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# **A CHRONOLOGICAL AND CALENDRIAL COMMENTARY ON THE PENTATEUCH**

**Studies in Biblical Chronology No. 3**

**by James B. Jordan**

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## 1

**The Days of Genesis 1**

Despite the confusion and the tergiversations surrounding the seven days of creation, there can be little doubt but that the Scriptures intend us to take these as normal (“24-hour”) days, for the following reasons:

1. The word “day” is defined in the text as “light-time”: “And God called the light day” (Genesis 1:5). Thus, the use of “day” for the entire evening and morning period is by means of extension. The light-time comes later, replaces the dark-time, and is eschatologically definitive; thus, the word for light-time comes to be used for the entire period.

2. The word “day” seems to be used for a larger *period* of time in Genesis 2:4 – “In the day that the Yahweh God made earth and heaven” – whether we read this clause with that which precedes or that which follows. This also must be an extended use. It cannot be read back into the days of Genesis 1, because an “age” or “period” of time does not have “evenings and mornings.” Thus, the expression “evening and morning” is a strong line of evidence for taking these days as 24-hour days.

3. Exodus 20:8-11 states: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work . . . *for* in six days the Yahweh made the heavens and the earth . . . and rested on the seventh day.” This verse states explicitly that God's reason for taking seven days to make the world was to set a pattern for humanity. God could have made the world instantly or over 20 billion years. He could have made it in 6 seconds or in 6 million years. In neither case, however, would He have been setting a pattern for human labor.

4. It is objected that Genesis 1 is accommodated to the thought-forms of ancient people. The ancient Hebrews were surrounded by cultures that had long mythological histories. Genesis 1 stands in stark contrast to this. Moses, with his Egyptian education, would have been just as happy if God had told him that the creation took billions of years.

5. Some have said that since the sun was created on the fourth day to mark out the distinction between day and night, the first three days cannot be said to be solar days. That is quite true: They were not *solar* days. This, however, says nothing about their length. It is clear from Genesis 1 that the sun was made to fit the pre-existent length of the day, not the other way around. The first three days were the same length as the last three.

6. Some have rammed a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. There is nothing in the text that even hints at such a possibility. Gap theories were the rage in the 19th century in England and America, but there never was any foundation for any of

them.<sup>1</sup>

7. It is objected that the “days” of Genesis 1 are literary markers, not real time periods. This is called the Framework Hypothesis, the notion that the seven days of Genesis 1 are merely a literary framework. The only “evidence” for this notion I have ever seen presented is that supposedly Genesis 2:5 contradicts Genesis 1:11, showing that we should not take Genesis 1 literally. That is, Genesis 2:5 says that plants were not made until after man was made, while Genesis 1:11 says that plants were made on the third day. Anyone can see, however, that this is a specious argument, and it is even clearer in Hebrew. Genesis 1:11 says that God created grains and fruit-trees on the third day, the foundations respectively of bread and wine. Genesis 2:5 says that before man was made, the other plants had not been created, and the grain plants had not yet sprouted. Traditional commentaries discuss this matter clearly, and the Frameworker argument at this point is based simply in sheer ignorance both of the text of Scripture and of the history of interpretation.

Moreover, the framework notion falls before evidence from Exodus 25-31. There we see God giving orders to Moses to build the Tabernacle. There are seven speeches from the Lord, each introduced by a formula: “Then the Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying” (Exodus 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12). As has been pointed out by others, and argued at length by me, these seven speeches follow the order of the seven days of Genesis 1.<sup>2</sup> The reason for this is that the Tabernacle is a microcosm. In fact, the description of the Dwelling in Exodus 25:1 - 27:19 also has seven paragraphs. Thus, the Scriptures are perfectly capable of setting out heptamerous literary sequences without the use of “days.” If Genesis 1 were only concerned with seven “categories,” the word “day” would not have been used.

It is interesting to note that the Framework Hypothesis has been thoroughly refuted over and over again, and yet it seems to have more adherents today than ever before. G. C. Aalders of the Free University of Amsterdam pointed out in 1932 that (1) in the text of Genesis 1 there is not a single allusion to suggest that the days are to be regarded as a merely stylistic device, and that (2) Exodus 20:11 presents God's activity as a pattern for man, and this fact presupposes that there was a reality in the activity of God that man is to copy. As E. J. Young of Westminster Theological Seminary pointed out in his book *Studies in Genesis One*,<sup>3</sup> no one bothered to answer Aalders. Young himself went on for fifty pages refuting the Framework Hypothesis, and to my knowledge nobody has tried to refute Young.

Recently, Kenneth Gentry has summarized the exegetical arguments against

<sup>1</sup>Gaps were also tossed into the chronologies of Genesis 5 and 11, and between Daniel's 69th and 70th week.

<sup>2</sup>See Peter J. Kearney, “Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Exodus 25-40,” *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 89 (1977): 375-86; and James B. Jordan, “The Tabernacle: A New Creation” (Niceville, FL: Biblical Horizons, 1993).

<sup>3</sup>(Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., 1964).

the Framework Hypothesis as follows: “(1) ‘Day’ is qualified by ‘evening and morning’ (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31), which specifically limits the time-frame. (2) The very same word ‘day’ is used on the fourth day to define a time period that is governed by the sun, which must be a regular day (Genesis 1:14). (3) In the 119 instances of the Hebrew word ‘day’ (*yom*) standing in conjunction with a numerical adjective (first, second, etc.) in the writings of Moses, it never means anything other than a literal day. Consistency would require that this structure must so function in Genesis 1. (4) Exodus 20:9-11 patterns man's work week after God's original work week, which suggests the literality of the creation week. (5) In Exodus 20:11 the plural for the “days” of creation is used. In the 702 instances of the plural “days” in the Old Testament, it never means anything other than literal days.”<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the Framework Hypothesis has to hold that the events recounted in Genesis 1 never happened. Quite apart from the matter of “days,” Genesis 1 makes a whole series of claims that the Framework Hypothesis says are false.

Let's be clear about this: We are discussing what the text claims happened. Genesis 1:7 says that an event happened in which God made a “firmament” and separated waters above the firmament from those below. The Framework Hypothesis says that this event never happened. According to it, all Genesis 1:7 means is that this configuration came into being as a result of the evolutionary plan of God.

Genesis 1:9 says that God gathered all the waters on the earth into one place, and that the dry land appeared. The Framework Hypothesis says that as an event, this never happened.

Repeatedly throughout the chapter, the text claims that God said things. These are events. We might interpret Genesis 1 and suppose that since human beings were not on the scene, God did not “speak” in audible tones. We might even say that these phrases mean that He “put forth His Word,” and thus refer to the work of the Second Person of the Trinity. The point, however, is that the text claims that God did these things, said these things, as discrete *actions*. The Framework Hypothesis says that God never did these things, that no such individual acts ever occurred. According to the Framework Hypothesis, all Genesis 1 means is that God's Word (or “wordness”) lies behind everything that came into being over the course of who knows how long a time. The Framework Hypothesis denies that there was a certain time in history when God said “Let there be light,” and another, different, event in history when God said, “Let the waters teem.”

To put it simply, Genesis 1 clearly claims that certain events took place, and the Framework Hypothesis says that those events simply did not take place. The Framework Hypothesis denies the specific claims of the text: The text as it stands is in error; these things never actually happened. All we are supposed to learn from the text, according to the Framework Hypothesis, is the *idea* that God made everything, and ordered it.

Therefore, according to the Framework Hypothesis, God never told Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful and multiply, etc.” as recorded in Genesis 1:28-30. If the Frame-

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<sup>4</sup>Kenneth Gentry, *The Greatness of the Great Commission* (Tyler, TX: ICE, 1991), p. 9.

worker wants to say, “Oh, no; I believe God really did say those words to Adam and Eve,” then we have to ask the Frameworker: “By what hermeneutics do you take Genesis 1:28-30 literally, while taking the events of the other days figuratively?” Consistently requires that either all seven days, and their events, are intended figuratively; or else they are intended literally.

Now, the Frameworker may reply, “Well, perhaps God never actually spoke those words to Adam and Eve, but the idea is still there, so the Cultural Mandate (or Dominion Mandate) is valid nevertheless.” This is straining it pretty bad, but let's grant the point because it introduces another problem for the Frameworker.

If we take Genesis 1 & 2 literally, then we find that God made Adam, told Adam not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, then made Eve, and told them both that every tree would be for them to eat (Genesis 2:7, 17, 22; 1:29). The literal interpretation shows us that the prohibition on the Tree of Knowledge was temporary, because eventually they would get to eat of every tree. Also, the literal interpretation leaves us with the impression that Eve learned about the temporary prohibition from Adam.

If, however, we go with the Framework Hypothesis, then God may never have told Adam and Eve that they would eat of every tree. In that case, they would not have known that the prohibition was only temporary. Perhaps the prohibition was permanent, and there is a “contradiction” between Genesis 1 (every tree) and Genesis 2 (every tree except one). The Frameworker can resolve this “contradiction” by saying that God never spoke Genesis 1:28-29 to Adam and Eve, but that these verses only give us the general idea that we can eat of any tree.

Now, we come up with two different ideas of Original Sin from these two interpretations. The literal interpretation sees Adam and Eve disobeying God, but also sees that their sin involved impatience, seizing something God had said they would get later but not now. The Frameworker interpretation sees the disobedience aspect, but has no reason to think that impatience was involved in this first sin, because according to the Frameworker, God did not say to Adam and Eve that every tree would be for them (Genesis 1:29).

As the reader can see, there are very serious problems with the Framework Hypothesis, and serious consequences of advocating it. We can summarize our critique by saying (1) there is absolutely no positive evidence in the Bible to suggest that the days of Genesis 1 are only a literary framework; (2) there is abundant evidence in the Bible that these are sequential days of normal (“24-hour”) length; (3) the advocates of the Framework Hypothesis have never answered their critics at all, and continue to advocate their position without the slightest foundation; and (4) the Framework Hypothesis leads to some very serious hermeneutical and theological consequences.

Is there any evidence for what time of year the creation week occurred? Biblically, both the autumn and the spring are taken as starting points for the calendar. According to Exodus 23:16; 34:22; and Leviticus 25:8-10, the year ended in the seventh month. Thus, the first month of the solar year was the seventh month, while the first month of the lunar year was the first month (Exodus 12:2). In the northern hemisphere, the fall begins the evening of the solar year, while the spring begins its morning. Later on, Passover was in the spring, the beginning of the lunar year, while

the Day of Atonement was in the fall, the beginning of the solar year. Since the evening of the year comes in autumn, and Genesis 1 speaks of evening's coming before morning, there is a tradition of seeing the creation as taking place in autumn. For a fuller discussion of this point, however, see section 3 below.

### **When Did Adam Fall?**

When did the Fall of man take place? It could not have taken place on the sixth day, because at the end of that day everything was still very good (Genesis 1:31).

Some have suggested that Adam and Eve lived a long time in the Garden before disobeying God. This is very unlikely. Human psychology is such that the more Adam and Eve resisted temptation, the stronger they would become. It is clear that they fell into sin at the first opportunity, which means they fell right away. The sheer naivete of the situation excludes any other option.

When did God come to judge Adam and Eve? Genesis 3:8 is usually translated in such a way that the Lord God came walking in the “breeze” or “cool” of the day. This is often taken to be in the evening, but later Scripture associate the coming of the Lord and of His judgments with sunrise, not with sunset. Genesis 3:8 literally reads the “breath” or “Spirit” of the day, which points not to the time of day but to the conveyance of God's presence by the Holy Spirit. Thus, I hazard to guess that Adam and Eve sinned during the night of the sabbath, and the Lord arrived in the morning to conduct sabbath worship. Sunrise rather than afternoon makes the most sense, since the rest of Scripture makes it plain that humanity did not enter into God's sabbath. Thus, Adam and Eve had sinned before God came for the first sabbath worship service.

Later in the Bible, the first daily sacrifice is ordered to be offered “between the evenings,” that is, between sunset and dark; i.e., during twilight. This is most pointedly required of Passover (Exodus 12:6). It seems to me that since the sacrifices pay the price for man's sin, the timing of these sacrifices points to the time of man's sin.

The following chronology makes the most sense to me:

Day 6, morning: God creates land animals (Genesis 1:24-25).

Day 6, noon: God creates Adam (Genesis 2:7).

- God tells Adam not to eat the forbidden fruit (Genesis 2:17).
- God brings animals for Adam to name (Genesis 2:19).
- God creates Eve from Adam's rib (Genesis 2:22).

Day 6, afternoon: God blesses Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28-30).

Day 6, sunset: Everything is very good (Genesis 1:31).

Day 7, evening: Adam tells Eve about the forbidden fruit.

- Satan tempts Eve, Adam standing by (Genesis 3:6).
- Fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-6).
- Adam and Eve work during the night to make clothing (this would have taken some time; Genesis 3:7).

Day 7, morning: God arrives for sabbath worship, making the Holy Place in the center of the Garden into a Most Holy Place by means of His presence (Genesis 2:9; 3:8).

- God passes judgment on Adam and Eve, and they do not enter into sabbath rest (Heb. 4).

The conclusion of this is that the fall of man took place on the seventh day, or at the very least quite soon after the creation.

### The Sacrifice of Abel and the Time of the New Year

When did Cain kill Abel? Obviously we cannot be sure, but there are two relevant considerations. First, it was most likely shortly before AM 130, because Seth was born soon after (Genesis 4:25; 5:3). Second, it is reasonable to assume that Cain already had a wife (a sister), because if he had been driven out before marrying it would have been difficult for him to obtain one from Adam and Eve afterwards.

What time of year? Genesis 4:3 states that the two men offered sacrifice “at the end of days.” This expression can simply mean “after many days,” but in the present context almost certainly designates harvest and thus means in the autumn, the same time as the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Ingathering in later Israel's calendar.

“At the end of days” is literally “at the cutting off (*qets*) of days.” This almost certainly at the end of the harvest. It was Cain, apparently, who was in a position to determine this change of time: He was the farmer as well as the firstborn son of the house. Abel followed his lead and also brought a sacrifice.

The term *qets* is interesting. It always indicates the cut off point of some set period of time. It is related phonetically to the words *qatsir* (harvest) and *qatsar* (to reap, cut down). [Hebrew lexicons ascribe *qets* and *qatsir* to two different roots, but this is speculative and depends on an evolutionary view of the development of language. The ear readily connects the two, and the connection in meaning is also clear.] The harvest entails cutting down the fruit of the ground, and is the cutting off point for the agricultural or national year. This time is also spoken of as the “going forth of the year” in Exodus 23:16.

Because this is a debated point, I want to demonstrate my position more fully. Does “the cutting off of days” simply mean “after a time,” or does it mean “at the end of the year”? What we notice is that the term *qets*, when used with a specific length of time, means the definite end of that definite period of time:

- Genesis 8:6 - at the cutting off of 40 days.
- Numbers 13:25 - at the cutting off of 40 days.
- Deuteronomy 9:11 - at the cutting off of 40 days.
- Judges 11:39 - at the cutting off of 2 months.
- Isaiah 23:15, 17 - at the cutting off of 70 years.
- Jeremiah 42:7 - at the cutting off of 10 days.
- Ezekiel 29:13 - at the cutting off of 40 years.

Some passages clearly indicate the cutting off as the time of harvest, the actual end of the solar or national year:

- Deuteronomy 15:1 - at the cutting off of every 7 years.
- Deuteronomy 31:10 - at the cutting off of every 7 years.
- Jeremiah 34:14 - at the cutting off of 7 years.

Other passages hint that the cutting off of the years spoken of was in the autumn:

- 2 Samuel 14:26 - at the cutting off of every year. Absalom cut his hair at the end of every year.
- 2 Samuel 15:7 - at the cutting off of 40 (or perhaps 4) years. Absalom goes to sacrifice at this time, which may well have been at the turn of the year.
- 1 Kings 2:39 - at the cutting off of 3 years. Shimei, Solomon's last enemy, is killed. Now the Temple can be built, in the fourth year (1 Kings 6:1). Thus, this event most likely closed out Solomon's first three years.
- 2 Chronicles 8:1 - at the cutting off of 20 years. This was in the autumn, as can be seen from 2 Kings 8:2.
- 2 Chronicles 21:19 - at the cutting off of 2 years. Since the reigns of the kings were dated by solar years, beginning in autumn, the death of Jehoram may well have been right at the end of his last year.

One passage uses the term “cutting off of years” to refer to the lunar year, beginning in the Spring.

- Exodus 12:41 - at the cutting off of the 430 years. This event was on the 15th day of the first month, the seventh month of the solar year.

Let us now examine the remaining instances of this phrase:

- Genesis 16:3 - at the cutting off of 10 years. Ishmael was conceived, and he was born the same year (the eleventh year). At the time of his birth, Abram was 86. There is nothing to indicate whether the phrase here refers to the spring or to the fall, but since later on the phrase “time of reviving” refers to the spring, it is reasonable to assume that the phrase “cutting off of years” here refers to the fall.
- Genesis 41:1 - at the cutting off of two full years. This was two full years after Pharaoh dealt with his baker and cupbearer. His visions concerned harvests, and might thus have come at the end of the year, or in the spring. This is, however, the end of a definite period of time.
- 1 Kings 17:7 - at the cutting off of days. Elijah's brook dried up. This might indicate the turn of the year, after a summer of heat, but it might not. Unlike Genesis 4:3, where precisely the same phrase is used, there is no indication of a harvest.
- 2 Chronicles 18:2 - at the cutting off of years. Jehoshaphat visited Ahab, who put on a feast for him. Giving the royal context, and that the kings measured their rules by the solar year, this phrase hints that it was at the turn of the year, in autumn.
- Nehemiah 13:6 - at the cutting off of days. After his time of service at court, Nehemiah asked to return to Jerusalem. There is no hint that this phrase indicates a set time of the year, but simply that after a time Nehemiah asked to return. Here again, however, the phrase does indicate the end of a definite period of time.

What we have seen is that “at the cutting off of days/years” indicates the end of a definite period of time, usually explicitly defined in the text. We have also seen that it very often refers to the turn of the solar/national year in autumn, especially when

associated with harvests. We are on very good ground, therefore, in seeing it referring to the end of the solar year in Genesis 4:3, especially since harvest is in view.

The Day of Atonement and the Feast of Ingathering came in the seventh (sabbath) month, at the end of all harvests. Extrapolating backwards from information given at Sinai, and remembering that Moses put Genesis in its final form, we may readily imagine that Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices in the seventh month. According to Exodus 23:16; 34:22; and Leviticus 25:8-10, the year ended in the seventh month. Thus the first month of the solar year was the seventh month of the lunar year, for the cycle of lunar months began in the spring with the first month (Exodus 12:2). (The Bible speaks of the day as beginning at evening, as in Genesis 1, “there was evening and morning, one day.” Similarly the year begins around the autumnal equinox, as the year darkens.)

Thus, it seems most likely that Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices at the end of the sixth or at the beginning of the seventh month, at the end of the solar year.

If this is the “cutting off of days,” then the beginning of days would be in autumn, in the seventh month. Thus, we can suppose that the creation of the world, recorded in Genesis 1, took place in autumn.

At the same time, however, the Bible always presents humanity as moving from priestly service to kingly reign, thus from the first to the seventh months. It makes sense for the regnal, solar year to begin after the priestly, lunar months begin. Since Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden to serve, not in the Land of Eden to rule, it makes sense that time for them began with the lunar months in the spring, moving forward toward the solar year of the fall. Thus, there would be a six-month Year ) before the beginning of Year 1 in the fall.

Interestingly, the Tabernacle, the first and priestly cosmic-replica built by Israel, was completed and entered in the first month, the beginning of the ecclesiastical year (Exodus 40). By way of contrast, the Temple, the second and royal cosmic-replica, was completed and entered in the fall, the beginning of the civil year (1 Kings 6:38; 8:2; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3).

From all this, I assume that the creation took place at the vernal equinox/new moon, not in the fall. Year 1 began in the seventh month after creation.

## The Chronology of Genesis 4 & 5

Elsewhere I have shown that there are not and cannot be any gaps in the chronology of Genesis 5.<sup>5</sup> The sons born may not be the firstborn, as Seth was not Adam's firstborn, and though Shem is mentioned first in Genesis 5:32, he was not the oldest. The son whose name is given, and to whom the chronology is attached, is the “patriarchy-bearer.”

There are seven generations from Adam to Lamech on Cain's side, and seven from Adam to Enoch on Seth's side. If we assume that the births of relevant generations correspond, which may not be the case, we can assume that Enoch's prophecies were directed in part against Lamech's behavior. The chronology is as follows:

(On the symbolism inherent in the numbers in Genesis 5 and 11, see chapter 21 below.)

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<sup>5</sup>See my forthcoming book on Biblical chronology, provisionally titled *The Date of Creation: A Survey of Biblical Chronology and Its Meaning* (Tyler, TX: ICE, forthcoming).

## FROM ADAM TO THE FLOOD

1st	0 - Adam created 125? - Cain kills Abel
2d	130 - Seth born
3d	140? - Enoch ben Cain born. <sup>6</sup> 235 - Enosh born
4th	245? - Irad born 325 - Kenan born
5th	335? - Mehujael born 396 - Mahalalel born
6th	406? - Methushael born 460 - Jared born
7th	470? - Lamech ben Methushael born 622 - Enoch ben Jared born
8th	632? - Jabel, Jubal, Tubal-cain born 687 - Methuselah born
9th	874 - Lamech ben Methuselah born 930 - Adam died 987 - Enoch translated 1042 - Seth died
10th	1056 - Noah born 1140 - Enosh died 1235 - Kenan died 1290 - Mahalalel died 1422 - Jared died
	1536 - Beginning of 120 years of grace (Genesis 6:3)
11th	1556 - Japheth born (5:32; 10:21) 1558 - Shem born (7:6; 11:10) 1560? - Ham born (9:24). <sup>7</sup> 1651 - Lamech ben Methuselah died 1656 - The Flood; Methuselah died 1657 - End of Flood

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<sup>6</sup>I have given Cain 15 years to move and settle down before having children, and thus I am spacing his line in each case ten years after those in preceding generation of Seth's. Of course, Cain might have given birth to Enoch long before he slew Abel, and the Cainitic line might be much more compact than that of Seth. There is no hard evidence for my suppositions here.

<sup>7</sup>We do not know when Ham was born, only that he was the youngest.

### The Chronology of the Flood Year

The first difficulty to address here is that some have posited a 360 day year before the Flood. Supposedly this is proved by the fact that 5 months (Genesis 7:11 + 8:4) equals 150 days (Genesis 8:3). The following stand against this:

1. The 150 might be a round number for 147 actual lunar days.

2. Noah might have been unable to see the new moon while in the Ark, and thus would have measured out 30-day months until he was again able to take measurements, at which time he would have adjusted the calendar.

3. Noah entered the ark on the 17th day of the 2d month, and exited on the 27th day of the 2d month. This gives 12 lunar months, for 354 days, plus 11 days, to equal a solar year. Genesis 7:11 & 8:14.

4. The number 365 occurs in the numerology of the early chapters of Genesis in two ways:

a. It is the number of years Enoch lived (Genesis 5:23).

b. Genesis 5 tells us the age of each patriarch when the patriarchy-bearing son was born. If take each of these figures from Adam to Lamech, and divide each one by 60, and then add together all the remainders, we get 156. Genesis 5 also explicitly tells us how long each patriarch lived after the patriarchy-bearing son was born – seemingly unnecessary information since we are also told his total years. If we take each of these figures from Adam to Lamech, and divide each one by 60, and then add together all the remainders, we get 209. Add these two remainders together and we get 365. Although this kind of numerical computation seems bizarre to modern rationalistic people, it was not strange in the ancient world, and the fact is that this kind of computation does indeed work in various places in the Bible, such as here. The full significance of what God means by this certainly eludes me! but it is clear that the number 365 is indeed “hidden” in the text (Prov. 25:2).<sup>8</sup>

c. (Outside of Genesis, note also Numbers 3:46, the number 273, which is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a solar year, and then Numbers 3:50, the number 1365, which is 1000 + 365. The other astrally significant numbers in Numbers also use a year of 365 days, not

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<sup>8</sup>M. Barnouin, “Recherches numériques sur la généalogie de Gen 5,” *Revue Biblique* 77 [1970]: 347-75; summarized in Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*. Word Biblical Commentary 1 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), p. 134.

one of 360.)<sup>9</sup>

We conclude that there is no evidence to substantiate the notion that the length of the year before the Flood was 360 days.

As regards the Flood year itself, it began in the second month, which would be in the spring. We can make a good guess as to the various days of the year by taking note of the number of seven-day sequences that show up in connection with it. This indicates a sabbath pattern. We start off with the assumption, grounded in Biblical theology, that God's announcement of the Flood came on a sabbath, the day of judgment. This was AM 1656, month 2, day 10 (hereafter 2/10/1656), according to Genesis 7:1-4.

The actual judgment commenced on the following sabbath, 2/17/1656 (Genesis 7:10-11). After 40 days the rain stopped (Genesis 7:12, 17). If we assume a 30-day second month, we come to 3/27/1656, a Thursday. On Thursday, the fifth day, the fishes and birds were made. On this Thursday of the Flood year, only fishes and birds (surviving by lighting on floating debris) would exist on the earth. The only animals and men were in the Ark.

The waters receded and after 150 days the Ark rested (invisibly) on Mount Ararat, on 7/17/1656, which is a Tuesday, the day the dry land began to appear in Genesis 1.

The tops of the mountains became visible on 10/1/1656 (Genesis 8:5). Let us provisionally assume this to be a Tuesday, corresponding to the third day of creation week, when the dry land appeared. This would mean that if the tenth month was 29 days, the raven and dove sent out 40 days later (11/11/1656) were sent out on a sabbath (Genesis 8:6-12). The doves sent out seven and fourteen days later were also sent out on sabbaths (11/18/1656; 11/25/1656).

Following from this, if the eleventh month was 29 days and the twelfth was 30 days, or vice versa, then the drying of the surface of the earth and uncovering of the Ark on 1/1/1657 (Genesis 8:13) was on a Sunday, the first day of a new creation. Similarly, if the first month of 1657 was 30 days, then the emergence from the Ark on 2/27/1657 (Genesis 8:14) was also a Sunday, the eighth Sunday of the year.

We provisionally assumed above that 10/1/1656 was a Tuesday, and this is the case if we assume 29-day months for the seventh, eighth, and ninth months.

Now let us cross-check the scheme. We found reason to believe that months 2,3,4,5,6,11/12 were 30 days, and that 7,8,9,10,11/12 were 29-days, with the first month of 1657 a 30-day month. This gives us a roughly 50-50 spread, which is what is required for lunar months.

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<sup>9</sup>On the astral numerology of Numbers, which presents Israel as a heavenly host, see M. Barnouin, "The Censuses of the Book of Numbers and Babylonian Astronomy" (translation: Niceville, FL: Biblical Horizons); original French: *Vetus Testamentum* 27 (1977):280-303.

### The Rebellion of Ham

Genesis 9:20-27 records the fall of Ham. Noah, acting as a second Adam with more God-like responsibilities than the first, actually plants his own garden, in this case a vineyard. It takes several years for a vineyard to produce enough grapes to produce wine. We are told that on one occasion Noah took a sabbatical rest, drank wine, and fell asleep in his tent. This is parallel to God's withdrawal from His garden in Genesis 2:25, to allow Adam and Eve to get to know each other intimately, and to test them by His absence (cp. Genesis 3:8, where we see God's return).

Ham rebels against Noah as Adam rebelled against God. Adam seized the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, which had to do with rule and judicial authority. Ham stole Noah's robe, which had to do with the same thing. When Ham tried to enlist his brothers in his conspiracy, however, they refused to go along, and upheld their father's authority (symbolized by upholding his robe on their shoulders).

When Noah "returned" to the scene, he, like God in His garden, passed judgment. Ham was Noah's youngest son, and so Noah placed a judgment on Ham's youngest son, Canaan. Like all such judgments, this one was double-edged: Canaan would be "cursed" to be a servant of servants, but a servant of God's servants would find blessing.

In terms of chronological information, this shows us that Canaan had already been born by this time. He was Ham's fourth son (Genesis 10:6). We read in Genesis 11:10 that Shem's firstborn, Arpachshad, was born two years after the Flood. If we assume a child every two years, beginning two years after the Flood, then Canaan was born in the eighth year after the Flood, in 1664.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Leah's sons were born at two-year intervals; Gen. 29:31-35. See the discussion in chapter 14 below.

### The Date of the Tower of Babel

In the days of Peleg the earth was divided (Genesis 10:25, referring to the tower of Babel). Perhaps the tower of Babel incident happened about the time of Peleg's birth, but that is unlikely. We are told that the clan of Joktan, Peleg's brother, moved to the east (Genesis 10:30). Four verses later we read that "as they journeyed east" they came to Shinar and built the tower of Babel. In context, it seems clear that it was the Joktanites who headed up the Babelic project. This is no surprise, since the Joktanites were in the priestly line of Shem (Genesis 9:26-27; 10:22ff.). Those who were supposed to lead in true worship became leaders of apostasy. Moreover, Genesis 10:6-8 may mean that Nimrod, founder of Babel, was the fourth generation from Ham, while Joktan was the fourth generation from Shem, making them contemporaries:

Ham	Shem
Cush	Arpachshad
Raamah	Shelah
Sheba or Dedan	Eber
Nimrod	Joktan

Alternatively, Nimrod might have been a late son of the long-lived Cush, and thus a contemporary of Joktan. (If Cush were the same age as Arpachshad, he would have been 101 when Joktan was born, with probably 300+ years to go; thus if Cush begat Nimrod at the age of 101, Nimrod would have been the same age as Joktan.) Since, however, the line of the ungodly is taken only to Lamech and his family, the 7th and 8th generations from Adam, in Genesis 5, it seems reasonable that the line of the ungodly is taken only as far as Nimrod and Joktan in Genesis 10 & 11. The chart in chapter 9 below illustrates this.

In terms of the theology of Genesis, the call of Abram occurs in the aftermath of the judgment on the nations at the tower of Babel. Israel becomes the microcosm of a new creation, with her seventy elders a microcosm of the seventy nations of the world in Genesis 10. Thus, it is possible that the scattering at Babel happened not too long before the call of Abram. On the other hand, since the Biblical principle is that people fall into sin immediately after they are granted a kingdom, it may be that the Joktanites led the nations of the world into sin sometime around the middle of Peleg's life. According to Biblical chronology, Peleg was born in AM 1757 and lived 239 years, to the year 1996. Abram was born in 2008.

The meaning of Genesis 10:25, then, is that sometime during Peleg's life the world was divided at Babel. Since Peleg's brother Joktan was involved in the apostasy at Babel, and it seems that his involvement came after he had begotten many sons, it is likely that the Babel incident happened in the middle or later part of Peleg's life. For aesthetic reasons I shall arbitrarily put the division of the nations in AM 1871 (midway between the Flood and Abram's exodus from Egypt, on which see below).

If Nimrod was born around 1759, as I have suggested, then he had plenty of

time to grow up, gather men around him as a “mighty hunter,” and found a city, Babel. If the fall of Babel came in 1871, then after this Nimrod went forth to found Assyria (Genesis 10:8-12).

### The Chronology of Genesis 11

There can be no gaps in this chronology either. The following are the dates:

- 1558 - Shem born. Shem died when Abraham was 150. He outlived Sarah by 13 years. Isaac and Rebekah had been married 10 years.
- 1658 - Arpachshad born to Shem, 2 years after Flood (Genesis 11:10). Abram was 86 when Arpachshad died, and Ishmael was 2 years old.
- 1693 - Shelah born. Shelah died when Abraham was 118.
- 1723 - Eber born. Eber outlived "Abram the Hebrew [Eberite]" 4 yrs. Jacob and Esau were 19 when Eber died.
- 1757 - Peleg born
- 1787 - Reu born
- 1819 - Serug born
- 1849 - Nahor born
- 1871? - Tower of Babel
- 1878 - Terah born
- 1948 - Birth either of Haran or Nahor ben Terah (see below)
  - 1996 - Peleg died
  - 1997 - Nahor died
  - 2006 - Noah died
- 2008 - Abram born (see below)
  - 2026 - Reu died
  - 2049 - Serug died
  - 2083 - Terah died

On the symbolism inherent in the numbers in Genesis 5 and 11, see chapter 21 below.

Genesis 11:26 says that Terah lived 70 years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Compare to Genesis 5:32, which says that Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth. We know from Genesis 11:10 that Shem was 100 years old 2 years after the Flood, which came in Noah's 600th year, so that Shem was obviously not the first-born. He was born when Noah was 602, even though as patriarchy-bearer he is listed first. According to Genesis 10:21, Japheth was the eldest. That makes Ham the youngest.

By means of parallelism, we can suggest that of Terah's sons, Haran was the eldest, born when Terah was 70 years old, and Nahor the youngest. Nahor married one of Haran's daughters (Genesis 12:29), and Haran died well before the other two sons did (Genesis 12:28).

Acts 7:4 tells us that Abram did not leave the city of Haran until Terah had died. Genesis 12:4 says that Abram was 75 at that time. Genesis 11:32 says that Terah died at 205. Thus, Abram was born when Terah was 130. This solution was first noted by Ussher, and so commentaries preceding his work do not take it up. Amazingly, many modern commentators also do not follow Ussher on this point, although the

arithmetic is simple and frankly inescapable. We can only assume that many modern commentators do not read very widely when they write their commentaries, and also cannot do arithmetic.

Problem: In Genesis 17:17, Abraham laughed and said, “Shall a child be born to a man who is 100 years old?” If Abraham had been born when Terah was 130, why would he have a problem believing in a birth at 100? On the basis of this, some have suggested that Terah was not dead when Abram left Haran, and that Acts 7:4 should be taken spiritually: Terah was dead to Abram.

This won't hold up, however. Years later, Abraham married Keturah and had more sons. Clearly Abram's laughter in Genesis 17:17 is not related to any feeling of impotence, but to the humor in the situation: a childless man finally having a son at the age of 100. More to the point is the second phrase of 17:17, “And shall Sarah, who is 90 years old, bear a son?” Sarah was past the age of childbearing (Genesis 18:11). At any rate, Abraham's marriage to Keturah shows that he had no problem with the idea of having children in his old age.

A second “problem” is that if we assume Abram was born when Terah was 70, then the arrival of Abram in Canaan at 75 happens 365 years after the birth of Arpachshad. Neat. But, of course, we wind up destroying the literary parallel between the sons of Terah and the sons of Noah. So, the purely aesthetic considerations cancel each other out. In terms of Biblical calculation based on an inerrant text, we should allow Acts 7:4 to carry the day.

It is, thus, far better to go with Ussher and other chronologists, and assume that Abram was born when Terah was 130. This is the simplest and most satisfactory explanation.

### The Table of Nations

If we assume births every two years, and about 30 years between generations (cp. Genesis 11:12-24), we can come up with an approximate series of dates for the generations recorded in Genesis 10. We shall assume that all three of Noah's sons had their firstborn sons two years after the Flood (cp. Genesis 11:10). See the Table.

Note that the line of Japheth only extends to the third generation. Both the second and third generations of Japheth provide seven names. Four of the third generation names are sons of Javan (Ionia; Greece), and this seems to point forward to the time when Greece (Hellenism) would be the principle adversary of orthodox Judaism (Zechariah 9:13; Daniel 11:*passim*).

The line of Ham, with which the Israelites interacted throughout their history, extends to the fourth generation in order to pick up the Philistines, and to the fifth to pick up Nimrod, and no farther.

The priestly line of Shem extends to the two sons of Eber, one of whom (Joktan) apostatized at Babel, with his 13 sons. This line is carried no farther.

## An Hypothetical Chronology for the Table of Nations

Date	Line of Shem	Line of Ham	Line of Japheth
1656 -	FLOOD		
1658 -	Arpachshad ben Shem	Cush ben Ham	Gomer ben Japheth
1660 -	Elam ben Shem	Mitsrayim ben Ham	Magog ben Japheth
1662 -	Asshur ben Shem	Put ben Ham	Madai ben Japheth
1664 -	Lud ben Shem	Canaan ben Ham	Javan ben Japheth
1666 -	Aram ben Shem		Tubal ben Japheth
1668 -			Meshech ben Japheth
1670 -			Tiras ben Japheth
----- - Generation change -----			
1688 -		Seba ben Cush	Ashkenaz ben Gomer
1690 -		Havilah ben Cush [Ludim] ben Mitsrayim	Riphath ben Gomer
1692 -		Sabtah ben Cush [Anamim] ben Mitsrayim	Togarmah ben Gomer
1693 -	Shelah ben Arpachshad		
1694 -		Raamah ben Cush [Lehabim] ben Mitsrayim Sidon ben Canaan	Elishah ben Javan
1696 -	Uz ben Aram	Sabteca ben Cush [Naphtuhim] ben Mitsrayim Heth ben Canaan	Tarshish ben Javan
1698 -	Hul ben Aram	Nimrod ben Cush (?) [Pathrusim] ben Mitsrayim [Jebusite] ben Canaan	[Kittim] ben Javan <sup>11</sup>
1700 -	Gether ben Aram	[Casluhim] ben Mitsrayim [Amorite] ben Canaan	[Dodanim] ben Javan
1702 -	Mash ben Aram	[Caphtorim] ben Mitsrayim [Girgashite] ben Canaan	
1704 -		[Hivite] ben Canaan	
1706 -		[Arkite] ben Canaan	
1708 -		[Sinite] ben Canaan	
1710 -		[Arvadite] ben Canaan	
1712 -		[Zemarite] ben Canaan	
1714 -		[Hamathite] ben Canaan	

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<sup>11</sup>Words ending in -im or -ite indicate peoples, not individuals.

---- - Generation change -----	
1723 -	Eber ben Shelah
1724 -	Sheba ben Raamah
1726 -	Dedan ben Raamah
1730 -	[Philistines] ben [Casluhim]
---- - Generation change -----	
1757 -	Peleg ben Eber
1759 -	Joktan ben Eber                      Nimrod ben Sheba or Dedan (?)
---- - Generation change -----	
1787 -	Reu ben Peleg
1789 -	Almodad ben Joktan
1791 -	Sheleph ben Joktan
1793 -	Hazarmaveth ben Joktan
1795 -	Jerah ben Joktan
1797 -	Hadoram ben Joktan
1799 -	Uzal ben Joktan
1801 -	Diklah ben Joktan
1803 -	Obal ben Joktan
1805 -	Abimael ben Joktan
1807 -	Sheba ben Joktan
1809 -	Ophir ben Joktan
1811 -	Havilah ben Joktan
1813 -	Jobab ben Joktan
---- - Generation change -----	
1819 -	Serug ben Reu
---- - Generation change -----	
1849 -	Nahor ben Serug
---- - Generation change -----	
1871? - TOWER OF BABEL	
1878 -	Terah ben Nahor

### Abram in Canaan and Egypt

Abram entered Canaan in AM 2083. We are not told how long he dwelt in Canaan before his descent into Egypt, but I suggest two years. My reason is almost purely aesthetic and theological: it means that Abram's exodus from Egypt happened in the third year, as did his separation from Lot. So often in the Bible a preliminary judgment is rendered on the third day or in the third year, that it makes sense to see the same thing happening here. We do read in Genesis 12:4 that Abram was 75 when he left Haran. He spent a little time at Shechem (v. 6). Then he pitched his tent at Bethel (v. 8), a statement that indicates a somewhat longer sojourn. After a time, he moved into the Negev (v. 9). Then there was a famine in the land. Abram moved into Egypt, was celebrated as a sheik, and received many gifts. Then God struck the Egyptians with plagues. All of this indicates to me a time of about 2-3 years.

Now, what is interesting is that if Abram's exodus from Egypt came in the third year, AM 2086, this is 430 years after the Flood. The 430 years of "bondage" in Egypt begin with Abram's arrival in Canaan, as we have seen, so that there would be a three-year overlap of these two 430-year periods. Since the Hebrews' migration into Goshen happened exactly in the middle of the 430 years of "bondage in Egypt," it strikes me as aesthetically appropriate to put the fall of the nations at the tower of Babel exactly in the middle of the 430 years from the Flood to Abram's third year in Canaan. That is why I put the tower of Babel in AM 1871. This date for Babel is late enough for Joktan and his clans to be involved, but early enough for the two civilizations of Ur and Egypt to have developed to the point they seem to have at the time of Abram.

But the reader should be aware that my suggestion that Abram's exodus from Egypt happened in the third year of his sojourn in Canaan is somewhat speculative (though I think pretty well grounded in the text and in Biblical theology), and my date for the tower of Babel is purely speculative, though approximately correct.

## The Chronological Structure of Abraham's Life

Abraham was born in 2008. He received his call from God to leave Haran at age 75, in 2083 (Genesis 11:32; 12:1; Acts 7:4). After ten years he took Hagar as concubine at age 85 (Genesis 16:3), in 2093. Ishmael was born a year later, when Abraham was 86 (Genesis 16:16), in 2094. Since Abraham lived 175 years, the birth of Ishmael came at the center of his life. We shall discuss the importance of this below.

At the age of 99, Abraham was told to circumcise his household, and was told that Sarah would have a son (Genesis 17:1, 24; 18:10). This was the year 2107, the year Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. The next year, 2108, Isaac was born (Genesis 17:17; 21:5).

Five years later, Isaac was “weaned,” meaning that he moved from his mother's tent to his father's (or in some other way was presented by Sarah to Abraham). The 400 years of Genesis 15:13 began when Isaac was five years old. This is approximately the time when Isaac was weaned, and when Ishmael was seen laughing by Sarah and was cast out. Ishmael's mother was an Egyptian, as the text is careful to point out in this context (Genesis 21:9). While there was no direct oppression involved in Ishmael's simple laughter, yet when we remember that the name Isaac means “he laughs,” we can understand Sarah's fear that Ishmael would be a counterfeit Isaac. Paul in Galatians 4:29 says that this laughter constituted “persecution,” in the sense that it detracted from Isaac's place as heir. Thus, Paul identifies the beginning of the 400 year oppression with the weaning of Isaac. This is the year 2113. Abraham was 105.

Sarah died 32 years later. Sarah was 90 at the birth of Isaac (Genesis 17:17; 21:5). She died at the age of 127 (Genesis 23:1). Therefore, Isaac was 37 when Sarah died, in the year 2145. Abraham was 137.

Abraham died at the age of 175 (Genesis 25:7), in 2183.

In the providence of God, Abraham's life is structured chiastically:

- A. Birth in 2008
- B. Entrance into land at age 75
- C. Birth of Ishmael at age 86
- B'. Birth of Isaac at age 100
- A'. Death at age 175

If we reflect on this, we see that the land and seed are connected (B). We also see that at the center of Abraham's life (C) is the production of his own seed, which is not good enough. In a sense, Ishmael is Abraham's true seed, the seed produced by sinful man (though Ishmael became a believer, Genesis 21:20, cp. 21:22). Only after God's miracle is the true seed born, the seed of the woman, whose dead womb is miraculously opened.

Interestingly the second half of Abraham's life is also structured chiastically:

- A. Birth of Isaac, Abraham 100
- B. Death of Sarah, Abraham 137
- A'.Death at age 175

The death of Sarah, followed shortly by Isaac's marriage, which involves taking Rebekah into Sarah's tent (Genesis 24:67), moves Abraham off the scene as regards the core of redemptive history. Abraham marries Keturah and has six more sons, but they are not the seed line.

Now, if we look at Acts 7:2-4, we find the Holy Spirit saying that Abram received God's initial call in Ur, moved to Haran until his father Terah died, and then moved to Canaan. This is, of course, a typological prophecy of Israel's later exodus from Egypt: wandering in the wilderness (Haran) until the older generation (Terah) dies, and then entering the land. We are not told when Abram made his exodus from Ur and went to Haran, but it was sometime during his first 75 years. Also, at some point in these 75 years he married Sarai. Thus, Abram's marriage to Sarah and call parallel chiastically the death of Sarah and the removal of his call. We can now put it all together (see the chart).

## THE STRUCTURE OF ABRAHAM'S LIFE

- A. Birth of Abraham
- B. Marriage to Sarah and call of Abraham (age ?)
- C. Sojourn in Haran; God appears and tells him to leave (Genesis 12)
- D. Entrance of Abraham into land (age 75)
- E. Attack of Pharaoh on Sarah (Genesis 12) (age 76-77?)
- F. Abraham re-enters land (Genesis 13) (age 77?)
- G. War of the Kings; Lot rescued (Genesis 14) (age 78?)
- H. God appears to Abraham (Genesis 15) (age 78?)
- I. Birth of Abraham's son Ishmael (age 86)
- H'. God appears to Abraham (Genesis 17) (age 99)
- G'. Destruction of Sodom; Lot rescued (Genesis 18) (age 99)
- F'. Abraham leaves land (Genesis 20) (age 99)
- E'. Attack of Abimelech on Sarah (Genesis 20) (age 99)
- D'. Birth of Sarah's son Isaac (age 100)
- C'. Sojourn in Philistine territory; God appears, tells him to leave, return to land, offer Isaac (Genesis 22)
- B'. Death of Sarah and removal of Abraham's call (age 137)
- A'. Death of Abraham (age 175)

### The Life of Abraham

2006 - Noah dies (Genesis 9:29).

2008 - Abram is born of Terah in Ur (Genesis 11:26-32; 12:4; Acts 7:4).

2026 - Reu ben Peleg dies (Genesis 11:20-21).

2042? - Abram and Terah move to Haran (Genesis 11:31-32).

2049 - Serug ben Reu dies (Genesis 11:22-23).

2083 - Terah ben Nahor dies. Abram leaves Haran and enters promised land, settling in Shechem (Genesis 12:1-7). This is the beginning of the 430 years of living under Egyptian dominion. See the discussion of Exodus 12:40 in chapter 16 below.

2084? - Abram moves to Bethel (Genesis 12:8).

2085? - Abram moves to the Negev; famine sends him to Egypt (Genesis 12:9-10).

2086? - Pharaoh attacks Sarai, is plagued, and sends Abram out with much spoil (Genesis 12:11-20). Abram leaves Egypt and settles in Bethel. There is strife between Lot's men and Abram's, and Lot separates from Abram (Genesis 13:1-17).

2087? - Abram moves to Hebron, converts Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner. The War of the Kings ensues. Lot is captured and rescued. Abram is afraid the kings will return. God appears to him and promises him the land (Genesis 13:18; Genesis 14-15).

2093 - Sarai offers Abram forbidden fruit: Hagar. Abram accepts. Once Hagar is pregnant, she makes it clear that she will not let Sarai adopt her child. Sarai punishes Hagar, who flees. God meets her and blesses her (Genesis 16:1-14).

2094 - Ishmael born (Genesis 16:15-16).

2096 - Arpachshad ben Shem dies (Genesis 11:12-13).

2107 - In the spring God appears to Abram, changes his name to Abraham, and tells him to circumcise his household. God also changes Sarai to Sarah, and tells Abraham that she will have a child in twelve months “at this time next year” (Genesis 17).

A few days after this, God appears to Abram again, tells him that Sarah will bear him a child in the spring (“when the time revives”; Genesis 18:10 & 14; cp. 2 Kings 4:16-17), and announces the destruction of the cities of the Jordan Circle. Abraham pleads for Lot's life, and is given it (Genesis 18). God's two angels proceed to Sodom and rescue Lot; then the cities are destroyed (Genesis 19). (The circumcision of the righteous is parallel to the destruction of the wicked.) Lot chooses not to rejoin Abraham, and his life is ruined.

The fouling of the land causes Abraham to leave it and move south toward Egypt, and then later into Philistine (Egyptian) territory (Genesis 20:1). By now it is summer.

These events have taken probably three months, which means Sarah must become pregnant immediately in order to have a son in the spring. Satan attacks by causing Abimelech to take her into his harem. God shuts up the wombs of Abimelech's household, appears to Abimelech and threatens him, and Sarah is returned to Abraham. Abraham settles in Gerar (Genesis 20).

2108 - In the spring Sarah gives birth to Isaac in Philistine territory (Genesis 21:1-7).

2113 - Isaac is weaned. At the feast, Sarah sees Ishmael laughing. She perceives that his laughter will war against Isaac, whose name means Laughter. This event is the beginning point of the 400-years during which the seed will live in a land not theirs (Genesis 21:8-10; Galatians 4:30; Genesis 15:13; Acts 7:6). In terms of the theme of Egyptian dominion over the Hebrews, note that Ishmael is the son of an Egyptian woman.

Sarah requires Abraham to drive Hagar and the 13-year old Ishmael out. God appears to Hagar and tells her that He will be with Ishmael and bless him (Genesis 21:11-21).

Also during this year Abimelech covenants with Abraham at Beersheba (Genesis 21:22-34), and Abraham settles in Philistine territory for a long time.

2124 - Ishmael is 30 years old. Let us assume that his firstborn son is born in this year, and his others at two year intervals. Thus, this would be the year of Nebaioth's birth (Genesis 25:13).

2126 - Shelah ben Arpachshad dies (Genesis 11:14-15). Kedar ben Ishmael is born (?).

2128? - Adbeel ben Ishmael born.

2130? - God tells Abraham to take Isaac into the land, to Mount Moriah near Jerusalem, and offer him as a sacrifice. Isaac is a “youth” not a “child,” so perhaps 17 or so (thus the year 2130). After sparing Isaac, God tells Abraham that he will have a vast multitude of seed (Genesis 22:1-19). This might also be the year of the birth of Mibsam ben Ishmael.

2131? - Abraham hears that his brother Nahor has had 12 sons (Genesis 22:20-24).

2132? - Mishma ben Ishmael born.

2134? - Duman ben Ishmael born.

2136? - Massa ben Ishmael born.

2138? - Hadad ben Ishmael born.

2140? - Tema ben Ishmael born.

2142? - Jetur ben Ishmael born.

2144? - Naphish ben Ishmael born.

2145 - Sarah dies at the age of 127 in Hebron, which means that Abraham had moved back into the land of promise by this time. Abraham buries her in the field at Machpelah in the promised land (Genesis 23).

2146? - Kedemah ben Ishmael born.

2148 - Abraham sends his servant to obtain a wife for Isaac, who marries Rebekah and takes her into Sarah's tent (Genesis 24). Isaac is 40 at this time (Genesis 25:20).

### The Continuation of Abraham's Line

2149? - Abraham marries Keturah and begins to have six sons (Genesis 25:1-6). I shall put these children two years apart from each other, as we have done before, and the next generation will be put after 30 years, in order to get an approximate chronology.

2151? - Zimran ben Abraham born.

2153? - Jokshan ben Abraham born.

2155? - Medan ben Abraham born.

2157? - Midian ben Abraham born, the ancestor of the Midianites.

2158 - Shem ben Noah dies (Genesis 11:10-11).

2159? - Ishbak ben Abraham born.

2161? - Shuah ben Abraham born.

2168 - Esau and Jacob born (Genesis 25:25-26).

2183 - Abraham dies at 175 (Genesis 25:7). Sheba ben Jokshan born (?).

2185? - Dedan ben Jokshan born.

2187 - Eber ben Shelah dies (Genesis 11:16-17). Ephah ben Midian born (?).

2189? - Epher ben Midian born.

2191? - Hanoah ben Midian born.

2193? - Abida ben Midian born.

2195? - Eldaah ben Midian born.

2198 - Jacob and Esau are 30 years old. Let us assume that around this time Esau despises his birthright and signs it over to Jacob (Genesis 25:27-34). This means that the famine and Isaac's sojourn in Philistine territory take about 10 years, at the end of which we are told of Esau's marriage in 2208.

2200? - A famine causes Isaac to move to Philistine territory (Genesis 26:1-11).

2201? - Isaac reaps a bountiful harvest (Genesis 26:12).

2202? - The envious Philistines drive Isaac away (Genesis 26:13-17).

2203? - Isaac digs wells and finally finds a place to live for a few years (Genesis 26:18-22).

2205? - Isaac moves to Beersheba (Genesis 26:23-25).

2207? - Abimelech makes a covenant with Isaac at Beersheba (Genesis 26:26-33).

2208 - Esau marries two pagan wives, Judith bath [daughter of] Beerli the Hittite and Basemath bath Elon the Hittite (Genesis 26:34). In Genesis 36:2 these two women are named Adah bath Elon the Hittite and Oholibamah bath Anah bath Zibeon the Hivite. So, Judith (Praise) is also named Adah (Pleasure), and Basemath (Fragrant) is also named Oholibamah (High Place Tent). Basemath-Oholibamah was the daughter of Elon the Hittite and Anah, who was the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite. We shall have him bear his first two sons a year later. Esau married a third wife in 2245.

2209? - Eliphaz ben Esau and Jeush ben Esau born (Genesis 36:4-5)

2211? - Jalam ben Esau born.

2213? - Korah ben Esau born.

2215? - [Asshurim] ben Dedan born.

2217? - [Letushim] ben Dedan born.

2219? - [Leummim] ben Dedan born.

2231 - Ishmael dies (Genesis 25:17).

### Jacob and Esau

The first chronological problem encountered in the story of Jacob is to figure out his age when he went to Padan-Aram to get a wife. He was 77 years old (and thus by no means a youth). We know this from the following data:

- a. Joseph stood before Pharaoh at age 30 (Genesis 41:46).
- b. At the end of 7 years of plenty, Joseph was 37 (Genesis 41:29-30).
- c. At the end of 2 years of famine, when Jacob came to Egypt, Joseph was 39 (Genesis 45:6) and Jacob was 130 (Genesis 47:9).
- d. Therefore, Jacob was 91 when Joseph was born ( $130-39=91$ ).
- e. Jacob had served Laban 14 years when Joseph was born (Genesis 30:25).
- f. Therefore, Jacob was 77 when he came to Padan-Aram ( $91-14=77$ ).

The other problem for the Jacob narrative is to figure out the ages of his sons. After Joseph was born, Jacob sought to leave Haran and was persuaded to stay another 6 years (Genesis 30:25ff.; 31:38, 41). Thus, Joseph was born at the end of the first 7 years of Jacob's marriage. If Joseph is the youngest son born in Padan-Aram, then all 7 of Leah's children were born during those 7 years, which is pretty much impossible. Even if we say that Dinah was born later on, which seems to have been the case from Genesis 32:22, we still have 6 sons born in 7 years.

There are two answers to this problem. The first is that it is, of course, barely possible, if Leah was passing the children on a wet nurse instead of nursing them herself (since women tend not to conceive while nursing). When we consider that Leah stopped bearing after the birth of Judah, and apparently did not conceive her last two sons until after her maid Ziplah had born two children, then we must have at least 8 children born in seven years before Joseph. This strains credulity to the breaking point.

The second answer is that this passage is not presented in strictly chronological order. The order is theological. First are described the ten "natural" sons, and then is described the birth of Joseph, the "miracle" son, born from a closed womb. Consider: first Abraham has a natural son, and then God opens Sarah's womb and the miracle son is born. The second born is the replacement for the fallen firstborn. Consider: Rebekah is barren, but God miraculously opens her womb. Her firstborn, Esau, is bad, and is replaced by the second-born, Jacob ("Supplanter"). Now we come to Jacob. The first ten sons are born without a miracle. They are bad, and sell Joseph into slavery. Joseph is the second-born, replacement son, born after the miracle. This is the structure of the passage.

So then, what is the chronology? Leah has four sons and stops bearing (Genesis 29:31-35). This easily takes up seven years, and these four sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah) are older than Joseph. Early in the seven years, Rachel gives Bilhah to Jacob, and two sons are born (Dan & Naphtali; Genesis 30:1-8). These are also probably older than Joseph. After she stops bearing, Leah gives Zilpah to Jacob, and she bears two sons (Gad & Asher; 30:9-13). These are probably younger than Joseph,

born during the final six years in Haran. At some point, Leah begins to have children again and bears Issachar and Zebulun (30:14-20), again during the last six years. We are told that afterward she bore Dinah.

2239? - Teman ben Eliphaz born (Genesis 36:11).

2241? - Omar ben Eliphaz born (Genesis 36:11).

2243? - Zepho ben Eliphaz born (Genesis 36:11).

2245 - Rekebah and Jacob trick Isaac into obeying God and giving the blessing to Jacob. Jacob leaves home at age 77 to get a wife in Padan-Aram. God appears to him at the top of a ladder to heaven (Genesis 27-28). Esau, seeing his parents loath his first two wives, marries Mahalath and Ishmael. Since Ishmael died in 2231, this was probably a child of his old age. In Genesis 36:3, Mahalath (Mild) is called Basemath (Fragrant), the same as the original name of Esau's first wife. Possibly in this year also Gatam ben Eliphaz born (Genesis 36:11).

2247? - Kenaz ben Eliphaz born (Genesis 36:11).

2249? - Amalek ben Eliphaz born (Genesis 36:12).

2252 - Jacob marries both Leah and Rachel.

2253? - Reuben ben Jacob born.

2254? - Dan ben Jacob born.

2255? - Simeon ben Jacob born.

2256? - Naphtali ben Jacob born; Reuel ben Esau born (Genesis 36:4).

2257? - Levi ben Jacob born.

2259 - Judah ben Jacob born? Joseph ben Jacob born. Judah was older than Joseph.

2262? - Gad ben Jacob born.

2263? - Issachar ben Jacob born.

2264? - Asher ben Jacob born.

2265 - Jacob returns to Canaan at age 99. Before leaving, Zebulun ben Jacob is born (?). Laban pursues Jacob, but is turned back by God. God meets Jacob and wrestles with him at Jabbok. Jacob meets Esau and parts from him, settling in Succoth (Genesis 33:17).

2266? - Dinah is born.

2276 - Joseph, age 17, brings back a bad report on his six older brothers, has dreams, and is sold into slavery (Genesis 37). Judah leaves his brothers and marries Shua (Genesis 38:2).

2277? - Er ben Judah born (Genesis 38:3).

2279? - Onan ben Judah born (Genesis 38:4).

2281? - Dinah, age 15?, is ravished by the Hamor of Shechem when Jacob moves to Shechem. The city of Shechem is razed by Levi and Simeon, who are cursed by Jacob (Genesis 33:18-20; Genesis 34). Jacob moves to Bethel (Genesis 35:1-15).

2282? - Jacob moves from Bethel to Eder; on the way Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin (Genesis 35:16-21).

2283? - Hanoch ben Reuben born (Genesis 46:9).

2284? - Reuben lies with Jacob's unendowed wife Bilhah (Genesis 35:22); [Hushim] ben Dan born (Genesis 46:23).

2285? - Pallu ben Reuben born (Genesis 46:9); Jemuel ben Simeon born (Genesis 46:10).

2286? - Nahath ben Reuel born (Genesis 36:13); Jahzeel ben Naphtali born (Genesis 46:24).

2287 - Joseph, age 28, interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's baker and cupbearer, two years before he stands before Pharaoh (Genesis 40; 41:1). Hezron ben Reuben born; Jamin ben Simeon born; Gershon ben Levi born? (Genesis 46:9-11).

2288 - Isaac dies at 180 (Genesis 35:28). Zerah ben Reuel born? (Genesis 36:13); Guni ben Naphtali born? (Genesis 46:24).

2289 - Joseph, age 30, stands before Pharaoh at the beginning of the 7 years of plenty (Genesis 41:46). Carmi ben Reuben born; Ohad ben Simeon born; Kohath ben Levi born (Genesis 46:9-11).

2290? - Shammah ben Reuel born (Genesis 36:13); Manasseh ben Joseph born (Genesis 41:50-51); Jezer ben Naphtali born (Genesis 46:24).

2291? - Jachin ben Simeon born; Merari ben Levi born (Genesis 46:10-11).

2292? - Mizzah ben Reuel born (Genesis 35:13); Ziphion ben Gad born (Genesis 46:16); Ephraim ben Joseph born (Genesis 41:52); Shillem ben Naphtali born (Genesis 46:24).

2293? - Zohar ben Simeon born; Tola ben Issachar born (Genesis 46:10, 13). Shelah ben Judah born (Genesis 38:5, 11). If Er married at 30, and was killed by God, then Onan would have been, say, 28 when he also was killed. Shelah at that time was underage, below 20. Tamar was asked to wait for him to grow up. We are here making Shelah 14 years younger than Onan, or 14 years old when Onan was killed. See discussion below in section 15.

2294? - Haggi ben Gad born; Imnah ben Asher born (Genesis 46:16-17).

2295? - Shaul ben Simeon born; Puvvah ben Issachar born; Sered ben Zebulun born (Genesis 46:10, 13, 14).

2296 - End of the 7 years of plenty. Shuni ben Gad born; Ishvah ben Asher born? (Genesis 46:16-17).

## Joseph and Judah

Genesis 38 tells us about Judah's sons and grandsons, and if we try to get these events into the time before the descent of the Hebrews into Goshen, it is very difficult to do so.

But this passage is almost certainly dischronologized. Thematically Genesis 38 is linked with the story of Joseph. Judah falls into the sin that Joseph resisted (adultery). Both married foreign women, Joseph rightly and Judah wrongly. Both had two sons, whose birth-statuses were reversed. Given the structure of Genesis, there is no good place to stick this story if it happened later than the descent into Goshen. We have every reason to believe that after they relocated their headquarters to Goshen, the Hebrews continued to pasture up in Canaan (1 Chronicles 7:21-22, 23-24). We are told in Genesis 38 that Judah married at about the time Joseph was sold to Potiphar. Judah and Joseph were about the same age, so Judah was about 18. We then read that after a long time Judah's wife died (Genesis 38:12). This comes after Tamar's first two disastrous marriages. Almost certainly this projects the rest of the story into the period after the relocation of the Hebrew encampment to Goshen. Though dischronologized, Genesis 38 fits exactly with the theological order of presentation in Genesis, showing the kinds of sins the Hebrews were prone to fall into if they remained in Canaan, and explaining why God sent them into a sanctuary in Goshen.

Genesis 46:12, though, says that Judah's sons by Tamar, born at the end of Genesis 38, went down into Egypt with Jacob. At first glance, this indicates that they were born before the descent into Goshen. The last clause in the verse, however, mentions the two sons of Perez, who are included in the count in verse 15. Nobody can believe that these sons were born before the descent into Egypt. Thus, the list of names in Genesis 46 has to be taken as a genealogical summary, and not as a list of those who, head for head, made the trek. (And note 46:21, which lists 10 descendants, including grandchildren, of Benjamin; obviously these had not been born before the descent into Egypt!). We have fitted the grandsons and great-grandsons of Jacob into the chronology.

Thus, in the chronology we are assuming standard 30-year distances between generations, and two-year intervals in births unless the text indicates otherwise (which it does in Genesis 38:11, where Judah's third son Shelah is clearly several years younger than his next oldest brother).

- 2297? - Job ben Issachar born; Elon ben Zebulun born (Genesis 46:13-14).
- 2298 - After two visits by his sons to Egypt, Jacob moves his household to Goshen (Genesis 45:6). This is exactly 215 years after Abram moved into the land of promise (in 2083), and is the mid-point of the 430 years of dwelling “in Egypt.” Ezbon ben Gad born; Ishvi ben Asher born? (Genesis 46:16).
- 2299? - Shimron ben Issachar born; Jahleel ben Zebulun born (Genesis 46:13-14).
- 2300? - Eri ben Gad born; Beriah ben Asher born (Genesis 46:16-17).
- 2302? - Arodi ben Gad born; Serah bath Asher born (Genesis 46:16-17).
- 2304? - Areli ben Gad born (Genesis 46:16).
- 2307? - Er marries Tamar and God kills him (Genesis 38:6-7). Onan refuses seed to his dead brother and God kills him (Genesis 38:9). Tamar is told to wait for Shelah to grow up.
- 2312? - Bela ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2313? - Shelah is 20 years old, but is not given to Tamar. Judah's wife dies (Genesis 38:12). Tamar seduces Judah (Genesis 38).
- 2314? - Perez and Zerah ben Judah are born (Genesis 38:27-30); Becher ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2315 - Jacob dies at 147 (Genesis 47:28).
- 2316? - Ashbel ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2317? - Libni ben Gershon born (Exodus 6:17).
- 2318? - Gera ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2319? - Shimei ben Gershon born (Exodus 6:17).
- 2320? - Naaman ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2321? - Mahli ben Merari born (Exodus 6:19).
- 2322? - Ehi ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2323? - Mushi ben Merari born (Exodus 6:19).
- 2324? - Rosh ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2326? - [Mupim] ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2328? - [Hupim] ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2330? - Heber ben Beriah born (Genesis 46:17); Ard ben Benjamin born (Genesis 46:21).
- 2332? - Malchiel ben Beriah born (Genesis 46:17).
- 2344? - Hezron ben Perez born (Genesis 46:12).

2346? - Hamul ben Perez born (Genesis 46:12).

2350? - Births of Amram (Kohath is 61) and Jochebed (Levi is 93).

2369 - Joseph dies at 110 (Genesis 50:26).

## Moses

Exodus 2:1 states that “a man from the house of Levi went and took a daughter of Levi,” and from their marriage came Aaron, Miriam, and Moses. There is an important contrast within this verse: the man was from the house of Levi, while the woman was a daughter of Levi, not a daughter of the house of Levi. The verse clearly implies that Moses mother was an actual daughter of Levi himself.

This supposition is confirmed by the statement of Numbers 26:58 & 59. Verse 58 states that Moses' father, Amram, was a grandson of Levi, while verse 59 makes it clear that Moses' mother was an actual daughter of Levi: “And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt.”

These passages force us to conclude that the “430 years of Egyptian bondage” referred to in Exodus 12:40 cannot possibly begin with the descent of the Hebrews into the land of Goshen under Joseph. Rather, the 430 years must begin with Abram's arrival in the land of promise, which was under Egyptian hegemony at the time.<sup>12</sup> If we can figure this out, it is no surprise that Paul also could (Galatians 3:17).

Exodus 6 adds further confirmation, telling us that Amram was the son of Kohath, Levi's son, and that “Amram took to him to wife his father's sister Jochebed,” again affirming that Jochebed was Levi's actual daughter (Exodus 6:18-20).

Exodus 6 also provides us a relative chronology for the sojourn in Goshen. We are not told when Kohath was born to Levi, but we are told that Levi lived 137 years. We are not told when Amram was born to Kohath, but we are told that Kohath lived 133 years. We are not told when Moses was born to Amram, but we are told that Amram lived 137 years (Exodus 6:16-20). Thus, we can put down a relative chronology as follows:

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<sup>12</sup>For a full discussion, see my *The Date of Creation*, forthcoming.

- 2257? - Levi born (see Chapter 13 above).
- 2289? - Kohath ben Levi (see Chapter 13 above).
- 2350? - Amram ben Kohath born (Exodus 6:18) (Kohath is 61); Jochebed bath Levi born (Levi is 93).
- 2352? - Izhar ben Kohath born (Exodus 6:18).
- 2354? - Hebron ben Kohath born (Exodus 6:18).
- 2356? - Uzziel ben Kohath born (Exodus 6:18).
- 2382? - Korah ben Izhar born (Exodus 6:21).
- 2384? - Nepheg ben Izhar born (Exodus 6:21).
- 2386? - Zichri ben Izhar born; Mishael ben Uzziel born (Exodus 6:21, 22).
- 2388? - Elzaphan ben Uzziel born (Exodus 6:22).
- 2390? - Sithri ben Uzziel born (Exodus 6:22).
- 2394? - Levi dies at 137 (Exodus 6:16).
- 2412? - Assir ben Korah born (Exodus 6:24).
- 2414? - Elkanah ben Korah born (Exodus 6:24).
- 2416? - Abiasaph ben Korah born (Exodus 6:24).
- 2422? - Kohath dies at 133 (Exodus 6:18).
- 2430 - Aaron ben Amram born (Exodus 7:7).
- 2433 - Moses ben Amram born (Amram and Jochebed are 83). According to Exodus 7:7, Moses was born 80 years before the Exodus.
- 2460? - Nadab ben Aaron born (Numbers 3:2; Exodus 6:23).
- 2462? - Abihu ben Aaron born (Exodus 6:23).
- 2464? - Eleazar ben Aaron born (Exodus 6:23).
- 2466? - Ithamar ben Aaron born (Exodus 6:23).
- 2473 - exile of Moses from Egypt, according to Acts 7:23.
- 2487? - Amram dies at 137 (Exodus 6:20).
- 2494? - Phineas ben Eleazar born (Exodus 6:25).
- 2513 - Exodus.

What time of the year was Moses born? In Deuteronomy 31:2 Moses says, "I am 120 years old today." Evidently this was the same day as Deuteronomy 1:3 - "the 40th year, on the 1st day of the 11th month," or shortly thereafter. Was this Moses' birthday? We cannot be certain, but we can be certain that it was close to his birthday, because Moses was already 80, when he initiated the 10 plagues. This means that the first eight plagues happened during the last two months of the lunar year. Evidently Moses had just turned 80 when he stood before Pharaoh.

### Chronology of the Plagues & Exodus

Exodus 12:41 says, “And it came about at the end of 430 years, to the very day, that all the hosts of Yahweh went out from the land of Egypt.” Some have suggested that “to the very day” refers back to Abram's entrance into the land of promise, so that we can date his entrance as the 15th day of the 1st month. Exodus 12:41, however, does not demand this interpretation, and it seems better to translate it: “And it came about at the end of 430 years that it happened on this very day . . . .” The stress is on the date of the Exodus, as the following verse indicates.

The plagues took place during the (solar) year 2513, as did the Exodus. We can construct an approximate chronology as follows:

*11th Month (January-February 2513) (assume 29 days)*

Day 1: Moses stands before Pharaoh and Aaron's staff swallows the staffs of the Egyptian magicians (Exodus 7:8-13).

Day 2: The Nile and all Egyptian water turned to blood for seven days (Exodus 7:14-25). I shall assume that the plagues came 9 days apart.

Day 11: The Plague of Frogs (Exodus 8:1-7).

Day 20: The Plague of Gnats (Exodus 8:16-19).

Day 29: The Plague of Insects (Exodus 8:20-32).

*12th Month (February-March 2513) (assume 30 days)*

Day 8: The Plague on Cattle (Exodus 9:1-7).

Day 17: The Plague of Boils (Exodus 9:8-12).

Day 26: The Plague of Hail (Exodus 9:13-35).

*1st Month (March-April 2513) (assume 29 days) [See Calendar Charts in Appendix.]*

Day 1: The new moon. Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron (12:1-20). Moses tells the elders (12:21-28).

Days 2-9: The Plague of Locusts (10:1-20).

Day 10: Passover lambs/kids set aside. (Sabbath).

Days 11-13: The Plague of Darkness (10:21-23).

Day 14: Moses' last interview with Pharaoh (10:24-29; 11:4-8). At evening: Passover.

Day 15: The exodus from Egypt (beginning of 3d week, measured from the new moon).

Day 16: Pharaoh's pursuit.

Day 17: Red Sea passage. (Sabbath; also the 3d day after the Exodus.).

Day 18: If the previous day was the first sabbath after Passover, this day would be the equivalent of the Day of First Fruits (Leviticus 23:11). My guess is that the Song of the Red Sea was sung on this day, 15:1-21.

Day 19: Marah incident, 15:22 (note: a crisis after 3 days).

Day 23: Elim encampment, 15:27.

Day 24: Sabbath.

*2d Month (April-May 2513)* (assume 30 days) [See Calendar Charts in Appendix.]

Day 2: Sabbath.

Day 9: Sabbath.

Day 15: Wilderness of Sin, 16:1 - “on the 15th day of the second month.”

Day 16: Manna begins, 16:13. (Sabbath).

Day 22: Move to Rephidim, 17:1.

Day 23: Sabbath.

Day 24: Meribah incident, 17:1-7.

Day 25: Amalek arrives, 17:8.

Day 26: Battle with Amalek, 17:9.

Day 27: Jethro arrives, 18:1.

Day 28: Jethro's advice, 18:13.

Day 30: Sabbath.

*3d Month (May-June 2513)* (assume 29 days) [See Calendar Charts in Appendix.]

Day 1: Leave Rephidim, arrive at Sinai, 19:1 - “On the 3d new moon . . . on this very day.”

Day 2: Moses ascends and hears (kingdom of priests), 19:3-6.

Day 3: People accept, 19:7-8a.

Day 4: Moses ascends and reports, hears (God in the cloud), 19:8b-9a.

Day 5: People accept, 19:9b.

Day 6: Moses ascends and reports, hears (consecrate and prepare for 3d day), 19:9b-13.

Day 7: 2d day (Sabbath).

Day 8: 3d day: Sinai Theophany (Pentecost; Leviticus 23:15-16).

Day 9: Elders ascend the mountain, 24:4-11.

Day 14: Sabbath: Moses ascends into Cloud, 24:16.

*4th Month (June-July 2513) (assume 30 days)*

Day 24: Aaron makes the calf, 32:5-6.

Day 25: Sacraments with the calf, 32:5-6 - “a feast to Yahweh.” Moses returns, 24:18.

Day 26: Moses intercedes, 32:30.

*5th Month (July-August 2513) (assume 29 days)*

Day 1: Moses returns for another 40 days (Exodus 32:28).

*6th Month (August-September 2513) (assume 30 days)*

Day 11: Moses comes back.

Let us now explain the details of this suggested chronology.

*Month 1, 2513*

Exodus 12:3 says that the Passover lamb was to be chosen and set aside on the 10th day of the month. As regards the month itself, this was the 3d day of the 2d week (the second set of seven days after the first day of the month), and points to the pervasive “3d x” theme in the Bible: Significant events occur on the 3d day, in the 3d week, in the 3d month, in the 3d year, and in the 3d hour. For reasons that will become clearer as we proceed, this was probably the sabbath day of the week in this particular year (since the 17th was most likely a sabbath).

Now, God's speech in Exodus 12:1-20 came on the 1st day of the month, and thus precedes Moses' final audience with Pharaoh, which happened at the end of the plague of darkness, and which came the day before the Passover plague (Exodus 10:28-29; 11:4). Thus, the 3-day Plague of Darkness (Exodus 10:23) happened between the time the lambs were set aside on the 10th and the Passover on the 14th. Accordingly, we can be certain that the Plague of Darkness happened on the 11-13th days of the month. I have suggested that the Plague of Locusts happened Days 2-9 of this month.

We can now make a comparison with the creation week of Genesis 1, as follows:

Day 10: Sabbath; lambs set aside.  
 Day 11: 1st Day: Light created; Sun darkened over Egypt.  
 Day 12: 2d Day: Firmament established; Sun in firmament darkened.  
 Day 13: 3d Day: Land revealed; darkness in all the land of Egypt (10:22).  
 Day 14: 4th Day: Sun, moon, and stars created; firstborn of Egypt die, and in terms of Biblical symbolism, this is the fall of the astral bodies of Egypt.  
 Day 15: 5th Day: Hosts of land and sea created; Host of God leaves Egypt.  
 Day 16: 6th Day: Man created; Pharaoh pursues.  
 Day 17: 7th Day: Sabbath; Israel granted sabbath as they pass through the Red Sea.

The 17th day is not only a sabbath, but is the 3d day after the Exodus, and thus a day of transition for Israel. Now, the text does not say that the passage through the Red Sea happened on this date, or on the 3d day after the Exodus. This interpretation is only my educated guess, based on the chronological and calendrical “logic” of the text.

In Leviticus 23, God later tells Israel to observe the day after the sabbath in Passover week as the Feast of First Fruits (Leviticus 23:11). According to our reconstruction, this would be the day after Israel passed through the Red Sea, the day of celebration as they sang the Song in Exodus 15.

The 3d day theme returns in Exodus 15:22, where we read that 3 days after they passed through the Red Sea the people found only bitter water to drink. God delivered them in this crisis.

My suggestion of Day 23 for the arrival and encampment at Elim is only a suggestion.

### *Month 2, 2513*

Exodus 16:1 says that Israel arrived at the Wilderness of Sin, approaching Sinai, on the 15th day of the 2d month. Evidently they began their complaining about food on that day as well. The next day, then, would be the beginning of the manna. The remaining suggested chronology for this month is designed to show how the progression of incidents recorded in Exodus 16-18 might have occurred. The sabbaths are, again, based on counting back from Month 3.

### *Month 3, 2513*

According to Leviticus 23:15-16, Pentecost was to be observed 50 days after the sabbath after Passover, or 49 days after the Feast of First Fruits. I initially based my reflections on the Jewish tradition that the Law was given on Pentecost. My own investigation has led me to believe that this is correct. If we can figure out which day of the month this was, then we know that the day before it was a sabbath, and we can then count the sabbaths backwards and assign days in the 1st and 2d months as sabbaths, which is what I have done.

On the 1st day of the 3d month, Israel arrived before Sinai and camped in front of Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1-2).

Exodus 19:3-6 says Moses went up on the mountain. I assume that this was the next day.

Exodus 19:7-8a says that Moses told God's words to the elders and that they, for the people, accepted it. I assume that this was the 3d day of the month.

Exodus 19:8b-9a says that Moses went back to God and told Him of the people's acceptance, and received more information from Him. I assume that this was the 4th day.

Exodus 19:9b says that Moses told the people about this. Given the amount of time it takes to go up the mountain and down, and the amount of time it takes to gather the elders and confer with them, I assume that this was the following, or 5th day.

Exodus 19:10-13 indicates that Moses then went up the mountain again and got further instructions from God, and then came down and consecrated the people. This would be the 6th day.

The people were told to prepare for God's arrival on the 3d day, so that next day was a day of consecration.

God arrived on the 8th day and spoke the 10 Words to the people. Then God gave Moses the Ordinances (Exodus 21-23).

The following day, Day 9, the people accepted the covenant and the elders had a meal with God. They saw God enthroned above the firmament, which was created on the second day of the week, which is this day.

Exodus 24:16 says that God's glory was on the mountain for 6 days, and then Moses went up into the glory on the 7th.

Now, possibly none of these events had any connection to the festival calendar that God was about to initiate, and possibly none of these events had any connection with Creation Week. I assume, however, they these events were connected with both. First, the reference to God's creation week in Exodus 20:11 shows that God expected these people already to be operating in terms of that week. Moreover, the cloud of God was on the mountain for six days and then Moses was called up on the seventh. Second, the festival calendar of Leviticus 23 begins with Passover, and so we are justified in assuming, provisionally at least, that the events after Passover are also tied to the calendar.

If we make these assumptions, everything falls nicely into place. This, to me, is strong confirmation that the assumptions are correct. We have already made associations with the Feast of First Fruits and with Pentecost, so let us now consider the parallels with Creation Week:

Day 1: Creation; Israel arrives at Sinai.

Day 2: Firmament established. The Firmament is the outer house of God, which is pictured in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. That room is maintained by the priests. On this day, God tells Moses that Israel will be a nation of priests.

Day 3: Land emerges; Israel accepts God's offer.

Day 4: Astral bodies created and made lights for the Firmament; Moses reports to God, who says that He will appear to the people in a cloud. The astral bodies show God's light in the sky; here God says He will show Himself in a fiery cloud.

Day 5: Hosts of land and sea; the host of God hears that God is coming.

Day 6: Creation of man and announcement of God's test to Adam and Eve; God tells Israel to make themselves clean and new: to wash themselves, wait for the 3d day, keep themselves from their wives, and not to touch the mountain. This is parallel to the test given Adam and Eve: to not eat (or even touch, as Eve rightly surmised) the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Day 7: A day of sabbath rest and waiting, which Adam and Eve failed to observe, but which Israel did observe on this occasion.

Day 8: The first day of a new creation, when Yahweh gave the Torah-law to Israel.

Day 9: The second day of a new creation, when the elders of Israel were admitted into the outskirts of the cloud-firmament to eat a meal with God. Later the priests would maintain that meal (the 12 loaves of showbread) in the Holy Place, equivalent to the place half-way up the mountain where the elders ate.

Day 14: At the end of this second week, the week of man, Moses ascended the mountain and remained there (for 40 days, anyway). God ascended to sabbath rest at the end of His week in Genesis 1-2, and since man is God's image, it is implied that man would ascend to join God in rest (by entering the Throneland of Eden, west of the Garden) at the end of man's week. We see the same progression here. God creates His world anew during the first week and sets a test before Israel, which they pass initially. Instead of being cast out of God's presence, therefore, the elders of Israel are invited to eat with Him, but they are still "in the Garden" which is the gateway to the Throneland of Eden. At the end of this second week, the week of man, Moses is invited into the equivalent of the Throneland, to dwell with God as a junior partner in His rule. This sequence of events foreshadows the work of Christ.

With all this in mind, I feel fairly confident that the 14th day of the 3d month was a sabbath, and thus that the Law was given on a Sunday, the first day of a new week. If this is so, then we can calculate back the sabbaths and know when they came in the 1st month. (I have assumed a 29-day 1st month and a 30-day second month. If these are reversed, the sabbaths in the 2d month change, but those in the 1st month do not. This is because the entire span of time with which we are concerned crosses over two monthly boundaries. You can confirm this by drawing and marking calendars for both systems.)

I would be remiss if I did not point out how I think this chronology anticipates the work of Christ. The plagues against Egypt and the liberation of God's people parallel the 3-year ministry of Jesus in general. Pharaoh's attack and pursuit of Israel, on Friday (month 1, day 16) parallels the crucifixion, wherein Christ allowed Pharaoh to win (it seemed). Israel's passage through the death-experience of the Red Sea on the sabbath of month 1, day 17, parallels Christ's sojourn in the tomb. Israel's victory celebration on Sunday, month 1, day 18, parallels His resurrection.

This sequence is then applied to God's people. Israel's consecration and sabbath wait (month 3, day 7) parallels the waiting of the apostles for the Holy Spirit in Acts 1 (note v. 12). The arrival of God's fire on Mount Sinai (month 3, day 8) parallels the arrival of tongues of fire on Pentecost; God's sermon parallels Peter's. The meal eaten by the elders the following day parallels the continual feast of the

saints that began in Acts 2:42.

*Month 4, 2513*

Moses was on the mountain with God for 40 days and 40 nights. If month 3 lasted 29 days, as I have posited, Moses returned on the 25th day of month 4. If month 3 lasted 30 days, then Moses returned on the 24th day of month 4.

Exodus 32:7 indicates that God ordered Moses to leave the mountain as soon as the evil festival got going. The previous day, the 24th on my reckoning, Aaron had told the people that this would be a festival to Yahweh. On the next day, the 26th, Moses interceded for Israel (Exodus 32:30).

Interestingly, these are days 4, 5 & 6 of the week. Israel was given the Law on the 1st day of the week, and admitted, through her elders, to God's mountain on the 2d day. If we discount the 40-days, then Israel fell into sin before the "week" was out, and Moses was told to leave the mountain. Israel had lost her privilege.

God heard Moses' intercession, and after a time called Moses back up the mountain for 40 more days (Exodus 34:1-3, 28). I have pictured this in months 5 & 6.

## The Year 2514

With Moses again on Mount Sinai for 40 days during months 5 & 6 of 2513, we come to the beginning of year 2514, which of course began with the new moon of month 7. The next dated event we find is in Exodus 40:2, 17, where we are told that on the 1st day of the 1st month of 2514 the Tabernacle was erected. Thus, during the preceding six months the Tabernacle and its furnishings were made.

Exodus 40:12-15 show us that on this same day Aaron and his sons were consecrated to be priests. This event is recorded in greater detail in Leviticus 8. It is unlikely that on this same day, which is already quite full, God also dictated Leviticus 1-7 to Moses. Doubtless these revelations had been given previously, though not while Moses was in the cloud on Mount Sinai; we are told that God spoke these commands to him from the tent of meeting that preceded the building of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 1:1; Exodus 33:7).

Aaron's ordination actually lasted a week (Leviticus 8:35), and on the eighth day Aaron offered his first sacrifice, God lit the fire on the altar, and God's fire slew Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 9-10).

It seems almost certain that the first day of the month was also the first day of the week. Thus, God entered the Tabernacle on the equivalent of the first day of creation. The Tabernacle was the place where God would meet with humanity, if humanity were faithful. Thus, this is really the second week, the week of man. Aaron is the New Adam, and begins his week of guarding the new Garden, the task that Adam had been given and had failed to accomplish. The last day of Aaron's guarding week was the sabbath. Having completed his week, Aaron now, on what is specifically called the eighth day, begins a third week as God's priest in the Tabernacle; but on that day his sons fall into sin and once again humanity destroys her privilege.

Numbers 7 tells us that on this same first day of the lunar year, the princes of the tribes of Israel began offering gifts to their newly enthroned King.

Numbers 8 describes the consecration of the Levites to assist the priests. The events in Numbers 1-9 are not given in chronological order, so we cannot be sure when this consecration took place. It makes sense that it took place after the consecration of Aaron as priest and before the first Passover conducted in connection with the Tabernacle (Numbers 9). Apparently the Levites had already been exchanged for the firstborn of Israel, an event that almost certainly would have preceded the consecration of the Levites by sacrifice (Numbers 3). The travelling duties of the Levites, delineated in Numbers 4, were probably ordered in the second month, along with the mustering of the Israelite host for travel.

*1st Month (March-April 2514) (assume 30 days) [See Calendar Charts in Appendix.]*

Day 1: The Tabernacle is erected and God moves into it (Exodus 40:17; Numbers 7:1). Moses is driven from the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:35) and is not able to reenter it until the sacrificial system has been set up. Aaron and his sons are anointed and invested, and begin the sacrifices of consecration (Leviticus 8). The princes of the

tribes begin to offer gifts of fealty to Yahweh, beginning with Judah (Numbers 7:1, 12).

Day 2: Issachar's offerings (Numbers 7:18).

Day 3: Zebulun's offerings (Numbers 7:24).

Day 4: Reuben's offerings (Numbers 7:30).

Day 5: Simeon's offerings (Numbers 7:36).

Day 6: Gad's offerings (Numbers 7:42).

Day 7: Ephraim's offerings (Numbers 7:48).

Day 8: Manasseh's offerings (Numbers 7:54). Aaron offers sacrifices that cleanse the way for Moses and him to enter the Tabernacle. God lights the altar with His own fire (Leviticus 9). Nadab and Abihu bring their own fire before God's face and are consumed (Leviticus 10).

Day 9: Benjamin's offerings (Numbers 7:60).

Day 10: Dan's offerings (Numbers 7:66). Passover lambs are set aside (Exodus 12:4).

Day 11: Asher's offerings (Numbers 7:72).

Day 12: Naphtali's offerings (Numbers 7:78).

Day 13: Perhaps on this day the Levites were consecrated to assist the priests (Numbers 8:5-26).

Day 14: Passover observed, and rules given for a second Passover in the second month (Numbers 9:5-6).

Day 21: Last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

*2d Month (April-May 2514)* (assume 29 days) [See Calendar Charts in Appendix.]

Day 1: Numbering and mustering of the Israelite host (Numbers 1:1). Probably also the numbering of the Levites and assignation of their travelling duties (Numbers 4). With the host formed, the unclean must depart the official boundaries of the camp (Numbers 5:1-4).

Day 14: Second Passover.

Day 20: God's cloud moves from the Tabernacle, signalling to break camp (Numbers 10:11).

Day 22: On the 3d day, the people complain and are punished at Taberah (Numbers 10:33; 11:1-3).

Day 23: The people complain about manna. This is probably the following day. Moses complains about bearing the burden all alone. God gives him 70 helpers. God gives the people quail for a whole month (Numbers 11:4-35).

*3d Month (May-June 2514)* (assume 30 days)

Day 24: Departure from Kibroth-hattaavah (Numbers 11:20).

Day 26: Probably the day they set up camp at Hazeroth (Numbers 11:35).

Day 27: Aaron and Miriam grumble; Miriam is struck with "decay" ("leprosy") for a week (Numbers 12).

*4th Month (June-July 2514)* (assume 29 days)

Day 5: Miriam is cleansed; Israel breaks camp (Numbers 12:16).

Day 7: Probably the day they set up camp in the Wilderness of Paran (Numbers 12:16).

Day 8: The spies depart for 40 days (Numbers 13:1-25).

*5th Month (July-August 2514)* (assume 30 days)

Day 17: The spies return; Israel rejects their message. God tells them that their sojourn in the wilderness will be extended to 40 years.

A series of events and rebellions follow, which seem to happen one after another during the 5th and 6th months:

- The people fight Canaanites and lose (Numbers 14:40-45).
- God gives laws for libations of wine, a promise that someday they will enter the land and be able to offer wine (Numbers 15).
- The rebellion of Korah (Numbers 16).
- The destruction of Korah the following day (Numbers 16:16).
- The plague on Israel the next day (Numbers 16:41-50).
- The staffs of leaders placed before God, perhaps on the same day, perhaps a day later (Numbers 17:1-7).
- Aaron's staff blossoms the next day (Numbers 17:8-11).
- Levites are given additional responsibilities to protect Israel from the threat of God's presence, and are given the tithe as reward (Leviticus 17:12-18:32).
- God gives laws for cleansing after contact with the dead, introducing the 38 years of dying in the wilderness (Numbers 19).

My guess is that all this happened by the end of the sixth month. The book of Numbers then skips to the end of the wanderings. Numbers 20 takes place in the 40th lunar year after the Exodus (the solar years 2553-54).

### The Years 2553 and 2554.

No events are recorded for the first six months (months 7-12) of 2553. Numbers 20 says that Israel arrived at Kedesh in the 1st month, and that Miriam died at that time.

Over the next few months, we find Israel rebelling and demanding water (Numbers 20:2-13), and we find Israel attempting to pass through Edom and being rebuffed (Numbers 20:14-21).

Then Aaron died. Numbers 33:38 says that he died on the 1st day of the 5th month. Numbers 20:29 says that the people mourned him for 30 days, which takes us to the beginning of the 6th month. The death of the high priest released Israel from her "city of refuge" situation in the wilderness, and now the conquest of the land can begin anew (Numbers 21).

Numerous battles and other events take place over the next several months (month 6, 2553; months 7-10, 2554). This brings us to the 1st day of the 11th month, which is the day Moses preached his sermons to Israel recorded in Deuteronomy 1-4, 5-26, 27-28, 29-30, 31, 32 (Deuteronomy 1:3). The very same day, God showed Moses the land he would not be allowed to enter (Deuteronomy 32:48). Then, apparently on that same day, Moses died (Deuteronomy 32:50; 34:1-7).

Israel mourned for Moses 30 days (Deuteronomy 34:8), which carries us into the 12th month. It makes sense to me that Joshua sent the two spies into Jericho during this month.

We come now to the 1st lunar month, still in the year 2554. Joshua 4:19 says that Israel crossed the Jordan on the 10th day. They had camped across the Jordan for three days previously (Joshua 3:1-2). Now, in Joshua 1:11 Joshua is seen telling the people that in 3 days they will cross the Jordan. Thus, Joshua 1 takes place at the Jordan (Joshua 3:1). Accordingly, Joshua 2 must precede both Joshua 1 and Joshua 3. In Joshua 2 we find that the spies hid for 3 days after leaving Rahab, and then reported to Joshua at Shittim. Then Israel moved from Shittim to the Jordan, and remained there for 3 days before crossing the river. All of these days serve to push the actual spying back into the 12th month.

Some have suggested that the seven days of marching around Jericho (Josh 6:3-4) correspond with the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus, the destruction of Jericho would be a form of purging the leaven. I find this a bit hard, because the Feast of First Fruits came during the week of Unleavened Bread, and also because Joshua 5:13 seems to imply that they were sojourning near Jericho when the angel of Yahweh appeared to Joshua and gave him orders regarding the conquest of Jericho. My own guess is that the week of conquest followed the week of Unleavened Bread.

The fall of Jericho almost certainly must have occurred on a sabbath, the day of God's presence and judgment. Thus, the preceding week of trumpets is a week of warning and unravelling of the Old Creation. The preceding week, of unleavened bread, would be a week of New Creation.

*1st Month (March-April 2554)* [See Calendar Charts in Appendix.]

Day 1: New Moon. We shall make this a Sunday, the first day of the week as well as of the month and lunar year.

Day 2: Spies leave Rahab and hide for 3 days.

Day 5: Spies report to Joshua; Israel breaks camp at Shittim.

Day 7: Israel arrives at Jordan; waits 3 days. (Sabbath).

Day 10: Israel crosses Jordan (Joshua 4:19); Passover lambs set aside.

Day 11: Israel circumcised (Joshua 5:2-9).

Day 14: Passover (Joshua 5:10). (Sabbath.)

Day 15: Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; Israel eats of the land (Joshua 5:11). For the first time, Israel can offer the first-fruits at the Feast of First-Fruits.

Day 16: Manna ceases (Joshua 5:12).

Day 21: Last day of Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Sabbath.)

Day 22: First day of march around Jericho (Joshua 6:3).

Day 28: Last day of march around Jericho; fall of Jericho (Joshua 6:4). (Sabbath.)

## The Conquest

With the completion of the initial conquest, the land was divided up. In Joshua 14:7-10, Caleb says that he was 40 years old when he was sent to spy out the land. This was in the 4th month, 2514. He now states that it is 45 years later, and he is 85 years old. Therefore, it is now the year 2559. We assume, then, that the War of Conquest occupied 6 years, beginning in 2554 and ending in 2559.

It seems reasonable to say, then, that the following year was the first year of occupation. Joshua 21:44 says that “Yahweh gave them rest on every side,” perhaps an allusion to the sabbath, and to the sabbath year, for this would be the first sabbath of the land after their entrance into it. This was the year 2560.

### Theological Observations on Genesis 5 & 11

The numbers found in Genesis 5 & 11 display characteristics that indicate a complex and meticulous symbolic schematization operating at several levels. Because these numbers are so potent symbolically, unbelieving scholars have universally (as far as I know) treated them as artificial. Believers take them literally, but believers must also reflect on their meaning. Our purpose in this chapter is to uncover what we can of their significance.

First of all, we notice that there are 10 generations from Adam to Noah, and also 10 generations from Noah to Abram:

Adam	Noah
Seth	Shem
Enosh	Arpachshad
Kenan	Shelah
Mahalalel	Eber
Jared	Peleg
Enoch	Reu
Methuselah	Serug
Lamech	Nahor
Noah	Terah
Japheth	Nahor
Shem	Abram
Ham	Haran

This numerical scheme seems contrived, and that's because it is indeed contrived. The question is: Who contrived it? Was it contrived by a “priestly redactor” late in the history of the kingdom of Judah, or even after the exile, who was simply trying to show that God superintends history; or was it contrived by God Himself, the Playwrite of all history? For believers, the answer must be the latter.

This, however, is only the beginning. To help us consider these passages, we shall summarize the data in tabulations that follow. As regards Genesis 5, we are told how old each patriarch was at the time of the birth of his significant son, how many more years he lived, and then we are given the total of the years of his life. Moreover, in most cases, these numbers are given in a strangely elaborate form, which contrasts with the way numbers are ordinarily written in the Bible. Usually, large numbers in Hebrew are given in this form:

“And the years of the life of Levi were 7 & 30 & 100 years” (Exodus 6:16).

“And Moses was a son of 100 & 20 years when he died” (Deuteronomy 34:7).

“A son of 16 years he was when he became king, and 50 & 2 years he reigned in Jerusalem” (2 Kings 15:2).

In these instances, drawn at random, we see that the word “years” appears only once, after all the numbers. In most instances in Genesis 5 & 11, however, the numbers are partially separated by the repeated term “years”; to wit:

“And Methuselah lived 7 & 80 years and 100 years and begat Lamech. And Methuselah lived after begetting Lamech 2 & 80 years and 700 years, and he begat sons and daughters. And all of the days of Methuselah were 9 & 60 years and 900 years, and he died” (Genesis 5:25-27).

This literary structure has the effect of creating several significant chains of numbers, which now follow:

	<b>LIFESPANS</b>	<b>NUMBERS AS WRITTEN IN HEBREW</b>		
Adam	130+800=930	130	+ 800	= 900 & 30
Seth	105+807=912	5 & 100	+ 7 & 800	= 12 & 900
Enosh	90+815=905	90	+ 15 & 800	= 5 & 900
Kenan	70+840=910	70	+ 40 & 800	= 10 & 900
Mahalalel	65+830=895	5 & 60	+ 30 & 800	= 95 & 800
Jared	162+800=962	62 & 100	+ 800	= 62 & 900
Enoch	65+300=365	65	+ 300	= 65 & 300
Methuselah	187+782=969	87 & 100	+ 82 & 700	= 69 & 900
Lamech	182+595=777	82 & 100	+ 95 & 500	= 77 & 700

Noah's years are not given in this form. Genesis 5:32 says that “Noah was a son of 500 years and he begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.” (According to Genesis 10:21, Japheth was the eldest, and according to Genesis 9:24, Ham was the youngest.) “Noah was a son of 600 years when the flood put waters on the earth” (Genesis 7:6).

Also, Genesis 9:28-29 says that Noah lived 350 years after the Flood, for a total of 950 years, using this form:

Noah After Flood: 300 years & 50 years  
Total: 900 years & 50 years

Let us notice a couple of significant features of this data so far. First, the text says that Adam was 130 years old when he begat Seth; it does not say that he was 30 years & 100 years old. This contrasts with every other item in the list. Why this is so is unclear to me.

Second, in the cases of Adam and Noah, the total life span is given in reversed literary order from the rest; in their cases alone the number of centuries is given first, and then the remainder of years. This seems to link the two men as progenitors of humanity.

Let us now consider the post-flood patriarchs in Genesis 11. Here the information is simpler, in that we are not given the total number of years each patriarch lived; we have to figure that out for ourselves from the data provide (age at birth of significant son+remaining years):

	LIFESPANS	NUMBERS AS WRITTEN IN HEBREW
Shem	100+500(=600)	100 + 500
Arpachshad	35+403(=438)	35 + 3 & 400
Shelah	30+403(=433)	30 + 3 & 400
Eber	34+430(=464)	34 + 30 & 400
Peleg	30+209(=239)	30 + 9 & 200
Reu	32+207(=239)	32 + 7 & 200
Serug	30+200(=230)	30 + 200
Nahor	29+119(=148)	29 + 19 & 100
Terah	70(+135)=205	70 (+135) = 5 & 200

In all these cases, the century years follow the extra years.

Now, this peculiar way of stating years is also used sometimes in the rest of Genesis for the patriarchs, and for a couple of other significant periods in the Bible; to wit:

Abram enters land (Genesis 12:4)	5 years & 70 years
Abram receives Ishmael (Genesis 16:16)	80 years & 6 years
Covenant of circumcision (Genesis 17:1)	90 years & 9 years
(contrast 17:24)	99 years
Lifespan of Sarah (Genesis 23:1)	100 & 20 & 7
Lifespan of Abraham (Genesis 25:7)	100 & 70 & 5
Lifespan of Ishmael (Genesis 25:17)	100 & 30 & 7
Lifespan of Isaac (Genesis 35:28)	100 & 80
Lifespan of Jacob (Genesis 47:28)	7 & 40 & 100
Lifespan of Joseph (Genesis 50:22, 26)	110; 110 (note contrast)
Sojourn in Egypt (Exodus 12:40, 41)	30 & 400; 30 & 400
Lifespan of Aaron (Numbers 33:9)	123 (note contrast)
Lifespan of Moses (Deuteronomy 34:7)	120 (note contrast)
Lifespan of Joshua (Joshua 24:29)	110 (note contrast)
Exodus to Temple (1 Kings 6:1)	80 & 400

What accounts for this oddity of expression? One thing we can notice is that outside of the patriarchs, the only other two occurrences of this form are found in connection with the exodus from Egypt and the building of the Temple; or perhaps more pointedly the building the Tabernacle (representing Israel and the world) and the Temple (representing the same). The last patriarch whose years are recounted in this way is Israel himself.

The years of the patriarchs are recounted in this elaborate manner from Adam to Noah and Shem, from Shem to Eber, and from Eber (Hebrew) to Jacob (Israel). The period from Abraham the Hebrew to the Exodus is recounted this way, as is the

period from the Exodus to the Temple. Thus, from creation to the Temple this extended form is used.

The only person whose lifespan is recounted this way who does not seem to belong in the list is Ishmael, but when we consider that Ishmael represents the entire converted Gentile world, sons of Egyptian women who recognize Abraham as father, we can see a possibly reason why his lifespan is signified by this lengthened form. (On Ishmael's conversion, see Genesis 21:20, "God was with the lad," as explained by the same phrase two verses later in 21:22.)

This lengthened formula of dating is used in the patriarchs for the birth of the significant son (Genesis 5 & 11), and for certain events in the life of Abraham: his entrance into the land (the microcosmic world), the *birth* of Ishmael (a new first-Adam, the portion of humanity that is saved and led), and the *promise* of Isaac (a promised last-Adam, the portion of humanity, ultimately Christ, that saves and leads).

Finally, in the cases of Adam and Noah, the centuries come first and then the remaining years. This is also true of Abraham and his immediate family (Sarah, Ishmael, Isaac). Thus, I suggest Abraham is presented as a Third Adam, a new progenitor.

### Fascinating Numbers

The style of writing we have been examining has the effect of isolating the hundreds from the rest of a number. Thus, the number 782 becomes 700 + 82. This causes us to reflect on these numbers in a more precise way than we might: We don't simply ask what the number 782 might signify, or what its factors might be; but we also ask what the numbers 700 and 82 might mean and what their factors might be. When we do this, something odd turns up: Virtually every number in these lists ends in either 0, 2, 5, 7, or 9. Moreover, it can easily be shown that every number is composed of 10s, 5s, and 7s. The texts of Genesis 5 & 11 provide us with 38 numbers (not counting hundreds). If we were to take 18 people out of the population at random, and take the year their first child was born, the number of additional years they lived, and their total lifespan, what are the odds that all of these numbers would be composed of 10s, 5s, and 7s?

You can look back at the list and see these numbers. First comes Adam, with a 30. Then comes Seth, with a 5 (105) and a 7 (807) for a total of 12 (912). The numbers in Seth's life provide a clue for understanding certain other numbers, as we shall see. Here are the rest:

Enosh	90, 15, 5
Kenan	70, 40, 10
Mahalalel	5, 30, 95
Jared	62 (50+[5+7])
Enoch	65
Methuselah	87, 82 (70+[5+7]), 69 (50+[5+7]+7)
Lamech	82 (70+[5+7]), 95, 77

Notice that the more complex numbers are still composed of fives and sevens. 62 is built from 50, and 82 is built from 70.

$5+7=12$ , and 12 is certainly a significant number. It appears first with Seth ( $105+807=912$ ). Jared's 62 is  $50+12$ ; and Methuselah's 82 is  $70+12$ . Methuselah's 69 is  $50+12+7$ .

Certain other numbers also are composed of 5 & 7. For instance, Mahalalel lived "5 years and 60 years" and begat Jared, while Enoch lived "65 years" and begat Methuselah. Mahalalel comes first, and thus explains 65 to us. 65 is  $(5 \times 12)+5$ ; or  $(5 \times [5+7])+5$ .

The number 95, which occurs twice in the series, might be seen simply as a multiple of 5, or as  $(7 \times 10)+(5 \times 5)$ .

When we turn to Genesis 11, we have fewer numbers, but they are equally curious. Here again are the numbers as given in the text, this time including the hundreds:

Shem	100, 500
Arpachshad	35, 3 + 400
Shelah	30, 3 + 400
Eber	34, 30 + 400
Peleg	30, 9 + 200
Reu	32, 7 + 200
Serug	30, 200
Nahor	29, 19 + 100
Terah	70, 5 + 200

At first glance, we are struck by the predominance of 3, itself a very significant number in the Bible: the number of the preliminary crisis in the middle of the week (3d day, 3d week, 3d hour, 3d year, etc.). At second glance, however, most of these 3s are visibly and inescapably linked with 4s, to make symbolic 7s. Notice these numbers from the list:

3 + 400 (twice)  
30 + 400  
34

We should not fail to see the obvious allusion to 7 here.

Moreover, Arpachshad's 35 years are  $5 \times 7$ . With Terah we have a 70 and a 5. Peleg's 9 seems an anomaly, but the next Patriarch, Reu, has the same total number of years, but with a 2 and a 7 instead. Reu's 32 seems to be  $20+5+7$ . Nines show up again with Nahor, but here again these nine only conceal 5s and 7s:

$29 = 10+5+7+7$   
 $19 = 5+7+7$

Now, it is amazing enough that out of such a small population sampling, we should find virtually all the numbers ending in 0, 2, 5, 7, & 9. It is even more amazing to find that all the 2s and 9s reduce to 7s in such a way that the remainder of the number is also significant in terms of this system of 5s and 7s (see Note below). It is even more amazing to find that almost all of the few 3s and 4s that do crop up are

visibly paired, forming 7s of some sort.

But what is yet more amazing is that this system continues on in Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch, with the addition of the number 3 (which we have seen creeping into Genesis 11). Consider these lifespans:

Sarah	100 & 20 & 7
Abraham	100 & 70 & 5
Ishmael	100 & 30 & 7
Isaac	100 & 80
Jacob	7 & 40 & 100
Joseph	110
Sojourn	430 years
Levi	137 (Exodus 6)
Kohath	133 (Exodus 6)
Amram	137 (Exodus 6)
Aaron	123
Moses	120
Joshua	110

[NOTE: Of course, any number above 2 and 9 themselves can be reduced to 5s and 7s and 10s. For instance, 99 is 7+7+5+80. What is significant about the 2s and 9s in the Genesis 5 chronology is that once we've subtracted the 7s and 5s necessary to get a round number (divisible by 10), that number itself is either 50 or 70. The only such numbers are 62, 69, and 82.]

The occurrence of these numbers 5, 7, 10, and 12 invites us to consider the genealogies themselves.

The fifth from Noah is Eber, who is directly tied to the witness of Shem in Genesis 10:21, and whose name is heard in the term "Hebrew." The Hebrews are the focussed continuance of the religious calling of Shem (Genesis 9:26-27).

The fifth from Adam is Mahalalel. What is significant about him is that he died in the year A.M.1290, which is 366 years before the Flood. Considering that Enoch lived 365 years, we are entitled to see the number 366 as significant. Mahalalel's death began a countdown, a Great Year of grace, which was extended by one further year, before the Flood. (Also, it may be noted that 1290 is 3x430, and recurs with exodus-notations in Daniel 12:11.)

The seventh from Adam is Enoch, who walked with God after 365 years and was taken by God without passing through earthly death. The fourteenth from Adam is Eber, whose name is preserved in the word Hebrew. The twenty-first from Adam is Isaac, the miracle son.

The seventh from Noah is Reu. What is significant about him is only indirectly revealed. Let's go back: The seventh from Adam in the line of Cain is the murderous polygamistic poet Lamech—quite a contrast to Enoch. Reu also contrasts with the seventh from Noah in this way: Eber had two sons: Peleg and Joktan. The Joktanites were involved in Babel (Genesis 10:30 + 11:2). Genesis 10:26-29 lists 13 sons of Joktan, who moved east with him and were involved with Babel. By way of contrast, we are only given one son of Peleg by name: Reu. The Hebrew Reu continued the

true line when the Hebrew Joktanites apostatized. Thus there was judgment and separation in the 3rd generation from Eber, the 7th generation from Noah.

The tenth from Adam is Noah; the tenth from Noah is Terah, father of Abram. Since the second chronology starts with Shem, we can also see that Abram is tenth from Shem. The fifteenth from Adam is Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided at the tower of Babel. The twentieth from Adam is Abram.

The twelfth from Adam is Arpachshad, born after the Flood. The twelfth from Noah is Isaac, the miracle son born after the circumcision. (The coming of circumcision in Genesis 17 should be regarded as an historical event analogous to the Flood or to the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost; it created a new world.) The twelfth from Shem is Israel.

Now, if we consider the other names on the list, which have no numerical association with 5, 7, 10, or 12, we find that nothing significant is said about any of them:

Enosh  
 Kenan  
 Jared  
 Lamech, father of Noah (an exception: he uttered a prophecy)  
 Shelah  
 Serug  
 Nahor

### Further Numerical Items of Interest

Umberto Cassuto points out some other numerical factors in Genesis 5.<sup>13</sup> For one thing, he observes that every number in Genesis 5 is a multiple of 5, sometimes with the addition of 7. We have, in essence, made this point already. He also points out that in the totals of the years lived by the patriarchs, there are five 7s, so that we have another occurrence of the number 5:

Seth	912 [(181 x 5) + 7]
Jared	962 [(191 x 5) + 7]
Methuselah	969 [(191 x 5) + 7 + 7]
Lamech	777 [(154 x 5) + 7]

Interestingly, and this is not from Cassuto, if we add up all the total years of these patriarchs, including Noah's 950, we come to 8575 years, which is 5 x 5 x 7 x 7 x 7.

Some of Cassuto's numerical computations are, however, in error. On p. 261 he states that 1643 solar years of 365 days each makes 600,000 days, and if we add two 7s (=14) to this 1643 we come up to 1657, the year the Flood ended. Thus, he says,

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<sup>13</sup>Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part 1: From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, Hebrew University, [1944] 1961.), pp. 258ff.

we see here the sexagesimal number 600,000 augmented by two 7s.

The problem is that  $1643 \times 365 = 599,695$ , and in fact a closer number would be obtained by multiplying 365 by 1644, which is 600,060. In neither case, however, does Cassuto's assertion stand up. Nor can we repair his assertion by adding in extra days for leap years. Over the course of 1643 years we would have 410 extra days, minus the compensatory 365-day non-leap years that come three out of every four century years (in this case, 12).  $410 - 12 = 398$ .  $599,695 + 398 = 600,093$  days.

Again, he argues on p. 262 that if we add up the lives of the pre-Flood patriarchs, and then add Noah's life to the year after the Flood (601 years), we come up with 8226 years. That is correct. Then he says that 8219 years is 3,000,000 days, to which we then add 7 years. Once again, then, we have a sexagesimal number ( $\frac{1}{2}$  of 6,000,000) + 7. In this case also, however, Cassuto's computations do not stand up.  $8219 \times 365 = 2,999,935$  days.

Moreover, Cassuto maintains that the 5 years is 60 months, and thus that a sexagesimal system underlies the use of the number 5 in this passage. This is not correct. There are 62 lunar months in 5 solar years.

Thus, contrary to Cassuto, there does not seem to be a sexagesimal number system underlying or woven through these numbers. Rather, the basic numbers are 5 & 7, which compose the numbers 10 and 12, all basic to Biblical revelation.

### **A Jubiliary Number?**

The Flood ended in the year A.M.1657. According to Cassuto (as best I recall), in a place I cannot find (and which may be in a book I read in seminary and do not possess), this number consists of 33 jubilees of 50 years each, plus 7 more years. Now,  $33+7=40$ , and of course, 40 is a significant number in the Bible. The problem with this scheme is two-fold. First, the Year of Jubilee is not introduced until Mount Sinai, in Leviticus 25. This problem can be overcome if we posit that God was foreshadowing the jubiliary principle in this earlier age.

The major problem is that jubilees come every 49 years, not every 50 years. The 50th year, the Year of Jubilee, is the first year of the new cycle.<sup>14</sup>

The jubiliary principle may, however, still be foreshadowed in the antediluvian history. 33 jubilees of 49 years comes to the year 1617, which is 40 years before the end of the Flood in A.M.1657. At the jubilee in Leviticus 25, the accused sinner could leave the city of refuge (in this case, the ark), and return to his land unmolested by any accuser (in this case, return to the world). The 40 years that ended with the end of the Flood, thus, might be intended to foreshadow Israel's time in the wilderness-refuge that issued into the conquest of Canaan-land.

### **Astral Numbers**

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<sup>14</sup>See James B. Jordan, "The Jubilee & Biblical Chronology," published by Biblical Horizons.

Gordon J. Wenham, in his commentary on *Genesis 1-15*,<sup>15</sup> summarizes some work M. Barnouin has done on the numbers in Genesis 5. I shall simply quote Wenham's summary, and then add to the discussion.

“Barnouin (*Revue Biblique* 77 [1970] 347-65) has made the bravest attempt to confront this issue. He believes that the ages of the antediluvians can be related to various astronomical periods such as the number of days or weeks in the year or the synodic periods of the planets (i.e., the time it takes for a planet to return to the same point in the sky). These astronomical periods were known to the Babylonians, and a sexagesimal arithmetic, he maintains, would have made the calculations quite easy.

“Barnouin notes the obvious point that Enoch lived 365 years, which he supposes represents the perfect span of life.

“Furthermore, if the [ages of the patriarchs when their son was born, Adam to Lamech] and the [remaining years of the patriarchs, Adam to Lamech] are each divided by 60, and the remainders added together, the sum of the remainders is 365! As for the patriarchs' ages at death, these can be related to synodic periods: e.g., Lamech's 777 = synodic period of Jupiter + synodic period of Saturn; Jared's 962 = synodic period of Venus + synodic period of Saturn. He shows how other patriarchal ages can be generated similarly.”

Now, I do not read French, so this is as far as I can go with summarizing Barnouin's 1970 article. In *Vetus Testamentum* 27 (1977), Barnouin published a second article on the census figures in the book of Numbers, which is available in translation.<sup>16</sup> In this technical study, Barnouin shows that the census figures in the book of Numbers relate, over and over again, to various astral cycles, establishing that Israel is being portrayed as a heavenly host. In this course of his discussion, he makes repeated reference to Genesis 5.

I am not well enough informed to try and extend Barnouin's thesis, but he certainly strikes me as being on to something. Kenan's total of 910 years is ten times 91, and 91 is  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a solar year of 365 days.

Enoch's 365 years corresponds to a solar year. I'm not sure Barnouin is right that this is the ideal lifespan. I think that Genesis 5 implies that the ideal lifespan is a millennium, which none of these attained.

Jared's 962 years corresponds to the synodic period of Venus (584 days) plus the synodic period of Saturn (378 days).

Methuselah's 969 years are added to Kenan's 910 years to come up with a total of 1879. This number is the total of four synodic periods:

Mercury	116 days
Venus	584 days
Mars	780 days
Jupiter	399 days

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<sup>15</sup> (Waco: Word, 1987), pp. 133-4.

<sup>16</sup>In fact, I commissioned this translation, and it is sold through Biblical Horizons.

Finally, Lamech's 777 years, in addition to being a triple repetition of the number seven, corresponds to Jupiter (399) plus Saturn (378).

What significance does all this have? Well, in Genesis 15:5, God told Abram to “tell” the stars, and that “so shall your seed be.” If we are right in positing that the patriarchal lives carried astral symbolic weight, then Abram's observation of the stars would, at least in part, remind him of the great patriarchs of old. Such would his seed be, and indeed, the census figures of the book of Numbers bear this out. Abram's seed were numbered in the same astral fashion, planets moving in the firmament of heaven.

The firmament is the chamber between earth and heaven. It is the original Holy Place between the Altar Mountain on earth and the Holy of Holies of Heaven. It is, thus, the place where man, as priest/ruler of creation under God, is positioned. Thus, God's people are restored “to the heavenlies,” and are pictured as moving about in the firmament.

An additional dimension of this revelation may be seen in another aspect of the numbers of Genesis 5. The total number of days from creation to the end of the Flood Year (A.M.1657), using even years of 365 days each, and drawing this hint from Enoch's 365-year lifespan, comes to 604,805 days. This is not completely correct, however, since the Flood ended during the 1657th year.

Years are solar, and months are lunar. The water is said to have dried up from the earth on the first day of the lunar year, which is six months into the solar year. Thus, this is about 177 days ( $\frac{1}{2}$  a lunar year of 354 days) into year 1657. Noah exited the ark on month 2, day 27, or about 234 days into the year.

Now we can come up with a more accurate figure. 1656 years of 365 days is 604,440 days. If we add 402 leapyears we come to 604,842 days. To this we add 177 days to the first day of spring, for 605,019 days; or we can add 234 days to the day Noah left the Ark of Refuge, for 605,076 days.

All of these numbers are approximate. I only wish to call attention to the census figures in Numbers, and how closely they match up. The total of the first census was 603,550 (Numbers 1:46), while the total of the second census was 601,730 (Numbers 26:51). In both cases, the root number is 600,000, with a significant additional number added (Barnouin discusses 3550 and 1730 in the paper mentioned for sale above). At any rate, we can see that just as there is a correspondence between the census figures and the lifespans in years of the ante-diluvian patriarchs, so there is also a rough correspondence between the total census figures and the total period of the first patriarchal age measured in days.

### **Sabbath Themes**

The sabbath is the time of enthronement; it means that one's priestly service has been counted as successful by God, and He now bestows kingship.<sup>17</sup> When God finished His “service” or labor of making the world in six days, He entered into

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<sup>17</sup>See James B. Jordan, *Sabbath-Breaking and the Death Penalty*, available from Biblical Horizons.

enthroned sabbath rest on the seventh. The image of God, humanity, is to move through the same historical programme.

The life of Noah shows the initial fulfillment of God's programme for humanity. At his birth, Noah's father Lamech prophesied: "This one will give us comfort from our work and from the toil of our hands in connection with the ground, which Yahweh has cursed" (Genesis 5:29). This was a prophecy that Noah would complete humanity's first week, and enter into enthroned sabbath rest.

This is exactly what happened. After the Flood, God made a covenant of kingship with Noah, transforming the preceding covenant of priesthood made with Adam. Noah would be enthroned and allowed to pass judgments as a king. The kingly duty of punishing the wicked with the death penalty was entrusted to him. Noah planted a vineyard and drank of the wine, which is everywhere in the Bible a symbol of enthroned kingly rest. (Note the various cupbearers that serve kings in the Bible; the fact that Ahasuerus drinks wine each time he makes a pronouncement in Esther; the fact that Jesus, entering into His priestly work, rejected wine until the Kingdom had come; etc.) When his sons sinned, Noah passed judgment on them. Note the parallel: God planted a garden; Noah planted a vineyard. Adam tried to seize God's prerogatives; Ham tried to seize Noah's. God passed judgment; Noah, now enthroned in sabbath kingship, passes judgment.

Thus, we are prepared to see some analogies between Noah's life and God's actions in Genesis 1, and that is what we find. Genesis 5:32 says that "Noah was 500 years old, and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth." These sons are not listed in order; Japheth was oldest, and Ham youngest (Genesis 8:24; 10:21). What is important about Genesis 5:32 is that Noah's first son was born at the beginning of his 6th century of life, paralleling God's creation of a son on the 6th day.

The Flood came in Noah's 600th year (Genesis 7:6). This was the beginning of his 7th century of life, his sabbath century. After God executed His judgment on sinful humanity, His "last" judgment so to speak, He turned the kingly sabbatical responsibility of passing judgment and restraining evil over to Noah and his true descendants (the Godly; the church). Those who would not identify with the Godly would lose the right to pass judgments, and instead of being kings would be slaves (Genesis 9:25-27). *This has been true ever since, despite appearances.* Even when the Godly do not wield the sword of justice in society, they still rule the world, for they and they alone have the ear of the Father.

It may well be significant that Noah's life as a second Adam begins in the second millennium of humanity. He was born in the year 1056, which is  $8 \times 7$  years into the second millennium. The eighth day signifies a new beginning, for it is the first day of man's week after the completion of God's. Thus, the number 56 may be intended to have a prophetic character to it, and may lie behind Lamech's prophecy.

Additionally, if we look only at the second millennium, as a millennium of man, then the idea presents itself of a man's actually fulfilling Adam's fallen week and coming to sabbath rest. The Flood came in the year 1656, or 656 years into this human millennium. It comes, as we saw, in the seventh or sabbath century. After a jubiliary period of 49 years, the Flood comes in the 7th year (i.e., 56), a year of exclusively Divine judgment. The next year becomes the year of man's enthronement as God's junior partner, the first year of a new week of years.

Part of the importance of this chronological information is that it affirms to us the historical concreteness of the development of the kingdom of God in human history. “Priest” and “king” are not just abstract, timeless theological ideas, though they are usually considered this way, sad to say. They are stages in maturation, both for us personally (we serve God before we rule men), and historically.

To round out this discussion of sabbath themes, let me point out that there is also a sabbath motif in the chronology after the Flood. The seventh from Noah is Reu, whose father Peleg is one of the two sons of Eber. Peleg's brother, Joktan, had thirteen sons who joined with him in the wicked Babel project (Genesis 10:25-30; 11:1). Thus, in the seventh generation from Noah we have the apostasy of the 13 grandsons of Eber through Joktan, which must contrast with the implied faithfulness of the one grandson of Eber through Peleg. Compare the seventh from Adam: the godly Enoch and the ungodly Lamech.

The fall of the false Hebrews came toward the end of the second millennium; Peleg died in 1996, and “in his days the world [not the `soil'] was divided” (Genesis 10:25). Abram starts a new world, and he was born in 2008. This is eight years into the third millennium, the beginning of the second week of years of that millennium. Thus, the birth of Abram, considered chronologically, points to a new beginning.

