

Chronology as viewed in the Concordant Version

CHRONOLOGY. WHAT IT IS.

CHRONOLOGY deals with the order of events as they have occurred in the course of time. It is thus an enquiry into events of history as given in ancient records. The objective of chronology is to translate the references of these records, in such a way as to express for them the sequence of their occurrences in time.

The subject is not confined to the Scriptures, but, in the Scriptures we have the most compendious record of the events of any nation. Moreover, the scriptural records have the unique character and they give events as they are related to the ways of leue, and as they lead forward to the coming of the One by Whom He is to reach His great purpose, not alone in regard to the earth, but also for the universe.

Chronology, in the Scriptures, is then in a class to itself, and, if for that reason alone, it should be treated with the full respect which corresponds to its worth as a feature in God's inspired word. Such an estimate ought to wean believers from formulating dates which they claim for significant events of prophecy. Such dates are really based upon extrapolation, and not upon the time statements in God's word. They form no part of chronology. Moreover, every date must be from the actual statements of the event, as given in the Scriptures. Less than this is not admissible grounds for an item to be included in a scriptural chronology.

ITS LIMITATIONS

The chronology of the Scriptures does not contain, nor does it entertain, any feature or aspect based upon extrapolation, or comparison or duplication. There can be no support for such features from any theory in which days are used to represent years. These notions are entirely outside the field of those chronological details which rest upon definite scriptural records and statements akin thereto.

That reflection which can claim to have spiritual quality will discern that the ways of our God are the basis of the chronology of His word. Then that such chronology is confined within the compass of three eons. Yet, moreover, its major role is around the first man, the one who was a living soul, to indicate when and where he is related to God's ways. The still greater value of chronology is to lead forward, amidst the discrepancies and failure of leue's own people, to the birth of Him Who is the Second Man, the life-giving spirit, and then to His death, resurrection and His ascension into heaven.

Beyond the point of His rousing and ascension, the chronology of the Scriptures becomes a blank, and it does not begin again to function until seven years before He, Who is the Messiah of Israel, will come again. Of that hour no man knoweth (Mt. 24:36, Mk. 13:32).

Indeed, we have a consecutive chronology between these two, the first man and the Second Man. In this we discern the value of the chronology of the Scriptures. We see what God's ways mean, first for the earth and then for the universe. The location of these two in the stream of time, and of the events around them, is thus made clear. In this ways they are given actuality which makes them purposive in God's ways.

SOME DETAILS EXPLAINED

There is need for a brief explanation of the chronology indicated in the margin of the Concordant Version of the Hebrew Scriptures, for it differs considerably from that shown in our Authorised Version, which chronology was compiled by Ussher. Especially in chapters five and eleven of Genesis are details of some of our verses based upon the text of the Greek Version of the Hebrew Scriptures. This version is usually termed the Septuagint.

For the chapters of the period prior to the Deluge, and those of the centuries following, which lead to Abraham, the figures of the Greek Version allow a much more orderly view of the sequence of events, as well

as of their development, than do those of the Hebrew text. Much consideration of the matter suggests that this result is a sufficient reason for preferring the figures of the Greek Version, and the name Cainan in Luke 3:36 would seem to make it conclusive.

Though we give dating by years, we are well aware that there are weaknesses in *any* chronology. At best the years must have only a relative value, yet they can afford aid by adding vividness to the facts of history detailed in the Scriptures. Even so, when from the years of Scripture history we pass over to secular history dates, there must always be some uncertainty. In keeping with the particular outlook of the C.V. upon the Scriptures, every date is based upon a distinct statement in the Scriptures. For the foregoing reason we have formulated our own range of years right down to B.C. 1 (so-called) and on to the Crucifixion, yet without intruding that term or name.

Our procedure simplifies the problem, reducing it to one detail, that of changing over into A.D. figures. This is really a matter which is outside the Scriptures, for it arises only because the Word of God is completed, and we are living outside the range of events which directly contribute anything to the subject of chronology. Moreover, any change to A.D. reckoning is not required by the Scriptures, but rather by what has come to be a matter of custom.

Whatever year of secular chronology may be decided upon as the equivalent to Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, we still have in our C.V. figures a scriptural chronology based entirely on statements therein. If B.C. 4 of secular dates be equal to our A.D. 1, then the addition of 4 to 1957 (the present year of writing) makes it 1961.

We can also use Messiah's age of 30 (Luke 3:23), and this together with the length of the ministry of our Lord gives us the year of His death on the cross. This period seems to be two and a half years rather than three and a half, for John's account gives us only three Passovers in His ministry, see 2:13, 6:4 and 11:55.

The festival of John 5:1 would require to be a passover in order to give the four Passovers called for by the customary idea of the length of His ministry. But this reference would appear to be definitely to the feast of Purim. This we confirm from John 4:35, which says it is still four months to harvest, Harvest was pentecost (Sivan 6). Thus, four months would be some date around the middle of the month Sebat, with Purim on the 14/15 of Adar, then through Abib and Zif into Sivan, for the harvest.

There are two critical points in the range of scriptural chronology. Otherwise the Scriptures state what amounts to a consecutive record. The first point is from the leaving of Egypt up to the Judges. Though we term this critical, yet the figures and details are really available for it. With a little attention the details can be gathered together, and then their contribution to the chronology can be readily assessed.

The other critical point is from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Nebuchadnezzar's captivity commenced. There are no dates by which to go forward from this point, except the seventy year period, and then through sixty-nine of the seventy sevens revealed by Gabriel to Daniel. In this way the year of HIS birth was made known. It was in the year 483 of this period of 490 that this same Gabriel appeared, first to Zachariah and then to Mary, announcing the birth of John and the Lord Jesus respectively. This appearing of Gabriel was in the year which the C.V. reckoning makes to be 5465, and this would be our B.C. 1, did we calculate in that manner.

We exhibit, in the following extracts, some of our results. As a concession we show our B.C. dates along with the Adm dates:

	B.C.	Adm.
Adam	5465	1
Deluge	3203	2262
Call of Abram (Passover date)	1996	3469
Joseph's death	1710	3755
Sinai (Pentecost date)	1566	3899
Entry into Land (Passover)	1526	3939

David, year one of reign	1014	4451
Captivity (4th. Jehoiakim)	553	4912
Start of Seventy Sevens (= First year of Cyrus)	483	4982
Gabriel appears to Mary	1	5465
	A.D.	
Birth of Christ (Booths)	1	5466
Ministry starts (Booths)	30	5495
Crucifixion (Passover)	33	5498

It is entirely without desire to differ from others that we present these figures. We commend them only because they come from the Word of God, ignoring any claims.

B.C. or A.D. FIGURES?

The customary method used to state chronological dates has been developed from a most unnatural view, one which does not at all corresponds with reality. To date prior events toward a later datum indicates how novel has been the approach to the question. Moreover, in framing such a scheme, what the historian says, this has not been wholly relied upon, for he, from his prior position, had no awareness of the event which has to come to be made the anchor for the events of history. In other words, those who formulate the order of events in time also they do so on a basis of translating the references made by the ancient recorders.

But these records, in a very large measure, lack the definite value which present day investigators give to them. Whether aided by Berosus or Manetho, this is the case, and Ptolemy is little better, even though he supports his data by astronomical references, using the eclipse or an acronych, the rising of a star at sunset. The certainty claimed for such work entitles us to ask the question: Why then are there mistakes in the identifying of the particular eclipse referred to by the ancient record? The scholars have debated this matter and still do so.

The synchronisms of any two records lack value until a common base can be established. And the best of these writers do not actually afford the position for real dead reckoning. Always must there be some interpolating and extrapolating around the comparisons of the two synchronisms. The work cannot have any specific starting occurrence, and should always be related within its own boundaries. That record which can speak of an actual beginning, and can lead forward to its own specific issue, that must be accorded the premier place. This is only true of the Scriptures. They lead from the making of the first Adam and on to the crucifixion of the Lord from heaven. Thus the chronology of the Scriptures is related to purpose. This requires the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The inevitable method for chronology should be the adding of years from a beginning. This gives a progressive total, always ready for further additions. To decrease toward a fixed point cannot be really satisfactory. It intimates concerning itself that it is a makeshift, chosen due to the importance which had come to be assigned to a certain event, now made to be the datum. When that fixed point comes to be the basis of a doubted synchronism, then is it not being plainly said that the point was not adopted contemporary, or there would be no inaccuracy? The point was chosen long afterwards, for it was not until early in the sixth century that the A.D. year was fixed, and it took two further centuries to come into general use.

This position is telling us that the Scriptures are really the only writings and records capable to decide when A.D. would be and could be. Secular sources cannot do so, for they know little or nothing of the event, and they had to be told its value. In point of fact, the Scriptures do not use such a method for chronology, for they are too close to reality to do so. They knew the beginning and they add the years succeeding.

When the Scriptures reach the point whence adding the years of history are laid aside, then they tell how many years to add before the birth of the Anointed was to ensue. They do not have to wait until the event is past and its value becomes discerned. Then the Scriptures also tell the synchronism of this year, but secular sources fail to recognize even that year with any precision, for they vary up to eight years in their identity. The problem is not one which belongs to the Scriptures!

The Scriptures do not use the unreal method which has come to be the vogue. Nor should those who believe the Scriptures. In consonance with the Scriptures, the C.V. begins from Adam and on to the death of Christ. Then we await that point when God again reckons time and events, and His word does indeed, speak also of that point!

THE SEVENTY SEVENS

We have spoken already of these years, and we have pointed to them as the only means by which chronology can be continued beyond the fourth year of Jehoiakim. After the seventy years at Babylon, other dates have a broken sequence, and cannot be related so as to give a continuous reckoning. We must not follow the resources which it is usual to employ. Ptolemy's canons are far too unreliable for our purpose. Because of the use of these canons, the start and the conclusion of Daniel's seventy sevens have each been made to be a most difficult matter, bordering on the inconclusive.

Our results must keep rigidly within the Scriptures. If we take any data from an outside source, then by that amount and degree do we fail to have a scriptural chronology, having consecutive value. Yet, if our data be wholly and truly from the Scriptures, then we have the simplest of situations, resting on the bedrock of God's Word.

The start of the seventy sevens of years lies in the first year of Cyrus. And this year lay almost immediately to hand when Gabriel spoke to Daniel in response to Daniel's prayer to leue. From the first year of Cyrus ensues the first seven sevens, that is, forty-nine years. These bring us to the point when Jerusalem was restored and built, square and salient. These years had, indeed been eras of constraint.

Following these are sixty-two sevens. Here we can begin to boggle, if we are so minded! But, if we attend to what is said in Daniel 9:25 we will see that the years are unto a person. One Who is Messiah, the Governor. They go forward to, and include, the year in which His birth is announced. And Gabriel, who told Daniel of this matter, was the one who came to announce to Mary that which would fulfill his words to Daniel. Simeon and Anna likewise, knew from such a Scripture that His birth was at hand. And how discerningly each of them spoke in regard to Him.

Our Lord was born as the Christ, John the Baptist was filled with holy spirit before his birth, but His very generation was by the holy spirit. After His coming in flesh, He was never subjected to any rite that made Him to be Christ. He was Christ at His birth. We read of "the birth of Jesus Christ" (Mt. 1:18), "where Christ is born" (Mt. 2:4). The messengers told the Shepherds that "today was brought forth to you a Saviour, Who is Christ, the Lord" (Luke 2:11). The great truth is that Jesus is the Christ, not that He became such when He entered His active ministry.

All the foregoing details confirm that we are correct when we find Gabriel intimating the year of Messiah's birth to Daniel. There is, however, the possible thought that the remaining books of the Hebrew Scriptures, that is the so-called Minor Prophets, may supply some details for the chronology of this period. Again, what of the books Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther? These latter three books are certainly contemporary with matters of the period which follows the return from the deportation, but only Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, of the prophets are in this same period.

Whilst there are references in Haggai and Zechariah which enter into the history of the period, and even date certain matters to the reign of Persian kings, yet they remain isolated from the general drift of the years of the Hebrew Scriptures. Such specific time statements as are given do not relate the events to the overall sequence of years. Thus they are without value for formulating the chronology of the particular period following the return from the deportation.

In his prophecy Zechariah does lead forward to a nearer view of the overthrow of the second kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream-Image. The operations of Alexander, the Great, are there put into focus, but not in any sense which states the year suitable for a chronology. This is quite notable, for it is most agreeable to the position of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, in which there are references to several Persian kings, and the years in their reigns, but such years remain in that isolated state which does not fasten them into the general drift of Hebrew chronology.

This situation is in thorough agreement with our use of the years intimated to Daniel by Gabriel. The forward movement of the years to the coming of Messiah, at His birth, were taken care of by the words of Gabriel. The year was not left for history to formulate or show, but it was announced well before, by leue Who alone knew the hour, even as also is true in regard to His coming again to mount Olivet.

We are familiar with the details of secular history as it is given in the several writers of the subject, whether of Babylon, or Greece or Egypt. In each there is the same lack and uncertainty around the Persian period of world domination. And this applies not alone to the length of that period, but also in respect of the kings, both Median and Persian.

The records of this period, and consequently the count of time to which they are related, were lost amidst the Greek invasion, and no historian can supply them. Ptolemy, the Astronomer and Geographer, of the second century A.D. who lived in Egypt, he sought to supply details for the deficiency, when writing of Persian history. His claim was that he supported his writings by eclipses. It is, however, fully evident that his canons are without value to history. Yet the present chronological position for the period is based upon Ptolemy's canons. It is, of course, quite outside our plan to seek any aid from the historians. The inspired Word of God must give us the information.

EZRA — NEHEMIAH

Because there is one writer of much note and loving regard, who deals with the scriptural side of these matters of which we have written above, we will speak further of the Ezra-Nehemiah period and his particular treatment of these books.

The writer in question adopts the idea that these books shall be reversed as to their sequence, making Nehemiah to be the commencing book, and consequently the building of the wall to be the initial work. This is seriously proposed, and we would therefore offer a few comments in order to make clear that we have examined the two books with this thought in mind, but we have been unable to accept the results into our chronology.

In the Hebrew canon, these two books were regarded as one, and there does not appear to be any valid reason to doubt that this is the correct view. Though in our A.V. we have them separated, in which they follow the treatment of the Septuagint, yet their order was, without doubt, as our heading. The matter in the two books is in sequence, when in that order.

What is required is that we make ourselves fully acquainted with the details given in the book, and, at the same time, ignore outside sources of possible contacts. Then the details will be found to fill out to an intelligent outline, and one which is agreeable to other parts of God's Word.

Despite the first response to the decree of Cyrus (see 1:1-3), those who went with Zerobabbel seem to have gone each to their own city (3:1). They did not actually settle in Jerusalem, but rather in their allotments. This matter of inhabitants for the city of Jerusalem came up some years later (see Neh. 11:1). Then it was settled by lot that one of ten should be brought into Jerusalem.

In the early stages of the return, there undoubtedly was much zeal for the work in hand. We are told that they gathered as one man to Jerusalem, yet it was only the few (possibly the Levites) who settled in Jerusalem. Some work was done, but it was soon hindered and even stopped. This restraint upon the temple work seems to have prevented serious work for some sixteen years. Then was it that Haggai and Zechariah, prophets of leue, urged the people to the work under Zerobabbel and Joshua.

It would appear that a good deal of work had been done at the start; materials were gathered, and the work on the house of God was apportioned amongst the Levites. In fact, to some extent the foundations of the house were laid early by Sheshbazzar (Ez. 3:6-11 and 5:16). This Sheshbazzar was actually Zerobabbel (Zech. 4:9).

Though much equipment was completed (Ez. 5:3,9), yet this was the point from which the real frustration of the work started. That was in the second year (Ez. 3:8) of the return from the captivity and the opposition continued through the reigns of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes. To each of these kings representations against the work being carried out were successfully made by the enemies of the Jew. And, be it noted, these enemies

considered that both the town and the house of God were being built (see Ez. 4). Some of the work being done was termed the barricades (Ez. 4:12).

In the second year of Darius, urged by the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, and with the eye of God upon the elders of the Jews, the work went forward (Hag. 2:19). And in the sixth year of Darius the temple was completed (Ez. 6:14,16). The dedication duly followed.

Difficulties have been made in understanding the record given in the Scriptures. That method has been used which almost amounts to the cancelling out of one verse by querying it against another verse. That the people dwelt in ceiled houses (Hag. 1:4) is perfectly correct. This must not be queried by a reference to Neh. 7:4 which says that the people in Jerusalem were few and the houses were not builded. The situation must first be understood ere a conclusion is drawn in regard to such a statement. To a large extent (as we have remarked earlier) the people dwelt outside the city. There they had ceiled houses.

Circumstances both in Judea and in Jerusalem were undoubtedly very distressing, and this Nehemiah learned in the course of years (see. Neh. 1:1,2). But that book contains references which indicate that the house of God was already built, though the walls remained broken down (see Neh. 8:16 and 13:4).

The suggestion to Nehemiah by Shemaiah that they should sleep in the house of God (Neh. 6:10) to avoid being slain, this is an obvious fact to indicate that the house was already built again. Nehemiah also refers (5:15) to former governors of the land of Judah who had been chargeable to the people (5:15). All such details tell us that the matter in the book of Ezra precedes the matter in the book named Nehemiah.

Ezra and Nehemiah are surely consecutive. We see this confirmed as we look through the sequence of the references to the kings of Persia. The seventh year of king Artaxerxes of Ezra seven must really be the same king whose twentieth year is referred to in Nehemiah 2:1. Thus we find the house of God built in Ezra 7:27, which naturally follows the record of chapter six that it was finished in the month of Adar of the sixth of Darius (Ez. 6:15).

En route to Jerusalem, Ezra gathered the proper persons to minister in the house of God (Ez.8:17). The silver and gold were duly weighed in the house of God four days after arrival at Jerusalem (Ez. 8:33).

Ezra 10 leads us through to the end of the year in which Ezra left Babylon (Ez.7:9) to the first day of the first month following, through the ninth month (10:9) and the tenth month (10:16). All these details follow the sequence that the two books, Ezra and Nehemiah, are consecutive, and in the order of occurrence in our A.V.

It is a most notable matter that Zerobabbel is not in evidence in the book of Nehemiah, yet in Ezra he is the leading person. His work has preceded Nehemiah. It was the spirit of Zerobabbel that leue stirred up to obey the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to resume the work of building the temple. His hands had laid the foundation (Ez. 5:16 and Zech. 4:9) and they were to finish the house. By the speaking of the prophets, Joshua and the remnant were urged to the work of the house of leue. These matters are not only in the writings of the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, but they correspond with Ezra 5, the beginning having taken place in the second month of the second year of the coming to Jerusalem (Ez. 3:3). This agrees with the reign of Cyrus.

The order in which the kings of Persia reigned should be taken from Ezra 4 and 5. These chapters agree with that which is spoken to Daniel (see 11:2) in the third year of Cyrus. Following the completion of the temple in the sixth year of Darius, we pass to the next king, another Artaxerxes, in whose seventh year Ezra was sent to glorify the house of God (see Ezra 7). Thirteen years later, Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem to finish the city walls. This was in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. And this year approximates to the end of six of the first seven sevens of which Gabriel told Daniel (9:25).

It is needful that we realize that the opposition to the building of the temple was much more effective than the opposition to the building of the wall. It can be admitted that Nehemiah had great zeal and much purpose. He was most resourceful and not easily tricked. But it should be obvious that had the wall and the gates been first built, then the opposition and influence of outside enemies to the building of the temple could more easily have been resisted. In fact, it could have largely been ignored. We see the value of the gates in the instructions by Nehemiah after the wall had been built and the gates set up (see Neh. 7:3). The effectiveness of the gates is also apparent in preventing the continuing of the violation of the sabbath (Neh. 13:19).

CHRONOLOGY IN GENESIS

THE C.V. CHRONOLOGY shows the book of Genesis to cover a period of 3755 years, from the making of Adam in 2:7 to the death of Joseph in 50:26. This is a considerably greater number of years than is allowed by the A.V. chronology. That number is only 2369 for the same limits.

A notable and striking point is that 3755 is more years than have ensued since, for, to date (1957) we have only 3667 years. What, if any, is the value of such a position? Is it that the length of the period gives emphasis to indicate that there is an essential aspect of the matter recorded in the book? And thus our attention is called to the significance of what is being laid out there in?

By this protracted period we are being told that the events in it are not casual matters. Nor were they done in haste, confined to a few years. In this way there can be no doubt that they are to be interpreted as belonging to a sustained design, one which will later be worked out in God's ways, to a fuller degree.

The book extends over almost the whole of an important period, one which has distinct character, for it is referred to as, From Adam to Moses. During those centuries it is said that death reigned over those who do not sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression. From the C.V. figures we perceive that death's witness to the fact of sin was most prolonged. Other than Enoch, no respite from death had been during those many years. Yet the record in the book does show that some movements had been instituted by leue, and these were to bring about a remedying. These factors needed to be worked forward to an effectiveness, despite the vigor of sin and death recorded in Genesis.

Many are the actions in the book which would seem to prevent leue's promises being fulfilled. Yet there is to be a definite showing of the glory of God, in His ability to bring forth One Who fully reveals His love and His righteousness, even when that One has come to be related, as to flesh, to the race of humans, over which death had reigned during the many centuries of Adam to Moses, that is, the period of Genesis.

Within this book of God's Word, we have the feature of a series of genealogical annals (see 2:4 etc.). They lead forward, from the beginning first given to creation in 1:1. The double designation, leue Alueim, at 2:4, that is, name and title, follows the first reference to the genealogical annals, and the words, leue Alueim, intimate to us that we have come to matters which are historical.

By these annals of the book, we pass from the beginning, on to unfoldings of the divine operations which are related to the beginning, related in such a sense that virtually they are a purposed part issuing out of the beginning. The annals mark the several stages, all complementary, for they move forward from one significant position to the next, and thus the record comes to be a completed matter, composed of sequential stages, which reach to the point around Joseph's death; then there is the waiting for the visit of Alueim to carry forward His promises to the fathers.

The book is thus a purposive composition, come to that position after which, in the succeeding history, nothing wholly new is introduced. The events of the record have inaugurated that stage which is to be developed in the remainder of the Scriptures, and this is the working out of all that has been involved in this book of "A Beginning". The book thus gives character and direction to everything which follows in the Hebrew Scriptures.

If we regard the inspired title of the book, which, hitherto, we have termed "Genesis", a title coming from the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew, then we find that the words, In A Beginning, really describe the contents thereof. It is a title which tells the pith and the point of what is set out therein, amidst the element of time, by which terrestrial history is located.

A little reflection concerning the chronological period of the book, as required by the C.V., tends to give point to the title. The beginning refers not simply to the first verse, or the first chapter, but rather to the whole book. Our thought of this book of Scripture should not be as though it was written down immediate to the happenings recorded therein, but rather should we judge the book in the light that all recorded therein had taken place, at least, so far as they were events, ere they came to be written, and their sequel was ready to start.

The man who came to be the leading character in the succeeding books, Moses, was inspired to write the book

in this manner, and to bring it up to that point or situation out of which he led that people which leue Alueim had created in this period or beginning. And Moses took forward the bones of Joseph into the ensuing history in the land.

To apprehend this view, together with the length of the period, is to achieve in us an effect which brings forward the book out of the dim past. It comes to be nearer to us than we have hitherto realized. The matters therein are no longer scanty or hazy, for they fill out, in respect of time, to such an extent that faith will not dismiss them as inconsequential. Enacted in this record and period have been events which, in chapter eleven of the Hebrew epistle, take up 22 out of 40 verses of that chapter. Is not this a token as to how inspiration regards the period covered by the book of Genesis?

This book, then, shows a beginning, the details of which occupied more years than have ensued since! It records a beginning, the conclusion of which, even today, has still to be worked out and reached. It is a conclusion which is to bless all the families of the earth.

We should note that, since the ending of Genesis, no enlargement or addition has been made to that beginning. That which ensued in the remainder of the Hebrew Scriptures, from the Exodus forward, was all involved in the book entitled "In A Beginning", even unto the death of the Lord Jesus. Subsequent to the latter event, new operations were introduced, but they are not a sequel, for they find their basis prior to the beginning set out in Genesis.

The events of Genesis, when aided by the length of the period which is taken up in their installing, tend to take their proper focus and value. They were not just history which happened, but were the deeply laid plan, directed by leue Alueim during many centuries. The completing of that which was involved in that prior lengthy period is not yet reached, nor has there since passed a number of years equal to those required in achieving the beginning.

These considerations show us that the years to the death of Joseph in Egypt, as shown by the C.V., are speaking of the greatness and the importance of the beginning enumerated therein. Especially is this so when we allow our realization to take note that the period since the death of Joseph has to be viewed from the fact that it contains approaching twenty centuries, the period of the present administration, which are not to deal with matters strictly related to the developing of those matters implicated in the annals of Genesis.

When we also come to see the position of Egypt, at the time of Joseph, and how that people were implicated in the details and plan of Genesis, we are able to appreciate a little as to the early centuries required by the Egyptian dynasties. We do not, in such an expression, by any means wish to commit ourselves to the extravagant claims made around those dynasties, but we would remark that the first dynasty of Egypt is said to have concluded around B.C. 3000. This entirely precludes comparison alongside the A.V. dates.

Yet the Exodus needs so much from Egypt. The sons of Jacob have been there at least 215 years, and Joseph had preceded them by some 20 years. Abraham had also visited Egypt over 200 years earlier. This visit may have been in the twelfth dynasty, around B.C. 2000. Thus much history related to Egypt is required to correspond with Genesis. The nations of the earth really had asserted themselves against Alueim, and, though Babylon became the centre of adjudication, yet Egypt was there ready to fill what was needed from them by the ways of leue.

In the foregoing we have, from the viewpoint of the C.V. chronology, considered the years therein denoted by Adm., and their value to the book, as denoted by the inspired title of the book. Our earlier conclusion, made from a thoroughly different angle, is confirmed. In a prior paper we investigated the values of the Hebrew figures in comparison with the figures of the Greek Version. It was then discovered that the figures of the latter were really much more relevant to the internal requirements of the matter recorded therein.

The Hebrew figures from the deluge to Abram are altogether too brief to cover the development of nations and their lapse into idolatry. The very great degree of decline away from leue, which had arisen, was the cause of the call of Abram, and he was attached to the idolatry of that time (Joshua 24:2,3). Four centuries would not produce a population commensurate with the separation into nations, as well as the rise of the situation spoken of in Romans one, verses 21 to the end of the chapter.

The only matter against the Septuagint figures, which has any weight or proportion, is that some of its figures indicate Methuselah to have lived 14 years beyond the deluge. This is due to the figure for the birth of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, being given as 167. Such a reading is due to the Sixtine Text which first publicised such a difficulty. But investigation shows that the evidence of the cursive texts is really for 187. The uncial text, and Alexandrinus is the only uncial text available for Genesis, for their part, give 187. With this figure the Hebrew text agrees.

This matter thus falls into proper perspective, and becomes a detail to qualify the Septuagint figures, rather than the opposite. We might here take notice that, for over a thousand years, the Septuagint was the version of Christendom! This was through the Latin or Vulgate. Hebrew was not known in England, nor was Greek taught in the English Academies until about 1484 A.D. These are important facts which show what chronology must be from the Vulgate.

**FIGURES OF GENESIS 5 & 11,
IN THE HEBREW,
SAMARITAN & SEPTUAGINT**

We have discussed, at considerable length, the above in Unsearchable Riches vol. 40. pp. 223 to 240. This we did by comparing the situation which each set of figures created. The conclusion was clear that the figures of the Septuagint were far more in keeping with the sequence of the history of the period than were the Hebrew or Samaritan. leue's operations amidst this history found their scope in the figures of the Septuagint, but hardly so with the figures of the Hebrew and Samaritan.

WHY there is difference in the figures, and *WHEN* the difference arose, these questions clarify themselves a little as we carefully consider surrounding details of these sources. The first question, that of *WHY*, ensues from the confrontations which began between the Jews and the believers of the nations, for the latter accepted Him Whom the former rejected as their Messiah.

The Jew began to argue that the history, as shown by their Scriptures, was insufficient to warrant their expecting the promised Messiah. Agreeable to this, the Jew pointed to a chronology shorter in their Hebrew Scriptures than that stated in the Septuagint. The implications of this, from the standpoint of the texts of the Hebrew and the Septuagint, is the detail which we need to look at, in order to reach the *WHEN* aspect.

It needs to be noted that, up to a certain point, the Septuagint had been accepted, not only by the dispersion of the Jews, but by the people in the land, and the Lord Jesus in His ministry, as well as the apostles and Paul. This agreement accords with the fact that the Septuagint was translated from the Hebrew text supplied by Jerusalem, for though the work was to be done in Egypt, at the instance of king Ptolemy Philadelphus, it was not begun without the firm basis to which it was related. The Septuagint and the Hebrew texts appear to agree from the making of the Septuagint, around B.C. 280, to the end of the first century A.D. approximately.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, lived and worked in the first century, (A.D. 37 to 100), and he says that he took his figures out of the Hebrew, even though he wrote them in Greek, as was the balance of his work. Now the figures of Josephus, agree with the Septuagint. This gives the position that the Original agreement between Hebrew and Septuagint continued up to the end of the first century A.D.

It was at a point later than this that the Fathers began to charge the Jews with the alteration of their Hebrew text and it was when the Jews began to prefer their charge of alteration against the nations in respect of the Septuagint, that there was the counter charge.

We must remember that the nations had, in a sense, taken over the Greek version of the Scriptures, and also that for a thousand years or more the church used the Septuagint. It is clear that it was a greatly easier matter for the Hebrew to be altered, since the control of the Hebrew was a most local matter, whereas the Greek Scriptures, that is, the Septuagint, were in circulation in many parts surrounding the Mediterranean. The Hebrew language was not at all in general use, but the Greek was widely used. So that the Hebrew text was the most likely place for the alteration to be made.

An interesting question, and one which lends some support to the above outlined position, is this: Why is the present Jewish Calendar 247 years shorter than the period required by the figures of their Hebrew Text, even

as the figures stand in it? Their present year is 5718. Yet $4004 + 4 + 1957 = 5965$. This would appear to be a further shortening entertained since they standardized their Hebrew Text.

The Julian Calendar, based upon an arbitrary beginning, January 1st., B.C. 4713, names the present year as 6670 (= 1957 A.D.) This basis was chosen for no distinct reason.

The age figures in the Hebrew Text would appear to have been altered on two occasions or at two points of time; there is the one in regard to names prior to the deluge, and the other in the names following the deluge. The Samaritan was influenced by the first change, but it did not copy the details, only the result. It was not affected by the second altering, other than the omission of the name Cainan. The Septuagint escaped both instances, and so retained the name Cainan in Genesis 11.

The manipulating is somewhat obvious in the Samaritan, for only the cases of Jared, Methuselah and Lamech, do the reducing of the years at their generating, and it also reduces the full ages by that amount which allows them to reach the deluge year, but not beyond, for by the Samaritan figures, these three die in the year of the deluge.

Perhaps we should also regard the process to which the Jew subjected the Hebrew Text. Ostensibly this was to preserve the integrity of the Hebrew Text. The work was that of the Masoretes, and they produced the present Hebrew Masoretic Text. The work proceeded approximately from about A.D. 100 to 700, and in the course of the work, any text which did not conform to the standard was destroyed. Some few manuscripts escaped standardization, and a notable example are the scrolls which have come to be known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Before this we did not have a Hebrew manuscript earlier than the tenth century A.D.

These brief considerations appear to confirm the C.V. choice of the figures of the Septuagint. Writers at several points in the course of the centuries have made references to this subject. Kennicott, who did so much work on the Hebrew Text in the eighteenth century, shows that Eusebius speaks of some Hebrew copies, existing in the fourth century A.D., which had the larger numbers of the Septuagint. And, in later centuries, the existence of such Hebrew manuscripts is affirmed; see the Chronicle of Abraham Echellensis, which found them up to the seventh century. In a work entitled Chronographia, Georgius Syncellus (A.D. 700) wrote that he followed the Septuagint which was made from an ancient and uncorrupted Hebrew copy.

Such books are not readily available, because they are far from recent, and are the property of libraries which are out of reach of the ordinary person. At the best, the ordinary person can but find the odd writer who makes references to them, and gives but a brief statement or quote. And it is necessary to search diligently in order to come across even these brief references.

The objective of this brief writing is to set the subject of chronology into its proper perspective, to accord with the Scriptures. They do give dates in months and years. If we have shown that the dates show that leue related His revelation of His ways to history, and, in particular, the history of a people, to whose fathers He made His promises, then we are satisfied. That can but bring honor to His inspired word, for it leaves all the glory with God. The Lord Jesus said in reference to His coming again to Israel that no one but His Father knew that hour.

WE LEAVE IT SO.

EVENTS and PERIODS OF ACTIVITY IN GOD'S WAYS

WHEN WE HAVE PERCEIVED that scriptural chronology covers God's ways in and around His Son, then details ought to have taken their proper perspective in our mind. Other than God's Son, all are adjuncts to lead forward to God's glory in Him. Thus our collection of names, and our association of dates with them, are but incidental to assist.

First our discernment is promoted, then our grasp and understanding as to what leue was and is doing amidst the times which pass along in the history of leue's people. Such thoughts are aptly introduced to round out the end of the reign of king David, given in the first book of Chronicles (29:30). There they are regarded as "the times which went over David in his reign".

It is in such a sense as the foregoing, that we are able to view the whole of our extracts for the purpose of our chronology. We can regard some of the dominating particulars therein, and see them forming the pattern of

that central crisis of God's ways with His people Israel. This had regard to that One Who is leue's Messiah.

Not only do these matters have reference to leue's separating of His people from all other nations, but also as to formulating amongst them institutions and celebrations which crystallized to them that they were leue's special people to whom He had, on the one hand, given His legislation and incorporated an event which ever commemorated their departure from Egypt, and their entry into the land of promise. Indeed, these matters are to Israel indicative of their highest blessing at the hands of their Alueim, leue.

We are referring to those two great matters which occurred for Israel at the hands of leue. The one is termed the Passover, and the other is named Pentecost. The first event, the Passover, relates to the night in which they left Egypt, a people, redeemed by leue's power. And the second is Pentecost, when they stand at the foot of Sinai, to hear the law announced therefrom, amidst the majesty of leue. The one was fulfilled in Messiah's death, and the other finds its complement in the coming-on of the Spirit, the factor which Israel so much needed to write the law in their hearts.

To see the above events in their place, as they actually occurred to Israel at the hands of leue, and that they are dated in their calendar, so as to take a place in the seven annual festivals of leue (Lev. 23), this is, indeed, a most valuable discernment. Then to realize that those dates are of details which we regard in our chronology, this ought to add further insight toward that realisation which puts chronology into its place from the viewpoint of God's glory in the spiritual appreciation of the one who believes His word.

We avoid giving a full detailed outline concerning Lev. 23, and condense to the leading points, sufficiently to show how these matters are, of necessity, related to the subject of Scriptural chronology, giving to it that vital interest which lifts it to the spiritual plane of the glory of leue's ways in the earth.

From an attentive reading of Leviticus 23, it will emerge that we have the following dates around this period, the Passover to Pentecost:

Lev. 23:5. leue's Passover. First month (Abib) day fourteen.

Lev. 23:6. Seven days unleavened bread. First month, day fifteen.

This beginning day of the seven days of Unleavened Bread became an annual sabbath, one distinct from the weekly sabbath.

Lev. 23:10, 11 On the morrow after this sabbath was the Waving of the Sheaf of Harvest's beginning.

Lev. 23:15, 16 This waving of the firstfruit was the first of seven sabbaths which were to be numbered unto the morrow after the seven sabbaths and so fifty days.

Here are the details, and they show that in this period of Passover to Pentecost there are seven special sabbaths. These sabbaths are beside the regular weekly sabbaths, and even the annual sabbath of the Unleavened Bread (see Lev. 23:6-8).

An effect around these sabbaths is that one day, already a sabbath, will serve as a double sabbath. It ought to be clear that this series of special sabbaths begins with the waving of the sheaf for the firstfruit of the harvest. References to these special sabbaths are made in the Greek section of the Scriptures, and the versions (other than the C.V.) do not discriminate them. In this they are the source of much misunderstanding.

One point must become clear to us. The Passover dates the crucifixion and the waving of the sheaf at the beginning of the harvest, this is the type of His resurrection, indicating Him as the Firstfruit thereof.

So that:

Abib 14 = Messiah's death.

Abib 15 = Annual sabbath of Unleavened Bread.

Abib 16 = Messiah's resurrection as firstfruit thereof, and so the fulfilling of the beginning of the harvest, that is, the firstfruit.

The details of Exodus show that Israel's passing from Egypt to Sinai covered the same days as the period which is dated from Abib 14 (the first month) on to Sivan 6 (the third month). This starting point we see to be :

Ex. 12:18 and 13:4. First month. Passover night.

Abib 14

Days to complete the first month of the journeying.	Abib 30
Intervening month, in which the journeying continued.	Zif 29
Ex. 19:1 Third month. "same day"	Sivan 1
Ex. 19:3 (Day two) Moses' first ascent of Sinai	Sivan 2
Ex. 19:7 (Day three) Moses calls Elders.	Sivan 3
Ex. 19:8 (Day four) Moses returns to leue with the words of the people.	Sivan 4
Ex. 19:10 (Day four) Sanctify on "today" and	Sivan 4
Ex. 19:10 (Day five) Sanctify "tomorrow"	Sivan 5
Ex. 19:11 (Day six) Be ready the "third day".	Sivan 6
Ex. 19:16 = third day.	
Ex. 19:17 = 3rd day. Moses brings people from camp	Sivan 6
Alueim speaks the ten words	Sivan 6

In the above is recorded those details which led forward to the event Pentecost. The giving of the legislation has completed the prior event of leaving Egypt. They had then become a people, and now they have leue's legislation. During the remainder of the first year, the tabernacle was built and its equipment, and it was reared up on the first day of the first month, of the second year. From the tabernacle were spoken all the details of the several ways by which leue was to be approached in their worship.

A second Passover was also kept in the wilderness (see Num. 9:1-3). This was immediately prior to the failure which ensued at Kadesh Barnea, in connection with the sending of the spies to spy out the land, ere they went forward into the land! There were no further commemorations of the Passover until they crossed the Jordan, at the conclusion of the forty years wandering.

For the purpose of this crossing of the Jordan into the land, leue displayed His power in a manner comparable to that shown at the crossing of the so-called Red Sea (really the terminal sea) when Israel were delivered from the Egyptians, and Israel went forward to Sinai.

Israel came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month (Joshua 4:19) and they encamped at Gilgal, in the plains of Jericho, and then, on the fourteenth of the first month, they celebrated the Passover at the Gilgal camp (Jos. 5:10). The reproach of Egypt had been rolled away from them.

We turn to consider a matter of a somewhat different kind, yet which equally indicates the class of reality and worth which lies within scriptural chronology, and fills it out for leue's glory. The historical details from which we supply our chronology gives us values which illustrate leue's power and His grace, as well as His ability to legislate restraining features into His directions which shall regulate His people. By these the waywardness of His people was mitigated in its effects, and the rejection of leue delayed to a large degree. We also see that leue in His ways awaits the point when the follies of His people, or an individual therein, become a basis to show the glory of His operating.

The situation which we have in mind is that with which Samuel was confronted when leue's people requested him to enquire for a king for them that they might be like other nations. In this they rejected leue's theocracy introduced to their forefathers from Sinai.

leue acceded to their request, giving them Saul of the tribe of Benjamin, whom Samuel duly anointed to be king. Why was this done? Why a king out of any tribe other than Judah? The truth is that leue was Israel's king, as well as their Alueim. He was their invisible Ruler, and the kingdom was His, set up from Sinai.

Now, Israel's contemplation of a king out of any one of their tribes, this was an expression of dissatisfaction with their invisible Ruler. It was a rejection of leue. Yet leue was well aware as to the desire that would arise in the mind of His people. Jacob, when blessing his sons, ere he died, had indicated that Reuben's royal rights had been transferred to Judah (see Gn. 49:8-10). Why then give them a king from Benjamin's tribe? Here we are able to use information which is recorded in the Scriptural genealogies, and they are a feature which exists amidst the matters from which we are able to cull chronology.

The episode detailed in Genesis 38 tells first of the follies and sins of Judah's sons. Later, from that which ensued around Judah's sons, we learn that Tamar is brought back into the line which came to be that of David's progenitors, but this is unwittingly by Judah himself in his folly and sin. Tamar's sons thus came to be in the position denominated in Deut. 23:2 by the word "bastard". Such were excluded from the assembly of leue for ten generations. Here we learn the prohibition which lay across David's line, though in leue's ways, David was to become Israel's king, and to figure Him Who is Messiah for them. leue's glory will outweigh the follies of the flesh of His own. In the course of the line forward to David, faith preserved Rahab, the prostitute, and brought her into the line as the wife of Salmon. Indeed, grace brought in Ruth as a triumph over law, as grace also, despite David's folly, afterward led to Solomon sitting on Israel's throne.

Israel's request for a king, though arising entirely out of their lack of spiritual understanding, it was, in some sense, also premature. The one whom leue intended for the monarchy, he was not yet available. Jesse was but the ninth generation, and his elder sons were not leue's choice.

This is the situation which is used by leue to display to Israel that their desire for a king was not only wrong, but that even in the granting of a king, it should not at all be allowed to be a major reason to give them him of whom He would say "a man according to My heart" who will be doing all My will. This was not the case around Saul, yet David ever honored the fact that Saul was leue's anointed.

A reference to the lineage set out in Matthew one will make evident that David was in the tenth generation, and so the family to whom he belonged was no longer prohibited from leue's assembly. We set out the names in the lineage: 1 Phares. 2. Hesron. 3 Aram. 4. Amminadab. 5 Nahson. 6 Salmon. 7 Boaz. 8 Obed. 9 Jesse. 10 David, the king. In these we have 10 of the 42 generations which bring us from Abraham to Messiah.

In extending our words on chronology, we trust that we may have pointed a really spiritual view of the subject, and also shown that it does give that aspect which has actual value, since it is, indeed, wholly agreeable to the word of God.

Desire will ever lead into the realms which can but satisfy desire, and, however legitimate one may be persuaded that a quest is, yet the results, when considered from the angle of the glory of God and His Son, they do not measure up to what is appropriate thereto. The closest adherence to the facts of the Word are the measure which must be used. Any other gauge is quite unsuitable, however much may be the urge or the attraction to use it. May grace enable us to leave the subject under such a view!

E. H. Clayton

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