

THE CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF HISTORY

Abstract: Proposes a framework without gaps that closely follows standard Biblical chronologies. Early chronology is slightly longer than one based solely on the MT as I require two witnesses for the duration of each generation. The sojourn in Egypt of 430 years follows the SP and the LXX where the period extends back to Jacob's return from Padan Aram. The duration of the Judges comes from the 479 years of 1 Kings 6:1. The duration of the Kingdom period, with some reservations, comes from Thiele work, with Saul anointed in 1046 BC. Israel went into the Babylonian Captivity in 605 BC. They crucified Jesus in 33 AD. Careful analysis of the chronological details from Creation to the Crucifixion has revealed a Jubilee cycle pattern for many Biblical events. Often the Jubilee year immediately precedes the event such as Isaac's birth, David's move to Jerusalem, or Babylonian Captivity. Jubilees continued at 49-year intervals until changed by the Church in 1300 AD. Since then, the Church usually celebrates Jubilees at about 25-year intervals. A longer pattern of 10 Jubilee periods for important events is also evident. The Exodus followed Jubilee #70 in 1438 BC, Solomon's Temple was dedicated in Jubilee #80 in 949 BC, Ezra's restored the people after Jubilee #90 in 508 BC and They crucified Jesus after Jubilee #100 in AD 33. In 2000, we celebrated Jubilee #150.

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Introduction

Truth can defend itself; it needs only a witness. Over the years, the author has discovered that determining the chronology of the Bible is complex.¹ Many have worked toward a solution but because there are many variables, often apparently contradictory, that must be fit together to form a complete whole, all reviewed solutions were flawed. In this process, the author has made many wrong assumptions, usually starting with the most common presumptions, moving through the more radical assumptions and generally coming back very close to the standard assumptions. The process started in trying to solve the difficult chronology of the Judges period. This period has several good indicators as to the total length, but the sum of the parts seems to be too long. In each case comparison of the various sources, textual criticism and careful reading of the relevant passages has brought insight. Throughout this entire study, I maintain several overriding principles. The Scripture² is the word of God and was without error as originally given and that whatever corruption may have been introduced, the original can still be discovered. The problems can be reconciled! No word of Scripture is superfluous. There is value to studying and discovering the chronology. God hides things to have them discovered. When properly understood, new insights will result. It has been discovered that God foreknowing the events of history and guiding it according to His purpose does use a timetable. Not all details have been worked out, but important milestones have been discovered. Often important events associated with a Jubilee year occur in the Sabbath year preceding the Jubilee or in the following year, which is the "first harvest" in two years.

Jubilees—God's Time Periods

God, in Leviticus 25, specifies a method for tracking time. The Israelites were to let the land to rest from cultivation every seventh year. The year of rest was called a Sabbath year. The year the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, was a Sabbath year.³ There is a second witness the entrance was on a Sabbath year, Joshua read the law as was required on the Sabbath year (Joshua 8:34-35; Deut 31:10-12). It is confirmed Joshua read the law at this time (Nehemiah 8:17). They were to start the count from the year they planted their first crop,⁴ after settling in the Promised Land. After that every seventh year the land was to enjoy a rest or Sabbath. The year after every seventh Sabbath year was to be a Jubilee year: a second year, in a row, that the land was to rest from cultivation. See Figure 1: Sabbath and Jubilee Year Diagram, page 4. During each period of forty-nine years, there were to be seven Sabbath rest years and one Jubilee rest year. There are a total of eight years of rest in each forty-nine year period. The Jubilee celebrates the fiftieth year, not year fifty. The Jubilee year started about halfway through year forty-nine. If the Israelites kept these rests or Sabbaths, God guaranteed that they would dwell in "security." Besides the land resting, God commanded that in Jubilee years, the land was to be returned to its ancestral owner, debts canceled, and slaves freed. Returning the land freely in the Jubilee year tests the possessor of the land far more than the recipient of the land. The one returning the land must give up a portion of what one has.

God uses Jubilees as primary units to measure the whole period from Adam on. Many men have fit their Biblical chronology into a Jubilee framework stating that this confirmed that chronology.⁵ Since these chronologies disagree among themselves and because the work on Biblical chronology by Thiele⁶ has shortened the period of the kings, the work of many of these men can no longer be supported.

¹ Prayer, grace, study, diligence, and a God given desire to seek the truth wherever it may lie. Many wrong assumptions and conclusions have had to give way to get to the truth.

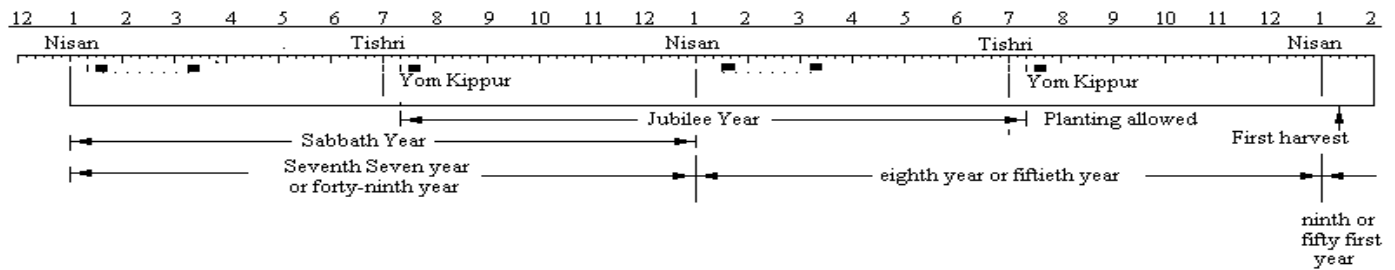
² The OT canon of 46 books was approved at the Council of Hippo in AD 393 and the NT canon of 27 books. "The canonical [OT] Scriptures are as follows: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the Son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, the Kings, four books, the Chronicles, two books, Job, the Psalter, the five books of Solomon, the twelve books of the Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Ezra, two books, Maccabees, two books . . ." canon 36.

³ Leviticus 25:2 . . . "When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath to Yahweh.

⁴ Leviticus 25:3. In the "Chronology of Josephus," 4:404-5, the author starts counting from the time of the entrance. Godfrey Faussett, *Sacred Chronology*, pp. 291, 295-6. Dates from the eighth year after the entrance.

⁵ "Chronology of Josephus," 4:417-21, Godfrey Faussett, *Sacred Chronology*, Robert Faussett, ed. (Oxford: University Press, 1855), p. 291, 295-6. Adam Rutherford, *Hebrew Chronology* (London: By the Author, 1939), p. 292.

⁶ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*. Convincingly, harmonizes the chronology of the Hebrew Kings.

Figure 1: SABBATH AND JUBILEE YEAR DIAGRAM**Figure 2 Details of the Sabbath/Jubilee year pair**

14 Abib / Nisan is Passover (Ex. 23:5). 15 to 21 Abib is the Feast of “Unleavened Bread” (Exodus 23:6).

The day after the weekly Sabbath after Passover, “Omer” = barley sheaf (Exodus 23:11).

The fiftieth day 49 days after Omer—“Feast of Weeks” (Exodus 23:15-16).

1 Tishri “Feast of Trumpets” (Ex. 23:24). 10 Tishri Yom Kippur or “Day of Atonement” (Exodus 23:27).

15 to 21 Tishri “Feast of Booths or Tabernacles” (Exodus 23:34).

Jubilee years start with the sounding of the Trumpet on 10 Tishri (Leviticus 25:9).

Sabbath year starts with the religious calendar on the 1st of Abib (implied Leviticus 25:1-6).

During the Sabbath and the Jubilee years gathering grain for food was allowed, but not reaping—the amount of grain collected is the issue. Normally the farmer would eat from grain stored before the Sabbath year, but if in need one could eat of the grain, but not harvest it.

Sequence and Time of Events

God, in Leviticus 26, enumerates blessings for obedience and levels of punishment for disobedience. In a more severe level of punishment, God promised to scatter the Israelites among the nations so that the land will receive its rest.⁷ God kept that promise when He sent Judah into captivity in Babylon.⁸ He forced the Israelites to let the land rest: “until the land has enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath to fulfill seventy years.”⁹ The land rested for the rest years it had missed.¹⁰ The rest years it had missed included both Sabbath and Jubilee years, because in both of these years the land must rest. “After the seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.”¹¹ One can determine the period during which rests were missed if the seventy

⁷ Leviticus 26:33-35 I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. Then the land will enjoy its Sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its Sabbaths. All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the Sabbaths you lived in it.

The blessings and the curses are directly linked to the keeping of the Sabbath and Jubilee year observances because the passages are enveloped. Leviticus 25:1 Yahweh said to Moses on Mount Sinai, [keeping Sabbath and Jubilee years chapter 25] then [Blessing and curses chapter 26] finally Leviticus 26:46 These are the decrees, the laws and the regulations that Yahweh established on Mount Sinai between himself and the Israelites through Moses.

⁸ By that time, all 12 tribes had been assimilated into Judah.

⁹ 2 Chronicles 36:21 The land enjoyed its Sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of Yahweh spoken by Jeremiah.

¹⁰ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 10 vols. Vol. 3 *1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Ester*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., reprint ed., 1982):514.

¹¹ **Jeremiah 29:10** This is what Yahweh says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. **Jeremiah 25:12** “But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the

missed Sabbath rest years made up for all missed Sabbath years. If one knows the year of the start of the Babylonian captivity, then one can fix the start of that period.

How many years of rest was the land given during the period of the kings? Scripture says King Josiah in his eighteenth year, kept the Passover better than any previous king.¹² The Passover was about 624 BC shortly before the Babylonian captivity. If the people were not properly keeping the Passover, it is highly unlikely that they were keeping the Sabbath year rests; much less the Jubilee year rests. It is probable that during the time of the kings, the land was never voluntarily given a Sabbath year rest. Even David, one zealous to keep the law, broke it several times with serious consequences. When he moved the Ark of the Covenant the first time, he did not have it carried by Levites, causing a man to die.¹³ When he counted the people, he did not have them each pay the census tax, which brought on the people three days of plague (2 Samuel 24). There is one account of the land getting a rest. When God delivered Judah under King Hezekiah, God told him that the land would sufficiently produce for their needs, for the next two years, they were **not to plant or harvest**.¹⁴ The law required two rest years in a row because at a Jubilee year because it always followed a Sabbath year. This refers to a combined Sabbath rest and Jubilee rest. Therefore, one can pinpoint this time in Hezekiah's life if the date of any Jubilee is known.

During the period of the kings of Israel and Judah, there were exactly 70 Sabbath years missed, adding in the two rest years in the time of King Hezekiah there would be 72 rest years. From this, one can calculate that there were nine Jubilee periods paid for in these 72 rest years, and the period to require this number of rests is 441 years.¹⁵ The date of the first deportation of Judah into Babylon is 605 BC Therefore the start of the period would be 1046 BC if there were no other breaks than the keeping of two rest years during Hezekiah reign. This point is very likely the start of Saul's reign. Conservative scholarship puts Saul's anointing between 1050 and 1025 BC¹⁶ The Jubilee during Hezekiah's reign was in 704 BC. This places the start of the Babylonian Captivity immediately following a Jubilee year.

At the start of Jesus' public ministry, on the Sabbath the first day of the second Jewish month in AD 31 He visited the synagogue in Nazareth, His hometown. See [Jesus' two-year ministry](#). There, Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah a proclamation of liberty and the acceptable year of the LORD.¹⁷ Jesus announced a

king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares Yahweh, "and will make it desolate forever. **Daniel 9:2** In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of Yahweh given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. **Zechariah 7:5** "Ask all the people of the land and the priests, "When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted?"

¹² 2 Chronicles 35:16-19 So at that time the entire service of Yahweh was carried out for the celebration of the Passover and the offering of burnt offerings on the altar of Yahweh, as King Josiah had ordered. The Israelites who were present celebrated the Passover at that time and observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. The Passover had not been observed like this in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; and none of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated such a Passover as did Josiah, with the priests, the Levites and all Judah and Israel who were there with the people of Jerusalem. This Passover was celebrated in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign.

¹³ 2 Samuel 6:7 Yahweh's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God.

¹⁴ "Chronology of Josephus," 4:406. 2 Kings 19:29 "This will be the sign for you, O Hezekiah: "This year you will eat what grows by itself, and the second year what springs from that. But in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

¹⁵ 72 rest-years / 8(rest-years/Jubilee) = 9 Jubilees. 9 Jubilees * 49(years/Jubilee) = 441 years. Note: Israel during the Sabbath and Jubilee years was not allowed to harvest the entire crop into storage; they were allowed to gather enough for their daily needs.

¹⁶ Walton, *Chronological Charts*, p. 25, says 1050 B.C.; Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 495, says 1050 B.C.; Leon Wood, *Distressing Days of the Judges* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), p. 11, says 1050 B.C.; Whitcomb, "Chart of the Old Testament Kings and Prophets," says 1043 B.C. and Unger, *Unger's Bible Handbook*, p. 12, says 1025 B.C.

¹⁷ Luke 4:18-19, 21 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." . . ., "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Why did Jesus choose the second month of the year to actually start the Sabbath year when it properly should have been the first month? I surmise that the barley harvest was not ready until a month after Passover was celebrated (Luke 6:1). Second, the feast of Booths, celebrated from the 15th to the 21st of Tishri should have followed rather than overlapped the autumnal equinox. Either reason would have required the intercalation of a 13th month at the end of the previous year making this the actual first month.

Jubilee year. The phrase "to proclaim liberty" is the term used in the Law of Moses for the freedom brought by the Jubilee.¹⁸ Jesus announced the Sabbath year preceding the Jubilee year. The Jubilee year follows the start of Sabbath year by six months. From 606 BC to AD 32 the Jubilee announced by Jesus, there were 637 years, exactly thirteen Jubilee periods.¹⁹ We now have four known Jubilees (1047 BC, 704 BC, 606 BC and AD 32). To work back to the time of the first Jubilee, in the days of Joshua, we use the 479 years of 1 Kings 6:1. The year of the entrance was commanded to be a Sabbath year.²⁰ Additional evidence for this is, Joshua, read the entire Law,²¹ and only during the Sabbath year at the feast of Tabernacles (or Booths) was there a command to read the entire Law.²² Nehemiah tells us that no one did it fully from Joshua's time until his time.²³ The second clue was the name of the place of Joshua's encampment, Succoths²⁴ meaning booths. The Law commanded the Israelites live in booths at the time of the reading of the Law. If the entrance occurred on a Sabbath year, then the first possible Jubilee year would be 7½ years later. Because the Jubilee year starts the count, and the count was started after they planted, the Jubilee year cannot start until the six years of conquest are completed. Sabbath years start in the first month Nisan (Abib), Jubilee years start in the seventh month Tishri. See Sabbath and Jubilee year diagram on page 4.

Seven Jubilees before the anointing of Saul or 343 years brings us to 1391 BC 7½ years after Israel entered the Promised Land. Now the conquest of the land took six years, but afterward, it was necessary to map the land, divide it by lot, and conquer the remaining inhabitants before the Israelites settled in the land. They entered on a Sabbath year, conquered for six years, divided the land and settled during the next two year and then they planted their first crop. The Jubilee year was to be counted from when the Israelites planted their first crop.²⁵ Planting was allowed in the month of Tishri following the Jubilee year; this allowed a planted crop to be harvested immediately after the completion of two rest years (Leviticus 25:21-22). The scheme would work as follows: The Red Sea crossing occurred on the day of the Omer offering (Sunday Nisan 17), in the year following a Jubilee year.²⁶ Forty-eight and one-half years later the Israelites planted the first crop in the second half of the Jubilee year. Saul became king over Israel after the Jubilee 343 years later. Using this information, the duration from the Exodus to the start of the building of the temple was 479 years.²⁷

To give a BC or AD date, the Jubilee date is counted as starting in the following Gregorian year. Before Christ, the Jubilee started on the 10th day of the seventh month Tishri. The year 607 BC, will be referred to as 606 BC. The 10th of Tishri occurs about the beginning of October but varies about two weeks depending on the moon.

¹⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, p. 426.

¹⁹ Note there is no year 0, December 31, 1 BC is immediately followed by January 1, AD 1. 637/49 = 13.

²⁰ Leviticus 25:2 . . . 'When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath to Yahweh.

²¹ Joshua 8:34-35 Afterward, Joshua read all the words of the law--the blessings and the curses--just as it is written in the Book of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read to the whole assembly of Israel, including the women and children, and the aliens who lived among them.

²² Deuteronomy 31:10-11 Then Moses commanded them: "At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before Yahweh your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing.

²³ Nehemiah 8:17-18 The whole company that had returned from exile built booths and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great. Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the feast for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, there was an assembly.

²⁴ Genesis 33:17 cf. John 4. Woman at the well. Genesis 33:17 Jacob, however, went to Succoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Succoth.

²⁵ Leviticus 25:3 Six years sow your field...

²⁶ This was the first day in two years a harvest could occur, this happens again at the Resurrection.

²⁷ 1 Kings 6:1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the temple of Yahweh.

Table 1: DATES SO FAR FIXED BY JUBILEES

Date	Elapsed years	Factored years	Description
1439 BC	0		The year before the Exodus. Moses at the Burning Bush.
1390 BC	49	1*49	The first planting in the promised land.
1047 BC	343	7*49	The year before the anointing of King Saul.
704 BC	343	7*49	The 15th year of Hezekiah. Sennacherib's army destroyed.
606 BC	98	2*49	The year before Judah first went into captivity in Babylon.
AD 32	637	13*49	Jesus announced the 'Acceptable year of the LORD'.

One can surmise that Jubilee dating can be used before the Exodus even if at that time, the land was not required to rest because the Law had not yet been given. First, there were laws, from God, passed through the generations.²⁸ Second, the sojourn of the sons of Israel in Egypt (and Canaan LXX) was 430 years to the day.²⁹ This will be demonstrated later.

If a man had a Hebrew servant, he was to let him go free after six years of labor and let him go free with an abundance of gifts (Deuteronomy 15:12-14). Jacob served Laban seven years for each of his two wives and then six more years. He came out of servitude with abundance after the six years were completed. Why did the injunction of slavery extend to Hebrews rather than to just the Israelites? So that Jacob would be included. Now a Hebrew servant was required to be set free in the seventh year, and he was not to be sent away empty-handed.³⁰ God made certain that this happened. If the Exodus was on the Passover following the end of the Jubilee year, then Israel returned from Padam Aram in the sixth year of a Sabbath cycle.³¹

The Jubilee date immediately before the entrance into Egypt would be 12.5 years before the Jacob and sons returned to Canaan.³² This is six months after Jacob married Leah and Rachael and a few months before Reuben was born. Therefore, Jacob married about the start of a Sabbath year. Three Jubilees or 147 years earlier one year after Abraham was circumcised in the spring Isaac was born. Abraham was circumcised at the start of a Sabbath year, and Isaac was born within the succeeding Jubilee year. Both the birth of Isaac and the sons of Israel were long-delayed events. Why did they occur on a Jubilee year? <It had appeared to me that they were born on the Omer following the Jubilee to match the time of the Exodus and the Resurrection. Do further research.> <What was God's purpose in delaying these events until Jubilee years?>

The Pre-Abraham Period

Adam to the Flood

The view presented here of the period from Adam to the flood assumes that there are no gaps in the record of Genesis 5 and 10. The length of time from Adam to Noah can be accurately found by adding the age of each man in the genealogy at the time of the birth of the son in the Massoretic text or Samaritan Pentateuch. While evaluating these sources, the author has required that two sources agree on the specific interval. The most questionable items are the age of Methuselah at the birth of his son, there being no

²⁸ Louis S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. Vol. 2 *Anthropology* (Dallas, Texas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947):260-1. Genesis 18:19 For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of Yahweh by doing what is right and just, so that Yahweh will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him." Genesis 26:5 Because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws."

²⁹ Exodus 12:40-1 Now the length of time the sons of Israel lived in [the land of Canaan and the land of (LXX and SP)] Egypt was 430 years. At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all Yahweh's divisions left Egypt.

³⁰ Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:12; Jeremiah 34:14.

³¹ 430/7=61 and 3/7 Sabbath periods earlier Israel and sons returned to Canaan after 20 years in Padam Aram.

³² 441- 428.5=12.5; 441 years is 9*49 or the next larger Jubilee duration than the 430 years. Jacob was in Padam Aram 20 years and married Rachael and Leah after 7 years. The 428.5 years is 430 - 1.5 years the amount of time before the Exodus that the Jubilee occurred. This places the Jacob's marriages at the start of the Sabbath year preceding the Jubilee year and the birth of his first son Reuben within the Jubilee year.

agreement among the sources. And the age of Lamech at the birth of Noah because only using the data from the LXX allows Methuselah to die before the flood.

The New Testament records that Enoch was the seventh from Adam (Jude 14), which by the genealogy he is. The length of the life span after the son was born, plus the total length of the life, confirms that it is this son who was born and not that the man began to have children at this point and the successor was born sometime later. A study of the manuscripts has the Massoretic text reading nearly always confirmed for the period from Adam to the flood by the Septuagint and/or the Samaritan Pentateuch. These sources never agree with each other for the numbers in Genesis 5 unless they agree with the Massoretic text. Where two or three witnesses agree a matter may be established (Deuteronomy 19:15). If the MT date for Lamech is chosen, there is a problem with the date of the Flood, because it appears that Methuselah dies after the start of the flood.

The Scripture indicates a one-year per generation adjustment to these numbers. The Flood started when Noah was 600 years old or in his 600th year. That is when Noah is 599, or in his 600th year, he is said to be 600.³⁴ For this to be so, they must have used a different method to count ages. It appears that Noah was counted as one year old in his first year. Today we would not say that he was one until he entered his second year. If this reasoning is correct, then the actual ages of the men in Genesis 5, are all one year higher than stated. This subtracts ten years, one year per generation, from Adam to the Flood. We can surmise that Adam was born in year one rather than year zero because the counting starts at one. This is partially removed because a son would on average be born .5 years later than his father, but up to one year per generation could be added back.

All recent conservative scholars interpret the statement that Arphaxad was born two years after the flood when Shem was 100 years old (Genesis 11:10) to mean that Shem was born when Noah was 602. Here it is taken to mean that he was born late in the year following the flood while Shem was still 100 (by the new reckoning). The Septuagint says in the second year after the flood rather than two years after the flood confirming this reasoning. It is of interest that the translation of Enoch occurred on near the twentieth Jubilee. Later we will find that at ten Jubilees intervals is often a major event. This brings then us to the date of the flood of 1652AM, about 4 years earlier than the standard Massoretic date of 1656 A.M. For reasons that will show up later there seems to be a 14-year discrepancy in the dating sometime between the birth of Enoch and the birth of Isaac. I will include the error here, but more research is necessary. It could be related to the fact that the son is born on average .5 years later than the father. The time from Adam to the Flood is then 1666 years.

The Flood to Abraham

Most recent chronologists investigated used the patriarchal ages of the Massoretic text, which results in the shortest possible time between the Flood and Abraham. The Samaritan Pentateuch is a very important witness to the text of the Old Testament, and it provides a text of the chronologies of Genesis 5 and 11 that is independent of both the Septuagint and the Massoretic text.³⁵ The Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch together agree on the years between generations. They are two witnesses, especially when correlated with other Biblical information, seems to provide a longer and better chronology than the Massoretic text. The chronology is better for the following reasons: Noah and Shem are considered righteous men; it is, therefore, unlikely that they were involved in the sin at Babel. Abraham's fathers are said to have served other gods

³⁴ Genesis 7:6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. Genesis 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month--on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.

³⁴ Genesis 7:6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. Genesis 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month--on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.

³⁵ Ernst Wurthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), p. 43.

beyond the river (Joshua 24:14). If Noah and Shem were still alive at the time of Abraham, then they would apparently be included in this sin of idolatry.³⁶ These problems disappear when using the Samaritan Pentateuch chronology because the longer generations place the death of Noah and Shem before Babel. Luke 3:36 lists Cainan in the genealogy, and there is no textual ground for eliminating this entry. Of these witnesses, only the Septuagint bears witness to this entry. It is likely that the entry for Cainan was dropped because the ages are the same as those for Selah. This is haplography. Wurthwein defines haplography as words or phrases found in immediate sequence and one omitted by error.³⁷ This can occur quite easily when a word or phrase matches a subsequent phrase. The addition of a name, on the other hand, would be a deliberate error.

If there is no reason to doubt the age of Noah at Shem's birth, then there is probably no reason to doubt the age of Terah at Abraham's birth, all manuscript evidence agrees that it was 70 years. One of the reasons driving the extending of Terah's age at Abraham's birth is to move the time of Babel earlier. If Terah's age at death is 145 as recorded in the Samaritan Pentateuch, then there is no reason to doubt Stephen's statement in Acts 7:4 that Abram entered Canaan after the death of his father. The MT and the LXX record Terah's age at death as 205 years. One group of scholars says Stephen made a mistake, but his mistake was accurately recorded, but Jesus said that the Spirit would guide the speech of those brought before a tribunal (Mark 13:11), as Stephen was, and Stephen was said to be a man especially full of the Holy Spirit. In addition, Stephen could not make his point without including some of this information.³⁸ These facts make it likely that Stephen made accurate statements. There is no reason to ask why Abraham would have commented that he had passed his time (to bear children) at one hundred (Genesis 17:17), his father did not bear Abraham at 130, as generally proposed, but at seventy. We do not have to ask the question why did Terah, an idolater (Joshua 24:14), lived 30 years longer than his son, a righteous man, remembering that in principle righteousness adds to the life (Proverbs 3:2).

A possible explanation for the variance of the Massoretic text has been proposed by Rehwinkel, "The word for one hundred was dropped by the copyist in the Massoretic text."³⁹ A second reason for the variation is the numbers could be dropped inadvertently, but to add or change a number would take a deliberate manipulation of the text, which is less likely. For these reasons, the chronology here adopted follows the Samaritan Pentateuch and Septuagint for the genealogy of Genesis 11.

There are statements made in the Book of Jasher that tend to reveal it as a valuable source of history. Jasher 7:23 "And Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, took a wife in those days, in his old age, and she bare a son, and they called his name Nimrod." Nimrod is called a son of Cush in the scriptural record, but it separates Nimrod from his other sons. Here Jasher explains that Nimrod was born late in Cush's life. Nimrod was the leader of all the people at the tower of Babel. Therefore, if Jasher is correct, Ham was probably dead before the division of the tongues. In addition, Shem and Noah would be dead, helping us to avoid explaining how these righteous men were involved in the sin at the tower of Babel. If Ham lived roughly the same amount of time that Shem lived, then the division at Babel probably occurred somewhat more than 500 years after the end of the flood. This would place a gap in the genealogical record between Eber and his son (or descendant) Peleg if we accept the reading of the Massoretic text, but no gap with the Septuagint reading. Apparently, Joktan was born first because the record of his sons in Genesis 11 is given and nations are said to have descended from them, while Eber's son Peleg is listed without descendants. Many scholars believe that the age recorded there is the father's age at the time the oldest son was born. Second, Genesis 11 says, each nation descended from these seventy persons. Therefore, the tongues must have been divided among the people who represent those nations. Abraham, a descendant of Peleg, is called a Hebrew; therefore, it is

³⁶ Whitcomb and Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, pp. 477-8.

³⁷ Wurthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, p. 107.

³⁸ *Grace Theological Journal*. Vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1987, p. @.

³⁹ Alfred M. Rehwinkel, *The Age of the Earth and the Chronology of the Bible*, with a Foreword by C. E. Hoopmann (Adelaide, South Australia: Lutheran Press, 1966), p. 37.

⁴⁰ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906, reprint ed., 1951), pp. 881-2.

likely that Joktan and his sons spoke their own language while Eber and Peleg spoke Hebrew. Abraham is called a Hebrew because of the language he spoke.

A Proposed BC Date for the Creation of Adam

Here some assumptions will be made that will be defended later. The Exodus occurred in 1438 BC. The length of the Egyptian sojourn was 400 years. From Abraham entering Canaan until Jacob journeyed to Egypt was 215 years. Abram was 75 years old when he journeyed to Canaan; therefore, Abraham was born in 2128 BC.⁴¹ From Adam to Abraham's birth, was 2738 years. Therefore the creation of Adam occurred in 4866 BC (2128 BC + 2738 years). Can Jubilee dating be used to extend back to the creation of Adam? God told Moses when to celebrate the Jubilee. Therefore God knows the time of the creation of Adam and specifying the Jubilee year could have made the times line up. The flood occurred in 1666AM (Anno Mundi) a Jubilee year (34*49). Isaiah 61:2 indicates Jubilee years can be either a time of God's favor or His vengeance or both. The above date for Adam's creation 4866 BC is evenly divisible by periods of 49 years from the already surmised Jubilee years. There is, therefore, no reason to doubt that Jubilee years extended back to Adam even if they were not celebrated in the same way.

⁴¹ (1438 BC Exodus) + (400 year in Egypt) + (215 in Canaan) + (75 years old when Abraham journeyed to Canaan).

Table 2: FROM ADAM TO ABRAHAM								
Name	Year Born BC	Year Born AM	age at son's birth	years after son's birth	years lived	year died AM	References	Supporting Manuscripts
Adam	4869	0	129	800	929	929	Gen.5:3-5	SP & MT
Seth	4740	129	104	807	911	1040	Gen.5:6-8	SP & MT
Enos	4636	233	89	815	904	1137	Gen.5:9-11	SP & MT
Cainan	4547	322	69	840	909	1231	Gen.5:12-14	SP & MT
Mahalaleel	4478	391	64	830	894	1285	Gen.5:15-17	SP & MT
Jared	4414	455	161	800	961	1416	Gen.5:18-20	LXX & MT
Enoch	4253	616	64	300	364	980 ⁴²	Gen.5:21-24	SP & MT
Methuselah	4189	680	186	782	968	1648	Gen.5:25-27	LXX & MT
Lamech	4003	866	187	566	782	1648	Gen.5:28-31	LXX
Noah	3816	1053	499	450	949	1996	Gen.5:32	SP,MT,LXX
Shem	3317	1552	100	500	(600)	2152	Gen.11:10-11	SP,MT,LXX
Flood	3217	1652	2				30*49=1470	31*49=1519
Flood	3200	1666	2				Gen.6-8	
Arphaxad	3198	1654	135	403?	(438)	2106	Gen.11:12-13	SP & LXX
Cainan	3063	1789	130	330	(460)	2263	Gen.11:13	LXX & Luke
Shelah	2933	1919	130	303	(433)	2366	Gen.11:14-15	SP & LXX
Eber	2803	2049	134	270	(404)	2467	Gen.11:16-17	SP & LXX
Peleg	2669	2183	130	109	(239)	2436	Gen.11:18-19	SP & LXX
Reu	2539	2313	132	107	(239)	2566	Gen.11:20-21	SP & LXX
Serug	2407	2445	130	100	(230)	2689	Gen.11:22-23	SP & LXX
Nahor	2277	2575	79	69	(148)	2737	Gen.11:24-25	SP & LXX
Terah		2654	70	(75)	145		Gen.11:26,32	SP & Acts
Abram	2128	2724	100	75	175	2913	Gen.12:4	SP, MT, LXX
Flood	3200	1666	2				Gen.6-8	
Arphaxad	3198	1668	135	403?	(438)	2106	Gen.11:12-13	SP & LXX
Cainan	3063	1803	130	330	(460)	2263	Gen.11:13	LXX & Luke
Shelah	2933	1933	130	303	(433)	2366	Gen.11:14-15	SP & LXX
Eber	2803	2063	134	270	(404)	2467	Gen.11:16-17	SP & LXX
Peleg	2669	2197	130	109	(239)	2436	Gen.11:18-19	SP & LXX
Reu	2539	2327	132	107	(239)	2566	Gen.11:20-21	SP & LXX
Serug	2407	2459	130	100	(230)	2689	Gen.11:22-23	SP & LXX
Nahor	2277	2589	79	69	(148)	2737	Gen.11:24-25	SP & LXX
Terah			70		(145)		Gen.11:26,32	SP
Terah	2198	2668	70	75	(135)	2803	Gen.11:26,32	
Abram	2128	2738	100	75	175	2913	Gen.12:4	

⁴² Could easily be one year later, immediately following the Jubilee year. Enoch was taken by God.

Table 3: JUBILEE EVENTS

Year AM	Jubilee	Year	Standard	Event Description
0	0	4866 BC	4004 BC	Creation of Adam and Eve
980	20	3886 BC		Enoch translated
1656		3210 BC	2348 BC	The Flood
2842	58	2027 BC	2065 BC	Isaac Born
2940	60	1929 BC		Esau sold his birthright to Jacob & Famine
2989	61	1880 BC	1922 BC	Jacob marries & Sons of Israel (Reuben) start arriving
3038	62	1831 BC		Just after the end of the seven years of famine.
3430	70	1439 BC	1146 BC	Moses and the burning bush, the year before the Exodus.
3479	71	1390 BC	1399 BC	The first planting in the promised land.
3822	78	1047 BC	1043 BC	The anointing of King Saul.
3920	80	949 BC	958 BC	The dedication of Solomon's Temple
4165	85	704 BC	701 BC	The 15th year of Hezekiah.
4263	87	606 BC	605 BC	Judah first carried into Babylon.
4410	90	459 BC	452 BC	Ezra restored people 6 years before Jerusalem restored
4900	100	AD 32	28 or 31	Year after Jesus Announces 'Acceptable year of the LORD'.

Many events are at 490-year⁴³ or 10-jubilee intervals.

The Patriarchal Period

The period from Abraham's entrance into the Promised Land until Jacob descended into Egypt is one of the least disputed intervals of time. Rowley succinctly outlines it as follows, "In Genesis 12:4 we read that Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran, and in Genesis 21:5 that he was one hundred years old when Isaac was born. Since Genesis 25:26 states that Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob was born, and Genesis 47:9 gives Jacob's age at 130 when he went into Egypt, we have a total of 215 years from the migration of Abram to the Descent into Egypt."⁴⁴ The period from the entrance of Abraham into Canaan to the Egyptian sojourn is 215 as agreed among all scholars consulted and unchallenged here.

⁴³ Jesus told Peter in Matthew 18:22 that we are to forgive 70*7 or 490 times. Could God forgive in periods of 490 years? This statement of Jesus is commonly said to refer to an indefinitely large number of times. Why didn't Jesus say a myriad times 7 or more than 70*7. Jesus was invariably precise in his statements.

⁴⁴ H. H. Rowley, *From Joseph to Joshua* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 57.

Table 4: ABRAHAM TO THE EXODUS

Elap- sed	Year AM	Year BC	Event	Terah		Abraham	Sarah	References
		2129	Abraham born	70		0	-	Gen.11:32;12:4;Acts 7:4
45			Terah dies	145		(75)	(65)	Gen. 11:32
0		2054	Abram to Canaan		Ishmael	75	(65)	Gen. 12:4
11		2040	Ishmael born	Isaac	0	86	(76)	Gen. 16:16
13		2027*	Circumcision		13	99	(89)	Gen. 17:1, 24
1		2026	Isaac born	0	(14)	100	90	Gen. 21:5;17:17
37		1989	Sarah dies	(37)	(51)	(137)	127	Gen. 23:1
3		1986	Isaac marries	40	(54)	(140)	Jacob	Gen. 24:67; 25:19
20		1966	Jacob & Esau born	60	(74)	(160)	0	Gen. 25:26
15		1951	Abraham dies	(75)	(89)	175	15	Gen. 25:7
24		1929*	Sold birthright	[99]	[113]		[39]	Gen. 25:31
1		1928	Esau marries	(100)	(114)		40	Gen. 26:34
23		1905	Ishmael dies	(123)	137		(63)	Gen. 25:17
17		1888	Jacob's flight	(140)		Joseph	(80)	Gen. 28:5
7		1881	Jacob marries	(147)			(87)	Gen. 29:20-30
1		1880*	Rueben born	(148)			(88)	Gen. 29: 31-32
5		1876	Joseph born	(154)		0	(94)	Gen. 30:25; 31:41
8	3001	1868	Jacob enters Canaan	(160)		(8)	(100)	Gen. 31:38, 41 Ex. 12:41
2		1862	Joseph sold	(169)		17	(109)	Gen. 37:2-28
11		1851	Isaac dies	180		(28)	(120)	Gen. 35:28
2		1849	Joseph made Vizier			30	(122)	Gen. 41:46
8	2972	1838	Jacob to Egypt			(39)	130	Gen. 46:1;47:9
6	2978	1831	End of famine			(44)	(135)	
12		1819	Jacob dies			(56)	147	Genesis 47:28
54		1765	Joseph dies			110		Genesis 50:26
326	3430	1439*	Burning bush					Ex. 3:2-3
1	3431	1438	Exodus					Ex. 12:40-41

* Marks a Jubilee year () Calculated numbers [] Estimated numbers

Bible mentions three circumcisions that were not done on the eighth day. All occurred at God's specific instruction. Abraham and his entire household were circumcised just before the feast of unleavened bread in Abraham's 99th year. Moses' son was circumcised shortly before the start of the plagues on Egypt. The Israelites born in the wilderness were circumcised about the 11th of Nisan as they entered the Promised Land.⁴⁵ The circumcisions that can be dated occurred just before the middle of Nisan. Moses' son could be the same. This would allow us to estimate the approximate date of the burning bush as the start of Nisan one-year before the Exodus.

Discerning the date of Jacob's marriage is somewhat more difficult, Jacob came to Egypt when he was 130 years old near the end of the second year of famine. Joseph became vizier at age thirty about eight years earlier. Joseph was born near the end of the seven years following Jacob's marriage to Leah and Rachael. So Jacob got married when he was about 130 - (38+6) = 86 years old.

The Egyptian Sojourn

There are three main opinions for the length of the Egyptian sojourn: 430 years, 400 years, and 215 years.⁴⁶ Exodus 12:40-41 in the Massoretic text supports the 430-year view where the sojourn in Egypt is said to be 430 years to the day. It interprets the 430 years of Galatians 3:17 to commence with the promise to Isaac, the seed of Abraham, as he entered Egypt (Genesis 46:1-4). This view holds that the genealogies of the period were often abbreviated. This view sees the 400 years as the period of bondage to Egypt.

⁴⁵ Genesis 17:23, 19:3; Exodus 4:23 and Joshua 5:2-3, 8 cf. 4:19.

⁴⁶ Exodus 12:40-41 MT; Genesis 15:13; Exodus 12:40-41 LXX.

The Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch add a phrase missing in the Massoretic text to Exodus 12:40-41, Now the sojourn of the sons of Israel in the land of Canaan and the land of Egypt was 430 years. At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all Yahweh's divisions left Egypt. The 215-year period takes the reading of the Septuagint but assumes that the 430-year period includes the 215-year period of the patriarchs in the Promised Land. The 400 years⁴⁷ is timed from the weaning of Isaac at age five.⁴⁸

It is here proposed that the length from the return of Israel to Canaan after the sojourn in Padam Aram to the Exodus is 430 years. These witnesses allow 430 years to include the time sons of Israel are in Canaan and Egypt. The sons of Israel arrived in Canaan when Jacob returned from Padam Aram. Galatians 3:16-17 430 years from promise to Abraham and his seed to the Exodus. This "promise to his seed" was made to Jacob just before crossing Jabbok when he wrestled with God, and his name was changed to Israel (Genesis 32). After Israel and his sons had spent 30 years in Canaan, they went down to Egypt for 400 years as promised to Abraham. It also agrees with Acts 13:19-20. Because the "about 450" conflicts with 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26 it must refer to the period in Egypt for this to be true. The about 450 years is broken down as follows: 400 years in Egypt, 40 years wandering, and 8½ years to full division of property. Any reading of Exodus 12:40-41 disproves the 215-year sojourn in Egypt because it says the period is for the sons of Israel because until about forty-years before the Egyptian sojourn there were no "sons of Israel." Jacob's name was first changed to Israel while he was returning from Padam Aram and preparing to confront his brother Esau. This is also the same time that his sons first entered Canaan. Before that, his sons had always lived in Padam Aram. Both the promise made to Abraham, and the recap by Achior⁴⁹, make it clear that the time in Egypt was 400 years.

The promise to return in the fourth generation was made to Abraham. His promised son was born when he was 100 years old. Four of Abraham's generations of promise are precisely 400 years. A generation means 1) a man's entire life span, 2) more commonly from a man's birth to the birth of his offspring, 3) a period or age of time.⁵⁰ However, in the fourth generation, they shall come out.⁵¹ If a generation is the period of the average life span, then it is 400/4=100 years. This seems unlikely to be the average time between the birth of the father and the birth of his son remembering Abraham's comment of his age at the time of the promise of the birth of Isaac that he was beyond childbearing age and his wife was barren. The 400th year was starting when Israel came out of Egypt.

This cannot be 400 years of oppression because the oppression does not start until later, at least after the death of Joseph. The oppression does not get severe until the time of the birth of Moses. Aaron, Moses' older brother, was not threatened with death. Joseph was a leader until his death, and it supports the twelve sons of Israel dying before the time of oppression. Then a pharaoh arose who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1:8). This occurred after Jacob died because Joseph promised to provide for his brothers and their children at that time (Genesis 50:21). Also, it says they embalmed Joseph, implying that he retained his status after his death (Genesis 50:2, 26).

Acts 13:19-20 further comments, Scripture says He "gave" them their land as an inheritance⁵² rather than he "promised" them their land as an inheritance suggests that the time referred to ends when they receive their land. Luke here uses the prefix kata before the verb. This intensifies the meaning of "to receive as an inheritance" to "fully receive as an inheritance," meaning they settled in their inheritance. The reason this passage is given a "D" rating (meaning no good reading or great uncertainty in the reading) is not that

⁴⁷ Genesis 15:13. The sojourning referred to began when Abraham first came into Canaan. (Heb. 11:8,9) Israel sojourned in Abraham and in Isaac and in Jacob, even as Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek, while yet in the loins of his father. `Heb. 7:9,10`

⁴⁸ Anstey, *Chronology of the Old Testament*, p. 66.

⁴⁹ Judith 5:9 ... And when there was a famine over all the land, they went down into Egypt, and there for four hundred years were so multiplied...

⁵⁰ Harris, Archer, Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 186.

⁵¹ Genesis 15:16. There is a passage that elucidates what the "fourth generation" means; 2 Kings 10:30 your children of the fourth generation shall sit. This was said to Jehu, who then proceeded to have there following generations sit on the thrown: Jehoahaz-Jehoash-Jeroboam II-Zechariah. Walton, *Chronological Charts*, p. 59.

⁵² Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament*, 6 vols. Vol. 3: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1930), p. 188.

the best text cannot be found but rather that the best text apparently disagrees with 1 Kings 6:1. Farrar reminds us that in the decision about which of two readings to select the rule is to choose the more difficult reading.⁵³ This period fits when applied to the period in Egypt and conflicts with the length of the period of the Judges.

400 Year Duration of the Egyptian Sojourn Shown from Genealogies

The sojourn in Egypt was 400 years; this promise was to be slaves in a country, not their own made to Abraham. From the following, one can discern we do not have a complete genealogy of Moses (Kohath, Amram, and Moses) during the sojourn in Egypt. Kohath lived 133 years (Exodus 6:18), and Kohath was alive when Israel went into Egypt (Genesis 46:11). Amram lived 137 years (Exodus 6:20). There is at least one missing generation here. Because God said they would come out in the fourth generation, there would only be three otherwise. Moses was eighty at the time of the Exodus, at that time, Amram's father, Kohath, had 8600 male descendants, and it appears that about twenty-five percent are descendants of Amram.⁵⁴ The maximum time without adding extra generations is 350 (133+137+80) years between these men. If the four generations spoken of to Abraham are taken as the total, then we can find the average number of children per family during the exile. Seventy people went down to Egypt: Jacob, twelve sons, fifty-one grandsons, four great-grandsons, a daughter and two granddaughters.⁵⁵ If there were five generations, with an average of fourteen children per family, there would not have been sufficient people to have 600,000 men at the time of the Exodus. If even fourteen children per generation are not enough, it is unlikely that five generations were enough. Archer has proposed that the sons needing redemption are the firstborn sons, born since leaving Egypt.⁵⁶ This lessens the need for such large families. In addition, four generations would be few to span 400 years.

A passage that indicates a longer Egyptian sojourn is 1 Chronicles 7:20-27, the genealogy from Ephraim to Joshua. Ephraim, Joseph's second child, was born in the seven years before the start of the seven years of famine (Genesis 41:50). The generations are Ephraim, Shuthelah, Bered, Tahath, Eladah, Tahath, Zabad, and Zhuthelah (1 Chronicles 7:20-27). If each man were 23 when his son was born, there would be 161 years between the birth of Ephraim and the Birth of Zhuthelah, seven generations later. Ezer and Elead were killed in battle with men of Gath. If these were sons, there would be an additional generation here. Ephraim was still alive at that point and had an additional son Beriah. From Beriah to Joshua, the genealogy has nine more generations. The series of generations is Beriah—Ephraim's new son, then Repheph, Resheph, Telah, Tahan, Laadan, Ammihud, Elishama, Nun, and Joshua. If each man were 23 when his son was born, there would be 207 more years for a total of 368 years from the birth of Ephraim to the birth of Joshua. If Joshua were thirty at the Exodus, this would bring the total to 398 years, very close to the 400 years of the sojourn in Egypt. The minimum time between Jacob's entrance into Egypt and the Exodus would be about 330 years if the average generation were only 18 years. If this is compared with the often-proposed Egyptian sojourn of 215 years, it makes the 215-year period short because the average generation would have to be less than 12 years.

Joseph lived to be 110 and Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation (Genesis 50:22-23), Joseph stood before pharaoh when he was 30 years old (Genesis 41:46) therefore within 80 years (110-30) the third generation was born. Both Ephraim and Manasseh were born before Joseph was thirty-seven. Therefore there are between seventy and 78 years for "children" of Bered's generation (the third) to be born but to not yet have any children of Tahath's generation (the fourth) yet born. It also mentions the children being brought up on Joseph's knees; this might imply that they were counted as the next generation.⁵⁷

⁵³ F. W. Farrar, *The Life and Work of Paul*, 2 vols. (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1879), 1:370.

⁵⁴ Numbers 3:27-28 To Kohath belonged the clans of the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites and Uzzielites; these were the Kohathite clans. The number of all the males a month old or more was 8,600.

⁵⁵ Genesis 46:8-27. A challenge--who was the second granddaughter? I know, email me if you figure it out or want to know.

⁵⁶ Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 130-1.

⁵⁷ Kidner, *Genesis*, p. 162.

Ephraim and Manasseh were counted as Israel's sons while on Israel's knees.⁵⁸ Ephraim was second born; therefore, he was probably not born until at least two years after Joseph rose to power. Because there was a promise that they would come out in the fourth generation it is interesting that Ephraim, a member of the first generation, should have a child (Beriah) so late in life, about 180 years old, thus allowing the generation from father to son to be greatly extended over its normal time (1 Chronicles 7:23). If this were repeated, then some of the members of the fourth generation would still be alive. Might not men in the days of Moses' birth, mourn over the loss of their descendants who were cast in the river and therefore seek to bear new children? This also explains how the population could increase so greatly, where the promise was that they would come out a great nation in the fourth generation.

While over 400 years with the population doubling every 25 years there would be more than 4.5 million Israelites. However, there is only about 2.5 million. Why? First, the pharaoh attempted to kill the male children. Secondly, the Book of Jasher records that when Ephraim was 180 years old (the age his grandfather died); forty thousand of his descendants were killed in a battle with the Philistines at Gath. The battle would reduce the enormous population, and it would explain Ephraim's mourning (1 Chronicles 7:22). He was not mourning for two lost descendants, but a multitude of descendants. Josephus mentions that they were not led by the "Way of the Philistines" because they were hated because of a quarrel of old.⁵⁹ Further, it greatly extends the time from between generations, and if Abraham's seed were counted in Ephraim, it would be specifically the number of generations Ephraim had in Egypt until the Exodus.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Genesis 48:5 "Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Rueben and Simeon are mine. . . . Genesis 48:12 Then Joseph removed them from Israel's knees and bowed down with his face to the ground.

⁵⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 2:15:3.

⁶⁰ Genesis 15:13, 16. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed, shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites in not yet full.

The Judges Period

There are two Scriptural witnesses as to the overall length of the Judges period. Jephthah mentions that Israel occupied Heshbon 300 years. This was in a diplomatic setting, the 300 years cannot refer to a period with gaps, or it would make no sense and be challenged immediately. Heshbon was captured in the 39th year after the Exodus. In 1 Kings 6:1, we are told that the temple foundation was laid in the 480th year after the Exodus.⁶¹ These witnesses agree on the length of the period of the Judges. The 480th years of 1 Kings 6:1 is 479 years plus two months. The dating of the reign of Solomon is from the month of Tishri, accession year reckoning was used and the months were numbered from Nisan even when the year was counted from Tishri. <<Small diagram>>@ The months are numbered from Nisan but the years are counted from Tishri. Therefore what is called the 2nd month we today would call the 8th month. We conclude the completion of the temple occurred just before a Jubilee. The completion of the temple articles and the gathering of the people to celebrate the dedication probably marks the beginning of the Jubilee. This dating can be discovered by carefully evaluating 1 Kings 6:37-38⁶² where the building took seven years but started in the 4th year 2nd month and finished in the 11th year 8th month.

"If all the terms of service performed by the various judges are added end to end, along with the stated periods of oppression, they form a consecutive total of approximately 410 years." "But the long date of 480 years (1 Ki. 6:1) seems to allow for only 292 years between the judgeship of Othniel and that of Eli."⁶³

The key ingredient in determining the length of the early judges period (up to the time of Jephthah) is the four periods that the "land had rest." The author contends during the period when the Judge judged, that oppression by a foreign power was not permitted.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the land could have rest before the judge came into office, a kind of peace while ruled by a foreign power. The judge merely finished out the period of 40 or 80 years of rest. This is the only way that the chronology of the Judges period can be worked out for the following reasons.

Joshua ruled for a significant period, probably forty years. "Joshua first appears . . . , as the leader of Israel in the Battle of the 'Amalekites at Rephidim, . . . , as Moses' attendant (cf. Ex. 24:13, 32:17, 33:11), is described in 33:11 by the Hebrew word na'ar which can hardly denote more than a youth approaching man's estate."⁶⁵ If we combine these—a warrior leader, and very young man—we may picture him about 30 years old at the time of the Exodus. Because he was among those counted at the first census, he was at least twenty at that time (Numbers 14:29-30). The word "from" used in 'from his youth' suggests that he had now ceased to be a youth. It is likely that he had turned thirty by the time he was sent to spy out the land.⁶⁶ It is therefore likely that between the time that the law was given and the time he went to spy, Joshua turned 30 years old, the approximate age when a person would cease being a na'ar. This helps us divide Joshua's life into three

⁶¹ Judges 11:26 For three hundred years Israel occupied Heshbon, Aroer, the surrounding settlements and all the towns along the Arnon. Why didn't you retake them during that time? 1 Kings 6:1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the temple of Yahweh.

⁶² 1 Kings 6:37-38 The foundation of the temple of Yahweh was laid in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv. 38 In the eleventh year in the month of Bul, the eighth month, the temple was finished in all its details according to its specifications. He had spent seven years building it.

⁶³ Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 277.

⁶⁴ Judges 2:18-19 Whenever Yahweh raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for Yahweh had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them.¹⁹ But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

⁶⁵ C. F. Burney, ed., *The Book of Judges, The Library of Biblical Studies*, Harry M. Orlinsky, with a Prolegomenon by William F. Albright (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1970), p. li.

⁶⁶ The word na'ar while usually referring to a young man was used by David of his son Absalom when he was close to forty. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 2:586.

parts. Thirty years in Egypt, 40 years wandering in the wilderness and 40 years as a leader over Israel.⁶⁷ The term "a long time" is used several times in the book of Joshua. It is first used of the length of the period of the war of conquest, a period of about 6 years.⁶⁸ It is used a second time of the period of rest, after the conquest (Joshua 23:1), but taken by scholars to mean about 10 years. Six years of war would be a long time to be at war, but a man of 110 would not be likely to consider 10 years to be a long period of peace. The final use of a long time is used to refer to the period spent in the wilderness a period of 40 years (Joshua 24:1).

The next point of contention has to do with the "age" at the death of the elders who outlived Joshua. A study of the scholars shows that all have the period of the elders ending within 71 years of the Exodus.⁶⁹ The elders who were boys at the time of the Exodus would then universally have had to die before they turned 80. Looking at the ages of those whose life spans are stated, it is found that Aaron lived to be 123, Miriam 120+, Moses lived to be 120, and Joshua lived to be 110.⁷⁰ Caleb was still vigorous at age 85 (Joshua 14:7-11). Ehud judged for 80 years (Judges 3:30) and therefore could hardly have been less than 100 years. Othniel born before the entrance judged Israel for forty years (Judges 3:11) starting eight years after all the elders had died; he, therefore, was probably at least 100 years old. Eli died at age 98 (1 Samuel 4:15). Now it is apparent the maximum life span of man was growing shorter during the Egyptian sojourn, for instance, the recorded life span of Israel was 147, Levi was 137, Kohath was 133, Amram was 137, Moses 120,⁷¹ etc.

Joshua was considered old after six years of conflict; he was at this time nearly 80 years old. He is called old from the standpoint of leading an army into battle, not in terms of being nearly ready to die. This is much as we would consider a professional basketball player old at 40, not ready to die, too old to compete professionally. Moses was 80 when he led Israel through the Red Sea, but Joshua led the army into battle.

In Psalm 90:10, Moses says man's life span is 70 or 80 years. This does not mean that everyone dies by 80 unless he is referring to those who died in the wilderness. Now it does say that all those who were counted in the first census in the wilderness had died by the time of the second census 38 years later (Exodus 26:64). But this does not imply that the life span of the Israelites was normally that short but rather that those men were judged for their disbelief and their lives were therefore shortened. This judgment suggests that their normal life span was greater; otherwise, they would not be dying young. If these ages are representative, then many of the elders should have lived to be at least 100, and some of them should have lived to be at least 110. If this is the case, then a boy who was ten years old when he witnessed the parting of the sea and lived to be age 110 would then be one of the last of the elders, and would not have died until more than 50 years after the Conquest was completed. The lives of the elders were probably cut short at this point to allow for the punishment of the Mesopotamian oppression. This compares with 61 to 71 years after the Exodus for the conservative position.

The conquest of Canaan starting in years 41 from the Jubilee meant that the land rested during the eight years of the conquest, mapping, division by lot, and conquest by individual tribes. Then Israel cultivated the land—therefore the land started at a place where it had received the rest it required.

Table 5: COMPARITIVE CONSERVATIVE VIEWS OF THE JUDGES

Person/Event	Unger ⁷²	Whitcomb ⁷³	Wood ⁷⁴	Rutherford	Proposed
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⁶⁷ It is unlikely, but possible that Joshua served Moses while Moses was still a prince in Egypt. If this was the case then Joshua's life would likely be divided 15-40-40-15.

⁶⁸ Joshua 11:18; 14:7, 10; (85 Caleb's age at end of conquest - 40 Caleb's age as a spy=45) (45-39=6 years conquering Canaan).

⁶⁹ Whitcomb, "Chart of Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges," has last elder die 64 years after the Exodus; Walton, *Chronological Charts of the Old Testament*, pp. 29, 48, at 61 years. Leon Wood, *Distressing Days of the Judges*, pp. 11, 13, at 71 years. John Davis and John Whitcomb, *History of Israel from Conquest to Exile* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), pp. 16, 18, at 66 years.

⁷⁰ Numbers 33:39; Numbers 20:1; Deuteronomy 34:7; Joshua 24:29.

⁷¹ Genesis 47:12; Exodus 6:15; Exodus 6:18; Exodus 6:20; Deuteronomy 34:7.

⁷² Unger, *Unger's Bible Handbook*, pp. 11-12.

⁷³ Whitcomb, "Chronological Chart of Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges."

⁷⁴ Wood, *Distressing Days of the Judges*, pp. 409-411.

Exodus	1441	40	1445	40	1446	40		40	1439	40
Entrance	1401	41	1405	34	1406	31	1413	25	1399	49
Mesopotamian	1360	6	1381	8	1375	8	1388	8	1350	8
Othniel	1354	40	1373	39	1367	40	1380	40	1342	32
Moabites	1314	18	1334	18	1327	18	1340	18	1310	18
Ehud	1296	81	1316	79	1309	80	1322	80	1292	62
Canaanites	1215	15	1257	*20	1229	20		*20	1230	20
Deborah	1200	45	1237	39	1209	40	1242	40	1210	20
Midianites	1155	5	1198	7	1169	7	-1202		1190	7
Gideon	1150	40	1191	40	1162	40	1202	40	1183	40
Abimelech	1110	5	1151	3	1122	3	1162	3	1143	3
Tola	wanting		1149	23	1119	23	1159	23	1140	23
Jair	wanting		1126	21	1118	22	1136	22	1142	*22
Ammonites	wanting		1105	18	1096	18			1117	18
Jephthah	1105	6	1087	6	1078	6	1114	6	1099	6
Ibzan	wanting		1081	6						
Elon	wanting		1075	+10						
Abdon	wanting		1065	*7						
300 yrs Heshbon		305		359		328		301		300
Philistines	1099	50+	1087	*40	1095	40			1145	40
Samson	1085	20	1069	20	1075	20			1105	20
Samuel	1035	10	1067	*24	1075	25	1069	11	1085	37
Saul	1025	15	1043	32	1050	40	1058	20	1047	40

*overlap

The next problem with the chronology is the inability to squeeze the judges period into the chronology the way it is normally done (See Table 1: Comparison of Conservative Views of the Judges Period, page 18), because of the violence it does to the text. Scripture says that when Yahweh raised up judges for Israel, Yahweh was with the judge, and saved Israel from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge (Judges 2:18). An enemy might arise and might attempt to oppress Israel, but the enemy would be defeated. So the times of oppression do not overlap the judgeship of any person raised up by Yahweh to be a judge. Later, God says, "I will deliver you no more" (Judges 10:13), suggesting that now a time of oppression might overlap a judge because God is no longer defending Israel from oppression.

Each of the periods until Tola has the previous judge dying, the people turning from God, God bringing on a period of oppression, and finally, God raising up a new judge who delivers Israel for the rest of his life and the land had rest. This sequence does not allow for overlaps. There is a transition in the Judges period, as the people grow more wicked where overlap between judge and oppression is allowed. For instance, as is often done, the last 20 years of Ehud's judgeship are overlapped with the 20 years of the Canaanite oppression, to synchronize the time with the strong and weak control periods of Egypt and to reduce by 20 years the period of the judges.⁷⁵ (See Table 2 Comparison of Conservative Views of the Judges Period, page 18). If Ehud's rest was not a real rest period, why does the text mention Shamgar who rescued the Israelites from the Philistines? The conclusion is that Ehud was still able to Judge, but not able to lead an army into battle. Also, if this oppression overlapped a period of peace, the actual period of peace would then have been an uninterrupted 120 years because the 80 years would be immediately followed by 40 years of peace under Deborah.⁷⁶

Jephthah states that Israel had dwelt in Aroer and Heshbon 300 years before the Ammonites wanted to take them back (Judges 11:26). Jephthah is speaking shortly after the period of the judges during which we can have no overlap. If we add up the known lengths of time, it is found that from the entrance until the time of Jephthah is at least 357 years. Jephthah knew something we do not, or he would have said more than 300 years had passed. It is the thesis held here that Jephthah knew that the length of the period of Israelite control was exactly 300 years. But he knew to leave out the years of oppression by foreign powers because after the

⁷⁵ Whitcomb, "Chart of Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges."

⁷⁶ Problems with standard archaeology, Bruce Killian, "The Bible vs. Archaeology, You Decide," at BibleArchaeology.htm.

initial contact these were periods of peace (except for the Midianites who caused disruption year by year). For instance, the Amorite territory was from the Arnon to the Jabbok (Judges 10:23) was the territory that had been dwelt in for 300 years was the area that nearly every oppressor of Israel would have had to control first before the area to the west of the Jordan could be controlled. The first oppressors from Mesopotamia would pass directly through this area. The next oppressors the Moabites with the Ammonites (Judges 3:13) would have come through this area to get to Jericho. The other two oppressions by the Canaanites and the Midianites would have had this area on their flank unless it was subdued. Therefore, the Israelites could not have controlled this area unchallenged for 300 years. Therefore, Israel continued to control that territory, but sometimes as a vassal state.

An additional complication shows up from Jephthah until King Saul. In the remaining 58 years, we need to place the Ammonite oppression, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Samson, Abadon, Eli, Samuel, and 40 years of Philistine oppression.⁷⁷

Archaeologists particularly try to shorten the period of the Judges for reasons of supposed links with Egypt. This can be refuted additionally by the genealogy of Samuel the prophet (1 Chronicles 6:33-38). He was descended from Israel, Levi, Kohath,⁷⁸ Izhar (Exodus 16:18), Korah,⁷⁹ Ebiasaph (Exodus 6:24), Assir, Tahath, Zaphaniah, Azariah, Joel, Elkanah, Amasai, Mahath, Elkanah, Zupu, Toah, Eliel, Jeroham, Elkanah, Samuel. From this, it can be discerned that there were at least sixteen generations from the conquest until the time of Saul (364 years / 16 generations = 23 years per generation). These generations show a significant passage of time. For a refutation of the archaeological argument for shortening this period, see [Bible Archaeology](#).

The period at the end of the judges has to account for Eli and Samuel. (1) Neither Eli nor Samuel is called a judge in the book of Judges. (2) At least the end of Eli's life overlapped the Philistine oppression. (3) Samuel was a boy when he is told of Eli's imminent demise (1 Samuel 3). (4) Twenty years later, Samuel calls the people to turn to Yahweh and leads them to victory over the Philistines (1 Samuel 7:2-11). (5) Throughout Samuel's lifetime, Yahweh's hand was against the Philistines (1 Samuel 7:13). (6) Samuel was old when he appointed his sons as judges and older when he anointed Saul as king (1 Samuel 8:5). He could hardly be less than sixty when he anointed Saul. It follows that there must have been at least 30 years of peace following the oppression of the Philistines, and that oppression lasted 40 years. (7) From this, it can be concluded that from the end of Jair's judgeship to the beginning of Saul's reign, there can be no fewer than 70 years. (8) Three hundred years minus 18 years had passed between the capture of the land of the Amorites according to Jephthah after Jair ruled. (10) 39 years passed between the Exodus and the capture of the Amorite land. (11) The total of these times (39+300+70-18) is 391 leaving no more than 88 years for the reigns of Saul and David and 4 years of Solomon's reign because of the figure in 1 Kings 6:1.

The history of Eli's family during the period of Samuel and Saul requires a considerable lapse of time. The death of Eli synchronizes with the death of his son Phinehas in the battle of Aphek (1 Sa. 4). Since Phinehas was still an able-bodied man, his son Ahitub must have been a young man at most at that date. Yet according to (1 Sa. 14:3), it is Ahitub's son Ahijah (Apparently = Ahimelech of Chr. 22:11) who is priest in the early or middle part of Saul's reign; and at the slaughter of the priests of Nob, Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech and grandson of Ahitub, escapes to David carrying the Ephod with him, and is old enough to exercise the priestly office on David's behalf by manipulation of the sacred lot.⁸⁰

(Priests could only serve from age 30 years to age 50).

Rebuttal to the Conservative Position:

Whitcomb, in his chronology of the judges, has Samuel born during the Ammonite oppression near the start of Eli's judgeship. About 20 years later, the Philistine oppression starts coincident with the judgeship of Jephthah. Twenty years later, in the middle of the Philistine oppression, Samson, Samuel, and Abdon

⁷⁷ (480-(300+39+40+40+3)) of the 480 years (1 Kings 6:1). 300 Heshbon occupied to Jephthah, 39 Exodus to Heshbon, 40 Saul and 40 for David, 3 for Solomon, 58 years remain.

⁷⁸ Genesis 46:11 Kohath went into Egypt and lived 133 years.

⁷⁹ Exodus 6:21; Numbers 16:1, 31; Korah died in wilderness.

⁸⁰ Burney, *The Book of Judges*, p. iii.

begin their judgeships about the same time. Just four years before Saul starts to reign for 32 years, Philistine oppression ends. This chronology flies in the teeth of the statement that Yahweh was against the Philistines all the life of Samuel. Whitcomb has the Philistine oppression starting when Samuel is about 18 and ending when he is 58. How can the Philistines be oppressing Israel while Yahweh is against them?

Table 6: EXODUS, CONQUEST, AND JUDGES PERIOD				
Year	Start	End	Elapsed	Event
A.M.	BC	BC	Time	@FINISH ADJUST DOWN ONE YEAR
3430	1439*	1138	1	Moses and the Burning Bush
3431	1438	1399	39	Exodus Moses (Levi) census and wandering
	1399	1398	1	Conquering Transjordan & Moses' speeches
3471	1398	1393	6	Entrance into promised land
	1393	1392	2	Land divided--tribes battle individually
3479	1390*	1390	31	Israelites settle in land--Joshua judges
	1350	1350*	19	Elders who saw God's mighty work rule
	1351	1343	8	Mesopotamian oppression
	1342*	1312	32	Othniel judge (Judah)
	1310	1373	18	Moabite oppression
	1372*	1293	62	Ehud and Shamgar judge (Benjamin)
	1291	1273	20	Canaanite oppression
	1272	1233	20	Deborah judge (Ephraim?)
	1232	1224	7	Midianite oppression
	1225	1184	40	Gideon judge (Abiezrite?)
	1185	1181	3	Abimelech king (Abiezrite?)
	1182	1144	24	Tola [23] & Jair [22] overlap (Issachar) (Manasseh)
	1145*	1126	18	Ammonite oppression-overlap with Philistine
	1127	1120	6	Jephthah judge (Manasseh)
	1121	1113	7	Ibzan judge (Judah)
	1114	1103	10	Elon judge (Zebulun)
	1104	1095	8	Abdon judge (Ephraim?)
	1145*	1106	40	Philistine oppression-overlap with Ammonite
	1105	1084	20	Samson judge (Dan)
	1085	1048	37	Samuel judge (Levi)
	1047*	1006	42(41)	Saul king (Benjamin)
	1006	999	7.5	David King in Hebron (Judah)
	997	0965	33	Year after jubilee David king in Jerusalem
@	0973	0965	8	Solomon King (overlap with David)
	0964	0933	32	Solomon King (sole over Israel)
@	0959	0959	4	Temple started (1 Ki. 6:1 480 th after Exodus)
	0949*	0949	9.5	Temple dedicated (1 Kings 8)
4037	0931			Division of the kingdom

* Jubilee year (Tribe)-tribe to which a judge or king belonged.

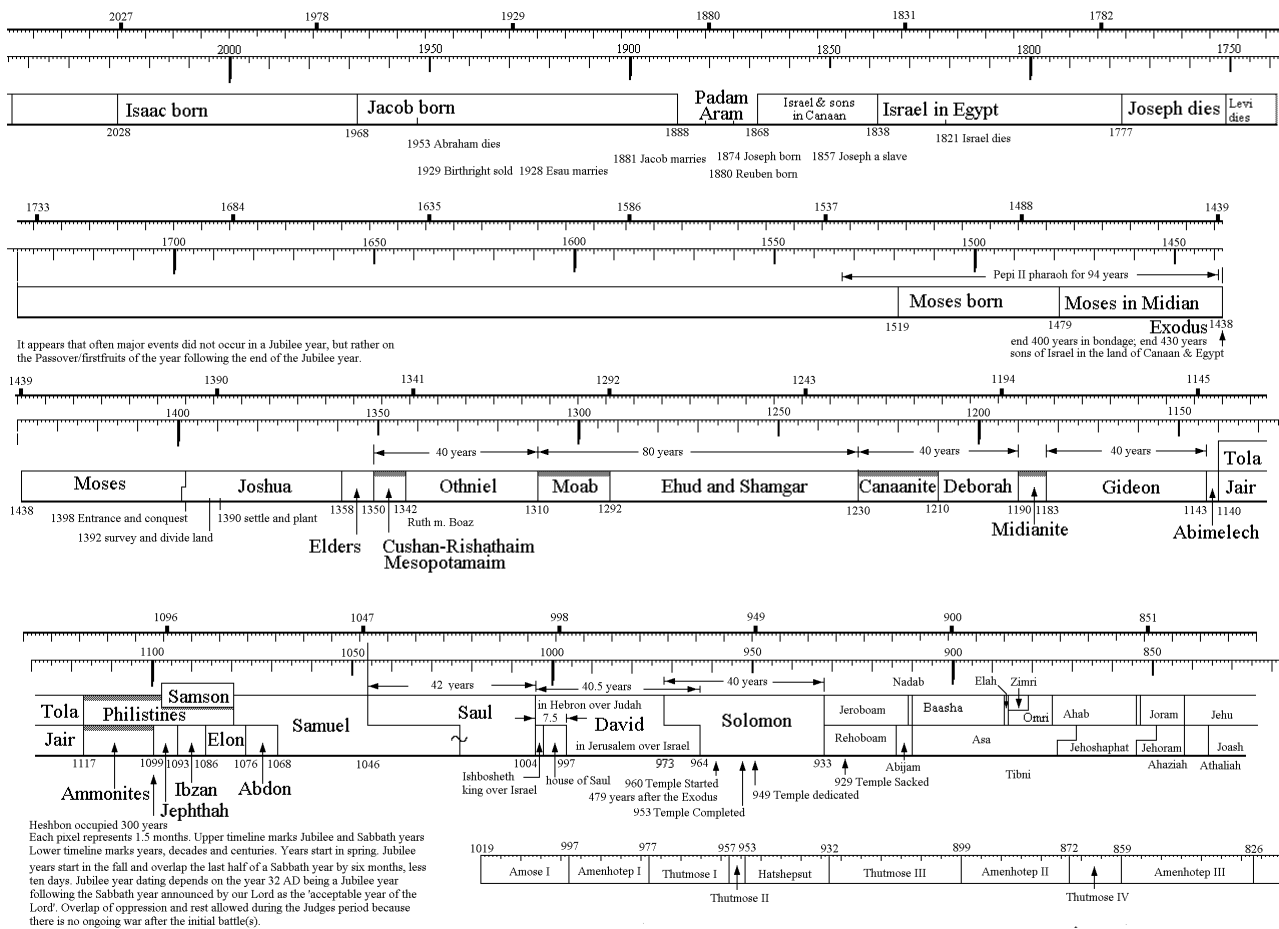


Figure 3: A Chronological Chart of the Patriarchs and Judges

Conservative Views of the Kings Period

The period of the kings lasted from the anointing of Saul until Jerusalem, and the Temple were destroyed and Zedekiah, king of Judah, went into captivity in Babylon. This period has three sections: the united kingdom—Israel, then the divided kingdom—Israel and Judah, finally the kingdom of Judah alone. The united kingdom lasted for about 113 years. The divided kingdom followed. Most conservative scholars agree with Edwin R. Thiele's chronology for this period. Thiele has proposed a method which recognizes accession and non-accession year reckoning, years starting in the month of Nisan or the month of Tishri, and overlapping reigns and coregencies which answer most chronological problems during this period. He has linked this chronology with the Assyrian kings' lists to produce a time of 931/30 BC for the division of the kingdom. The time of Hezekiah fifteenth year is 702/01 BC. The time for the start of the Babylonian captivity was 604 BC. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 BC.

Thiele says, "The single greatest cause for misunderstandings concerning the chronological data in the Books of Kings has been the failure, both in ancient and modern times, to recognize the employment of what may be termed "dual dating" in connection with the regnal data in certain coregencies and overlapping reigns."⁸¹ "Whenever a king came to the throne in either nation, a synchronism of that year in terms of the year of reign of the ruler of the other nation was entered in the record. When a reign came to its end, a notation was made of the number of years the ruler had been on the throne. Each nation made these notations in terms of the system of reckoning that was currently used in its own nation, whether accession- or nonaccession-year reckoning."⁸² Thiele found that the kingdom of Judah started counting the reign of a king

⁸¹ Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), p. 33.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

from Tishri, the seventh month.⁸³ He found that the kingdom of Israel after the division started counting the reign of a king from Nisan, the first month.⁸⁴ Judah used an accession-year system that is a method of counting the years of a king's reign where the partial first year was not counted. The kingdom Israel used the non-accession-year reckoning, so the first partial year is counted as the first year of the king's reign. The total of the lengths of reigns in Judah is the total period of time while in Israel one year per king must be subtracted from the total period of time. The months are numbered from Nisan regardless of from which month the king's reign was reckoned.⁸⁵ Each country used its own method of reckoning dates for the lengths of reign and synchronisms of the kings of the other country.⁸⁶ The king would often crown his son as a coregent if the situation warranted. In these areas, with the exception of the dates, the author agrees with Thiele.

Thiele later linked his chronology to the Assyrian chronology, which noted a dateable eclipse. This link and the later adjustments he made to accommodate this linkage are in the main rejected. The author is certain that there was a change in the stable progression of the solar system at the time of the going back of the shadow of the sun in the days of Hezekiah. Thiele's dateable eclipse is earlier than this point and therefore is not precisely datable by astronomical methods. Thiele also links his dates to Ptolemy's Canon. These early dates are rejected because Ptolemy calculated the eclipse data then fit the rulers into the expected pattern. Because the pattern had a discontinuity, it cannot be considered accurate.

In the period of the judges, the people ask for a king instead of God, and God tells Samuel to listen to the people because they have rejected him as king. Before this, God did not allow other kings to usurp His position (1 Samuel 8:5, 7, 22). Jeroboam was told that he would serve other kings (2 Chronicles 12:8). Therefore just after the start of the divided kingdom, Israel suddenly comes under the control of Egypt, and we never read about that yoke being cast off. Egyptian control drastically affects synchronisms with Egypt; See [Bible Archaeology](#) for the historical situation.

The Old Testament record is missing two words right at the spot where King Saul's age when he became king and the length of his reign is stated.⁸⁷ The length of Saul's reign is stated in Acts 13:21 as forty years and in Josephus as forty years.⁸⁸ David, at the beginning of his reign, ruled over Judah only. A son of Saul, Ish-bosheth, claimed the throne of Israel reigned for two years, making Maharaim on the east of the Jordan his capital (2 Samuel 4:1-7). Ishbosheth's age (also called Eshbaal) provides a check on the duration of Saul's reign. Ishbosheth was forty when he began to reign (2 Sam. 2:10). Scripture lists Saul's sons and daughters at the time of his accession in 1 Samuel 14:49. Ishbosheth is not listed among them, showing that he had not yet been born. As Ishbosheth was 40 years old at Saul's death, this means that Saul reigned for at least 40 years. When he died, others from the house of Saul ruled, including Abner (2 Samuel 3:1, 6). When Abner died David was anointed the king over all Israel (2 Samuel 5:1-3) and reigned over the whole nation 33 years after having ruled over Judah for seven years and six months (2 Samuel 5:4-5). The lengths of the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, are all given as forty years.⁸⁹ It appears that the main reasons for shortening Saul's reign are to prevent the overlap of his kingship with the judgeship of Samson; to allow Samuel to grow old enough to need to appoint his sons as judges; and to shorten the period of the monarchy before the Temple was built so that the maximum number of years is available for the judges period. There can be no overlap between the reign of Saul and David because although David was anointed king while Saul was still alive, David was not counted as king until he was ruling in Hebron. Saul reigned at least 40 years; there is, therefore, no reason to doubt Paul's statement that he reigned 40 years, although this may be an approximation. The author believes that Saul reigned in parts of 42 different years, but less than 41 years total. There can be a certain amount of overlap between Solomon and David because Solomon was twice

⁸³ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, p. 29.

⁸⁴ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, p. 30.

⁸⁵ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, p. 28.

⁸⁶ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, p. 55.

⁸⁷ 1 Samuel 13:1 Saul was [thirty] years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel [forty-] two years.

⁸⁸ *Antiquities* VI, XIV, 9.

⁸⁹ Acts 13:21; 1 Chronicles 29:27; 2 Chronicles 9:30.

anointed as king while David is still alive.⁹⁰ The Temple was started some time after David's death, but not more than 4 years later. Because David is told he cannot build the Temple, but he prepared for the building of the Temple. The Temple is first built in the fourth year of Solomon's reign. Thiele states that Israel used the Tishri reckoning during Solomon's reign, which Judah continued to use, but Israel did not, after the separation of the kingdoms.⁹¹ Saul probably dies at Passover because of the reference to unleavened bread on the night before his death. It is therefore highly likely that Israel used the accession year reckoning starting in the month of Tishri that Judah continued to use after the division. This would mean that the forty-year periods were at least forty years but less than forty-one years. The reign of Saul started in Tishri 1047 BC and ended in Nisan 1008 BC. The reign of David started in Nisan 1008 BC and ended in Tishri 968 BC. The reign of Solomon started in 973 BC overlapping three years with his father, David. The overlap is shown in the fact that David had Solomon anointed some time before his death, and he then began to prepare to build the Temple. The second month of the fourth year may refer to the second month of the first year after David died, but the fourth year of his reign as king, but it appears that it refers to the fourth year of Solomon's sole rule. Solomon's reign ended in 932 BC.

Problems with the Conservative View of the Kings Period

The first problem is that Thiele fails to take into account earth-moving events recorded in the Bible. The sun stood still in the sky for Joshua, and the sun's shadow moved backward for Hezekiah. These events mark changes in the stable progression of solar and stellar events making eclipses unreliable clocks for the fixing of the time of events in the history of the ancient world. Because many do not see any change in the stable progression of the earth in either the days of Joshua or Hezekiah, they consider the miracles in these events, to be the miraculous refraction of the sun's rays.

Thiele says, the sequence in 2 Kings 15:23-38 and the synchronisms in 2 Kings 17:1 and 18:1, 9, 10 must have been corrupted during transmission because they have the kingdom of Israel continuing until the sixth year of Hezekiah or about fifteen years after the Assyrian records say it was destroyed.⁹² Thiele is saying the last 20 years or so of the synchronisms between Israel and Judah were made up because Israel was destroyed 20 years earlier, which is a more reliable the interpretation of the Assyrian records or the received Scriptural witness.

Scripture says Israel, as a people, was to be destroyed within 65 years of the days of Ahaz (Isaiah 7:8). According To Thiele, they were carried off into captivity in the days of Hezekiah only a few years later. It is therefore difficult to understand why the period would have been placed at 65 years unless something else happened after they were carried into captivity.

Relegating certain passages to late editorial corruption is not an acceptable way to deal with the problems of the synchronism of 2 Kings 17. Critics must revise this entire chapter because it does not fit into their conceived pattern of history.

The Kings Period

The work done by Thiele is a valuable aid for the reconstruction of the chronology of this period nevertheless, Thiele in his earlier attempts to work out the chronology of the Hebrew kings, came closer to the chronology proposed here. At that time, he states that he had only two problem verses in reconciling the scripture with itself.

In the pattern as it then existed there was a harmonious arrangement of the reigns according to the data of Kings for both the synchronisms and the length of reign except for the two synchronisms of 2 Kings 15:32 and 16:1, for the accessions of Jotham and Ahaz. On the pattern as it then stood, Hoshea came to the throne in a year which was both the twentieth year of Jotham and the twelfth year of Ahaz, according to the synchronisms of 2 Kings 15:30 and 17:1, and Hezekiah began to reign in the third year of Hoshea, in harmony with 2 Kings 18:1. Jotham,

⁹⁰ 1 Kings 1:39, 45 and 1 Chronicles 29:22; see also 1 Chronicles 22 and 28.

⁹¹ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, p. @@.

⁹² Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, p. 147.

however, on that pattern came to the throne in the same year as did Pekah in Israel, the year of Azariah's death, and not in Pekah's second year as called for by the synchronism of 2 Kings 15:32, and Ahaz began his reign in the eighth instead of the seventeenth year of Pekah as called for by the synchronism of 2 Kings 16:1.⁹³

Later, Thiele attempted to link his chronology to the Assyrian chronology; in doing this, he was forced to compromise the Scripture to synchronize Israelite and Assyrian chronologies.

A passage (Ezekiel 4) would appear to indicate that the length of the Israelite nation was at least 390 years. Because this is not considered possible by the interpreters, this author has not seen a convincing interpretation of the passage. Israel had accumulated 390 years of punishment, and Judah had accumulated an additional 40 years of punishment. First, we presume the punishment was on the people of Israel rather than the nation of Israel. Second and we presume that they could continue to be punished until they ceased to be a people. If Israel existed for 336 years, then during that period they would accumulate 54 years of missed Sabbath rests to pay for. These two numbers add up to 390 the years of punishment paid for by Ezekiel. If we add the 40 years paid for by Judah, there are 11 years unaccounted for in the 441 years between Saul and the first wave of the captivity. This could be the time allowed by the keeping of the Sabbath and Jubilee rests by Hezekiah after the siege of Sennacherib.

When the 70 years are finished, I will punish the king of Babylon.⁹⁴ Could the end of the 70 years correspond to the time of the writing on the wall, especially since Darius the Mede took over after Belshazzar died⁹⁵? Moreover, the first year of Darius is the same year Daniel had his vision and understood the number of the 70 years.⁹⁶ There are three different 70 years periods, one for Jerusalem, one for Babylon and one for the land.

⁹³ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, pp. vii-viii.

⁹⁴ Jeremiah 25:12 "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares Yahweh, "and will make it desolate forever.

⁹⁵ Daniel 5:30-31 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, And Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.

⁹⁶ Daniel 9:1-2 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom-- In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of Yahweh given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

Table 7: THE PERIOD OF THE KINGS					
Year A.M.	Year BC	Judah	Israel	Assyria	Important Events
	1047	Saul			
	1008	David			
	972	Solomon			
	932	Rehoboam	Jeroboam I		Temple Sacking
	914	Abijam			
	912	Asa			
	911		Nadab		
	910		Baasha		
	887		Elah		
	886		Zimri/Tibni		
	881		Omri	Ashurnasirpal	
	875		Ahab	Shalmaneser II	
	871	Jehoshaphat			
	854		Ahaziah		
	853		Joram		
	849	Jehoram			
	842	Ahaziah	Jehu		
	842	Athaliah			
	836	Joash		ShamsiAdad V	
	815		Jehoahaz	Adadnirari III	
	799		Jehoash		
	797	Amaziah		Shalmaneser IV	
	783		Jeroboam II	Ashurdan III	
	768	Azariah			
	754		Zechariah	Ashurnarari	
	753?		Shallum		
	753?		Menahem		
	741	Jotham	Pekahiah		
	741				
	733	Ahaz	Pekah	Shalmaneser V	
	717	Hezekiah	Hoshea	Sennacherib	Israel into
	688	Manasseh			Captivity
	644	Amon			
	642	Josiah			
	610	Jehoahaz			
	610	Jehoiakim			Judah into
	606	Jehoiachin			Captivity
	598	Zedekiah			
	570				

Hezekiah's great revival in his first year began at the very start of a Sabbath year. His 8th and 15th, 22nd, and 29th or last year were all Sabbath years—his reign was framed by Sabbath years and centered on the Jubilee year. Also, Thiele position that the kingdom of Israel was already destroyed by the time of Hezekiah's reign is wrong because Hezekiah called men from both Israel and Judah to his revival Passover in his first year. 2 Kings 18:10 Samaria was captured in Hezekiah's 6th year, just before the Sabbath year.

Babylonian Captivity to Christ Period

There is general agreement on the chronology of the period from the Babylonian captivity to Christ. For this period, we are more dependent on secular sources for the dates, but we are into an era where eclipse data is valid and useful. The date of the end of the Babylonian captivity here conservatives fall into two

camps; the first takes the statement of the Scripture that the period lasted 70 years⁹⁷ at face value so it must be exact and complete. The second group studying the records of the Babylonians during this period come to the conclusion that the actual period of captivity lasted about 69 years and they then allow one year to expire before the Temple was started to be rebuilt by Ezra to complete out the 70 years. A variation on this is that the 69 years began just before the end of one year and ended just after the start of the year. Therefore, it is counted as 70 years because it included part of 70 different years. The author takes this final view.

The information on this period is obtained from two sources the first is Ptolemy's Almagest or Canon which details the starting and ending dates of the main world rulers from the period before the captivity into Christian times. Because Ptolemy includes eclipse data along with his canon of rulers, his is considered a very authoritative source for this period.

Key dates for dating this period are a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, the birth of Jesus the Messiah and the date of His crucifixion. The method of determining this period is to take the implied length from Daniel 9:24-26. In this passage, 69 sevens (of years) or 483 years to pass between the time of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem and the time the Messiah, the anointed one comes. This decree is generally agreed to be the document issued by Artaxerxes authorizing Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem.⁹⁸ The common dating for the issuance of this decree is 444 or 445 BC. If normal years are used for the calculation, then Christ died in AD 40. Because this does not meet any normal calculations for the date of Jesus' death, years of 360 days are postulated as prophetic years, and then the date of Jesus' death is brought down to a more acceptable AD 33.⁹⁹ This often-cited proposal that the period from the proclamation to Nehemiah until the time of the Messiah is 483 periods of 360 day years is rejected because Genesis 1:14 says that the sun, moon, and stars are for years, signs and seasons. The sun governs the length of the year. The length of the year had been 360 days until Hezekiah's reign, and then there was a change in the stable progression of the earth around the sun. By the end of the Babylonian captivity, the length of the year had probably settled into our current 365.242 days per year. This pushes the date of Nehemiah's decree some seven years earlier to 451 BC. All eclipse data before the time of Hezekiah is rejected for dating events before that time because there were major changes in the length of the year.

Ezra is normally dated as having journeyed from Babylon to Jerusalem in the spring of 458 BC.¹⁰⁰ Ezra and the Israelites start their journey on the first day of the year, the first day of the year after the Jubilee year 459 BC. During that year, he caused the people to get rid of their foreign wives, completing just as the year ended. Ezra, the leader of the returnees, is assumed to be old at this time. Nehemiah is said to return in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1). Artaxerxes was coregent with his father for a period of years before his father Xerxes died. Because Nehemiah, the cupbearer, was personally close to Artaxerxes, it is likely that he dated his reign from the time when Artaxerxes was made coregent.¹⁰¹ In the seventh month after Nehemiah returned the Law was read, indicating a Sabbath year. The law only needs to be read to the people in the seventh month of the Sabbath year (Deuteronomy 31:10-13). Note: for Nehemiah, the 20th year of Artaxerxes does not start in Nisan compare Nehemiah 1:1 and 2:1. Also note, Nisan is month number one although it is not the first month in the year for the reign of kings, confirming Thiele. Because Ezra dates the reign of Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign (Ezra 7:8) and Nehemiah dates from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 1:1, 2:1) these events are assumed to be separated by 13 years. In Nisan 453 BC five years

⁹⁷ 2 Chronicles 36:21; Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10; Daniel 9:2; Zechariah 1:2; 7:5.

⁹⁸ Nehemiah 2:1 In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of king Artaxerxes . . . about 445 BC March-April. Nehemiah 2:4 If it please your Majesty and if you look upon me with your royal favor, send me to Judah to rebuild the city of my fathers." Nehemiah 2:8 "And the king granted these requests, for God was gracious to me." Nehemiah 2:17 "Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and rid ourselves of this disgrace."

⁹⁹ $69 \times 7 = 483$. $483 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days/year} = 173,880 \text{ days}$. $173,880 \text{ days} / 365.242 \text{ days/year} = 476.07 \text{ years} = 476 \text{ years } 25 \text{ days}$.

Spring 444 BC—(476 years + 25 days) March 30, AD 33. This assumes the Messiah is revealed on the first Palm Sunday.

¹⁰⁰ John Whitcomb, "Chart Old Testament Kings and Prophets," 1966.

¹⁰¹ <http://www.yahweh.org/publications/pdf2/sj11Chap.pdf>, pp. 164-166. The proposal made in this work cannot be correct because the people discover at the beginning of the reading that they need to be living in Booths. They make booths and live in them during the reading in the feast of Booths. In Josephus' account they are living in booths during the reading—therefore the account of the reading of the law does not occur until after the walls have been rebuilt.

later, Artaxerxes issues the proclamation to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25) and Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem. The walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt, and in the seventh month, the Law is read. In 31 AD, 483 years later, Jesus announces the acceptable year of the Lord fulfilling Daniel 9:26. Jesus was quoting from Isaiah 61:1 is announcing, in their hearing that the Lords Anointed One has come, Messiah is revealed. The final seven-year period is still future. It is of interest that the 490 years of Daniel 9:24 do not start on a Jubilee but rather on a Sabbath year the end of the 483 years is a Sabbath year that includes the start of the Jubilee years. Seven years remain to fulfill Daniel 9:27. It is also of interest that 483 years of 365.242-day years is nearly identical to $490 * 360$ day years. This revelation of Jesus was the Messiah is about two years earlier than the normal time Jesus is assumed to be revealed on Palm Sunday.

<-----20th year----->	The period referred to in Nehemiah 2:1
473BC 465BC 458BC 453BC 444BC	
8 years 7 years 5 years 9 years	
<-----> <-----> <-----> <----->	
	Normal dating for Nehemiah's return
	Nehemiah returns and the walls are rebuilt, in Artaxerxes' twentieth year
	This is a Sabbath year.
	Ezra and the people return, foreign wives and children put away.
	This is the year following a Jubilee year.
	Artaxerxes sole king of Medo-Persia

The traditional date for the deliverance of the Jews in the days of Queen Ester is Adar 14, 509 BC very close to the Jubilee year preceding Ezra's return to Jerusalem 459 BC.¹⁰² The time of the Maccabean revolt and the cleansing of the temple are traditionally dated in 165BC. The jubilee date near this event is 165 BC. Whether these events are exactly linked is unknown at this time without more study.

After the Babylonian captivity, one can find evidence that the Jews kept the Sabbath years—the Israelites had learned their lesson. For instance, 1 Maccabees 6:48-54, some Jews were keeping a Sabbath rest year. Clearly, the Jews were not keeping the rests at the right time. For instance, while in a city under siege, the defenders are starved out after only a short period, because it was a “sabbatical year and they could not harvest.” The problem is that God promises to have the land produce enough for two years, allowing resistance to a much longer siege. Second, Yahweh promised that if they kept these laws, they would be dwelling in security, being under siege does not sound like a particularly high level of security.

But if the priests interpreted the Law such that the Sabbath year was said to occur at such and such a time then it would be a Sabbath year because the successor to Moses—the priests in Ezra's time were the authoritative interpreters of the Law. The person(s) who sat in Moses seat interpret the law in a legally binding way.¹⁰³

Josephus¹⁰⁴

In Daniel 9:25 the 483 years end with the Messiah the Prince. In Luke 4:18, Jesus reading from Isaiah 61:1, Yahweh has anointed me—Jesus is claiming to be the Messiah—anointed by the LORD—a new time period starts. “This day, in your hearing, this has been fulfilled.”

¹⁰² John Whitcomb, “Chart Old Testament Kings and Prophets,” 1966.

¹⁰³ Deuteronomy 17:8-11 If cases come before your courts that are too difficult for you to judge--whether bloodshed, lawsuits or assaults--take them to the place Yahweh your God will choose. 9 Go to the priests, who are Levites, and to the judge who is in office at that time. Inquire of them and they will give you the verdict. 10 You must act according to the decisions they give you at the place Yahweh will choose. Be careful to do everything they direct you to do. 11 Act according to the law they teach you and the decisions they give you. Do not turn aside from what they tell you, to the right or to the left.

¹⁰⁴ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 11.chap. 5.sect. 5,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/text?lookup=j.+aj+11.chap.+5.sect.+5&vers=english;whiston&browse=1>

This brings us to the final area of problem that is the dates of Jesus' birth, ministry, and death. A separate article has been written on this topic see [Dionysius Exiguus](#). The conclusion from that paper is that Jesus was born within a few weeks of the transition between BC and AD. Jesus' public ministry lasted just over two years rather than the common teaching that it lasted 3.5 years. Jesus died on Passover AD 33.

There is much apparently contradictory evidence. The first set places the death of Jesus in Nisan AD 30; the second set of evidence places His death in Nisan AD 33. The year AD 30 and 33 are fixed as the only choices. Only in these years was a Friday Passover/crucifixion astronomically possible. The alternate days of the week for the crucifixion are without serious merit.

Sidebar God prompting the church to establish the standard dating system (Anno Domini, Gregorian Calendar) used worldwide, influenced the accurate selection of the date chosen for the birth of our LORD. It could be that Jesus' birth / incarnation was December 25, 1 BC. This would best fit the scenario that Jesus was about 30 when he began his public ministry in AD 31 and died in AD 33. If there were a year 0, it would be 1 BC.

The Length of Jesus Ministry

See <http://www.scripturescholar.com/Jesus2yearMinistry.htm> Jesus' public ministry primarily occurred during the Sabbath and Jubilee year pair. The year of His resurrection occurred on the immediately following the first harvest to the very day, the first in three years.

Table 8: BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO CHRIST		
Year	Year	Event or King
A.M.	BC	
4259	610	Jehoahaz
4259	610	Jehoiakim
4263	605	1st Captivity—Babylonian captivity starts
4263	605	Jehoiachin
4270	598	Zedekiah
4284	586	Jerusalem destroyed
	562	Jehoiachin released/Evil-Merodach king
	538	End of captivity
	536	Temple starts under Zerubbabel
	520	Temple resumes
	516	Temple finished
4410	459	Ezra returns with many people
4416	453	Jerusalem rebuilt under Nehemiah
	166	Temple Desecrated
	165	Temple restored
	16	Herod rebuilds the Temple (46 years before AD31)
4867	1 BC	Jesus Born
	AD 1	Herod dies
4899	31	Jesus announces Sabbath year + Jubilee
4900	32	Jubilee year during Jesus' ministry
4901	33	Jesus dies, rises & the Church is born

The next sections, I know that there are many who will not be able to receive them. Here we transition from the Israelite period to the Church Age.

The Church Period: From Christ to the Present¹⁰⁵

When the Sanhedrin the then authoritative interpreter of the Scriptures, condemned Jesus, they condemned themselves as unfit to hold that position.¹⁰⁶ Previously, Jesus foreseeing this event had passed on His authority to authoritatively interpret the Scriptures to Peter as an individual and the apostles as a group (Matthew 16:19, 18:18). In Acts 4:17-20, the Sanhedrin commanded Peter and the apostles to no longer speak or teach in the name of Jesus. This is a decisive point of division as the new Church goes on by itself separate from the previous ruling body. By that point, the Sanhedrin had already lost their authority. The Catholic Church established at Pentecost had the authority to declare when the Jubilee would be celebrated.

The record of the early Jubilees as kept by the church has been lost. Until the common use of paper in the fourteenth century, things were memorized rather than being recorded on documents.¹⁰⁷ The purpose of the Jubilee transformed from freedom from financial debt and a return to one's inheritance to include freedom from the penalty of forgiven sin. That is the pilgrim is placed in the state where the reward of heaven is ones immediate inheritance upon death. The Old Testament Jubilees is a type or shadow of the current Jubilee (Colossians 2:16-17). What the Jubilee will be in the future has not yet been revealed. That the Jubilees were celebrated during the earlier Church age can be discerned by the date of the earliest recorded Jubilee in the church age AD 1208. This date is exactly in sequence with the earlier Jubilees. Therefore until AD 1208 the Church apparently continued to celebrate the Jubilee periods at 49-year intervals. God preserved the tradition. The following record of the Jubilee is cited from the Catholic Encyclopedia.

In the light of this explicit mention of a Jubilee with great remissions of the penalties of sin to be obtained by full confession and purpose of amendment, it seems difficult to reject the statement of Cardinal Stefaneschi, the contemporary and counselor of Boniface VIII, and author of a treatise on the first Jubilee ("De Anno Jubileo" in La Bigne, "Bibliotheca Patrum", VI, 536), that the proclamation of the Jubilee owed its origin to the statements of certain aged pilgrims who persuaded Boniface that great indulgences had been granted to all pilgrims in Rome about a hundred years before. It is also noteworthy that in the Chronicle of Alberic of Three Fountains, under the year 1208 (not, be it noted 1200), we find this brief entry: "It is said that this year was celebrated as the fiftieth year, or the year of Jubilee and remission, in the Roman Court" (Pertz, "Mon. Germ. Hist.: Script." XXIII, 889). It is beyond all dispute that on 22 Feb., 1300, Boniface published the Bull "Antiquorum fida relatio", in which, appealing vaguely the precedent of past ages, he declares that he grants afresh and renews certain "great remissions and indulgences for sins" which are to be obtained "by visiting the city of Rome and the venerable basilica of the Prince of the Apostles."¹⁰⁸

The year 1208 was the 24th Jubilee following the Jubilee in Jesus time at AD 32.¹⁰⁹ In the year 2000, we will celebrate the 26th Jubilee since the institution of the "ordinary" Jubilee in AD 1300. Jesus announced Jubilee number 100; we have now celebrated Jubilee number 150!

Why the change Jubilees to Holy Years? Scripture states that God would cause all feasts of the Jews would stop,¹¹⁰ but some of them were permanent.¹¹¹ Therefore, God, in order to fulfill His Word,

¹⁰⁵ Information in this sections is primarily from *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "The Holy Year of Jubilee", copyright © 1913 by the Encyclopedia Press, Inc. Electronic version copyright © 1996 by New Advent, Inc. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08531c.htm>. and from <http://www.giubileo.rai.it/eng/arca2web/storia/index.htm>.

¹⁰⁶ Deuteronomy 17:10-12, Matthew 23:2, Mark 14:64.

¹⁰⁷ James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed*, pp. 97-100, 109-110.

¹⁰⁸ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "The Holy Year of Jubilee", copyright © 1913 by the Encyclopedia Press, Inc. Electronic version copyright © 1996 by New Advent, Inc. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08531c.htm>.

¹⁰⁹ AD 32 + (24 * 49) = AD 1208

¹¹⁰ Hosea 2:11 I will stop all her celebrations: her yearly festivals, her New Moons, her Sabbath days--all her appointed feasts.

¹¹¹ Exodus 31:13-17 The Sabbath was to be kept forever.

had to change the feasts. These feasts were a shadow or type.¹¹² In Christ, God, directing the Church, has migrated the Sabbath to the Lord's Day, Passover to Good Friday, The Omer or first fruits offering to Easter, the Feast of Weeks to Pentecost, and we have yet to see what will happen with the feast of Tabernacles. The Jubilee has become the Holy Year--not only a time for canceling debts and return to inheritance but a time for the canceling of the punishment due for forgiven sin. The extraordinary plenary indulgence granted during a Holy year is called the Jubilee Indulgence. A plenary indulgence is a full pardon from to the punishment due for one's forgiven sins. If we remember that the word Sabbath means rest, we can translate the third commandment, "Remember to keep holy the day of rest."¹¹³

The Holy Year is a year of spiritual liberation and remission, the chief feature of which is a plenary indulgence to be gained by those who fulfill certain conditions, one of which is a pilgrimage to Rome. The first ordinary Holy Year or Jubilee Year was celebrated in 1300 when Pope Boniface VIII declared that Romans and Pilgrims to Rome might gain "the most full pardon of all their sins" on condition that having confessed their sins they visited the basilicas of Saints, Peter and Paul. He intended that the Holy Year be celebrated every 100th year, but his successors shortened the intervals, acting on the suggestion that otherwise, whole generations would be excluded from the benefits of the Jubilee. Since 1450, the Jubilee has been celebrated every 25 years the only exceptions were the years 1800, 1850, and 1875 when political conditions were unfavorable. Extra ordinary Jubilees were declared in 1929 and 1933.

The purpose of the Holy Year, in the words of Pope Pius XII, is "to recall to all Christians and not only to the expiation of their sins and the amendment of their lives but also to the attainment of virtue and holiness." As a person in the state of grace, we are acceptable to God because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. In the Holy Year, one is to attain holiness and virtue so that we are acceptable to God not only because of what Christ has done for us but also through the completion of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Not only imputed righteousness but actual righteousness as well. A special time of grace toward our maturation. Bottom line not just freedom from punishment and return to inheritance but the opportunity to develop God's character in us.

In accordance with an old tradition, the Holy Year begins on December 24, before the first vespers of Christmas, and ends at the same time a year later.¹¹⁴ The most notable feature of the opening and closing ceremonies is the symbolic opening and final walling up of the Holy Door, in each of the four patriarchal basilicas of Rome.

Each time a Holy Year is proclaimed, the reigning pope specifies the conditions for gaining a plenary indulgence for the Jubilee. In his bull, *Jubilaem maximum*, proclaiming 1950 as a Holy Year, Pope Pius the XII granted the Jubilee indulgence under the following conditions: (1) worthy reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist (normally during the Jubilee period); (2) devout visits to the basilicas of Saint John Lateran, Saint Peter, Saint Paul-outside-the-walls, and Saint Mary Major; (3) recitation three times in each basilica of our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be to the Father, for the intention of the pope, and the recitation of the Creed once in each basilica.¹¹⁵

To give more importance to the Jubilee Indulgence, during the Holy year and other Indulgences for the living with few exceptions, are suspended in Rome and elsewhere, but only for the living; they may still be gained and applied to the souls still in purgatory.

Certain classes of Catholics are able to gain the Holy Year Indulgence without visiting Rome, e.g., all nuns and sisters; monks, likewise Trappists and Carthusians; the faithful who are prisoners, or exiled or deported, or condemned to penal servitude, or detained in reformatories; the faithful in those countries from which they are not allowed to leave for a pilgrimage to Rome; those prevented by sickness from

¹¹² Colossians 2:16-17 ... to a religious festival, a New moon celebration or a Sabbath day, these are a shadow of things that were to come; the reality is found in Christ.

¹¹³ Exodus 20:8 and Deuteronomy 5:12

¹¹⁴ This year it ends in January 6—why? For ecumenical reasons?

¹¹⁵ The requirements for this year 2000 confession, Eucharist, pass through holy door, pray 'our father', 'hail Mary', and Glory be for the intention of the Pope, do an act of mercy all within a reasonable time (about 8 days).

visiting Rome; all people over 70 years of age; all who attend the sick in hospitals; laborers who cannot take time off to go to Rome. The above classes of people may gain the indulgence by fulfilling the condition of confession, communion, and prayers for the intention of the pope and by doing whatever is proscribed by the local bishop as a substitute for the pilgrimage to Rome.

It is customary for the Pope, at the end of the Holy Year, to extend the Jubilee Indulgence to the whole world, the conditions of visits to the basilicas being satisfied by visits to local churches.

Table 9: JUBILEES DURING THE CHURCH AGE

¹¹⁶	¹¹⁷	year	Pope	Description
125	1	1300	Boniface VIII	Proclaimed the first ordinary Jubilee, interval set at 100 years. ¹¹⁸
126	2	1350	Clement VI	Gave his consent and set a period of fifty years between Jubilees.
			Urban VI	He set period at 33 years in memory of the earthly life of Jesus.
127	3	1390	Boniface IX	
128	4	1400	Boniface IX	Since the number of pilgrims was so great at previous Jubilee.
129	5	1423	Martin V	The first holy door opened a walled-in door St. John Lateran. ¹¹⁹
130	6	1450	Nicholas V	golden year--Vatican library founded--summer the plague arrived
131	7	1475	Sixtus IV	He Ordered building of the Sistine Chapel & Sixtus Bridge
132	8	1500	Alexander VI	Four Doors in the four major basilicas would be opened
133	9	1525	Clement VII	At a time of the Protestant Reform. Golden hammer first used
134	10	1550	Julius III	Michelangelo age 76
135	11	1575	Gregory XIII	About 300,000 people came to Rome from all over Europe.
136	12	1600	Clement VIII	Occurred on 31 Dec as Pope was confined to bed
137	13	1625	Urban VIII	Pilgrims confined within city by flood protects from plague ¹²⁰
138	14	1650	Innocent X	
139	15	1675	Clement X	
140	16	1700	Innocent XII	a Holy Year of penitence
141	17	1725	Benedict XIII	Repentance, prayer, and Christian compassion
142	18	1750	Benedict XIV	
143	19	1775	Pius VI	The Door opened on 26 February 1775.
		1800	Pius VII	The difficult situation during Napoleon's rule prevented Pius VII from proclaiming the Jubilee.
144	20	1825	Leo XII	More than half a million pilgrims made the journey to Rome.
		1850	Pius IX	Holy Year not held because of the unsettled situation in the Roman Republic and temporary exile of Pius IX.
145	21	1875	Pius IX	Proclaimed a Holy Year, but no ceremonial opening of the Door because Rome was occupied by troops of King Emmanuele.
146	22	1900	Leo XIII	
147	23	1925	Pius XI	Consider precious work of the missions
		1929	Pius XI	extra ordinary Jubilee
		1933	Pius XI	extra ordinary Jubilee
148	24	1950	Pius XII	The dogma of the Assumption into Heaven of Mary.
149	25	1975	Paul IV	Themes for reflection & action: renewal & reconciliation.
		1983	John Paul II	extra ordinary Jubilee
150	26	2000	John Paul II	Great Jubilee

Tradition on December 24 The door walled in since the last Jubilee: Pope knocks three times with a silver hammer, Cardinal knocks two times, and the threshold is then washed. The Pope crosses with a black candle in his left hand and a cross in his right hand.—I am the door, he who enters with be saved.

¹¹⁶ Combined Jubilee number from Creation to the Present

¹¹⁷ Ordinary Jubilee number of the Church Age form 1300 AD on.

¹¹⁸ 2 million pilgrims visited Rome a city of 40,000.

¹¹⁹ Could this door have been walled and opened before records were kept?

¹²⁰ St. Peters Basilica dedicated the following year.

Table 10: JUBILEE EVENTS FROM CREATION TO PRESENT

Year AM	Jubilee	Year	Event Description—If * event occurs in year following Jubilee
0	0	4866 BC	Creation of Adam and Eve
980	20	3886 BC	Enoch Translated—maybe *
1656		3200 BC	The Flood— about ten years before the Jubilee
2842	58	2027 BC	Circumcision of Abraham, * Isaac born.
2940	60	1929 BC	Esau sold his birthright to Jacob/famine associated with Jubilee
2989	61	1880 BC	The first son of Israel, Reuben is born, * Levi born.
3038	62	1831 BC	The seventh year of Famine predicted by Joseph just passed
3430	70	1439 BC	* Exodus of Israel out of Egypt
3479	71	1390 BC	The first planting when settling in the promised land.
3528	72	1241 BC	The end of the Mesopotamian oppression—Othniel judge
3577	73	1292 BC	The end of the Moabite oppression—Ehud judge
3773	77	1096 BC	The end of the Ammonite oppression—Jephthah judge
3822	78	1047 BC	* The anointing of King Saul.
3871	79	998 BC	* David ruling over all Israel and Judah in Jerusalem
3920	80	949 BC	The dedication of Solomon’s Temple (9 years 11 months after start)
4165	85	704 BC	The 15th year of Hezekiah & destruction of Sennacherib’s army.
4263	87	606 BC	* Judah first carried into Babylon.
4361	89	508 BC	Israel rescued through the efforts of Queen Ester
4410	90	459 BC	* Ezra returns, 5 years later Nehemiah restores Jerusalem’s walls
4704	96	165 BC	The victory of the Maccabees over Antiochus Epiphanes
4900 [#]	100	AD 32	“Acceptable Year of the Lord,” *Crucifixion, Resurrection & Church
6076	124	AD 1208	Last Jubilee celebrated at a 49-year interval
6172	125	AD 1300	First ordinary Jubilee celebrated at a 25-year interval
6872	150	AD 2000	Great Jubilee--Pope John Paul II (40*50 since Jesus’ birth)

[#]The fullness of time may refer to the 4900 years, which is 10 * 490 or 10 * 10 * 7 * 7 years.¹²¹

Ecclesiastes 3:1- There is an appointed time (in Hebrew zeman,¹²² Greek kairos) for everything under heaven. God does have specific times for his plans. Moreover, certain things will happen at very specific times. Solomon being wise, would have insights into God’s way of timing events. Just maybe God laid out intervals of 10 Jubilees for the accomplishment of different periods of his developing his family.

Chronological Insights re God’s harvest

It is of interest that important events on God’s schedule of creating a people for Himself occur on the Sunday following Passover following the end of a Jubilee year. This is the time of the Omer or wave offering. This would be the earliest time to reap a harvest for over two years. The exit of the Israelites from the Red Sea and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ both occurred on this particular day. Abraham’s child of promise Isaac was born at about this time in the year following the Jubilee. Also, Jacob’s first son Rueben was born about this time.

¹²¹ Galatians 4:4 But in the fullness of time, God sent his son born of a woman ...

¹²² BDB p. 273 only in Ne 2:6 (Nehemiah’s return to the king), Est 9:27, 31 (the establishment of Purim) and Ec. 3:1.

Appendix: The Holy Door and the Eastern Gate.

In John 10:1-21, Jesus is talking to the Pharisees on the last and greatest day of the Feast of Booths. However, this was a week and a half more than one year after the Jubilee started. Jesus is in this passage, talking about Himself being the door. This is the only passage in the gospels where Jesus says that he is the door. Therefore while apparently in the Jubilee year, he is also calling our attention to the concept of a door that believers pass through, but others cannot. I do not know whether Jesus is at this point, calling attention to the end of the Jubilee year or not, but he very well could be.

Ezekiel 44:2-3 Yahweh said to me, "This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because Yahweh, the God of Israel, has entered through it. 3 The prince himself is the only one who may sit inside the gateway to eat in the presence of Yahweh. He is to enter by way of the portico of the gateway and go out the same way." Ezekiel can help us view Mary as the door that allowed Jesus into the world, and in this interpretation especially confirms her virginity. Because the gate can represent the womb of Mary--into whom no other was allowed to enter because it had been used by the Lord of glory. The eastern gate was sealed in about Ezekiel 44 before and after the king to prevent others from entering. We have Mary as symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant and the gate through which only the king could enter.

When Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden, a door was closed. Cherubim guarded the garden to prevent Adam and Eve from returning. The door to the garden and a special relationship with God had been closed.

There was an opened door in the ark that could be entered up to 7 days before the flood came on the earth. We would not expect to have a door in the side of a ship unless there was some deeper purpose to that door because it would be prone to leakage. God closed the door to the ark only Noah and his family, the ones passing through that door, survived.

The words used by the pope at the opening of the Holy door indicate its link to a gate "door gate." The pope had a vision that the Holy door was to be included in the Jubilee celebration. Only the high priest was allowed through the curtain and only once per year. The curtain was split asunder at the time of our Lord's death on the cross. Pope John Paul II refers to the threshold. If this is extended back to creation, then there may be a link between the opening of the Holy Door on the holy year. A possible link between the holy door in the early Church is the Jubilee door in the Cathedral in Rome of St. John Lateran which had a walled-in door opened for the Jubilee. Could that door have been walled in after an earlier no longer remembered Jubilee?

The Jubilee year is more than a year of rest it is a year consecrated to God—'a Sabbath to the Yahweh', cf. Is 49:8-10, 2 Co. 6:1-2, Luke 19:41-44, Mark 1:15. The following year is the first harvest for three years, but it is more than that it is often a year of new beginnings. The faith of the believers was tested to failure or to success directly in how they responded during the Jubilee.

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Glossary

MT Massoretic Text dates from about AD 1000; it has a remarkable similarity to the Dead Sea Scrolls.

SP Samaritan Pentateuch.

LXX Septuagint-- Greek translation of the scriptures dating to about 300 BC.

AM Anno Mundi-- the year of man--dating from the creation of Adam.

AUC Ab Urbe Condita--From the city founding--from the founding of Rome in 7xx BC.

Accession year Reckoning of reign where a partial first year did not count towards the years of a king's reign.

Non-Accession year Reckoning of a reign counting the first partial year as a full year of reign.

Indulgence pardon.

Papal Bull The most solemn and weighty form of a papal letter.