz	2 Kg 23:31-35; 2 Ch 36:2-4
2 Kg 15:27-31	Pekah	752-732 BC	609-598 BC	Jehoiakim	2 Kg 23:36-24:7; 2 Ch 36:5-8
2 Kg 17:1-6	Hoshea	732-722 BC	598-597 BC	Jehoiachin	2 Kg 24:8-17; 2 Ch 36:9-10
Israel Falls to Assyria in 722 BC Judah Falls to Babylon in 586 BC			597-586 BC	Zedekiah	2 Kg 24:18-20; 2 Ch 36:11-14

It is necessary for an accurate understanding of the Old Testament and its chronology to have an idea of how the Old Testament prophets fit into the picture. The following chart provides an idea of the time periods for the Old Testament prophets:

A Chronology of the Old Testament Prophets			
	Prophets to Israel	Prophets to Judah	Prophets to Foreign Nations
ASSYRIAN PERIOD:	- <u>Amos</u> ca. 763-755 BC - <u>Hosea</u> ca. 755-710 BC (began ministry in Israel, but later in Judah)	- <u>Joel</u> ca. 835-796 BC - <u>Isaiah</u> ca. 739-680 BC - <u>Micah</u> ca. 735-710 BC	- <u>Obadiah</u> ca. 850-840 BC (to Edom) - <u>Jonah</u> ca. 775 BC (to Ninevah) - <u>Nahum</u> ca. 650-630 BC (to Ninevah)
BABYLONIAN PERIOD:		- <u>Zephaniah</u> 635-625 BC - <u>Jeremiah</u> 627-570 BC - <u>Habakkuk</u> 620-605 BC - <u>Daniel</u> 605-536 BC - <u>Ezekiel</u> 593-570 BC	
PERSIAN PERIOD:		- <u>Haggai</u> 520-505 BC - <u>Zechariah</u> 520-470 BC - <u>Malachi</u> 437-417 BC	

Consideration #11: The Chronology of the Exile & Return

Technically, the Exile period deals with the history of Israel during the 70 year captivity in Babylon, while the Restoration period describes the dealings of God with Israel after the 70 year Babylonian Captivity.

THE EXILE: The captivity of Judah took place in three specific stages.

Stage #1: 605 BC On his way back from victory in Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar, general of the armies of Babylon, laid siege to Jerusalem, and took some of the leading nobles and young men from the city of Jerusalem as hostages and carried them back to Babylon. It is at this point that Daniel and his three friends are carried off. Most of the citizens are still in the land of Judah, but are certainly subservient to Babylon. It is possible that it was at this point that Jeremiah prophesied the 70-year captivity (cf. Jeremiah 25:11-12).

Stage #2: 597 BC Jehoiakim rebels against Nebuchadnezzar (ca 602 BC), who finally comes and attacks Jerusalem (March 10, 597 BC), carrying off 10,000 captives to Babylon. Jehoiakim had died in 598 BC, so that by the time Nebuchadnezzar arrived to punish Jerusalem for their rebellion, Jehoiachin had come on the throne. He was taken captive to Babylon, and remained prisoner there until the death of Nebuchadnezzar in 561 BC (2 Kings 25:27-30). It was at this time that the wealthy elite were carried off to Babylon including Ezekiel, who would be called to the prophetic office about 593 BC.

Stage #3: 586 BC King Zedekiah ignores the warnings of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 27-28) and plots against Babylon once again, so that Nebuchadnezzar returns, lays siege against Jerusalem (January 15, 588-July 18, 586 BC), and captures it. One month after the city fell, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar's army burned the city and the temple. A tiny remnant of Jews, including Jeremiah, was left in Judah under Gedeliah, who was appointed governor. When Gedeliah was murdered, those Jews feared reprisal and fled to Egypt, taking Jeremiah there against his wishes (cf. Jeremiah 40:13ff).

NOTE: Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel fulfilled their prophetic ministries during this period of Babylonian captivity.

THE RESTORATION: The return of Judah took place in three stages also.

Remember that while Judah fell to the nation of Babylon. Babylon in turn was destroyed by Medo/Persia in 539 BC (cf. Daniel 5). Thus when the Jews return to the land, they do so under the authority of the Persians. It is necessary to mention in connection with this that the Babylonians had a policy of *expatriation*, where they would remove people from their native land and place them somewhere else in the empire in order to avoid an organized resistance. In contrast, the Persian policy was *repatriation*, which was the concept of replacing people back into their native land in order to gain their loyalty.

Stage #1: 538 BC (Ezra 1-6) The decree of Cyrus (2 Chronicles 36) allowed for the return to the land. The political leader who led the return was Zerubbabel and the religious leader was Joshua. There were about 50,000 Jews who returned at this time. The purpose of this return was to rebuild the temple, which was completed in 516 BC. It was during this time that the prophets of Haggai and Zechariah ministered.

Stage #2: 458 BC (Ezra 7-10) The leader of this return was Ezra the Scribe, who led about 2,000 Jews back to Jerusalem. The purpose of this return was to purify the worship services.

Stage #3: 445 BC (Nehemiah 1-13) It was at this time that Nehemiah was allowed to return to the land in order to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and enable the people to re-inhabit the city. The Old Testament prophet that ministered at this time was Malachi.

NOTE: It is during this time that the events of the book of Esther take place (ca. 483-478 BC) in Persia, which highlight the fact that not all of the Jews returned to the land.

Chart of the Chronology of the Exile & Return:

722 BC	Fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel to Assyria.
605 BC	Exile: Stage #1 D Daniel and a few taken captive to Babylon.
597 BC	Exile: Stage #2 N 10,000 Jews taken captive to Babylon.
586 BC	Exile: Stage #3 D Destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem.
539 BC	Babylon falls to the Medo-Persians (Daniel 5).
538 BC	Decree of Cyrus (2 Chronicles 36/Ezra 1).
538/37 BC	Return: Stage #1 S 50,000 Jews return under Zerubbabel & Joshua.
516 BC	Completion of 2 nd Temple.
458 BC	Return: Stage #2 N 1,000 Jews return under Ezra to restore worship.
445/44 BC	Return: Stage #3 N Nehemiah returns to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

CONSLUSION:

The narrative of the Old Testament closes with the events of the book of Nehemiah and the ministry of the prophet Malachi. The land of Israel would endure 400 years of prophetic and revelatory silence until the events surrounding the birth of Christ, where the New Testament narrative picks up.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

August 10, 2003

Introduction

There are approximately 400 years, which take place between the days of Nehemiah and Malachi and the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. This time period is often referred to as "The Silent Years." This is a great chasm of silence as far as Scripture is concerned, because the events of this period are not recorded there. Nevertheless, this period was a thrilling time when momentous and world-shaking events were transpiring. Great empires rose and fell, many battles were fought, and writings such as the Apocrypha and Greek Septuagint were part of this period. A brief understanding of the Intertestamental Period is at least essential to a right appreciation of the New Testament.

World history made rapid strokes during this interval. The internal condition of Judah experienced a radical transformation. A new culture, different institutions, and unfamiliar organizations arose in this period, which appear in the New Testament, but not in the Old.

The Old Testament closed with the Medo-Persian Empire being the dominant power. Also, Egypt was still a power to be reckoned with in world politics. During the interval between the Testaments both faded from the scene as outstanding nations. World power shifted from the east to the west, from Asia to Europe, and from Medo-Persia to Greece. When the New Testament opens a new world power, Rome, has come on the scene. There are four periods of history that we will examine, which transpired during this time frame: 1) The Persian Period; 2) The Hellenistic (Greek) Period; 3) The Hasmonean Period; and 4) The Roman Period.

The Persian Period [450-333 BC]

The Persians were ruling the world at the close of the Old Testament and continued in power for about 100 more years. This was a time when the Jews enjoyed religious freedom under the tolerant Persian rule. The Persians practiced a policy called repatriation. They would often return people to their native lands in order to obtain their loyalty. As a result of this repatriation and the preceding Babylonian expatriation, the mixed race of the Samaritans (Gentiles mixed with Jews) came into being. During this period tremendous antagonism developed between the Samaritans and the Jews. The Persians also allowed native peoples to have some authority in their own regions. The Jews became a small semi-independent state under the Persian rule. This is the development of an internal self-government, which becomes the genesis of the Sanhedrin. The Jewish High Priest is given an increasing amount of civil power during this period, which explains the lack of civil power in the Old Testament, but the great deal of power demonstrated in the New Testament. Commerce also developed among the Jews during this time frame creating a sharp distinction between the rich and the poor and making Jerusalem the center of commerce for Israel. Israel suffered much during this period as a result from constant warfare between Egypt and Persia.

- 480 BC Xerxes, the Persian, was victorious against the Greeks at Thermopylae, but he was defeated at the battle of Salamis. This was the last bid of the East for world dominion.
- 333 BC Alexander the Great led the united Greek forces to victory over the Persians at Issus.

The Hellenistic (Greek) Period [333-166 BC]

This period began in Palestine around 333 BC when Alexander the Great conquered the land. The Persian armies stationed in Macedonia were defeated by Alexander as he sought to unify the world around Greek culture.

Daniel prophesied of this kingdom in 8:20-22:

“The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia. “And the shaggy goat {represents} the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. “And the broken {horn} and the four {horns that} arose in its place {represent} four kingdoms {which} will arise from {his} nation, although not with his power.

This is a truly remarkable prophecy of intertestamental times. A new kingdom will come to power (Greece). Its first king (Alexander the Great) will be broken and four kingdoms will rise in his place. This is exactly what we see with Greece. After Alexander the Great died, the kingdom was split between his four generals.

Some have suggested that Zechariah 9:2-8 is a prophecy of Alexander the Great. In fact there is a legend that the brilliantly robed Jewish high priest went out of Jerusalem to meet Alexander the Great. He evidently read the prophecy to Alexander and Alexander spared Jerusalem from attack by his armies. In fact Alexander permitted the Jews to observe their laws and even granted them exemption from tribute or tax during the Sabbath years. When he built Alexandria in Egypt, he encouraged the Jews to live there and he gave them the same privileges as he gave his Greek subjects.

At his death the kingdom was divided between his four generals, two of which are important for intertestamental chronology. Egypt went to Ptolemy and Syria to Seleucius. This placed Israel, which was right between the two in the midst of a struggle. Israel first fell under the control of the Ptolemies in Egypt, but was later taken by the Syrians. While under the rule of Egypt, many of the Jews moved there and enjoyed the privileges of the Greek population. It was during this time period around 285 BC that the Jews of Alexandria, Egypt made a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek language. We know this as the Greek Septuagint or LXX. It became the common version used during the New Testament and is often quoted by Jesus and the Apostles. After the Syrian control of the land, Israel was divided into the regions of Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Trachonitis, and Perea. Initially the Jews were allowed to live according to their laws under the council of the high priest, but under the rule of Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes, they soon lost those freedoms. It was around 170 BC when Antiochus took Jerusalem and abolished the Jewish religion. In its place he established Greek idolatry and terrible times followed. Antiochus plundered Jerusalem, desecrated the temple, and enslaved the people. On December

25, 168 BC, he offered a pig on the great altar of the temple and then erected a heathen altar to Jupiter. It was this act along with the forbidding of all Jewish rites and ceremonies that led to a revolt and the end of the Greek period in Israel.

The historical significance of this period is seen in the fulfillment of Daniel 8 with Alexander the Great conquering Persia and gaining control of Israel. Also noteworthy was the spread of Greek culture called Hellenization, which became a dominant issue in Israel between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Greek language became the *lingua franca* (universal trade language) of the Mediterranean world. So by the time of the New Testament, Greek was the dominant language and hence would become the language that the New Testament was originally written in.

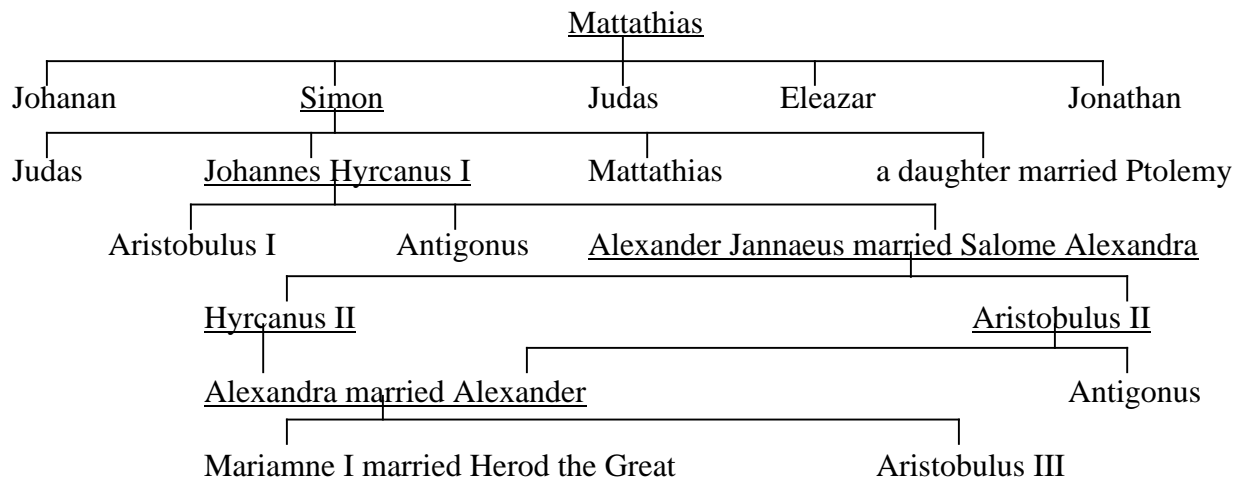
- 332 BC Alexander the Great visited Jerusalem. He was shown the prophecy of Daniel, which spoke of him; therefore he spared Jerusalem.
- 323 BC Alexander died, and the world empire of both east and west was divided among his four generals.
- 320 BC Judea was annexed to Egypt by Ptolemy Soter.
- 312 BC Seleucius founded the kingdom of the Selucidae. Judea became the battleground between Syria and Egypt as a buffer state.
- 285 BC The formation of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.
- 203 BC Antiochus the Great took Jerusalem, and Judea passed under the influence of Syria.
- 170-168 BC Antiochus Epiphanes took Jerusalem and defiled the temple. He had been mentioned in Daniel as the little horn (Dan. 8:9). He has been called the "Nero of Jewish history."

The Hasmonean Period [166-63 BC]

This period begins following Antiochus IV's offensive sacrifices in the temple as the Jews were being greatly oppressed. Copies of the Scriptures were being ordered destroyed and laws were enforced with extreme cruelty. The horrible practices of Antiochus IV could not be tolerated any longer and the oppressed Jews revolted. Matthias, a priest with strong convictions and righteousness led this movement. He was the first of this family of liberators called the Maccabees. He was succeeded by Judas Maccabeus, who was assisted by four brothers. They regained possession of Jerusalem, purified the temple and again established the daily sacrifices. Trouble continued until about 142 BC, when the Maccabees gained national independence. During this time period, the high priest had both religious and civil power. Toward the end of this period civil war broke out between two brothers (Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II) about 66-63 BC. This civil war was ended when the Romans invaded and conquered Palestine. During this period the political groundwork was laid for the Herods in Israel and the sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees emerged over the issue of Hellenism.

- 167 BC Mattathias, the priest of Judea, raised a revolt against Syria. This is the beginning of the Hasmonean period. The Jews have never suffered more than during this era, and never were they more heroic than in this interval. Judas Maccabaeus "the hammer" was the leader who organized the revolt.
- 166-160 BC Judas Maccabeus's leadership.
- 160-143 BC Jonathon is high priest.
- 142 BC Tower of Jerusalem is cleansed.
- 142-134 BC Simon becomes high priest and establishes the Hasmonean dynasty.
- 134-104 BC John Hyrcanus enlarges the independent Jewish state.
- 103 BC Aristobulus's rule.
- 102-76 BC Alexander Jannaeus's rule.
- 75-67 BC Rule of Salome Alexandra with Hyrcanus II as high priest.
- 66-63 Battle between Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II.
- 63 BC Pompey invades Palestine and Roman rule begins.

The Maccabees (Hasmoneans)



The Roman Period [63 BC]

This period began with Pompey's capture of Jerusalem in 63 BC. The local government was entrusted to patriarchs who were appointed by the emperors. In 63 BC Hyrcanus II was given the position of high priest. In 47 BC Julius Caesar made Antipater ruler of Judea and his son, Herod, governor of Galilee. Following the murder of Caesar, Herod received the appointment to

become king of Judea. On his return he married Mariamne, the beautiful granddaughter of the former high priest Hyracanus II. He did so hoping to gain the good will of the people. Herod was a very brutal and cunning individual as he committed crimes of unspeakable cruelty even murdering his wife and two sons. He would later attempt to kill Christ by having the children of Bethlehem killed. In another attempt to gain the favor of the people, he rebuilt their temple, which is the temple that Christ came to many times. When the New Testament opens, the Roman empire is ruling the world with Caesar Augustus as its emperor and with Herod as king of Judea. The Roman period is known for the establishment of a reasonably consistent system of law. The Roman government took control of piracy and thievery making travel easier and safer. The Roman policy of *Pax Romana* (world-wide peace) also facilitated travel. The development of a solid system of roads during this time not only allowed for ease in travel, but would also allow for ease in the spread of the Gospel later on.

- 63 BC Pompey invades Palestine and Roman rule begins.
- 40 BC Roman Senate appointed Herod to be King of Judea.
- 37-25 BC Herod eliminated Hasmonean rule.
- 31 BC Caesar Augustus became emperor of Rome.
- 25-14 BC Herod's period of building projects {Sea harbor at Caesarea Maritima; Jewish Temple).
- 19 BC The rebuilding of the Herodian temple was begun.
- 14-4 BC Herod's family feuds (He slew his wives, sons and part of the Sanhedrin)
- 5/4 BC Jesus was born in Bethlehem.
- 4 BC Herod dies before Passover after a lunar eclipse dated at March 14, 4 BC.

TIMELINE OF INTERTESTAMENTAL CHRONOLOGY			
<u>Persian Period</u>	<u>Greek Period</u>	<u>Hasmonean Period</u>	<u>Roman Period</u>
[450-333 BC]	[333-166 BC]	[166-63 BC]	[63 BC-NT]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repatriation/ Samaritans • More civil power for the high priest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexander the Great • Greek is <i>lingua franca</i> • Septuagint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maccabean Revolt • Pharisees & Sadducees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pax Romana</i> • Solid system of roads • Rise of Herod

TABLE OF INTERTESTAMENTAL CHRONOLOGY

480 BC	Xerxes, the Persian, was victorious against the Greeks at Thermopylae, but he was defeated at the battle of Salamis. This was the last bid of the East for world dominion.
333 BC	Alexander the Great led the united Greek forces to victory over the Persians at Issus.
332 BC	Alexander the Great visited Jerusalem. He was shown the prophecy of Daniel, which spoke of him; therefore he spared Jerusalem.
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320 BC	Judea was annexed to Egypt by Ptolemy Soter.
312 BC	Seleucius founded the kingdom of the Selucidae. Judea became the battleground between Syria and Egypt as a buffer state.
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75-67 BC	Rule of Salome Alexandra with Hyrcanus II as high priest.
66-63 BC	Battle between Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II.
63 BC	Pompey invades Palestine and Roman rule begins.
40 BC	Roman Senate appointed Herod to be King of Judea.
37-25 BC	Herod eliminated Hasmonean rule.
31 BC	Caesar Augustus became emperor of Rome.
25-14 BC	Herod's period of building projects {Sea harbor at Caesarea Maritima; Jewish Temple}.
19 BC	The rebuilding of the Herodian temple was begun.
14-4 BC	Herod's family feuds (He slew his wives, sons and part of the Sanhedrin)
5/4 BC	Jesus was born in Bethlehem.
4 BC	Herod dies before Passover after a lunar eclipse dated at March 14, 4 BC.

NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 1:

THE CHRONOLOGY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH & EARTHLY MINISTRY

August 17, 2003

Introduction

While New Testament Chronology is clearly not as difficult to determine as Old Testament Chronology, it is not without its own problems. New Testament Chronology relies upon a close examination of chronological notations from the pages of Scripture compared with the historical records of Rome and the writings of Josephus a Jewish historian. As one approaches a New Testament Chronology, It becomes necessary to first deal with the Life of our Lord upon the earth. Early Christians were most concerned about the fact of Christ's birth and ministry rather than the dating of those events. Although the earliest Christians were not particularly interested in dating chronological details, the Gospel writers did leave behind some notations that aid us in determining an accurate chronology of the New Testament. It will be the attempt of this class to establish fixed dates for the birth, ministry and crucifixion of Christ, as well as the ministry of the Apostle Paul and the writing of the New Testament books.

Consideration #1: The Date of Christ's Birth

The logical place to start in considering a New Testament Chronology is with the birth of Christ. In A. D. 525 Pope John I asked a Scythian monk, Dionysius to prepare a standard calendar for the Western Church. Dionysius preferred a calendar reckoned from the incarnation of Christ. The previous calendar had been reckoned from the foundation of Rome. It was thought that the Christian era began on January 1, 754 A.U.C. (anno urbis conditae = from the foundation of the city of Rome). It was believed that Christ was born the previous December 25th so Dionysius labeled 754 AUC as AD 1 and the previous year as 1 BC. Later researches determined that Herod had died in 750 AUC. Because Matthew mentions that Christ was born prior to Herod's death, then Christ had to be born sometime prior to AD 1. However there is a great deal of speculation as to how soon before AD 1 Christ was born. Some see it as early as 15 BC or 11 BC and others as late as 3 BC to 1 BC.

In the broadest terms Luke 2:1 states that Christ was born in the reign of Caesar Augustus (who reigned from March 15, 44 BC to August 19, AD 14). Since this is so broad, one needs to narrow the limits. In an attempt to arrive at a more specific date, it is essential to establish two concrete limits (the earliest limiting point in time & the final limiting point in time). [Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, p. 12.]

The Final Limiting Point for the Birth of Christ

According to Matthew 2:1 and Luke 1:5, Christ was born in the days of Herod the King (Herod the Great).

- Matthew 2:1 *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king*
- Luke 1:5 *On the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.*

So Christ was born prior to the death of Herod the Great. This becomes the final limiting point, because Christ could not have been born after the date of Herod's death. Herod had been appointed as the king of the Jews by the Roman Senate sometime late in the year of 40 BC, but it took about three years before he gained possession of that domain in 37 BC. So he reigned as king of the Jews for 37 years from the time he was made king (34 years from the time he possessed the land).

Joseph mentions that an eclipse of the moon occurred just prior to Herod's death. This eclipse can easily be dated on either March 12th or 13th of 4 BC. Josephus also mentions that just following Herod's death it was the celebration of Passover. The first day would have occurred on April 11th of 4 BC. So Herod's death had to fall between March 12th and April 11th of 4 BC. The 34th year of Herod's reign had already begun and was dated at Nisan 1 of 4 BC, which would have been March 29th of 4 BC. Therefore Herod's death would have occurred between March 29th and April 11th of 4 BC. Therefore Christ must have been born prior to this time period. So He could not have been born any later than March/April of 4 BC.

The Earliest Limiting Point for the Birth of Christ

Luke 2:1-5 tells us that a census was taken just prior to the birth of Christ.

- Luke 2:1-2, *Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.*

If this census can be dated, then the earliest limiting point for the birth of Christ can be identified since He was born just after this census was decreed. The problem is that of the dating of Quirinius's governorship over Syria. He clearly served as governor in AD 6-7 and possibly a bit earlier in 3-2 BC. The problem is that if the census occurred while Quirinius was governor then it would not be before Herod's death in 4 BC.

However, upon closer examination of the Greek text, the term *first* [PROTOS] is used adverbially and is better translated *before*. So verse 2 should read, *This census took place before Quirinius was governor of Syria.* It is possible that Luke mentioned it this way so that it would not be confused with the well-known census taken in AD 6, while Quirinius was governor of Syria (cf. Acts 5:37). If Quirinius was governor in 3-2 BC, then this census would have occurred just prior to his first governorship. Although the exact date of the census is difficult to determine, it seems best that it took place after Herod came into disfavor with Augustus sometime around 8/7 BC. Herod had executed his sons Alexander and Aristobulus sometime in 7 BC. It was during this time that there was an intense struggle for Herod's throne. Herod changed his will three times prior to his death. Between his ailing health and the instability of his mind, it seems logical for Augustus to have a census taken in order to assess the situation in

Palestine before Herod's death. So this census was likely taken after 7 BC, but before Herod's death in 4 BC. The decree may have gone out around 6 BC, but it may have taken a year or two to initiate and carry out the census. So a census within the last year or two of Herod's reign seems most logical and probable. This would place the earliest limiting point for Christ's birth sometime between 6 and 4 BC.

Other Chronological Considerations for the Birth of Christ

- John 8:57, *“The Jews therefore said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?’”*

Some have suggested that Jesus must have been born much earlier than previously thought because of this statement and thus hold to a birth of 11-9 BC, which would place Jesus in his forties and fit this statement better. However, this is a very general statement and the Jews were simply emphasizing Jesus' youth in contrast to His claim of existence before Abraham. John 8:57 proves to not be very helpful in determining a date for the birth of Christ. However it certainly does not contradict the previous conclusion of a date between 6 and 4 BC.

- Matthew 2:16, *“Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its environs, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi.”*

Some have suggested that the fact that Herod killed all the male children two years old and under indicates that the Magi visited Jesus a considerable time after His birth. They determine that Luke is speaking about the birth account and Matthew is speaking about a time two years after the birth of Christ. They base their argument off the different words used for child between the Matthew and Luke accounts. Matthew uses the terms [PAIS] and [PAIDION] (which are used of children of at least one year of age) and Luke uses the term [BREPHOS] (which is used to refer to an unborn child, a newborn or an infant. However upon close examination of New Testament usage, the terms are used interchangeably. [BREPHOS] almost always means infant, but [PAIDON] is used of infants on many occasions (Luke 1:59, 66, 76; 2:17, 27; John 16:21; Hebrews 11:23). The point is that one cannot make an argument based off the usage of these terms. The tone of Matthew 2:1 is that the Magi visited Christ soon after His birth. After the birth of Christ, Joseph would have quickly secured a house for them to stay in. So how does one deal with Matthew 2:16. Herod was a madman by this point and quite paranoid about his throne. He wanted to make sure that there were no mistakes. He wanted to make sure that Jesus would be killed. So he declared that all the male children up to two years would be killed. As Hoehner states this certainly would not be out of character for Herod. Likely the visit of the Magi and the killing of the male babies in Bethlehem took place shortly after the birth of Christ.

- Luke 3:23, *“And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age.”*

According to this verse, Jesus' ministry began when He was about 30 years of age. It seems best that the term *about* only allows for two to three years on either side of 30. According to Luke 3:1 John the Baptist began his ministry prior to that of Christ in the 15th year of Tiberius. The 15th year of Tiberius' reign can be dated to begin (depending on the way one reckons it) in either

27 or 29 AD. That being the case, it seems most likely that the birth of Christ must occur no earlier than 5 BC. It seems best to date the birth of Christ sometime in late 5 BC or early 4 BC.

Regarding the Traditional Date for the Birth of Christ

As early as Hippolytus (c. AD 165-235) the date of Christ's birth has been December 25th. The Eastern Church assigned a date of January 6th. Chrysostom (AD 345-407) stated in 386 that December 25th was the correct date. Although it is not possible to pinpoint the exact date of Christ's birth, there does exist a relatively old tradition of a midwinter birth sometime in December or January. This would place Christ's birth sometime in December 5 BC or January 4 BC.

Many have often raised objections to a midwinter birth because of the statement regarding the shepherds in Luke 2:8.

- Luke 2:8, *And in the same region there were {some} shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night.*

The objection is based upon the typical practice that shepherds took their sheep indoors at night between November and March. Although, it certainly could have been a mild winter and the Shepherds could have had their sheep out at night. However, most agree that the sheep were not always brought under cover during the winter months. What is important is that the sheep were brought in from the wilderness during the winter months and would have been in the fields around Bethlehem. Clearly this agrees with Luke 2:8 and would suggest a midwinter birth in keeping with the traditional dates. The Mishnah also infers that the sheep were often in the fields at least 30 days prior to Passover, which would suggest that they were brought in by February. There is no valid evidence to suggest anything other than a midwinter birth for Christ.

Conclusion

While the exact date for the birth of Christ is difficult if not impossible to determine, a midwinter date seems most probable. Clearly Christ was born before Herod's death in March/April 4 BC. It seems likely that He was born no earlier than 5 BC. So a midwinter date of 5/4 BC would fit in with the chronological notations of Scripture. Although the exact date cannot be known a December 5 BC or January 4 BC date seems quite reasonable as all of the data is evaluated.

Consideration #2: The Commencement of Christ's Earthly Ministry

The only time that Jesus's childhood is mentioned is in Luke 2:40-52. In this passage we are directly told that He was 12 years old at the time. If Jesus was born in mid-winter of 5/4 BC, He would have been 12 years old at the Passover of AD 8. So it is likely around the Passover of AD 8, when He went to Jerusalem with His parents. While only two gospels emphasize the birth of Christ and only Luke mentions an event from Jesus's childhood, all four gospels thoroughly describe Christ's earthly ministry. This leads us to our next chronological consideration: When did Christ's earthly ministry begin? Unfortunately like the birth of Christ, the commencement of His earthly ministry is debatable as well. In determining the date of the beginning of Christ's

earthly ministry, we will examine four passages that will shed light on this consideration: Luke 3:1; 3:23; John 2:20 & John 8:57.

Luke 3:1 *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*

- Luke 3:1-3, *Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins;*

Luke does a very nice job providing chronological markers here in the first three verses of Luke chapter 3. He does so to identify the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry. The word of God came to John and he came into the district around the Jordan preaching and baptizing. We of course know as the narrative of Luke continues that shortly thereafter Jesus came to be baptized and it is at this point that Christ's earthly ministry begins. So the earliest limiting point for Christ's earthly ministry would be just after the commencement of John the Baptist's ministry. There are seven individuals mentioned, which could provide some insight as to the date of this event.

1) Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea. He ruled as governor or prefect over Judea from AD 26 to either late AD 36 or early AD 37.

2) Herod was tetrarch of Galilee. This is a reference to Herod Antipas, who was the son of Herod the Great. He ruled Galilee and Perea from 4 BC to about AD 39 when he was deposed.

3) Philip was the tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis. He was also a son of Herod the Great. He ruled these areas northeast of Palestine from 4 BC to AD 34 when he died.

4) Lysanias was the tetrarch of Abilene. There is no significant historical reference for him. He simply cannot be dated with confidence. There is an inscription, which records a temple dedication by the freedman of Lysanias the tetrarch. This inscription might possibly be dated between AD 14 and AD 29.

5) Annas and Caiaphas were serving as high priests. The official high priesthood of Annas ended in AD 15, but his influence continued on during the high priesthood of his son-in-law, Caiaphas, who served from AD 18-36.

Between these 5 chronological notations we are given a range between AD 26 and AD 34 for the commencement of John the Baptist's ministry. Fortunately, Luke includes a sixth and more detailed chronological reference. However it is not without its problems.

6) It was the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar's reign. Unfortunately this can be interpreted or reckoned in about five different ways. [see Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, pp. 31-37]

1-The first method of reckoning could be that Luke was counting from the decree by which Tiberius became a co-regent with Augustus. This would make Tiberius's 15th year AD 25/26. However this method should probably be rejected since there is no historical evidence to suggest that it was reckoned in this way, while there is considerable historical evidence to suggest that Tiberius reckoned his first year after the death of his father, Augustus.

2-The second method is that Luke reckoned from Nisan 1. This would make the first year of Tiberius last from August 19, AD 14 to Nisan 1, AD 15, and his 15th year from Nisan 1, 28 to Nisan 1, 29 (April 15, 28 to April 4, 29). Those who hold this position believe that Luke was drawing off a source from John the Baptist's circle, where the regnal years were often counted from Nisan 1. However this cannot be concluded with certainty. During the Maccabean period both Nisan and Tishri new years were used. In fact, it seems doubtful that a Gentile writing to a Roman official would use a Jewish system to calculate time.

3-The third method is that which is used by Syria from the time of Augustus to Nerva. According to this system, the regnal years of the Roman emperors were reckoned from Tishri 1. The first year of Tiberius would have extended from August 19, AD 14 to Tishri 1, AD 14, and thus his 15th year from Tishri 1, 27 to Tishri 1, 28 (September 21, 27 to October 8, 28). The adherents of this view support it with the fact that Luke was from Antioch and would have used this system of reckoning.

4-The fourth method is that Luke used the Julian Calendar. If one reckons according to the non-accession year system, then Tiberius's first year was from August 19 to December 31, AD 14 and his 15th year would have been from January 1 to December 31, AD 28. However, if the accession year system is used, then the accession year is from August 19 to December 31, AD 14, the first year would have been from January 1 to December 31, AD 15 and the 15th year would have been from January 1 to December 31 of AD 29. The proponents of this view emphasize that the use of the Julian Calendar and reckoning according to the accession year system was employed by Roman historians such as Tacitus and Suetonius. Since Luke was writing to Theophilus a Roman official, then this is the system that Theophilus would likely be familiar with.

5-The fifth and final option is that Luke used the normal Roman method of reckoning. According to this view the 15th year of Tiberius would have been from August 19, AD 28 to August 18, AD 29.

The best conclusion is either method four or five. It seems likely that John's ministry began sometime in AD 29 and thus the commencement of Jesus's ministry would have followed shortly thereafter.

Luke 3:23 *About thirty years of age*

- Luke 3:23, *And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being supposedly {the} son of Joseph, the {son} of Eli,*

The phrase about thirty years of age is very general. It is not a specific term at all. To be about 30 years of age, one would need to be about 2-3 years younger or older than 30. If we conclude that John the Baptist began his ministry in AD 29 according to the fourth or fifth option above,

then Jesus would have been baptized sometime in AD 29 and Christ's earthly ministry would have begun likely sometime late in AD 29 prior to the Passover of AD 30. Considering a December 5 BC or January 4 BC date of birth, then Christ would have been 32 years old at the commencement of His earthly ministry. Harold Hoehner suggests that this conclusion is desirable for three reasons: 1) First, it does not require a quick succession of events in such a short span of time for John's ministry; 2) Second, it allows for Christ's ministry to be at least three years in duration; 3) Third, the fact that Luke used the term "About" indicates that Jesus was not exactly thirty years of age when He began His ministry. According to this scenario, John the Baptist began his ministry sometime early in AD 29 and Jesus would have been baptized in the summer or early Autumn of AD 29. If this is true, then Jesus would have been 32 years old with His 33rd birthday approaching in December of AD 29 or January of AD 30, which would certainly fit with Luke's statement of "About thirty years of age."

John 2:20 "Forty-six years to build this temple"

- John 2:19-20, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' 20 The Jews therefore said, 'It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?'"

It is important to note here that there are two Greek terms for *temple*: 1) HIERON, which refers to the temple precincts and 2) NAOS, which refers to the temple edifice. The temple precincts were under construction until AD 63. The term used by the Jews here is NAOS, the temple edifice. Construction was begun to rebuild the temple edifice in 20/19 BC and it was completed in 18/17 BC. Forty-six years later would be the year AD 29/30. This means that Jesus' first Passover would be AD 30. The Jews were telling Jesus that the temple edifice had stood for 46 years. [Hoehner, p. 43] This passage clearly supports the previous conclusion that Christ's earthly ministry began after His baptism in AD 29 and that His first Passover after His ministry began was in AD 30.

John 8:57 "Not yet fifty years old"

- John 8:57, "The Jews therefore said to Him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?'"

Some have suggested that Jesus must have been much older than previously thought because of this statement. They have suggested that Jesus must have been in his forties to fit this statement better. However, this is a very general statement and the Jews were simply emphasizing Jesus' youth in contrast to His claim of existence before Abraham. John 8:57 is not very helpful in determining the age of Christ at the commencement of His ministry. However it certainly does not contradict the previous conclusion of Christ being 32 years old when He began His earthly ministry.

Conclusion

Although it is impossible to pinpoint the commencement of Christ's earthly ministry in any precise way, it makes good sense based on the above verses that John the Baptist began his ministry of preaching a baptism of repentance sometime during AD 29. Since Christ began His earthly ministry shortly after John's and was in fact baptized by John, it is likely that Christ's

baptism was sometime in the summer or early autumn of AD 29 and the commencement of His ministry shortly thereafter, following His 40 day temptation in the wilderness. This would place the first Passover following the commencement of His ministry in AD 30. This allows anywhere from 4 to 9 months for the events that take place between Christ's baptism and first Passover to occur.

Consideration #3: The Duration of Christ's Earthly Ministry

After determining the commencement of Christ's earthly ministry, the next chronological issue that must be considered is the duration of His earthly ministry. How long did Christ minister upon the earth. There has been a wide range of suggestions from as short as 4 or 6 months to as long as 10 or 20 years. This variance is due to the lack of a direct statement in the Gospels. In fact nowhere in the New Testament does it mention the length of Christ's earthly ministry. Although extreme views such as 4 to 6 months or 10 to 20 years have easily been ruled out, there still exists a variety of options from 1 to 4 years.

The One-Year Theory

The first view that must be examined is the one-year theory. This view holds that Christ's earthly ministry was only one year in length. This is based on Luke's quote of Isaiah 61:2 in Luke 4:19, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The proponents of this view believe that Christ's earthly ministry began with Mark 2:23 where the disciples are plucking grain, which would have been fully ripened between Passover and Pentecost. They believe that His ministry concluded with the Passover of Mark 14:1, which is the only Passover directly mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels.

However upon close examination, Luke 4:19 quotes Isaiah 61:2, not to identify the length of Christ's earthly ministry, but to announce the arrival of the long predicted Messiah. In addition as one examines the Gospel of John, there are at least three Passovers directly mentioned (cf. John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55). Furthermore it is impossible to squeeze all of the events of Christ's earthly ministry into a time period as short as one year. Therefore it is necessary to come to some other conclusion as to the length of Christ's earthly ministry.

The Two-Year Theory

This view holds that since the Gospel of John directly mentions three Passovers (John 2:23; 6:4; 11:55), then the earthly ministry of Jesus was just over 2 years. In order to hold this view most proponents will transpose the events of John 5 and 6. The problem is that a feast is mentioned in 5:1. In order to deal with this, they hold that John 5:1 is mentioning the same feast as in 6:4. In order to deal with this geographically, they swap chapter 5 and 6 around chronologically. So in this view the events of chapter 6 come prior to chapter 5. This is done because Jesus is in Cana of Galilee in chapter 4 and He is by the Sea of Galilee in chapter 6. Then in chapter 5 He goes up to Jerusalem and finally in chapter 7, since He could no longer travel in Judea, He traveled in Galilee.

It is quite illogical to switch the order of events in John chapters 5 and 6. In fact there is no textual evidence at for any other order than the one presented. In fact, the Gospel of John might actually be the most chronological of the Gospels. Not only that, but theologically in John 5:19-

47 Christ is established as the divine Son and this seems to serve as the basis of Christ's claims in chapter 6. In addition, John 7:3 seems to indicate that Jesus had not recently been in Jerusalem performing miracles and this would make no sense if chapter 7 immediately follows the events of chapter 5. The problem of this view is the feast mentioned in John 5:1, which seems to necessitate an additional year for Christ's earthly ministry. Hence the two-year theory is unacceptable.

The Four-Year Theory

Another possibility is a four-year ministry for Christ. There are two versions of this theory. *The first version* of the four-year view assumes a Passover at John 1:29, a second directly stated in John 2:13, a third is assumed by the mention of a feast in John 5:1, a fourth is directly stated in John 6:4 and the fifth is the Passover of death in John 11:55. *The second version* of the four-year view sees the first Passover as the one mentioned in John 2:13, the second assumed because of John 5:1, the third is directly stated in John 6:4, the fourth is alluded to in Matthew 17:24 and Luke 13:1 and must fit between the Passovers of John 6:4 and 11:55, while the fifth is the final Passover mentioned in John 11:55. This second version finds it difficult to believe that the departure from Galilee to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in John 7:2 is the same as the one mentioned in Luke 9:51. There is also concern that one cannot fit all the events into a three-year period.

However the best evidence is that only three or four Passovers are indicated by the text. Three years is also plenty of time to include all of the events of Jesus ministry. It seems best to reconcile the three journeys of Jesus in John 7:2, 11:7, 17-18 and 1:55 with those in Luke 9:51; 13:22; and 17:11). In addition there is no indication that John 1:29 was in the Passover season nor that Jesus went to Jerusalem at that time. If one assumes John 1:29-51 was Passover season, then there would be an entire year of ministry absent from the record between John 1:51 and 2:13. If you take the second four-year view, it is important to note that there is no internal evidence whatsoever to support a year between John 10 and 11. It seems very unlikely that Jesus had a four-year ministry.

The Three-Year Theory

The final and most acceptable option is the three-year theory. This view holds that in addition to the three directly stated Passovers of John in 2:13; 6:14 and 11:55, there is an unmentioned Passover between John 2:13 and 6:4. This is held based off two chronological notations. The first is in John 4:35, which mentions that there are four months until harvest. This would place John 4:35 around January or February following the previous Passover of John 2:13. The second notation is in John 5:1, where there was a feast of the Jews. Although it is unclear whether this is the Passover, Pentecost or Tabernacles, it seems best to see it as the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurs in the Fall. Regardless of which feast you take John 5:1 to be, it necessitates an additional Passover between 2:13 and 6:4. Since Christ's baptism and public ministry began prior to the first Passover of John 2:13, it seems best to understand that His ministry was about three and a half years long.

Conclusion

If Christ's ministry began sometime in AD 29 as we determined earlier, then the Passover of John 2:13 would have taken place in AD 30. The assumed Passover between John 2:13 and 6:4 would have been in AD 31 and the Passover of John 6:4 would have occurred in AD 32. This means that the Passover of Christ's crucifixion mentioned in John 11:55 would have been in AD 33 (more on this in the next lesson).

The Duration of Christ's Ministries Based of the Passovers of the Gospel of John	
The Passover of John 2:13	AD 30
The Passover between John 2:13 & 6:4	AD 31
The Passover of John 6:4	AD 32
The Passover of Christ's Death, John 11:55	AD 33

Chronological Survey of the Public Ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus' life before His public ministry began	About 30 years	BIRTH and SILENT YEARS
PUBLIC PRESENTATION Time: 2 1/2 years	3-6 months	THE OPENING OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF CHRIST 1. The ministry of the forerunner, John the Baptist 2. The baptism and temptation of Jesus the Christ 3. The miracle of water to wine performed at Cana (Jesus demonstrates His glory for the first time)
--seeking crowds --working countless miracles	About 6 months	THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST 1. Jesus cleanses the temple at Jerusalem 2. Nicodemus, a seeking Sanhedrinist, comes by night to Jesus 3. Jesus gathers to himself those who had already believed the message of John 4. John the Baptist is arrested; Jesus departs for Galilee, passes through Samaria on the way, deals with the woman at the well
--traveling through the lands of the Jews, saturating the area with His claims, and with the proof of those claims by means of miracles	18 months	THE GREAT GALILEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST 1. Many, many miracles during this time 2. Jesus is seeking crowds, traveling throughout Galilee, saturating the land with His two-fold claim (to be Messiah, and to be God come in the flesh), proving the legitimacy of those claims by means of miracles. 3. In spite of the undeniable proof Jesus offers in defense of the truth of His claims, Israel finally rejects Him, and His offer; Jesus discerns that spirit of disbelief, His disciples/apostles do not. a) Official rejection--the unpardonable sin (Mt 12:14-37) b) Popular rejection--the feeding of the 5000 (John 6:41-47)
PRIVATE PREPARATION Time: 1 year	6 months	TRAINING OF THE TWELVE Notice that Jesus' emphasis and tactics change dramatically at this point 1. He had been seeking crowds; he now seeks privacy 2. He had been working miracles freely; now He seeks to avoid miracle-working in the attempt to avoid the consequent multitudes of people 3. He had been speaking openly and plainly; now He speaks in parables 4. He had been travelling throughout the land of the Jews; now He begins to move in non-Jewish territories (Syro-Phoenicia, Decapolis, Ceasarea-Philippi) CULMINATION OF THIS PERIOD: 1. Jesus finally finds solitude with His apostles openly foretells His death for the first time; the apostles are horrified and unbelieving 2. To reinforce the staggering faith of the apostles, Jesus is transfigured before three of them
--seeking privacy --avoiding miracles		IN AND AROUND JERUSALEM: THE FINAL SIX MONTHS BEFORE HIS PASSION
--fleeing areas populated by Jews	6 months	1. To Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (OCT/Nov) [Luke 9:51; John 7:1-10:21] --then ministers in Judea for a final time, avoiding Jerusalem 2. To Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication (Dec) [Luke 13:22; John 10:22-42]--then, to Perea (Jol 10:42), where He ministers until the sister of Lazarus sends for Him 3. To Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead (ca Feb) [John 11] --then to the village of Ephraim, where Jesus remains in secret until He set out for the final Passover
FINAL EVENTS Time: several weeks --final trip to Jerusalem --Passion week --Resurrection Ministry	About 6 weeks	JESUS PASSION IN JERUSALEM, THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION 1. The final journey to Jerusalem; Jesus and His disciples travel to the city with a band of Passover pilgrims coming down from Galilee 2. The PASSION WEEK: Jesus dramatically enters Jerusalem (Sun), cleanses & possesses the temple (Mon/Tues), keeps Passover (Thursday PM), then is arrested, tried, crucified and buried (Fri) 3. The RESURRECTION (early on the first day of week), followed by a 40-day ministry on the earth 4. The ASCENSION to the Father from the Mount of Olives

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE & MINISTRY OF CHRIST

NOTE: The chronology of Christ's life and ministry on the earth can be taken from the words of Jesus in John 16:28.

"I came forth from the Father,

...and am come into the world;

...again, I leave the world,

...and go to the Father."

I. UNIT ONE: "I came forth from the Father..."

The emphasis: The pre-existence of Jesus Christ.

II. UNIT TWO: "...and am come into the world..."

The emphasis:

1. Jesus' birth, infancy, boyhood

2. Jesus emerges into public life

a. John the Baptist ministers in anticipation of the appearance of Messiah

b. Jesus is baptized by John

c. Jesus is alone in the wilderness for 40 days, is tempted by the Devil

d. Jesus gathers to Himself the first disciples

e. Jesus works a miracle at Cana of Galilee

3. Jesus gains attention in Judea and Samaria

Note: This phase of Jesus' ministry lasted about six months, but it is recorded only by the gospel of John. It was because of opposition generated during this time that Jesus left Judea and ministered in Galilee.

4. Jesus ministers in Galilee for about 18 months

a. Jesus spent 18 months in Galilee, during which His ministry was characterized by:

- open announcement of His Messiahship;
- miraculous proof of His claim to Messiahship and deity; and,
- ever increasing public amazement and official hatred.

b. During this time Jesus traveled to Judea once for a feast, but most of the time was spent traveling throughout Galilee offering Himself as Messiah to the Jews.

c. Jesus' offer of Himself as Messiah was rejected by the Jews. The most important single moment of rejection is recorded in Matthew 12:25-37, the event often referred to as the "unpardonable sin."

5. Jesus trains the twelve disciples

a. During this time, Jesus' emphasis changes dramatically. In brief, the change can be described as follows.

	THE GALILEAN MINISTRY	TRAINING OF THE TWELVE
Jesus' PURPOSE:	<i>PUBLIC PRESENTATION</i> --of Himself as Messiah	<i>PRIVATE PREPARATION</i> --of His disciples for His death and departure
Jesus' EMPHASIS:	<i>MIRACLES</i> --designed to authenticate His claims concerning Himself	<i>PARABLES</i> --designed to hide truth from His enemies, and to buy time to instruct His disciples
Jesus' STRATEGY:	<i>GO TO THE JEWS, MINISTER OPENLY</i> --in order that that generation might be personally and powerfully confronted with His message and with the confirming credentials, His miracles	<i>FLEE FROM THE JEWS, SEEK SOLITUDE</i> --in order that He might find opportunity to instruct His disciples concerning what was soon to happen to Him, what their responsibilities would be, how He would enable them even in His absence
Public REACTION:	MOUNTING PUBLIC FASCINATION --tempered by the suspicion, contempt, and finally hatred of the leaders of the nation toward Jesus and His claims	MOUNTED OFFICIAL HATRED/REJECTION --tempered by the continuing fascination on the part of the common people, but finally winning over even the populace

b. The reason for this dramatic change: Jesus recognizes that Israel's rejection is full and final, and that soon He will be taken and put to death. Thus, He begins to prepare His disciples for that event and their consequent responsibilities.

c. This period (training of the twelve) lasted about six months (approximately the first half of the last year of Jesus' public ministry). During these months Jesus fled crowds, was reluctant to perform miracles, and began to speak in parables.

d. NOTE: It was during this time that Jesus began to prophecy to His disciples that He was going to die (Matthew 16:21).

6. Jesus ministers in and around Jerusalem the final six months before His death

a. These last six months before Jesus' death are difficult to harmonize exactly. It is clear that Jesus traveled extensively in Perea (Trans-Jordan) for much of this time.

b. During these months, Jesus went three times to Judea. However, those trips were unannounced and brief, as Jesus was taking care not to fall into the hands of His enemies before the appointed time. The general spirit of this period is well reflected in John 7:30.

c. The events of this period, the last six months of Jesus' public ministry, are best understood in relation to three trips to Jerusalem (or its environs) made during this time. We must piece together all four Gospel accounts to understand the chronology of this period, simply because no one Gospel provides a continuous narrative.

- TRIP #1 - to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2-10:21). After the Feast, Jesus remained in Judea, though He avoided Jerusalem.
- TRIP #2 - to Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22-39). After this feast, Jesus journeyed to Perea, that area beyond the Jordan River.
- TRIP #3 - to Bethany (2 miles from Jerusalem) in order to raise Lazarus from the dead. After this miracle, Jesus finds seclusion in Ephraim, a little town north of Jerusalem some miles. Here He remains with His disciples, hidden from His enemies until He goes for the final time to Jerusalem for the Passover season (John 11:54).

III. UNIT THREE :. . . again, I leave the world . . ."

The emphasis:

1. Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, His arrest and trials, His crucifixion and burial
2. Basically, this involves the Passion Week, the major events of which include:
 - SUNDAY --the Triumphal Entry
 - MONDAY/TUESDAY --the fig tree is cursed, found withered; the second cleansing of the Temple --possession of the Temple for two days; Jesus bests all of His enemies in open debate, and then pronounces woes upon them --The Olivet Discourse

- WEDNESDAY --a silent day in the Gospels
- THURSDAY (afternoon & evening)
 - the preparation for the Passover meal
 - Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples; the Upper Room Discourse (Meanwhile, Judas betrays Jesus to the Sanhedrin)
 - the arrest of the Lord Jesus near the Garden of Gethsemane
- FRIDAY --a series of trials of Jesus, first three Jewish (a hearing before Annas, and then 2 trials before the Sanhedrin) and then three Roman (Pilate, Herod, and then Pilate gives Him over to the multitudes)
 - the crucifixion of the Prince of Life; His burial in a borrowed tomb
- SATURDAY --Jesus' body lays in the tomb; the Sabbath is observed

IV. UNIT FOUR: " . . . and go to the Father."

The emphases:

1. The resurrection of Jesus
2. The 40-day post-resurrection ministry of Jesus
3. The ascension of Jesus to the Father

NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 2: THE CHRONOLOGY OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION

August 31, 2003

Consideration #5: The Day of Christ's Crucifixion

Before one can determine the year of Christ's death it is necessary to come to some conclusion as to what day He was crucified on. There are three major views for the day of Christ's death: 1) A Wednesday Crucifixion; 2) A Thursday Crucifixion; and 3) A Friday Crucifixion.

THE WEDNESDAY CRUCIFIXION

- *Statement of the view:*

The proponents of this view believe that Jesus was crucified and died Wednesday evening and that He rose exactly 72 hours later (i.e. 3 full days and 3 full nights as Matthew 12:40 seems to state).

- *Overview of the Passion Week according to the Wednesday View:*

Saturday Nisan 10	Sunday Nisan 11	Monday Nisan 12	Tuesday Nisan 13	Wednesday Nisan 14	Thursday Nisan 15	Friday Nisan 16	Saturday Nisan 17	Sunday Nisan 18
Triumphal Entry	Cleanses, Controls the temple	Confronts enemies, pronounces woes, Olivet Discourse	Passover, Arrest, Trials	Trials, Crucifixion, burial	Body lays in the tomb	Body embalmed	Rises from the dead after exactly 72 hours	Or Rises early on this the first day of the week

- *Arguments in favor of this view:*

1-A literal interpretation of Matthew 12:40 suggests that Jesus was in the tomb 3 full days and 3 full nights. Matthew 12:40 says, "*for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*"

2-There are too many events that must take place hence a Wednesday crucifixion fits better. Jesus would have been buried on Wednesday evening, the body remained in the tomb on Thursday, and then on Friday, the body was embalmed.

3-The Passover lambs were usually chosen on Nisan 10 so the typology fits with Jesus (the Lamb of God) appearing in Jerusalem (the triumphal entry) on Saturday Nisan 10.

4-There is no need for a silent day in the events of the Passover week as there is if one holds to the Friday view.

- *Critique of this view:*

1-This view is based off a single verse of Scripture, Matthew 12:40. However if one examines all of the other New Testament passages referring to Christ’s resurrection, it becomes clear that He rose on the third day not after it. (cf. Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:4; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; John 2:19-22; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4) Remember that according to Jewish reckoning any part of a day was considered a day.

2-Three days and three nights in Matthew 12:40 is likely an idiomatic expression, which means third day.

3-If one takes Matthew 12:40 to refer to a 72 hour period, then Christ must have risen no later than 6 pm on Saturday evening otherwise He would have risen on the fourth day. Christians clearly celebrate it on the first day of the week, not on the Sabbath (cf. Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2).

4-It is true that many events occur between the death and burial, but several of these events were likely simultaneous and done by various people.

5-The argument based on typology is quite weak. It is unlikely that Christ’s triumphal entry would have been on Sabbath since Jesus was riding on an animal (He would have been breaking the Mosaic Law) and since the people were cutting down branches from the trees which was also a violation of the Law. It seems likely that if this was the case Christ’s enemies would have certainly mentioned it during the Passion week.

THE THURSDAY CRUCIFIXION

- *Statement of the view:*

The proponents of this view also strongly hold to Matthew 12:40 and believe that Jesus was crucified on a Thursday allowing for His body to be in the tomb three full nights, 2 full days and part of a third day.

- *Overview of the Passion Week according to the Thursday View:*

Saturday Nisan 9	Sunday Nisan 10	Monday Nisan 11	Tuesday Nisan 12	Wednesday Nisan 13	Thursday Nisan 14	Friday Nisan 15	Saturday Nisan 16	Sunday Nisan 17
Feast at which Mary anoints Jesus, in Bethany	Triumphal Entry	Cleanses, Controls the temple	Confronts enemies, pronounces woes, Olivet Discourse	Passover, Arrest, Trials	Trials, Crucifixion, burial	Body lays in the tomb, 3 full nights, 2 full days & part of the 3 rd day.		Rises early on this the first day of the week

- *Arguments in favor of this view:*

1-This allows for the body to be in the tomb 3 full nights, 2 full days and part of a third day, which satisfies Matthew 12:40, “for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS

IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” This fits a literal understanding of Matthew 12:40 in that any part of a day equals a day.

2-This would fit the typology of the Passover Lamb being selected on Nisan 10 if Christ’s triumphal entry is on Sunday Nisan 10.

3-This view eliminates the need for a silent day in the week as is necessitated by the Friday view with a silent Wednesday.

4-John 19:31 is not a reference to a regular Sabbath day, but instead it refers to the Day of Unleavened Bread, which is placed on Friday Nisan 15. The idea is that when the Day of Unleavened Bread fell on any other day than the Sabbath, it was referred to as the Sabbath of the Passover and no one was allowed to work on that day (Leviticus 23:7). It is felt that John 19:31, *“The Jews therefore, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high {day}), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and {that} they might be taken away”* is not a reference to a regular weekly Sabbath, but a Sabbath of the Passover.

5-An additional support for this is that in the Greek text of Matthew 28:1 the term translated Sabbath is in the plural form Sabbaths, which would imply that there were back to back Sabbaths.

6-Further the phrase, *“the day of preparation”* in John 19:31 refers to the preparations for the Passover as in John 19:14.

- *Critique of this view:*

1-This view like the previous is based off a single verse of Scripture, Matthew 12:40. However if one examines all of the other New Testament passages referring to Christ’s resurrection, it becomes clear that He rose on the third day not after it. (cf. Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:4; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; John 2:19-22; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4) Remember that according to Jewish reckoning any part of a day was considered a day. So this view would have Jesus in the tomb part of Thursday, all day Friday and Saturday and then part of a day on Sunday. If one assumes any part of a day is a whole day then Jesus was in the tomb 4 days according to this view. It is better to take this verse as an idiomatic expression so that there is no contradiction with the many verses that emphasize that the resurrection was on the third day.

2-There is no clear indication from Scripture that the day of Unleavened Bread was considered a Sabbath and therefore no work was to be done. In fact John 19:31 seems to fit rather well with the idea of a regular weekly Sabbath. It was the day of preparation for the Sabbath. They did not want the bodies to remain on the cross on the next day, which would be Sabbath. The clearest understanding of the verse would suggest that it was the day before the Sabbath (Friday).

3-One-third of the uses of Sabbath are in the plural, hence Matthew 28:1 is likely referring to just the one Sabbath day not multiple Sabbath days. Matthew 12:1-12 is a good example, because Sabbath is used both in a singular fashion and in a plural fashion to refer to the same day.

4-Both the Scriptures (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:31, 42) and the historian Josephus consistently indicate that the phrase “the day of preparation” always refers to the day prior to the Sabbath (i.e. Friday). In fact Mark 15:42 directly states this, “*And when evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath.*” John 19:14 is likely referring to the day of preparation for the Sabbath in the Passover week. In other words it may be stating directly “the Friday of the Passover week.” There is no need to force an unnatural meaning on all the other verses because of the terms used in this verse.

5-Further it seems clear that John 19:31, 42 specifically state that the Pharisees hurried to have Jesus in the tomb on the day of preparation so that He would not be on the cross on the Sabbath.

6-Once again an argument based on typology seems quite weak.

THE FRIDAY CRUCIFIXION

- *Statement of the view:*

The proponents of this view believe that the overwhelming majority of the Scripture emphasize that Jesus would rise on the third day. This would place the crucifixion on a Friday. Jesus body would lay in the tomb part of Friday, all day on the Sabbath day (Saturday), and part of the day on Sunday. Therefore He would be resurrected on the third day (Sunday), which was the first day of the week.

- *Overview of the Passion Week according to the Friday View:*

(My View)

Saturday Nisan 8	Sunday Nisan 9	Monday Nisan 10	Tuesday Nisan 11	Wednesday Nisan 12	Thursday Nisan 13	Friday Nisan 14	Saturday Nisan 15	Sunday Nisan 16
Feast at which Mary anoints Jesus, in Bethany	Triumphal Entry	Cleanses, Controls the temple	Confronts enemies, pronounces woes, Olivet Discourse	Silent Day, no record in the Gospels	Passover, Arrest, Trials	Trials, Crucifixion, burial	Body lays in the tomb	Rises early on this the first day of the week

(Hoehner)

Saturday Nisan 8	Sunday Nisan 9	Monday Nisan 10	Tuesday Nisan 11	Wednesday Nisan 12	Thursday Nisan 13	Friday Nisan 14	Saturday Nisan 15	Sunday Nisan 16
Arrival in Bethany	Many travel to Bethany to see Jesus	Triumphal Entry	Cleanses, Controls the temple	Confronts enemies, pronounces woes, Olivet Discourse	Passover, Arrest, Trials	Trials, Crucifixion, burial	Body lays in the tomb	Rises early on this the first day of the week

- *Arguments in favor of this view:*

1-Jesus prophesied that He would rise on the third day and the Gospels clearly give the impression that He did rise on the third day.

- Matthew 16:21, “*From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up **on the third day.***” (Cf. Matthew 17:23; 20:19; 27:64; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4; John 2:19-22)

2-Jesus’ body laid in the tomb on evening of the day of preparation (i.e. preparation for the Sabbath), which is called the day before the Sabbath, which is Friday (Cf. Matthew 27:62; 28:1; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54, 56; John 19:313; 42).

- Mark 15:42, “*And when evening had already come, **because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath.***”

In fact Mark 15:42 seems to be a direct statement that Christ was crucified on a Friday.

3-The women returned home and rested on the Sabbath (Luke 23:56), and then returned to the tomb early on the first day of the week (Sunday) and found it empty (Cf. Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1).

- Luke 23:56 “*And they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment. 24:1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.*”

4-On the day Jesus rose from the dead, He walked with 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13). They said that it was the third day since their Master was crucified (Luke 24:21).

- Luke 24:13, “*And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.*” ...24:21, “*But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened.*”

5-Thus the most natural reading of the New Testament would lead to conclude that Jesus was indeed crucified on a Friday and resurrected on a Sunday, which is the common consensus among early church Fathers and church scholars throughout history.

- *Critique of this view:*

1-This view understands Matthew 12:40 as an idiomatic expression rather than a direct literal statement.

But:

- The New Testament also speaks of the resurrection on the third day (Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:64; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- There are places where it is said that he will be raised “after three days.” However when one compares parallel passages in the other Gospels, they use the phrase “on the third day.” (Compare Mark 8:31 with Matthew 16:21/Luke 9:22; Mark 9:31 with Matthew 17:23; Mark 10:34 with Matthew 20:19/Luke 18:33). Thus the two phrases “after three days” and “on the third day” mean the same thing, a period extending to the third day.
- In Matthew 27:63, the Pharisees remember that Jesus predicted He would rise “after three days,” and asked for soldiers to guard the tomb “until the third day.”
- The Old Testament also supports the idea that 3 days and 3 nights = the third day. (In Genesis 42:17 Joseph incarcerated his brothers for three days, and then in verse 18 he spoke to them on the third day, and from the context released them on that day. In 1 Kings 20:29 Israel and Syria camped opposite each other for seven days, and on the seventh day they began to battle each other. In Esther 4:16 Esther asks the Jews not to eat or drink for three days, night or day and then she would go to the king. In 5:1 Esther went in to the king on the third day.)
- According to Jewish literature: Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah (lived about AD 100) stated: “a day and night are an Onah (a portion of time), and the portion of an Onah is as the whole of it.” In other words any part of a day is considered a day.

2-This view would necessitate a silent-Wednesday—unless one places the triumphal entry on Monday as Hoehner does.

But:

- There is clearly nothing wrong with having a silent day on Wednesday. It would certainly be necessary for Jesus and His disciples to prepare for the Passover meal that they would celebrate on Thursday. One is not entitled to require something of significance to happen on every day of the Passover week.

THE DAY OF THE MONTH

[See Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, p. 75-90 for a more detailed treatment]

One last issue remains regarding the day of Christ's Crucifixion. What day of the month did Christ eat the Passover meal and what day of the month was Christ Crucified on?

- *The problem at hand:*

All the gospels clearly identify that Jesus ate the Last Supper the day before His actual crucifixion (Matthew 26:20ff; Mark 14:17ff; Luke 22:14ff; John 13:2ff; Cf. also 1 Corinthians 11:23).

In addition, Mark 14:12 states that the Last Supper was on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they would sacrifice the Passover lambs.

- Mark 14:12, "*And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover {lamb} was being sacrificed, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?"*

Matthew and Luke state essentially the same thing (Cf. Matthew 26:17; Luke 22:7-8). Therefore the three synoptic gospels portray the Last Supper as being the Passover meal and thus would be eaten on Thursday Nisan 14. So Christ would have been crucified the following day on Friday Nisan 15.

However, the gospel of John states that the Jews who took Jesus to the Pratorium did not enter it so that they would not be defiled and would be able to eat the Passover (John 18:28).

- John 18:28, "*They led Jesus therefore from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium in order that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.*"

This means that Jesus would have been tried and crucified before the actual eating of the Passover meal. This can be further substantiated in John 19:14, where it states, "*Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!"*" It can also be substantiated by Paul's comments in 1 Corinthians 5:7, "... *For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.*"

There seems to be a clear difference between the synoptics, which see Jesus celebrating the Last Supper as a Passover meal on Thursday, Nisan 14 with the trial and Crucifixion on Friday, Nisan 15. However, in John the Last Supper was not a Passover meal and would have been celebrated on Thursday, Nisan 13 with Christ's trial and crucifixion taking place on the day the Passover lambs would be slaughtered, Friday, Nisan 14.

- *The views compared:*

Before examining the two views, it is necessary to emphasize what the instructions for the Passover were at the time Israel left Egypt. On the tenth day of the first month (Nisan = March/April), a lamb was selected for each household (Exodus 12:3). On Nisan 14 the lamb was slain, "between the two evenings" (Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5; Numbers 9:3, 5), which according to Josephus was between the ninth and eleventh hours (3-5 p.m.) Then that night the Passover meal was eaten (Exodus 12:8). [Hoehner, p. 76]

The Last Supper was a Passover

1-The synoptics explicitly state that the Last Supper was a Passover (Matthew 26:2, 17, 18, 19; Mark 14:1, 12, 14, 16; Luke 22:1, 7, 8, 13, 15).

2-It took place, as required by the Law (Deuteronomy 16:17), within the gates of Jerusalem even though it was so crowded at the time.

3-The Upper Room was made available without difficulty in keeping with the Passover custom.

4-The Last Supper was eaten at night, which was an unusual time for a meal (Matthew 26:20; Mark 14:17; John 13:30; 1 Corinthians 11:23).

5-Jesus limited Himself to the twelve rather than eating with the large circle of followers, which corresponds to the Passover custom.

6-A reclining posture at the table was for special occasion only.

7-The meal was eaten in Levitical purity (John 13:10).

8-Jesus broke the bread during the meal (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22) rather than as customarily done at the beginning of the meal.

9-Red wine was drunk, which was only for special occasions.

10-Some of the disciples thought that Judas left (John 13:29) to purchase items for the feast, which would not have been necessary if the Last Supper was a day before the Passover since he would have had the whole next day available for this purpose.

11-Some of the disciples thought that Judas left to give to the poor (John 13:29), which was customary on Passover night.

12-The Last Supper ends with the singing of a hymn, which would have been the second half of the Passover *hallel*.

13-Jesus did not return to Bethany, which was outside of Jerusalem's limit, but went to spend the night on the Mount of Olives, which was within the enlarged city limits for the purpose of the Passover feast.

The Last Supper was not a Passover

1-John's order of events would seem to indicate that the Lord's Supper was a day before the Passover:

- John 13:1, "*Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father...*"

However, this does not state that the Lord's Supper was before the Passover, but that Jesus Knew, before the Passover that His death was imminent.

- John 13:29, "*For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor.*"

But, as discussed before this verse only makes sense on the evening of Nisan 14, because if it wasn't then there would be an entire day to buy supplies for the feast.

- John 18:28, "*They led Jesus therefore from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium in order that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.*"
- John 19:14, "*Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!"*"

But, remember that we already concluded that the phrase means nothing more than the Friday of Passover week.

2-The bread spoken of is called bread [ARTOS] not unleavened bread [ADSUMA].

However, unleavened bread is often referred to and commonly called bread [ARTOS].

3-No mention is made in regards to the Last Supper of the Passover lamb and the bitter herbs used.

However, Luke 22:15 might be an instance where the Passover lamb is referred to, "*And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."*"

4-Only a single cup is denoted instead of the individual Passover cups.

However, in Jesus' day it was not uncommon to use a single cup in celebrating Passover.

5-The Passover was a traditional family meal where the father presided, but at the Last Supper, no women seemed present and Jesus presided over the meal.

However, from the text it cannot be argued for or against the presence of women.

Clearly from the evidence presented, Jesus indeed celebrated the Passover on Thursday. However, John 18:28 makes it clear that others had not yet celebrated the Passover. It becomes quite necessary to come to a better understanding of this in order to reconcile the apparent differences.

- *A possible solution:*

A possible solution to this dilemma is to consider the different ways to reckon (count) a day. Remember, that we have discussed this before under Old Testament Chronology.

1-First some reckoned a day from sunset to sunset.

- The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:18); Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:32); and the weekly Sabbath (Nehemiah 13:19) all ran from evening to evening.
- When there was a single day's ceremonial uncleanness, it ended in the evening (Leviticus 11:14; 14:46; 15:15; 17:15; 22:6; Deuteronomy 23:11)
- The order in which evening and morning are listed also would indicate that the day began with the sunset (Cf. Deuteronomy 1:33; 28:66; 1 Samuel 25:16; 1 Kings 8:29; Esther 4:16; Mark 4:27; 5:5; Luke 2:37...).

2-Second some reckoned a day from sunrise to sunrise.

- There are references of the day listed before the night (Genesis 1:14, 16, 18; 8:22; 31:40; Numbers 14:14; 2 Samuel 21:10; 1 Kings 8:59; Nehemiah 1:6; 4:9; Luke 18:7; Acts 9:24; Revelation 4:8; ...)
- There are references referring "to the same day" or "the next day" with the night being of the first day and not the beginning of the new day (Cf. Genesis 19:34; 1 Samuel 19:11; Acts 4:3; 20:7-11; 23:32...)
- Matthew 28:1 seems to be an explicit statement of a sunrise to sunrise reckoning, *"Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first {day} of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave."*

CONCLUSION

It seems evident that both reckonings were used even by the same authors within the same books. It is thought that the Galileans used a different reckoning of the Passover than the Judeans. The Galileans and Pharisees used a sunrise to sunrise reckoning, whereas the Judeans and the Sadducees used the sunset to sunset reckoning. Thus according to the synoptics, the Last Supper was a Passover meal. Since the day is to be reckoned sunrise to sunrise, the Galileans and with them Jesus and His disciples, had the Passover lamb slaughtered in the late afternoon Thursday, Nisan 14, and later that evening they ate the Passover with the unleavened bread. On the other hand, the Judean Jews who reckoned from sunset to sunset would slay the lamb on Friday afternoon, which marked the end of Nisan 14 and ate the Passover lamb with unleavened bread that night, which had become Nisan 15. Thus Jesus had consumed the Passover meal when His enemies, who had not as yet had the Passover, arrested Him. This makes good sense of John 18:28 and explains why the Jews did not want to enter the Praetorium. [Hoehner, p. 86-88]

THURSDAY	Midnight	Galilean Method Synoptic Reckoning Used by Jesus, His Disciples and Pharisees	Judean Method John's Reckoning Used by the Sadducees
	Sunrise	Nisan 14	
3-5 P.M. Passover Lamb Slain			
Last Supper	Sunset		Nisan 14
Jesus Arrested			
FRIDAY	Midnight		
6 A.M. (Jesus before Pilate) 9 A.M. (Crucifixion) 12-3 P.M. (Darkness) 3 P.M. (Jesus Died) Jesus Buried	Sunrise	Nisan 15	3-5 P.M. Passover Lamb Slain
	Sunset		Nisan 15 Passover Meal
SATURDAY	Midnight		

Consideration #6 The Year of Christ's Crucifixion

The next issue to be addressed regarding the chronology of Christ's death is the year of His crucifixion. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ is at the bedrock of Christianity and certainly is the most important death in all of history. However, it seems awkward that there is such divergence of opinion on the dating of this great event. This perhaps due to the fact that the Gospel writers, apostles and those in the early church were not so much concerned with the dating of this event as they were with the fact of it. As a result, now nearly 2,000 years removed, there are a variety of dates suggested for the crucifixion of Christ. The range consists of dates from Ad 21 to AD 36. There are advocates for nearly every year in between.

THE LIMITING OF THE DATE

It becomes quite necessary to attempt to limit the wide range of dates offered for the crucifixion of Christ. We will examine certain lines of evidence, which will aid in limiting the range of Christ's crucifixion from AD 21-36 to a specific year.

- *The officials of the crucifixion:*

There are two officials that are specifically involved in the crucifixion of Christ: Caiaphas and Pilate.

- Caiaphas: Caiaphas was high priest at the time of Christ's crucifixion and was specifically involved in the trial of Jesus (Matthew 26:3, 57; John 11:49-53; 18:13-14). Caiaphas served as high priest from AD 18 until he was deposed at the Passover of AD 37. So the crucifixion of Christ had to happen sometime between AD 18 and the Passover of AD 36.
- Pilate: The Scripture clearly identifies that Jesus was tried by the prefect/governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate (Matthew 27:2-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-19:16; Acts 4:27; 1 Timothy 6:13). Josephus (a Jewish historian) clearly outlines the tenure of Pilate's rule in Judea. He determines that Pilate's rule could not have begun before AD 25 and likely started in AD 26. He states that Pilate ruled for ten years and that Tiberius died before Pilate reached Rome. Pilate would have likely left Judea in the winter of AD 36/37. Therefore Pilate's reign as governor of Judea would have been from AD 26 until AD 36. So Christ's crucifixion must fall between those dates.

Upon examination of these two officials the range of dates for Christ's crucifixion can be narrowed a bit from AD 26 to AD 36.

- *The day of the crucifixion compared with astronomical dating:*

Having previously determined that Christ died on a Friday (see above) and that the date was likely Nisan 14, it becomes necessary to identify what years between AD 26 and 36 that Nisan 14 fell on a Friday. Although the Jewish calendar is based off a lunar month, astronomers can determine the days of the week on which Nisan 14 fell in Christ's time with great probability. [Hoehner, p. 99] Several studies have concluded that the only possible times Nisan 14 fell on a Friday were the years: AD 27, 30, 33 and 36. Of these possibilities, AD 27 seems the least likely since Nisan 14 probably fell on Thursday that year. AD 30 is also debatable, because it is possible that Nisan 14 fell on Thursday that year. The conclusions from the calculations of astronomers narrow the probable years for Christ's crucifixion to AD 30, 33, and 36 with AD 27 as an unlikely possibility.

- *The commencement and duration of Christ's ministry:*

The next step in determining the date of Christ's crucifixion is by taking the remaining years of AD 30, 33, 36 and possibly AD 27 and matching them up with the commencement and duration of Christ's earthly ministry. Once this has been done, it becomes quite clear what date is to be preferred.

- The commencement of Christ's earthly ministry: Remember, that based on Luke 3:1, "*the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*" and the conclusions from John 2:20 that the temple edifice had stood for 46 years, we determined that John the Baptist began his ministry of preaching a baptism of repentance sometime during AD 29. Since Christ began His earthly ministry shortly after John's and was in fact baptized by John, it is likely that Christ's baptism was sometime in the summer or early autumn of AD 29 and the commencement of His ministry shortly thereafter, following His 40-day temptation in the wilderness. This would place the first Passover following the commencement of His ministry in AD 30. This would certainly rule out the idea of an AD 27 or AD 30, crucifixion date.
- The duration of Christ's earthly ministry: Remember, that the most acceptable length for Christ's ministry was the three year view, which is based off the number of Passovers recorded in the Gospel of John. Since Christ's ministry began sometime in AD 29, the first Passover of Christ's ministry recorded in John 2:13 would have taken place in AD 30. A second Passover is not mentioned but is necessary based off from John 4:35 and 5:1, which would have been the Passover of AD 31. The Passover of John 6:4 would then be placed at AD 32 with the final Passover of John 11:55 and Christ's death at AD 33. The Passovers mentioned in the Gospel of John clearly reveal an earthly ministry of just over three years or up to three and a half years for Christ. Since that ministry began in AD 29, then all views except the AD 33 view for Christ's crucifixion can be ruled out. The Passover of Christ's death can be dated with most accuracy as Friday, Nisan 14 AD 33 (Friday April 3, AD 33).

THE CONFIRMATION OF THE DATE

The crucifixion date of AD 33 can be confirmed by both the historical context and by the context of Old Testament prophecy. The contribution of history has to do with the rule of Pilate, while the context of Old Testament prophecy involves the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27. Both of these seem to confirm the year of Christ's crucifixion as AD 33.

- *The contribution of history:*

The gospel accounts portray Pilate as weak and submissive to the pressure of the Jews, whereas contemporary historians such as Philo and Josephus picture Pilate as one who was greedy, inflexible, cruel, and who resorted to robbery and oppression. While this seems to be a big difference, it can be explained by the historical context.

Pilate was appointed prefect or governor of Judea by the equestrian Sejanus sometime around AD 26. Sejanus had risen to power as the prefect of the Praetorian Guard, which was the elite corps of 9,000 soldiers of the imperial palace. Around AD 26 or 27 the emperor Tiberius had retired to the island of Capri, leaving Sejanus in virtual control of the Roman government. Sejanus was an avid anti-Semite, who sought to exterminate the Jewish race.

Pilate was a friend of Sejanus and upon appointment to Judea began to enforce the policy of Sejanus. There were at least two major confrontations with the Jews. The second of these occurred when Pilate seized the temple treasury to build an aqueduct. This resulted in the prearranged killing of Jews with clubs. There is a possible reference to this event in Luke 13:1, "*Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*"

Eventually, Sejanus came under suspicion by Tiberius and was denounced by the Senate and executed. After the execution of Sejanus, Tiberius became more favorable toward the Jews. As a result, Pilate sought to disassociate himself from Sejanus and gain the favor of Tiberius. This would explain the weak backbone of Pilate at the crucifixion of Jesus. Even though he found no fault in Jesus, he allowed him to be crucified, because he could not afford an uprising among the Jews. This also explains the statement of the Jews in John 19:12, "*If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out {to be} a king opposes Caesar.*" Being that he was appointed by and closely associated with Sejanus, who opposed Caesar, Pilate could not release Jesus and be faced with further accusation of opposing Caesar by the Jews.

The historical context certainly explains the change in Pilate's attitude and the statements made by the Jews. As a result it certainly confirms the later crucifixion date of AD 33 as opposed to an earlier date of AD 30.

- *The contribution of Old Testament prophecy:*

One passage of Old Testament prophecy also confirms the year of Christ's crucifixion as AD 33. This is the prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27.

- Daniel 9:24-27, "24 *“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} . 25 “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. 26 “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. 27 “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.”*

While we will not go into great detail here, this prophecy does seem to support the AD 33 date. The context of this prophecy was probably the first year of Darius (538-537 BC) when Daniel observed that the 70-year Captivity was nearing completion. In this prophecy Daniel prophesies that 70 weeks will be set apart for Israel. The term *weeks* is best understood as a unit of 7. It likely refers to 70 weeks of years or (70 x 7 years = 490 years). When does this time period begin? It is clear that the time period begins *from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem* (Daniel 9:25). 69 of the 70 weeks of years will pass by until Messiah the Prince is cut

off. The terminology *cut off* implies death and is often used to speak of the death of an individual. In other words 69 weeks of years (483 years) will transpire from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince is put to death. The 70th week of years will occur at some point in the future.

There is only one decree issued to rebuild Jerusalem. We find that decree in Nehemiah 2:1-8. This decree from Artaxerxes to Nehemiah can be dated on Nisan 1, 444 BC. Nisan 1 would have fallen on March 4, 444 BC. So the 69 weeks of years (483 years) would begin on March 4, 444 BC. It is important to note that the prophetic year is in view here. Prophecy did not necessarily follow a lunar calendar and certainly did not follow a solar calendar. It usually followed a prophetic calendar of 360-day years (cf. Revelation 11-12). If one assumes the 360-day prophetic year, then the 69 weeks of years ($69 \times 7 = 483$ years) would equal 173,880 days. If one begins with Nisan 1, 444 BC (March 4, 444 BC) and calculates out 173,880 days, then one comes to Nisan 9, AD 33 (April 29, AD 33), which is none other than the triumphal entry date of the AD 33 crucifixion view. [Note: Harold Hoehner adjusts his date by one-day because he assumes that the new moon was not visible on March 4, 444 BC, so he places Nisan 1 on March 5, 444 BC in order to work toward a Monday March 30th triumphal entry date. He does this to avoid having a silent Wednesday during the Passion week.] Whatever the case, it seems clear that the Old Testament prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks best supports the idea of an AD 33 crucifixion date.

DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS				
69 Weeks		Church Age	70th Week	
$69 \times 7 = 483 \times 360 = 173,880$ days March 4, 444 BC = 173,880 days = March 29, AD 33				1/2 week

CONCLUSION

Although the date of the crucifixion has been greatly debated with positions anywhere from AD 21 to AD 36, the best supported date when the biblical context, historical context and astronomical calculations are evaluated is an AD 33, crucifixion date.

NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY PART 3: THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD

September 7, 2003

INTRODUCTION

The focus on this section will be from the foundation of the church at Pentecost until the death of the last Apostle (from AD 33 until the Apostle John’s death around AD 100). Luke specifically chronicles a good portion of this period in the book of Acts. He begins with the Ascension of Christ in AD 33 and moves chronologically through the early church and concludes with Paul’s first imprisonment. He begins with the commission of Christ to be His witnesses “*in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8). Luke then demonstrates how the church spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and then throughout the Mediterranean world. The following is an outline of the chronology of the church in the book of Acts:

AD 33-34		AD 33/34 to 46/47			AD 47 to 61				
The Witness in Jerusalem		The Witness in Judea & Samaria			The Witness to the End of the Earth				
Acts 1:1-8:4		Acts 8:5-12:25			Acts 13:1-28:31				
The Beginning of the Church at Pentecost	The Progress of the Church under Peter	The Witness of Philip	The Conversion of Saul	The Witness of Peter	1 st Mission Journey	Jerusalem Council	2 nd Mission Journey	3 rd Mission Journey	Trip to Rome

We will examine the early progress of the church in Jerusalem along with the expansion to Judea and Samaria. Then we will examine the life and ministry of the apostle Paul as the church expands throughout the Mediterranean world. We will conclude our study with the destruction of Jerusalem and the ministry of the last apostle, John up to around AD 100.

THE EARLY PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM [AD 33]

Ten days after Christ’s ascension, the promised Holy Spirit descended upon the believers gathered in Jerusalem. Although there were at least 500 followers of Christ that Jesus appeared to after the resurrection (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:6), only about 120 were present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:15). It is safe to say that the others likely returned to their homes outside of Jerusalem. The initial focus of Acts is upon the ministry of Peter in Jerusalem. Luke records three sermons by Peter: 1) to the Jerusalem visitors (Acts 2:14-40); 2) to those who observed the healing of a lame man in the temple area (Acts 3:12-26); 3) to the Jewish religious leaders (Acts 4:8-12). After the initial sermon in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost, about 3,000 people came to faith in Christ. Acts 4:33 gives a good summary of the early emphasis of the church, “*And with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus...*” Certainly the early church thrived in Jerusalem. However, it also met with a great deal of opposition from many of the Hebrew priests and elders and even from some of the Roman-appointed civil rulers in Jerusalem. Although there was opposition, the church still grew. Acts 6:7 tells us, “*The word of God kept on spreading and the number of disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem...*”

THE EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH INTO JUDEA & SAMARIA [AD 33]

The ministry of Stephen seemed to enrage the religious establishment. He was brought before the council and accused of blasphemy and stoned to death (Acts 7). Stephen is the first recorded Christian martyr. The killing of Stephen was the first in a series of persecutions against the Christians in Jerusalem. This persecution caused the early Christians to scatter throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. The exception to this was the apostles, as they seemed to make Jerusalem the home base of the early church (Acts 8:1). However the persecution worsened as Saul began to ravage the church moving from house to house and dragging men and women off to prison (Acts 8:3). In Acts 8 we see that the emphasis moves to ministry in Samaria with a focus on the evangelist, Philip. Philip was a key figure in bringing the Gospel to Samaria and later to the Judean coastal plain from Azotus to Caesarea. Regardless of the widespread persecution, the church continued to preach the Gospel and expand. This expansion was rapid as it had not even been a full year since the foundation of the church. Some have suggested that the first 8 chapters of Acts need more than a few months or a year to take place. Thus, they either push back the date of Paul's conversion or push forward the date of Christ's crucifixion. However, it seems best to hold a view of explosive growth and expansion of the church in its first year. The news of the resurrection, the power of the Holy Spirit and the bold witness of the apostles would clearly cause rapid expansion. In fact the first day of the church's foundation, 3,000 souls came to Christ and were added to the church. It did not take long for the church to spread.

THE EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH [AD 33/34-AD 100]

The majority focus of this section is on the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul. It is primarily through his ministry and missionary journeys that the church was able to expand throughout the Mediterranean world.

The Preparation of Paul: Acts 9 & 11; Galatians 1:13-2:10 (AD 33/34 to AD 47)

Paul originally Saul and persecutor of the church sought permission from the Sanhedrin to go to Damascus and bring back the Christians for persecution. It was while he was on his way to Damascus that he was blinded by his confrontation with the risen Lord. It was three days later through the ministry of Ananias that Paul was baptized. Paul then spent several days in Damascus with the disciples there (Acts 9:17-19). After escaping from Damascus (Acts 9:25), Paul went to Arabia (Galatians 1:16-17) and later returned to Damascus (Galatians 1:17). It was not until three years after his conversion, when he first went up to Jerusalem for a period of 15 days (Acts 9:26-29; Galatians 1:18-20). After his Jerusalem visit, Paul was brought to Caesarea (Acts 9:30) and then sent to Tarsus in the region of Syria & Cilicia for about 10 years (Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:21). It was at this time that Barnabas brought Paul to the church in Antioch for about one year (Acts 11:26). Paul would make a second visit to Jerusalem some fourteen years after his conversion. This was a famine relief visit as the church in Antioch sought to help the church in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 11:27-30; Galatians 2:1-2). During these first several years of Paul's Christian life, he would spend time being prepared for the missionary journey's that would soon come.

Paul's First Missionary Journey: Acts 13-14 (AD 48-49)

In late AD 47 or early AD 48 (possibly in the spring), Paul and Barnabas along with John Mark were sent out by the church in Antioch on the first of a series of missionary journeys. They set sail for Cyprus, the island homeland of Barnabas. They would spend time traveling about and preaching the word of God in the synagogues (Acts 13:5). Paul and his companions would then sail to Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Once they landed on Asia Minor, Paul and his associates journeyed 8 miles inland to Perga in Pamphylia, where John Mark left the Missionary party and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Paul and Barnabas would continue northward about 100 miles to Antioch of Pisidia in the central plateau of Asia Minor. There they began evangelizing the southern region of the province of Galatia. After being driven from Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas traveled 80 miles in a southeasterly direction to Iconium (Acts 13:51). When a threat was made against their lives, they fled to Lystra. After Jews from Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia made their way to Lystra, Paul and Barnabas journeyed to the secluded city of Derbe located about 70 miles southeast of Lystra. After some time, Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, encouraging the disciples and appointing elders (Acts 14:21-23). After they returned to Perga, Paul and Barnabas would set sail back to Antioch arriving in the late summer or early autumn of AD 49. It is likely, after their arrival back in Antioch, that the Apostle Paul penned his epistle to the Galatians in AD 49.

The Jerusalem Council: Acts 15:1-35 (AD 49)

The Judaizing controversy erupted forcing Paul to visit Jerusalem a third time. This visit is termed the Jerusalem council. The decision at the council opened a new era in the expansion of the church. The barrier between the circumcised Jew and the uncircumcised Gentile had been broken. Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch to teach and preach the word of the Lord (Acts 15:30-35).

Paul's Second Missionary Journey: Acts 15:36-18:22 (AD 50-52)

Paul selected Silas to accompany him on this second journey. They likely set out sometime in the spring of AD 50. They traveled by land to Paul's hometown Tarsus. After that they traveled to Derbe and then to Lystra, where they were joined by Timothy. After passing through Phrygia and Galatia, they finally came to Troas. Joined by the narrator, Luke (use of "we" in Acts 16:11), Paul and his companions sailed across the Aegean Sea to Macedonia at Neapolis. Paul went up the road about 8 miles to Philippi where he started a church in Lydia's house and Paul and Silas were briefly jailed. Leaving Philippi, Paul and his associates traveled about 100 miles to Thessalonica. Paul had a brief ministry until his preaching incited a mob against them. To avoid further trouble, Paul and Silas traveled by night to Berea. Leaving Silas and Timothy to minister in Berea, Paul was escorted to the sea, where he took a ship to Athens about 200 miles south. Paul waited on Timothy and Silas and spent time preaching in the Jewish Synagogue and the public market. He then left for Corinth some sixty miles west. Paul spent a year and half teaching the word of God in Corinth during this second missionary journey (Acts 18:11). An important church was established there with the help of Silas, Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla. It was during his time in Corinth about AD 51 that Paul wrote both 1 & 2 Thessalonians in order to correct some misunderstandings. Just before Paul's departure from Corinth, he appeared before the proconsul of Achaia, Gallio (Acts 18:12ff). Paul's appearance before Gallio whose term can

be dated to AD 51-52 serves as the fixed date for the life of Paul. One can work forward and backward from this date in order to determine a chronology for the life of Paul. After this, Paul left for Ephesus along with Aquila and Priscilla. Paul's stay was brief as he soon departed for Caesarea (and likely Jerusalem) and then finally returning to Antioch (Acts 18:22) probably in the late fall or early winter of AD 52.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey: Acts 18:23-21:16 (AD 53-57)

Paul embarked on his third journey from Antioch likely in the early spring of AD 53. Once again he headed north to visit the churches of southern Galatia and Phrygia that he had established on his first journey. However, his ultimate destination was certainly Ephesus. Paul spent about three years ministering in Ephesus (Acts 20:31). During his time of teaching (about two years) at the school of Tyrannus, "*all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.*" (Acts 19:10) It is also likely that during this time the churches of the Lycus Valley (Hierapolis, Laodicea, and Colossae) were founded. During his ministry in Ephesus (about AD 56) Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians as he responded to some troubling reports that he had received. After three years of ministry in Ephesus, Paul went to Macedonia (Acts 20:1) and likely visited Philippi and Thessalonica. While visiting in Macedonia in the autumn of AD 56, Paul wrote the second epistle to the Corinthians. Shortly after that he traveled to Corinth for a visit. While in Corinth, Paul wrote a letter to the church in Rome to inform them of his intended visit. Paul headed north again back to Macedonia and set sail from Philippi to Troas. Paul traveled along the coast, stopping in Miletus long enough to bid farewell to the Ephesian elders. He continued by sea until coming to Caesarea. After several days at Caesarea, Paul ascended the hill country to Jerusalem in late May of AD 57 for the feast of Pentecost (Acts 20:16).

Paul's Trials, Imprisonment & Trip to Rome: Acts 21:17-28:16 (AD 57-60)

Upon his return to Jerusalem, the brethren welcomed Paul, and he shared the results of his missionary travels with them (Acts 20:17-19). However the Jews began to stir up trouble and accused him of "teaching men against the people" and defiling the temple by bringing Gentiles into the inner courts. (Acts 21:28). The riot that ensued in the temple area brought about the involvement of the Roman tribune and Paul was arrested. After Paul was taken into custody, he was allowed to plead his case before the high priests and the Sanhedrin who were divided in opinion. The tribune once again placed him under custody, pending further examination. After learning of a plot to assassinate Paul, he was sent by night to Caesarea. There, Paul was tried by Felix, the governor and imprisoned for two years (commonly called Paul's Caesarean Imprisonment). Festus, the successor to Felix, also examined Paul, but Paul requested as a Roman citizen, for his fate to be determined by Caesar's tribunal (Acts 25:10). After hearing Paul's defense, King Agrippa II ordered that Paul be escorted to Rome for a final decision of his case.

Under guard, Paul along with Luke ("*we*" Acts 27:1) and other prisoners set sail from Caesarea probably in the late summer or early autumn of AD 59. They traveled north to Sidon and then along the southern coast of Asia Minor to Myra. After securing another ship bound for Italy they headed off for Crete. By the time they reached Fair Havens on Crete, "the fast" (Day of Atonement, October 5, AD 59) was over and it was a dangerous time to be traveling on the

Mediterranean (cf. Acts 27:9). Ignoring Paul's counsel, they set out for Phoenix a better protected harbor on Crete. Unfortunately the winds caught the ship and they spent fourteen days adrift in the storm-tossed waters of the Mediterranean. They finally approached the island of Malta, but the ship ran aground on a reef and was broken up by the pounding waves (Acts 27:27-44). After spending the winter there (probably November to January; cf. Acts 28:11), they secured passage on an Alexandrian ship headed for Rome. They stopped along the way at Syracuse (on Sicily) and at Rhegium (at the toe of Italy's boot) and finally disembarked at Puteoli. From there they traveled by land up to Rome and arrived probably late in February of AD 60.

Paul's First Roman Imprisonment: Acts 28:17-31 (AD 60-62)

Rather than being confined in prison, Paul was placed under house arrest. He remained in rented quarters chained to and under the supervision of a member of the Praetorian guard (Acts 28:16, 23, 30). This allowed Paul a great deal of interaction with others and permitted visitors. During this first Roman imprisonment, Paul wrote the Prison Epistles of Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon. Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon were written about the same time (probably the fall of AD 60) and sent by way of Tychicus and Onesimus. It seems that Philippians was written a bit later and possibly toward the end of Paul's imprisonment (probably late AD 61). Luke records that Paul was imprisoned in Rome for at least 2 full years and continued to preach the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly (Acts 28:30-31). Paul's ministry while imprisoned in Rome was evidently quite successful for his witness penetrated the Praetorian guard and even Caesar's household (Philippians 1:12-13; 4:22).

Paul's Life After the Events in Acts: (AD 62-68)

Paul's life and ministry after his first Roman imprisonment is somewhat of a puzzle and not real easy to put together. One must rely on clues from the Pastoral Epistles of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus in order to piece this time period together. Since Paul had requested that Philemon prepare him a lodging (Philemon 22), it seems logical that Paul first headed for Asia Minor after his release. The logical route would take Paul by sea to Ephesus first and then along the Meander River to Colossae. It seems evident that the next place that Paul visited was the area of Macedonia after leaving Timothy in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). While in Macedonia, Paul likely fulfilled his desire to visit Philippi (Philippians 1:25; 2:24). At this point, Paul's travels are purely speculative. He may have revisited Ephesus at this time. It is believed that at this point in his ministry that Paul realized a journey to Spain (Romans 15:28). Clement of Rome in his Epistle to the Corinthians mentioned that Paul journeyed to the extreme limit of the west, which is understood as a reference to Spain. The Muratorian Canon (AD 170) also mentions a journey of Paul to Spain. If Paul made it to Spain, then it would be logical for him to visit Crete on the way back, leaving Titus there to appoint elders. Paul was apparently on his way to Nicopolis for the winter, when he wrote Titus (Titus 3:12). It is possible that he made one last visit to Corinth before his arrest (2 Timothy 4:20). It seems clear that Paul must have been in Troas at the time of his arrest, which would be why he left his cloak, books and parchments there (2 Timothy 4:13). Paul was arrested and taken to Rome (2 Timothy 1:8, 16-17). He was treated much more harshly during this imprisonment (2 Timothy 2:9) and anticipated his death as the outcome (2 Timothy 4:6-8). Paul likely wrote 2 Timothy in the late summer or fall of AD 67 as he requested

Timothy to join him before winter (2 Timothy 4:21). Paul's death occurred in the spring of AD 68.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE [AD 68-100]

The fall of Jerusalem to the Roman legions in AD 70 brought the early apostolic age to a close. Peter had been martyred under the Neronian persecution of AD 64. Paul too was gone. There were some apostles, including John, whose ministries extended beyond the date of Jerusalem's destruction, but—in a very real sense—AD 70 marked the end of this era. [J. Carl Laney, *Concise Bible Atlas*, p. 242]

The life and ministry of the apostle John continued after the destruction of Jerusalem and is worthy of special mention. Irenaeus wrote that John resided in Ephesus, where he served as an elder and wrote his Gospel, probably around AD 85. John wrote his three Epistles from Ephesus around AD 85-90. Later in the fifteenth year of Domitian's reign, he was exiled to the island of Patmos from where he wrote the book of Revelation around AD 95. John was liberated when Domitian was assassinated in AD 96. After his Patmos exile, John resided once again in Ephesus and spent the closing years of his life visiting and ministering to the Asian churches. [Cf. Laney, p. 244-245] John ministered in and around Ephesus until his death sometime around AD 98 to 100.

A CHRONOLOGICAL CHART OF THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD

[Adapted from Harold Hoehner's Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age]

THE EARLY PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM [AD 33]		
Christ's Crucifixion		Friday April 3, 33
Pentecost	Acts 2	Sunday May 24, 33
Peter's Second Sermon before the Sanhedrin	Acts 3:1-4:31	AD 33
Death of Ananias & Sapphira	Acts 4:32-5:11	AD 33
Peter brought before the Sanhedrin	Acts 5:12-42	AD 33
Seven men of good reputation selected	Acts 6:1-7	AD 33
Stephen Martyred	Acts 6:8-7:60	AD 33
THE EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH INTO JUDEA & SAMARIA [AD 33]		
Saul's persecution of the church	Acts 8:1-3	AD 33
Philip's ministry in Samaria & Judea	Acts 8:4-40	AD 33
THE EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH [AD 33/34-AD 100]		
<i>Paul's Preparation</i>		<i>[AD 33 TO AD 47]</i>
Paul's Conversion	Acts 9:1-7	Late AD 33 or early AD 34
Paul in Damascus & Arabia	Acts 9:8-25; Gal. 1:16-17	AD 33-36
Paul's first visit to Jerusalem	Acts 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18-20	AD 36/37
Paul in Tarsus & Syria-Cilicia	Acts 9:30; Gal. 1:21	AD 37
Peter ministers to the Gentiles	Acts 10:1-11:18	AD 40-41?
Barnabas sent to Antioch	Acts 11:19-24	AD 41?
Paul went to Antioch	Acts 11:25-26	AD 43?
Agabus predicts a famine	Acts 11:27-28	AD 44?
Agrippa's persecution, James martyred	Acts 12:1-23	AD 44
Book of <i>James</i> penned by the Lord's brother		AD 44
Famine relief visit to Jerusalem	Acts 11:30; Gal. 2:1-10	Fall AD 47
Paul still in Antioch	Acts 12:25-13:1	Fall AD 47 to Spring AD 48
<i>Paul's First Missionary Journey</i>	Acts 13-14	<i>[AD 48-49]</i>
- Departure from Antioch		April AD 48
-Cyprus		April to June AD 48
-Pamphylia		First half of July AD 48
-Pisidian Antioch		Mid July to mid September AD 48
-Iconium		October AD 48 to February AD 49
-Lystra and Derbe		March to Mid June AD 49
-Return to visit the churches		Mid June through August AD 49
-Return to Antioch of Syria		September AD 49
<i>Galatians</i> written from Antioch	Acts 14:28	Fall of AD 49
<i>Jerusalem Council</i>	Acts 15:1-29	<i>Late AD 49 or early AD 50</i>
Paul back in Antioch	Acts 15:30-35	Winter AD 49/50
<i>Paul's Second Missionary Journey</i>	Acts 15:36-18:22	<i>[AD 50-52]</i>
-Departure from Antioch		April AD 50
-Syria and Cilicia		April AD 50
-Lystra and Derbe		May AD 50
-Iconium		Last of May to Mid June AD 50

-Pisidian Antioch		Mid June to early July AD 50
-Antioch to Troas		July AD 50
-Philippi		August to October AD 50
-Thessalonica		November AD 50 to January AD 51
-Berea		February AD 51
-Athens		Last of February to Mid March AD 51
-Arrival at Corinth		Early spring AD 51
-Silas & Timothy arrive from Berea		Spring AD 51
-1 <i>Thessalonians</i> written from Corinth		Early summer AD 51
-2 <i>Thessalonians</i> written from Corinth		Late AD 51 or early AD 52
-Departure from Corinth		Early September AD 52
-Passing through Ephesus		Mid September AD 52
-Arrival at Caesarea & likely Jerusalem		Late September or early October AD 52
-Return to Antioch		November AD 52
Paul's stay in Antioch	Acts 18:22-23	Winter AD 52/53
<i>Paul's Third Missionary Journey</i>	Acts 18:23-21:16	[AD 53-57]
-Departure from Antioch		Spring AD 53
-Visiting the Galatian Churches		Spring to Summer AD 53
-Arrival at Ephesus (ministered for 3 years)		September AD 53
-1 <i>Corinthians</i> written from Ephesus		Early Spring AD 56
-Departure from Ephesus (riot)		Spring AD 56
-Troas		May AD 56
-Arrival in Macedonia		June AD 56
-2 <i>Corinthians</i> written from Macedonia		Fall AD 56
-Departure from Macedonia		November AD 56
-Arrival in Corinth		November AD 56
- <i>Romans</i> written from Corinth		Winter AD 56/57
-Departure from Corinth		February AD 57
-Philippi		April AD 57
-Troas		April AD 57
-Travels along the coast of Asia Minor		April AD 57
-Ephesian elders meet Paul at Miletus		April/May AD 57
-Travel to Caesarea		May AD 57
-Caesarea to Jerusalem		Late May AD 57
-Meeting with James in Jerusalem	Acts 21:17-25	Late May AD 57
<i>Paul's Arrest, Trials & Trip to Rome</i>	Acts 21:26-28:29	[AD 57-60]
Paul's arrest and trial before Felix	Acts 21:26-24:21	May/June AD 57
Paul before Felix & Drusilla	Acts 24:24-26	June AD 57
Paul's Caesarean Imprisonment	Acts 24:27	Summer AD 57 to summer AD 59
The book of <i>Matthew</i> likely written		About AD 58?
Paul's trial before Festus	Acts 25:7-12	Summer AD 59
Paul's trial before Agrippa	Acts 26	Summer AD 59
Paul's Voyage to Rome	Acts 27:1-28:29	Summer AD 59 to February AD 60
<i>Paul's First Roman Imprisonment</i>	Acts 28:30	[AD 60-62]
<i>Ephesians</i> written		Fall AD 60
<i>Colossians</i> written		Fall AD 60

<i>Philemon</i> written	Fall AD 60
<i>Philippians</i> written	Late AD 61 or early AD 62
<i>Mark</i> written	About AD 60-61
<i>Luke</i> written	Late AD 61
<i>Acts</i> written	Early AD 62
James the Lord's Brother Martyred	AD 62
<i>Paul's Life after the Events in Acts</i>	[AD 62-68]
Paul in Ephesus and Colossae	Spring to Fall AD 62
Paul goes to Macedonia	Fall AD 62
<i>1 Timothy</i> written from Macedonia	Fall AD 62
? <i>Titus possibly written from Macedonia</i>	Fall AD 62?
? <i>Paul in Nicopolis</i>	Winter AD 62/63?
Paul in Asia Minor	Spring AD 63 to Spring AD 64
Peter writes 1 & 2 Peter from Rome	AD 63/64
?Paul possibly goes to Spain	Spring AD 64 to Spring AD 66
Christians persecuted; Peter Martyred	Summer AD 64
Paul in Crete	Summer AD 66
Paul in Asia Minor	Summer to Fall AD 66
? <i>Titus could have been written here</i>	Summer to Fall AD 66?
? <i>Paul in Nicopolis</i>	Winter AD 66/67?
Paul in Macedonia and Greece	Spring to Fall AD 67
Paul arrested in Troas & brought to Rome	Fall AD 67
<i>Hebrews</i> written	Fall AD 67 to Spring AD 68
<i>2 Timothy</i> written from Rome	Fall AD 67 to Spring AD 68
Paul's death	Spring AD 68
<i>Jude</i> written	AD 68
THE CONCLUSION OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE [AD 68-100]	
Destruction of Jerusalem	September 2, AD 70
Gospel of <i>John</i> written from Ephesus	About AD 85
<i>1, 2 & 3 John</i> written from Ephesus	About AD 85-90
John exiled to the Island of Patmos	AD 95
The book of <i>Revelation</i> written by John	AD 95
John liberated after Domitian's death	AD 96
John ministers in and around Ephesus	AD 96 to AD 98/100
The Apostle John dies of old age	Around AD 98/100