

The Biblical Calendar of History:

A Chronological Record of Events According to the Holy Bible

By Harold Camping

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The Biblical Calendar of History:

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Introduction

Chapters 5 and 11 of the Book of Genesis have long been a seemingly insurmountable obstacle to students of the Bible. Inasmuch as they begin with Adam and end with Abraham, they have their roots in creation and their outreach into the era of the great civilizations of Babylon and Egypt, which flourished during Abraham's day. They therefore tantalize the scholar who is trying to reconstruct history. Unfortunately, because a solution to an understanding of these chapters has not been forthcoming, the events embraced within their scope -- creation, the fall of man, the Noachian flood -- are likewise often looked upon as accounts impervious to clear understanding.

Bishop Ussher's attempt to understand these chronological notices has only worsened matters. His conclusions that Adam's date was 4004 BC, the flood date was 2349 BC, and that the Israelites spent 215 years in Egypt, agree neither with the biblical nor the secular evidence.

But these chapters of Genesis are part of the Word of God, and therefore they must be true and dependable. The question is, can they be rightly understood? I would be so presumptuous as to suggest a solution to these chronologies. This solution will be compared with some of the pertinent archaeological evidence.

The Biblical Calendar of History

The Clue Phrase is "Called His Name"

In Genesis 4 and 5 we read of the birth of Enosh to Seth. Why did God use different language to describe this event in Genesis 4 from that in Genesis 5? In Genesis 4:26, "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos." (All Scripture references are from the *King James Version* of the Bible.) But the Bible says in Genesis 5:6, "And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos." Why did God use the phrase "called his name" in connection with Enos's birth in Genesis 4 but not in Genesis 5? It is obvious that the phrases "[Seth] begat Enos" or "Methuselah begat Lamech" did not ensure that Enos was the immediate son of Seth or Lamech of Methuselah. Many instances can be found where a father-son relationship **appears** to be indicated and yet other Scriptural evidence points to a more distant ancestry. Matthew 1:1, where Jesus is referred to as the Son of David, and David, the son of Abraham, is illustrative.

A more careful examination of the Scriptures reveals why the phrase "called his name", which is the Hebrew *qara*, was used. In every place where this phrase is employed, there can be no doubt of the existing relationship; invariably it is indicative of parent and child. Thus, the Bible says, for example, in Genesis 21:3, "Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him . . . Isaac." We read in Genesis 25:25, "And they called his name Esau" and Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." In every instance where this "clue" phrase appears, one can be certain that an immediate son is being described and not a more remote descendant.

God's use of this "clue" phrase thus assures us that Seth was the immediate son of Adam (Gen. 4:25), Enos of Seth (Gen. 4:26), and Noah of his father, Lamech (Gen. 5:28-29). What about the rest of the names appearing in these genealogies under discussion? Two are decipherable. Other biblical evidence shows clearly that Shem was the immediate son of Noah, even though the phrase "called his name" is not used.¹ The Bible shows, too, by other information that when Terah was 130 he became the father of Abram.² But in the case of all the other names listed in these chapters there is no biblical evidence of any kind that points to an intermediate father-son relationship. In fact, there is internal evidence within these accounts that points to other than immediate father-son relationships.³

An Ancient Calendar

In further reflection upon this situation, two biblical notices should be examined. The first is that of Genesis 7 and 8, where the dates of the flood events are referenced to the age of Noah. Thus Genesis 8:13 records, "And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth." Genesis 7:6 tells us, "Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth." Could the calendars of ancient peoples have been tied to the life spans of certain individuals?

The second notice is that of the New Testament where Christ declared in Matthew 24:34, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." In this reference Christ is speaking of events that will take place just before His return. He is therefore insisting that "this generation" will continue at least for almost two thousand years, for this much time has now elapsed, and all the events of which He prophesied in Matthew 24 have not yet happened. As a matter of fact, this is the generation of Jesus Christ. For instance, the year AD 1995 is the year of our Lord.⁴ The events of today are dated exactly as they were in Noah's day, by reference to the birth date of a person.

Since this method of dating events was practiced in Noah's day, and was suggested by Jesus Himself, and is actually the practice used today, could not this have been the method described in Genesis 5 and 11? Is it not possible that these accounts are a calendar which gives the name of the patriarch whose life span was the reference point of his period or generation in history? This would make abundant sense, for it would provide continuity and clarity in historical reckoning.

Calendar Confirmation from Egypt

God gives additional evidence to support this reasoning. In Exodus 6 God gives genealogical information concerning some of the descendants of Jacob. The information given does not appear very meaningful to our present day and age, but hidden among these verses are three numbers. The first is found in verse 16 where it is stated that Levi's three sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and the years of Levi's life were 137. The second is in verse 18, where it says Kohath's four sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, and the years of Kohath's life were 133. The third is in verse 20, where it says Amram was married to Jochebed, and she bore him Moses and Aaron, and the years of Amram's life were 137. At first reading, it appears that Levi was the great-grandfather, Kohath the grandfather, Amram the father, and Moses and Aaron the sons. But is this so? There is no other biblical evidence that indicates this is the case, and there is no use anywhere in the Bible of the phrase "called his name" in reference to these men that would point to an immediate father-son relationship. Why would God give the life spans of only three individuals among so many?

To solve this puzzle, let us assume that God is giving us the calendar for the Israelitish sojourn in Egypt. One might recall that Jacob came to Egypt with his sons including Levi, and that the Israelites went out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Both Levi and Aaron are mentioned in Exodus 6 and the age of Aaron at the time of Israel's departure from Egypt is given as 83 (Exodus 7:7). It can be shown from the biblical references that when Levi entered Egypt he was 60 to 63 years of age, with the burden of the evidence pointing to 60 years.⁵ Since he died at the age of 137, he lived 77 years in Egypt. If this is a calendar giving the names of the reference patriarchs or generations, we would expect that Kohath was a descendant of Levi and was born the year of Levi's death; and that Amram was a descendant of Kohath, and that he was born the year of Kohath's death. Aaron in turn was born the year of Amram's death, and was descended from Amram. Let us add these time spans together:

| | |
|--------|----------------------|
| Levi | 77 years in Egypt |
| Kohath | 133 years in Egypt |
| Amram | 137 years in Egypt |
| Aaron | 83 years in Egypt |
| | ----- |
| | 430 years total time |

Turning now to the biblical record, we discover the following interesting information in Exodus 12:40-41, "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the

LORD went out from the land of Egypt." God thus shows us clearly that the calendar used to record the passage of time during the Egyptian sojourn was based on the lives of Levi and his descendants, Kohath, Amram, and Aaron. This also explains the prophecy given to Abraham in Genesis 15:13-16, that his descendants would be oppressed 400 years (they were not oppressed during the beginning of their sojourn) in a land that was not theirs, and that they would return to their own land in the fourth generation.

Aaron's was the Fourth Generation

I believe that God in His wonderful wisdom has given us the key that unlocks the hitherto perplexing genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. These chapters are a calendar. The time was divided into patriarchal periods or generations, even as the New Testament period is the generation of Jesus Christ, and as the Egyptian sojourn was so divided. Thus, for example, when Methuselah died, bringing to an end his generation, a man who was born in the year of Methuselah's death was selected to be the next reigning patriarch, or at least the next man for calendar reference. After Methuselah, this was Lamech. None of the conditions of his selection are given, except that he had to be a descendant of Methuselah. The Bible indicates that Methuselah was 187 years old when he begat Lamech; i.e., when he was 187, the forefather of Lamech was born to Methuselah (Gen. 5:25). This notice establishes the certainty of Lamech's blood descent from Methuselah by showing where his forefather tied into the life of Methuselah.

The selection of the next patriarch had to include a birth date coinciding with Methuselah's death date to ensure a rational history. Had he been born one or more years earlier, an overlap would have occurred that would have blurred history. If Lamech had been born one or more years later than Methuselah's death, a gap would have occurred that would have confused history. Therefore, when a citizen of the world of that day spoke of an event occurring in the year Methuselah 950, only one year in history coincided with that date. Again, if he spoke of the year Lamech 2, only one year coincided with that date, and he knew precisely how many years transpired from Methuselah 950 to Lamech 2.

At the beginning men were comparatively scarce. Thus it seems apparent that when Adam died, there was no one born that year who was qualified to become the next reference patriarch. When Seth died 112 years later, the same situation prevailed. But when Enosh, grandson of Adam, died 98 years after Seth, a child who was a descendant of Enosh was born in the same year, and this child was eventually named as the next reference patriarch. This was Kenan. Kenan's life span thus became the calendar reference for that period of history. The calendar was continued in this fashion until Methuselah died and Lamech was born.

When Lamech was born, he became the one to whom the calendar was referenced. His descendant, who was born the year of Lamech's death and who would have become the next patriarch, died in the flood. This can easily be known, for Lamech died five years before the flood and only Noah and his immediate family survived the flood. Noah, who was an immediate son of Lamech, of necessity became a substitute calendar reference, even though he was not born the year of Lamech's death. Thus, the flood events are all dated by the life span of Noah (Gen. 7:6, 7:11, 8:4-5, 8:13-14).

When Noah died 350 years after the flood, the same situation prevailed that existed when Adam died. Few people lived upon the earth, and no one met the conditions required to become the next reference patriarch. When Shem died 152 years after Noah, the child Arpachshad, a descendant of Shem, was born in the same year and he became the next patriarch. The calendar was then continued in this same fashion until Terah was born.

After Terah was born, he became the reference patriarch. During Terah's life span, God brought into being the nation of Israel through Terah's immediate son, Abram. Thus, the descendant of Terah who was born the year of Terah's death was outside the Messianic line and outside of God's chronological purposes. God effectively had narrowed men down to the family of Abram. The normal method of calendar keeping was set aside in the absence of patriarchs who qualified. When Abraham died, no descendant of his was born the year of his death. When Isaac, the immediate son of Abraham, died, the same situation prevailed. This was repeated when Jacob, the immediate son of Isaac, died. But in the year that Levi, the immediate son of Jacob died, a descendant of Levi was born whose name was Kohath, and he apparently met the qualifications of a reference patriarch. Thus, he continued the calendar line as we have seen. Amram followed Kohath, and Aaron followed Amram. Interestingly it can be shown that in a real sense Aaron's generation continued until Christ's began almost 2,000 years ago.⁶ God has thus given in His Word a complete calendar from creation to Christ.

The Chronology from Adam

A chronology beginning with Adam may now be set forth. To tie this genealogical table to our present calendar, synchronization between the biblical and secular histories should be found. Because so much work has been done in recent years, particularly in relation to the dating of the kings of Israel, this can be done rather readily. Edwin R. Thiele, in his book *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, established the date of the death of Solomon and the division of the kingdom as 931 BC.⁷ Since Solomon reigned 40 years (I Kings 11:42) and began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign (I Kings 6:1), the construction began in the year 967 BC. This date in turn can be related to the Exodus because in at least two places God gives a time bridge from the Exodus to the building of the temple. The first is recorded in I Kings 6:1, where 480 years is indicated as the time span between these events. The second can be shown from the chronology of the Hebrew judges.⁸

A time span of 480 years brings us to 1447 BC as the date of the Exodus. If we work back from this date to Adam, we arrive at the date for Adam as 11013 BC. The key dates are as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Creation of Adam | 11013 BC |
| Seth born | 10883 BC |
| Enosh's generation | 10778-9873 BC |
| Kenan's generation | 9873-8963 BC |
| Mahalel's generation | 8963-8068 BC |
| Jared's generation | 8068-7106 BC |
| Enoch's generation | 7106-6741 BC |
| Methuselah's generation | 6741-5772 BC |
| Lamech born | 5772 BC |
| Noah born | 5590 BC |
| Flood | 4990-4989 BC |
| Arpachshad's generation | 4488-4050 BC |
| Shelah's generation | 4050-3617 BC |
| Eber's generation | 3617-3153 BC |
| Peleg's generation | 3153-2914 BC |
| Reu's generation | 2914-2675 BC |
| Serug's generation | 2675-2445 BC |
| Nahor's generation | 2445-2297 BC |
| Terah born | 2297 BC |
| Abram born | 2167 BC |
| Isaac born | 2067 BC |
| Jacob born | 2007 BC |
| Entrance into Egypt | 1877 BC |
| Exodus | 1447 BC |
| Foundation of temple laid | 967 BC |
| Division of kingdom | 931 BC |

The First Civilization

The development of a biblical chronology beginning with Adam is interesting, but will it hold up when compared with the known facts of secular history? To ascertain this, the earliest civilization of antiquity will next be examined to determine its location and the time of its emergence.

The threshold of history appears to be located in the area of the present-day nation of Iraq. Albright writes:

Archaeological research has established that there is no focus of civilization in the earth that can begin to compete in antiquity and activity with the basin of the Eastern Mediterranean and the region immediately to the east of it . . . The Obeidan is the earliest clearly defined culture of Babylonia, where we find its remains underlying nearly all the oldest cities of the country, such

as Ur, Erech, Lagash, Eridu, etc. This proves that the occupation of the marshlands of Babylonia by human settlers came rather late in history of the irrigation culture, probably not far from 3700 BC.

Thus, the archaeological evidence shows that the location of the first civilization after the flood was in the Mesopotamia Valley, and this agrees exactly with the Bible, for it reports the first cities were Babylon, Erech, Nineveh, etc. (Gen. 10:10-11).

The date 3700 BC suggested by Albright is apparently satisfactory to most archaeologists. M. B. Rowton writes that in Uruk, one of the most ancient Mesopotamia sites, the earliest level of monumental buildings is that of the level known as Uruk V. He concludes,¹⁰ "the beginning of Uruk V can plausibly be dated 3500 BC." The dates 3500 or 3700 BC are estimates arrived at by starting at a more clearly defined historical point and allowing a reasonable period of time for each level of occupation prior to this. Thus, the archaeological evidence appears to indicate that prior to about 3700 BC there was no substantial culture anywhere in the world. About 3700-3500 BC the first great civilization began to be formed in the plains of Sumer in the land of Babylon, Erech, Ur, etc.

How does this time compare with the biblical chronology? In Genesis 10 the notice is given that the first building activity after the flood is that of Nimrod, the beginning of whose kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar (Gen. 10:10). When did Nimrod come upon the scene? His genealogical descent is that of Noah, Ham, Cush, Nimrod (Gen. 10:1, 6, 8). The Bible offers no timetable for this side of the family tree, but it does offer precise information regarding another branch, that of Noah, Shem, Arpachshad, and Shelah. In studying the genealogical statements of the Bible, it might be noted that very often two branches of the tree are offered. One is that of the descendants leading eventually to Christ and about which precise timetables are given, as we have seen. The second is the genealogical descent of that side of the family which turned away from God. It can be shown that the timetable of these two lines run roughly parallel.

It thus may be assumed that Ham and Shem were contemporaries (they obviously were, inasmuch as they were brothers), that Arpachshad and Cush were nearly contemporaries, and that Shelah and Nimrod were probably men of the same period of history. Thus, if Shelah's date is known, it may be surmised that Nimrod's was close to the same date.

Shelah's date by biblical reckoning was 4050 BC to 3617 BC. Nimrod then must have lived about this time. The Bible would thus suggest a date of about 3900 BC to 3617 BC for the founding of the great cities of the Mesopotamia Valley. Thus, the date suggested by the evidence of archaeology (3700-3500 BC) accords very well with the biblical statement.

It is of more than passing interest in this connection that the name **Nimrod** has left its mark on the Mesopotamia Valley. The great archaeologist George Rawlinson writes:¹²

The remarkable ruin generally called Ahkerhuf, which lies a little to the southwest of Baghdad, is known to many as the "Tel-Nimrod;" the great dam across the Tigris below Mosul is the "Suhr-el-Nimrud;" one of the chief of the buried cities in the same neighborhood is called "Nimrud" simply; and the name of "Birs-Nimrud" attaches to the grandest mass of ruins in the lower country.

The Confusion of Tongues

Another piece of history that should be interesting to investigate is the Tower of Babel. Is there any secular evidence that relates to the account of the confusion of tongues as set forth in Genesis 11? There is, indeed.

It might be noted that the Genesis 11 account indicates that prior to this time in history, all men spoke one language. Moreover, the leading civilization was that of the people who dwelt in the plains of Shinar or Sumer. Their desire to be the one great civilization of the world prompted the building of the tower, which in turn brought God's interference with their plans so that they were forced to separate into various nations.

As has already been shown, the first great civilization of the world as revealed by secular evidence was that which sprang forth in the Mesopotamia Valley. The time of the beginning of the second important civilization of antiquity could be of real significance. Presumably, it would have begun very shortly after the Tower of Babel. The events concerning the Tower of Babel are known to have occurred during the

generation of Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided (Gen. 10:25). Peleg's generation was from 3153 BC to 2914 BC. Therefore, one would expect no important civilizations other than Babylonia to have an antiquity greater than about 3150 BC.

Egypt Becomes a Great Civilization

All archaeological evidence points to Egypt as the second great civilization to appear. While there was a primitive culture in Egypt prior to the First Dynasty, the uniting of all of Egypt under Pharaoh Menes to form the First Dynasty was the signal for a major burst in the arts of civilization. Albright writes:¹³

It is now certain that the level of Egyptian culture remained considerably below that of Mesopotamia until the First Dynasty, when under strong indirect influence from the Euphrates Valley, it forged ahead of the latter in a breathtaking spurt.

Interestingly, the new civilization of Egypt beginning with the First Dynasty was patterned after the Babylonian (Mesopotamian) culture. Albright continues:¹⁴

The close of the Predynastic Age and the beginning of the Thinite (period of first two centuries) Period witnessed a sudden burst in the arts of civilization. This seems to have been connected in some way with an increase of cultural influence from Asia, since there are numerous exact parallels between Mesopotamia and Egyptian culture at this time, the former being demonstrably older and more original in nearly every instance.

The date of the beginning of the First Dynasty under Menes is calculated to be somewhere between 2800 BC and 3100 BC. The early archaeologists such as Breasted dated his reign at about 3400 BC. As new archaeological evidence was uncovered, this date was moved forward to about 3000 BC. Albright believes 2850 BC is a good estimate.¹⁵ William C. Hayes suggests 3100 BC is the best date presently available.¹⁶

Considering the above information, one is struck by the fact that prior to about 3100 BC to 2850 BC, only one civilization of consequence existed in the world. That was the nation of Babylonia on the plains of Shinar. Then at that time, in a sudden burst of progress, Egypt grew to become a second great civilization, a civilization patterned after the first. These dates are in almost exact agreement with the biblical date for the Tower of Babel. Surely the confusion of tongues as recorded in Genesis 11 sent thousands of people skilled in all the arts and crafts of Mesopotamia to Egypt and elsewhere. Thus, accord can be seen between the sacred and the secular records by this indirect evidence of the timetable of the civilizations of antiquity.

Writing and the Tower of Babel

It might be noted that writing had its beginning in Mesopotamia and may be related to the confusion of tongues. Sir Leonard Wooley writes:¹⁷ "All the archaeological evidence seems to prove that true writing was first developed in southern Mesopotamia." The timing for this event is given as 3500 BC to 3000 BC. Gelb concludes:¹⁸ "The date of the earliest Sumerian writing should be set tentatively at about 3100 BC."

The confusion of tongues in Sumer some time in the period between 3150-2900 BC could well have been the catalyst that produced writing. Before this dramatic civilization-splitting event, all was secure. Only one language was spoken in all the world. Verbal communication was adequate and dependable. But then came the fearful event that shook the very foundations of this great civilization; and men could no longer understand each other. There must be a better way. The application of the spoken word to clay tablets would provide insurance that this kind of happening would never again totally destroy a culture. The clay tablets would prove to be a reference point. One surely can see the possibility if not the probability of this connection between writing and the Tower of Babel.

Conclusion

We thus see that the chronology of history established by biblical reckoning agrees rather satisfactorily with the archaeological evidence of the earliest civilizations. The biblical timetable is of course the most reliable, for it is God's Word. If we have properly interpreted it, it should make possible a far more definitive analysis of the secular evidence than ever before. It should also provide a dependable framework in which to understand dating evidence such as that offered by radiometric isotopes like carbon

14.

Hopefully, a perspective of history has been set forth that shows that answers are potentially forthcoming when we begin with the biblical framework. The concept of a 13,000-year-old world, which began to be repopulated after the flood some 7,000 years ago, and which 1,500 years later had grown to a point that allowed the spawning of the first great cities, surely makes much more sense than that of mankind being around for hundreds or even thousands of millenniums, and then becoming a cohesive city civilization only in the last 5,500 years. Furthermore, the apparent possibility of the end of the age occurring in our time also accords far better with the shorter timetable.

Admittedly, the first purpose of the Bible is not to be a textbook of science or history. It is fundamentally a presentation of God's grace revealed through Jesus Christ. But when the Bible does speak in any field of learning, it does so with great care, accuracy, and authority. Three reasons might be advanced for this: (1) these subjects are often an integral part of the plan of salvation; (2) they are part of God's message to man; and (3) by reason of His very nature, God is accurate when He speaks. Therefore, it possibly has much more to offer than many have supposed. I hope that others will be encouraged to build upon the suggestions offered in this presentation.

Tables

Table 1 - A Calendar of Events in Biblical History

| EVENT | YEAR (BC) |
|--|-----------|
| CREATION (about 13,000 years ago) | 11013 |
| CREATION OF ADAM | 11013 |
| BIRTH OF SETH. Adam was 130 when Seth was born (Gen. 5:3) | 10883 |
| BIRTH OF ENOS. Seth was 105 when Enos was born (Gen. 5:6) | 10778 |
| END OF ENOS'S PERIOD 905 years after his birth (Gen. 5:11), which is the year Kenan was born and which began his period | 9873 |
| END OF KENAN'S PERIOD 910 years after his birth (Gen. 5:14). This is the year Mahalaleel was born and the beginning of his period | 8963 |
| END OF MAHALALEEL'S PERIOD 895 years after his birth (Gen. 5:17). This is the year Jared was born and the beginning of his period | 8068 |
| END OF JARED'S PERIOD 962 years after his birth (Gen. 5:20). This is the year Enoch was born and the beginning of his period | 7106 |
| END OF ENOCH'S PERIOD 365 years after his birth (Gen. 5:23). This is the year Methuselah was born and the beginning of his period | 6741 |
| END OF METHUSELAH'S PERIOD 969 years after his birth (Gen. 5:27). This is the year Lamech was born and the beginning of his period | 5772 |
| BIRTH OF NOAH. Lamech was 182 when Noah was born (Gen. 5:28-29) | 5590 |
| THE FLOOD (about 7,000 years ago). Noah was 600 when the flood came (Gen. 7:6) | 4990 |
| DEATH OF SHEM 502 years after the flood (Gen. 11:10-11). This is the year Arpachshad was born and the beginning of his period | 4488 |
| END OF ARPACHSHAD'S PERIOD 438 years after his birth (Gen. 11:12-13). This is the year Shelah was born and the beginning of his period | 4050 |
| END OF SHELAH'S PERIOD 433 years after his birth (Gen. 11:14-15). This is the year Eber was born and the beginning of his period | 3617 |
| END OF EBER'S PERIOD 464 years after his birth (Gen. 11:16-17). This is the year Peleg was born and the beginning of his period | 3153 |
| TOWER OF BABEL. During Peleg's patriarchal period, the division of the continents occurred. The Tower of Babel must have been between these dates (Gen. 10:25) | 3153-2914 |
| END OF PELEG'S PERIOD 239 years after his birth (Gen. 11:18-19). This is the year Reu was born and the beginning of his period | 2914 |
| END OF REU'S PERIOD 239 years after his birth (Gen. 11:20-21). This is the year Serug was born and the beginning of his period | 2675 |

Table 1 - A Calendar of Events in Biblical History (continued)

END OF SERUG'S PERIOD 230 years after his birth

| | | |
|--|-----------------|------|
| (Gen. 11:22-23). This is the year Nahor was born and the beginning of his period | | 2445 |
| END OF NAHOR'S PERIOD 148 years after his birth (Gen. 11:24-25). This is the year Terah was born and the beginning of his period | | 2297 |
| BIRTH OF ABRAM TO TERAH. Terah was 130 years old at the birth of Abram | | 2167 |
| ABRAM ENTERED CANAAN | | 2092 |
| CIRCUMCISION OF ABRAM when he was 99 years of age | | 2068 |
| BIRTH OF ISAAC. Abraham was 100 years of age at the birth of Isaac (Gen. 21:5) | | 2067 |
| BIRTH OF JACOB. Isaac was 60 years old at birth of Jacob (Gen. 25:26) | | 2007 |
| Jacob arrives in Haran at the age of | 60 | |
| Jacob works for seven years for Rachel and is then married to Leah | 67 | |
| Reuben is born to Leah the following year, when Jacob is | 68 | |
| Simeon is born to Leah when Jacob is | 69 | |
| Levi is born to Leah when Jacob is | 70 | |
| Jacob finishes his second seven-year contract for Rachel when he is | 74 | |
| Jacob works for wages for 20 yrs. In the 17 th year of this period, Joseph is born. Jacob is | 91 | |
| At the end of the 20-yr. period, Joseph is weaned and Jacob wishes to leaven Haran. He is | 94 | |
| Jacob works for six years longer for his flocks and leaves Haran at age | 100 | |
| JACOB'S NAME CHANGED TO ISRAEL when Jacob was 100 | | 1907 |
| JACOB'S FAMILY ARRIVES IN EGYPT when Jacob is 130 (Gen. 47:9) | | 1877 |
| Remember that the death year of one patriarch coincides with the birth year of the next, so the result must look like this: | | |
| Levi's time in Egypt (137 minus 60) | 77 years | |
| Kohath's period of patriarchal leadership | 133 years | |
| Amram's period of patriarchal leadership | 137 years | |
| Aaron's age at the time of the Exodus (Ex. 7:7) | <u>83 years</u> | |
| Total | 430 years | |
| EXODUS FROM EGYPT 430 years later (Exo. 12:40) | | 1447 |
| ENTRANCE INTO CAANAN 40 years later | | 1407 |
| SAUL BECOMES KING OF ISRAEL 360 years later (See Table 3 - Chronology of the Judges) | | 1047 |
| DAVID BECOMES KING OF ISRAEL 40 years later | | 1007 |
| SOLOMON BECOMES KING OF ISRAEL 4 years before David's death | | 971 |
| FOUNDATION OF TEMPLE LAID in fourth year of Solomon's reign | 967 | |
| DIVISION OF KINGDOM OF ISRAEL upon Solomon's death | | 931 |

(See Table 4 - Chronology of the Kings of the Divided Kingdom)

Table 2 - Historical Timetable of Pharaohs and Dynasties

1888 BC. Sesostris III became pharaoh. He was part of the Middle Kingdom or 12th Dynasty of Egypt. His father, Sesostris II, probably reigned during the previous 19 years and possibly came to an untimely death.

1886 BC. Joseph became Prime Minister or Grand Vizier of Egypt under Sesostris III.

1877 BC. The family of Joseph came to Egypt and took up residence in the land of Goshen. The city of Avaris (Zoan in the Bible), which later was called Tanis or Qantir, was the capital.

1850 BC. Sesostris III died after an exceedingly successful reign of 38 years. He was succeeded by another great 12th Dynasty pharaoh named Amenemhet III. Under his reign Joseph continued as Prime Minister. A canal bearing Joseph's name was constructed at this time.

1806 BC. Joseph died.

1802 BC. Amenemhet III died after a 48-year reign. During his reign Egypt was prosperous, tranquil, and productive. He was succeeded by Amenemhet IV who reigned for 9 years. During his reign, there was much internal strife for royal supremacy.

1791 BC. Amenemhet IV died and was succeeded by the last pharaoh of the 12th Dynasty, Sebeknefrure.

1787 BC. Sebeknefrure's reign of four years ended and with it ended the 12th Dynasty. The 13th Dynasty began. The reigns of succeeding pharaohs were short, and the empire began to dissolve. The Israelites, who no doubt are the "Hyksos" of archaeological fame, took advantage of the internal struggles to acquire a strong hand in the Egyptian government, and indeed some of them may have reigned as pharaohs during this period.

1580 BC. (approx.) Several dynasties have ruled over Egypt since 1787 BC. At this time, Ahmose I began to reign as the first king of the 18th Dynasty. He forcibly began to remove the Israelites (Hyksos) from political power. The most war-like Israelites were driven from the land, and the Israelitish nation began to be severely oppressed. Either this pharaoh or a closely succeeding pharaoh such as Thutmose I could well have been the king who "did not know Joseph" (Exod. 1:8).

1560 BC. (approx.) Ahmose I was followed by his son Amenhotep I. Amenhotep I consolidated the gains of his father.

1540-1535 BC. (approx.) Thutmose I began to reign as king. He, too, was a continuation of the 18th Dynasty. He continued and probably intensified the oppressive measures against the Israelites; he was ruling when Moses was born. His animosity towards the Israelites was probably heightened by his troubles with Palestine and Syria. His reign was followed by that of his son Thutmose II.

1527 BC. Moses was born at a time when a royal edict condemned all Hebrew boy babies to be destroyed. Princess Hatshepsut, a daughter of the king, found Moses in the bulrushes and raised him as her son.

1501 BC. Thutmose III began to reign as the greatest king of the 18th Dynasty. For approximately the first 25 years of his reign, he was co-regent with Princess Hatshepsut. She regarded herself as a king and was the dominant ruler during this co-regency.

1487 BC. Moses fled from Egypt. King Hatshepsut, who had raised Moses as her son, sought to kill him because of his evident loyalty for the Israelites.

1481 BC. (approx.) King Hatshepsut died and Thutmose III continued to reign until the time of the Exodus.

1447 BC. Israel went of Egypt during the reign of Thutmose III. The Exodus was after Israel had been in Egypt for 430 years (Gen. 12:40).

1407 BC. Israel's entrance into Canaan.

Table 3 - Chronology of the Judges[#]

Time Notices of the Judges Beginning with the Entrance into Canaan and Ending with the Last Time Notice Before the Reign of Saul:

| <u>Time Notice</u> | | <u>Israel Chronology</u> | <u>Heathen Oppression</u> |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Judges 3:8 | Israel served Cushanrishathaim | | 8 |
| Judges 3:11 | Land had rest | 40 | |
| Judges 3:14 | Israel served Eglon, King of Moab | | 18 |
| Judges 3:30 | Land had rest | 80 | |
| Judges 4:3 | Israel oppressed by Jabin, King of Canaan | | 20 |
| Judges 5:31 | Land had rest | 40 | |
| Judges 6:1 | Israel in hand of Midian | | 7 |
| Judges 8:28 | Land had rest | 40 | |
| Judges 9:22 | Abimelech ruled Israel | 3 | |
| Judges 10:2 | Tola judged Israel | 23 | |
| Judges 10:3 | Jair judged Israel | 22 | |
| Judges 10:8 | Philistines oppressed Israel | | 18 |
| Judges 12:7 | Jephthah judged Israel | 6 | |
| Judges 12:9 | Ibzan judged israel | 7 | |
| Judges 12:11 | Elon judged Isreal | 10 | |
| Judges 12:14 | Abdon judged Israel | 8 | |
| Judges 13:1 | Israel in hand of Philistines | | 40 |
| Judges 15:20 | Samson judged Israel | 20 | |
| 1 Sam 4:18 | Eli judged Israel | 40 | |
| 1 Sam 6:1 | Ark in Philistines' hands (7 mo = ~1 yr) | 1 | |
| 1 Sam 7:2 | From return of Ark to beginning of King Saul's reign | 20 | |
| Total Years | | ----- 360 | 111 |

[#] Editing Notes:

1. This table was reformatted according to the information in the following book:
Harold Camping, *1994?*, (New York, NY: Vantage Press, 1992), pp. 304-305.
2. The time notices related to oppression by heathen kings must be separated from the overall chronology of Israel to determine the 360-yr time duration of the Israelite Judges from Israel's entrance into Canaan until the reign of King Saul (1407-1047 BC = 360 years). That is, the 111 years of oppression were included in the 360-year time duration of the Judges.

Table 4 - Chronology of the Kings of the Divided Kingdom^{##}

| Judah (2 tribes) | | | Israel (10 tribes) | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|--|---------------------------|-----------|
| King | Reign BC (# of Yrs.) | Character | King | Reign BC (# of Yrs.)** | Character |
| 1. Rehoboam | 931-914 (16) | Bad | 1. Jeroboam I | 931-910 (22) | Bad |
| 2. Abijah | 914-911 (3) | Bad | | | |
| 3. Asa | 911-870 (41) | Good | 2. Nadab | 910-909 (2) | Bad |
| | | | 3. Baasha | 909-886 (24) | Bad |
| | | | 4. Elah | 886-885 (2) | Bad |
| | | | 5. Zimri | 885 (7 days) | Bad |
| | | | 6. Tibni | 885-880* (5) | Bad |
| | | | 7. Omri | 885-874* (12) | Bad |
| 4. Jehoshaphat | 871-846* (25) | Good | 8. Ahab | 874-853* (22) | Bad |
| 5. Jehoram | 854-842* (8) | Bad | 9. Ahaziah | 854-853* (2) | Bad |
| 6. Ahaziah | 842-841 (1) | Bad | 10. Joram | 853-841 (12) | Bad |
| 7. Athaliah | 841-835 (6) | Bad | 11. Jehu | 841-813 (28) | Bad |
| 8. Joash | 835-795 (40) | Good | 12. Jehoahaz | 813-796* (17) | Bad |
| 9. Amaziah | 796-767* (29) | Good | 13. Jehoash | 798-782* (16) | Bad |
| 10. Azariah (or Uzziah) | 789-737* (52) | Good | 14. Jeroboam II | 792-751* (41) | Bad |
| | | | 15. Zechariah | 751-750 (6 mo) | Bad |
| | | | 16. Shallum | 750 (1 mo) | Bad |
| | | | 17. Menahem | 750-740 (10) | Bad |
| | | | 18. Pekahiah | 740-738 (2) | Bad |
| 11. Jotham | 738-718* (20) | Good | 19. Pekah | 738-718 (20) | Bad |
| 12. Ahaz | 730-714* (16) | Bad | 20. Hoshea | 718-709 (9) | Bad |
| 13. Hezekiah | 715-686 (29) | Good | Israel conquered by Assyria in 709 BC. | | |
| 14. Manasseh | 697-642 | Bad | | | |

Table 4 - Chronology of the Kings of the Divided Kingdom^{##} (continued)

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------|---|
| 15. Amon | 642-640 (2) | Bad | |
| 16. Josiah*** | 640-609 (31) | Good | |
| 17. Jehoahaz | 609 (3 mo.) | Bad | Remnants of these 10 tribes joined with the nation of Judah, which is then called Israel. |
| 18. Jehoiakim | 609-598* (11) | Bad | |
| 19. Jehoiachin | 608-597* | Bad | |
| 20. Zedekiah | 597-587 | Bad | Judah conquered by Babylonians in 587 BC |

(See Table 5 - Destruction of Jerusalem and Captivity of Judah)

Footnotes

- * Co-regency.
- ** Number of years except where days or months indicated.
- *** Some Kings Have More than One Name (consider the kings after Josiah):

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|----------|
| Josiah's second son | = | Jehoahaz | = | Eliakim | = | Jeconiah |
| Josiah's first son | = | Jehoiakim | = | Coniah | = | |
| Jehoiakim's son | = | Jehoiachin | = | Mattaniah | = | |
| Josiah's third son | = | Zedekiah | = | | = | |

Editing Note:

This table has been reformatted and the dates have been revised to correspond with the most recent information contained in the following books:

1. Harold Camping, *Are You Ready?* (New York, NY: Vantage Press, 1993), Appendix III, p. 395.
2. Harold Camping, *The Perfect Harmony of the Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, (Oakland, CA: Family Stations, Inc., 1998), p. 70.

Table 5 - Destruction of Jerusalem and Captivity of Judah.

| | |
|---|--------|
| Israel (10 tribes) destroyed..... | 709 BC |
| Israel (Judah augmented by remnants from 10 tribes) subdued by Egypt..... | 609 BC |
| Israel taken in to Babylonian captivity and temple destroyed..... | 587 BC |
| Babylon conquered by Cyrus, king of Medes and Persians (under Cyrus first contingent of Jews returned to Jerusalem) | 539 BC |
| Temple partially rebuilt and rededicated | 515 BC |
| Ezra returned to Jerusalem to reestablish the law | 458 BC |
| Wall rebuilt by Nehemiah | 445 BC |
| SILENCE | |
| Christ was born | 7 BC |
| Christ was baptized..... | 29 AD |
| Christ died on the cross..... | 33 AD |
| Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans | 70 AD |

End Notes & References

¹ Compare Genesis 7:13, 9:18, and I Peter 3:20.

² Compare Genesis 11:27 ff, Genesis 12:4, and Acts 7:4.

³ For example, Genesis 10:21 describes Shem as "the father of all the children of Eber," though Eber is removed from Shem by several generations (cf. Genesis 11:10-16).

⁴ The fact that Jesus was born a few years earlier (probably 7 BC) does not diminish the force of this argument, for 1995 AD is in principle related only to Christ's birth date and not to any other.

⁵ Camping, Harold, *Adam When?*, Chap. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Chap. 6.

⁷ Thiele, Edwin R., *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, Eerdmans, Rev. 1965 edition, pp. 53-54. Much additional support can be given to the accuracy of this date from the reigns of three of the greatest of the Egyptian Pharaohs -- Sesostris III, Tuthmosis III, and Rameses II. A discussion of this is of course beyond the scope of the article.

⁸ Camping, Harold, Chap. 5.

⁹ Albright, William Foxwell, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1957, p. 32.

¹⁰ Rowton, M. B., in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Cambridge University Press, 1964, pp. 57-58.

¹¹ Camping, Harold, Chap. 7.

¹² Rawlinson, George, *Egypt and Babylon*, John W. Lovell Co., p. 9.

¹³ Albright, p. 142.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Hayes, William C., *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 1965, p. 4.

¹⁷ Wooley, Sir Leonard, *The Beginnings of Civilization*, The New York American Library, 1965, p. 364.

¹⁸ Gelb, *A Study of Writing*, p. 63.

Background Information

Family Radio

The following information was copied from the Family Radio Web site:

The Ministry of Family Radio
Broadcasting Christ-centered programs to the United States & around the world!
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This study was reformatted from material downloaded from the Family Radio Web site. This was done by two Family Radio listeners who have grown in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior over the years (with help from the questions and answers about the Bible as heard on the **Open Forum** program and other Family Radio materials) and who desire the same for others.

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