



Bible Chronology

for the last
generation
Christians

Anders Gärdeborn

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Bible quotes (in red) are from the *New King James Version, NKJV* (unless otherwise noted).

Particular relevant parts are highlighted *in this way*.

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Introduction

This booklet describes a chronology or calendar found in the Bible. It includes important events in God's salvation plan for mankind and for the earth, and it covers the whole history from creation to eternity. Because the biblical story begins with creation, the years of the biblical events are expressed as *years after creation*, or *anno mundi* (AM) in Latin. By a simple summation of time data, it is possible to calculate when these events occurred or will occur in time.

Of course, there are many sincere Christians who have tried the same task throughout the years, but none have, as far as I know, succeeded in every respect. Why then, am I not naive to think that this attempt is any better? Well, there are some *crucial* differences between the chronology presented here and all (?) previous attempts:

- The chronology is based exclusively on biblical information. No dates from secular history have been used, nor any astronomical events. And it is totally free from personal revelations, mine or others'. All used data are from the Scripture, open to anyone who wants to investigate it.
- The chronology is ***complete***. Not a single piece of time information from creation to eternity is missing. No guesswork is therefore needed.
- The chronology is ***accurate***. Adding time data demonstrates that the duration of the biblical history is exactly 7,000 years, a figure that is to be expected from supplementary biblical exegesis.
- The chronology is ***verified***. It contains several checkpoints confirming that the calculations are properly executed. The mathematical treatment of the Bible's temporal data reveals that all important events occur in jubilee years. In other words, the chronology validates itself.

Perhaps the most important event in the chronology is Jesus' return to earth to establish the Kingdom of God. Like other events, its date can be expressed as years after creation, and it will occur in the year 5999 AM. Of course, such a date does not tell us much as long as we do not convert it into our Gregorian calendar and express it as *years after Christ*, AD. This is possible, and it will be done later, but from start I would like to emphasize that such a conversion cannot be done without utilizing at least one piece of time data from secular history. Therefore, the AD-date of the return is not as reliable as its AM-date.

To reconstruct the Bible chronology is a puzzle where all the pieces must be exactly positioned, or the last one will not fit. I will show in detail the exact fit of every piece, but first we should ask ourselves whether or not we are really supposed to be able to figure out when Jesus comes back.

Most of the research behind the chronology is not done by me, but by Pastor Tim Warner from South Carolina, and it is featured in his book *The Time of the End* (available at Amazon). My task has been to compile and illustrate.

Should we know when Jesus returns?

Most Christians probably agree that Jesus will return "soon". This becomes obvious if we examine the "signs of the times" and the "zeitgeist" in the world around us. Jesus said that we should **look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God *is near*.** (Luk 21:29-31) But how soon is "soon"? Tomorrow? In a few years? During this century? Here, most people reply that we can not and should not know. It is a carefully kept heavenly secret. The common opinion is that when Jesus comes, He does so unexpectedly and surprisingly.

There are two different theological positions that underlie such a view: amillennialism that believes in a quick and unexpected end to this world, and pretribulationism that assumes an imminent and surprising "rapture" of believers. (The concepts will be clarified later.) The opinion that we cannot know largely overlaps a belief in either of these views, and because the views are common, so is the opinion. Therefore, many think it is misguided and perhaps even sinful to try to figure out the time of Jesus' return.

But does the Bible really teach that the return will come without any warning? In Matthew 24, Jesus lists a number of events that must precede His return, and the list culminates with: **Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken... Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds.** (Matt 24:29-30) As long as this cosmic climax has not yet appeared, the return cannot take place. 2 Thess 2:1-4 testifies to the same thing: **Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus... Let no one deceive you... for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.** Of course, it may be argued that “the falling away” has already taken place, but I find it difficult to think of an already occurred event that may be linked to “the son of perdition” who “sits as God in the temple of God”.

The most popular Bible passage in defense of an immediate and surprising return is probably Matt 24:36 (NIV): **About that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.** However, the translation may be questioned. In the original text, Jesus uses verb tense perfect, and in addition, the Greek word for *know* may also mean *discover*. Therefore, an alternative translation becomes: **About that day or hour no one has discovered...** Jesus never says that no one will ever discover the day in the future. No, He is on the same wavelength as the Old Testament prophet Daniel who received the explicit message to **seal the book until the time of the end** when **knowledge shall increase** (Dan 12:4).

We must not forget that it is almost 2,000 years since Jesus said that no one knows. When interpreting what He means, it is important to take the recipients and *their* situation into consideration. Not all of Jesus' statements apply to all times, all people, and all situations. When He sent out the twelve apostles, He instructed them to **not go into the way of the Gentiles** (Matt 10:5), but at the Great Commission the same disciples received a completely different marching order: **Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.** (Matt 28:19) God's salvation plan goes through separate phases, and hence the target group for the apostolic mission has also changed over time. Therefore, the words of Jesus in Matt 24:36 do not need to apply to all times, and this regardless of which translation (“no one knows” or “no one has discovered”) is correct. When Peter specifically asks **do You speak this parable [about the return] only to us, or to all people?** (Luk 12:41), Jesus answer reveals that the parable is mostly intended for future overseers. Jesus also tells the apostles that it **is not for you [the apostles] to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority** (Acts 1:7). Of course He is right – it was not for *them* to know. Neither has it been for anyone else in the last 2,000 years, but today this situation is changing.

Matthew's 24th chapter contains eschatological (doctrine of the end times) instructions that Jesus gave His apostles on the Mount of Olives. The teaching is initiated by the apostles' question: **When will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?** (Matt 24:3) Jesus' answer includes a reference to the book of Daniel: **When you see the “abomination of desolation,” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.** (Matt 24:15-16) So Jesus suddenly changes whom He addresses from the listeners (apostles) to the readers (you and me). Therefore, what He says should be more relevant in our day than when He uttered the words. And the reference is to a prophecy that Daniel received during the Babylonian captivity where a question was raised: **How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?** (Dan 12:6). The answer is that the revelation of the time will delay: **The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end... None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.** (Dan 12:9-10) So no one will be able calculate the time of the end except the wise who are alive when the time is approaching. If you as a reader want to belong to this crowd, this booklet is for you.

Jesus' teachings on the Mount of Olives also contain a parable: **If the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.** (Matt 24:43) Note the causation between *knowing* and *watching*. If the homeowner had known the thief's arrival, he would have watched and so avoided disaster. Watching requires knowledge of the time frame, and hence Jesus warns against not finding out when the thief will come. He then reconnects to His own return and gives His listeners a central command: **You also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.** (Matt 24:44) How will they be ready? Analogously with the homeowner, by finding out the time.

But why is there a need to watch if the time is known? Watching means waiting for something one knows will happen but not exactly when. The answer is revealed by a careful study of what Jesus is saying. KJV has a more literal translation of Matt 24:43: **If the goodman of the house had known *in what watch* the thief would come, he would have watched...** A “watch” was a three-hour shift for the Roman guards in Jerusalem and therefore the uncertainty about thief's arrival (and hence about Jesus' arrival) only needs to be three hours. That is probably why Jesus also said He will come at an “hour” when no one expects it.

Paul formulates the message about the thief in a slightly different way: ***Concerning the times and the seasons... you.. know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman... But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief... Therefore, let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.*** (1 Thess 5:1-6) Paul contrasts “they” (people in general) with the “brethren”. The former are surprised but not the latter. “Therefore” the brethren should not sleep but watch and be sober.

Much later, long after Jesus had risen and ascended to heaven, He revealed himself to the apostle John and repeated the analogy with the thief: ***If you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.*** (Rev 3:3) Again He emphasizes that the surprise is conditional: The shock will only hit the unprepared.

Humanity is facing the next phase of God's salvation plan for man and earth. Daniel is instructed to ***shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end*** (Dan 12:4), which should be compared with the corresponding instruction to the apostle John in the very last chapter of the Bible: ***Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.*** (Rev 22:10) Evidently, God provides information on a need-to-know basis. The fact that the Bible chronology gives us a firmer understanding of the time of the return is in itself an indication that we are near. The prophecy of increased knowledge is being fulfilled before our very eyes. It is time to start preparing for the greatest event in world history!

God's Salvation Plan

As a necessary background to the Bible chronology, I will in this chapter give an outline of God's salvation plan for mankind and for the earth.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1) This first verse of the Bible describes the beginning of God's creation act, and then follows a portrayal of how He generates and shapes the physical creation during six consecutive days. On the sixth day man is created: ***God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*** (Gen 1:27) The seventh day follows after the sixth, and it is totally different: ***On the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.*** (Gen 2:2) This pattern of six plus one reappears in several places in Scripture (figure 1). It is a template for the week with its six days of work and one day of rest: ***Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD your God.*** (Ex 20:9-10) It mirrors the agricultural cycle that the Jews were to follow: ***Six years you shall sow your field... but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land.*** (Lev 25:3-4) And it reveals the entire biblical history which consists of six millennia plus a ***Sabbath Millennium*** when the creation will rest. It is this association between the creation week and the biblical history that is the main theme of this booklet.

From the beginning, everything was very good in God's creation and without disease, starvation, disasters and other misery. God made the first couple, Adam and Eve, put them in the Garden of Eden and gave them instructions about what to eat. They were allowed to eat freely from all the trees but with one exception: ***Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*** (Gen 2:17) So not even death existed from the beginning. However, in history's most tragic event, the Fall, Adam and Eve chose to disobey their Creator (which is called sin), ate of the forbidden fruit and consequently death entered into creation. The rest is history.

Figure 1. The pattern of six units of work and one unit of rest repeats in several places in the Bible.



But God has a salvation plan for the creation in general and mankind in particular, and it is launched immediately after the fall into sin: **I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.** (Gen 3:15) The serpent and his “offspring” are Satan and an errand boy to him who will come at the end of this age, a detestable character called the *Antichrist*. The woman and her “offspring” are Eve with her children (mankind) and especially one man, *Jesus Christ*. He will crush the “head” of the serpent, a symbol for power, but at the same time have His “heel bruised”, a symbol for the crucifixion. From this early initiation of the salvation plan and onward, the entire Bible then deals with how God firmly implements it.

The plan has two main components, both executed by the Son of God, Jesus Christ. The first part is already completed, and it was so during Jesus’ *first coming* to earth when His purpose was to die. Why? Because God never backed away from His requirement that sin leads to death, and therefore Jesus must die *vicariously* in order to bear this inevitable consequence of man’s sin. However, Jesus resurrected and resumed His position with God in heaven. The second main ingredient in the plan of salvation will be implemented at Jesus’ *second coming* to earth, that is, upon His return. The purpose this time is not to die again but to complete the salvation plan, that is to restore the earth to the state it had before the Fall and to establish the Sabbath Millennium. God’s people who have died throughout history will then be resurrected from the dead and given new resurrection bodies, or as the Bible itself puts it: **So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.** (Heb 9:28)

God’s salvation plan stretches from *paradise* to *paradise*. When Scripture uses this word, it either refers to the Garden of Eden or to the Sabbath Millennium. The former is the original state and the latter is the ultimate goal. An objection to this view may be Luk 23:43 where Jesus says to the robber on the cross: **Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.** But the original Greek text lacks punctuation marks and an optional translation is therefore: **Assuredly, I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise.** This kind of expression was common at this time, and it may be compared with our way of saying “Now, listen...”.

Notice that the end result of God’s salvation plan is a *restored physical earth* and *restored physical people*, not a trashed earth and merely spiritual people. Therefore, Peter speaks of **the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.** (Acts 3:21). God did not fail when creating. Even if sin has delayed God’s plan to make the earth a paradise, it has certainly not ruined it. Both man and earth will be *restored* and *not replaced*. When Paul says that **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation** (2 Cor 5:17), he obviously does not mean that the person should be wiped out and *another* person take his place. No, he uses the word *new* to mean *of a new kind* or *unspoiled* and as a contrast to *used*. This is the meaning of “new” that is intended in Isa 65:17: **For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth.** Also Paul conveys an unambiguous destiny of the earth: **The creation itself... will be**

delivered [not demolished] from the bondage of corruption. (Rom. 8:21) But does this mean that we should not be with God? Of course not, but He will come to us and not the other way around: Behold, the tabernacle of God is *with men*, and He will *dwell with them*... The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in [the city]. (Rev 21:3, 22:3)

To accomplish His task, Christ must be born as a human being into this world. Therefore, God chose a man, *Abraham*, who became the progenitor of a nation, *Israel*, that would bring forth the Savior, *Jesus*. God gave Abraham a promise: All the land which you *see* I give to you and your descendants forever. (Gen 13:15) *The Sabbath Millennium will be God's fulfillment of this promise to Abraham*. The land that Abraham is to inherit is called *the Kingdom of God* in the Bible, and sometimes it is also referred to as *the Millennium* because of its duration. Since God showed Abraham the land and he "*saw*" it, it must be an earthly place. This is confirmed a few chapters later when God even pointed out its borders: To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to... the River Euphrates – the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites. (Gen 15:18-21) Admittedly, the land is also called *the Kingdom of Heaven* in Matthew's Gospel, but this is because he addresses Jews who did not want to use the name of God unnecessarily. It was too holy. Matthew means the kingdom *from* heaven, not the kingdom *in* heaven. Thus, fully penned it becomes *the Kingdom of the God of Heaven*. But it is not the same as *Heaven* as the place or perhaps the state of God's existence. (To understand the Bible, it is important to distinguish between three concepts that may all be translated "heaven": *Heaven* where God "*dwells*", *the Kingdom of Heaven* which is the future earthly Kingdom, and *the sky* which is the element where the birds fly.)

Also note that it was not only Abraham's descendants who received the land promise, but also Abraham personally: to you and your descendants... (as above) But today Abraham is dead, and the Bible makes it clear that he never obtained any land: God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it *to him* for a possession, and to his descendants after him. (Acts 7:5) So has God betrayed His promise to Abraham? Of course not! God is not unpredictable and unreliable, but He always fulfills His promises and covenants. The explanation is that God will raise Abraham from the dead so that He can give the Promised Land to the *resurrected* Abraham.

Who, then, are the *descendants* that will inherit the land together with Abraham? Primarily, it is Abraham's ethnic descendants, that is the Jews, but also Gentiles can partake in the promise: In your seed *all the nations* of the earth shall be blessed. (Gen 22:18) Here "seed" is the same Hebrew word (*zera*) as "descendants" in Gen 13:15 above. So the promise is given to *Abraham's seed*, and at the same time *all nations* will be blessed in the same seed. Paul unravels the concepts: To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," *who is Christ*. (Gal 3:16) Thus, the Jews are Abraham's offspring in the plural, and from the Jews comes Christ who is Abraham's Offspring in the singular. Hence, there are three recipients of the promise: 1) Abraham himself; 2) Abraham's offspring = the Jews; 3) Abraham's Offspring = Christ. But "Christ" has also a transferred meaning in the Bible. The *body of Christ* is the Christian congregation (1 Cor 12:27), which means that the promise also applies to all Christians. Therefore Paul continues: If you are Christ's, then you are *Abraham's seed*, and *heirs according to the promise*. (Gal. 3:29) All this means that the Kingdom of God, which Jesus will establish upon His return, is intended for all who "are Christ's", whether it be Abraham himself, Jews or Gentiles.

Jesus will be the King in God's Kingdom and reign over the earth with justice and righteousness. His kingship is based on a promise that God gave another hero of faith in the Old Testament, David, who was king in Israel about 1,000 years before Jesus' first arrival. David gets a promise: When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up *your seed* after you, who will come from your body, and I will *establish his kingdom*... And your house and your kingdom shall be established *forever* before you. (2 Sam 7:12,16) First the promise applies to David's son Solomon who became king directly after his father. But later in the passage the promise extends and applies "forever", and this signifies that it also includes David's descendants many generations thereafter. And here Jesus is found! Therefore, Jesus' kingship in the Kingdom of God is the fulfillment of God's promise to David. As Psalm 2 describes it: I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion... You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and *the ends of the earth for Your possession*. (verses 6-8)

Other Theological Positions

The theological view described in the previous chapter is called premillennialism, and figure 2 compares it with some others.

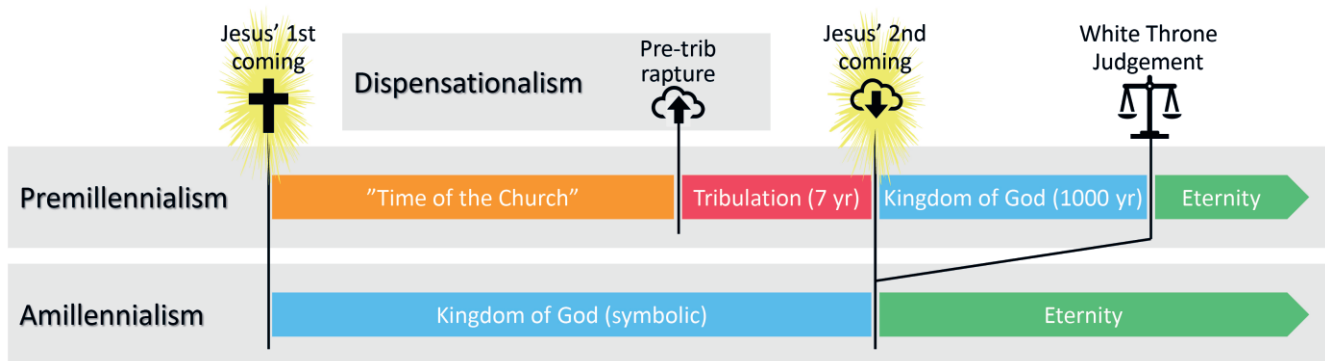


Figure 2. Different theological positions.

- **Amillennialism** means no-millennium. As the name suggests, it does not consider the Kingdom of God as a physical fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, but as a symbolic representation of the time we live in today. It will end with the return of Jesus and the ultimate judgment, and since no one knows the length of this present age, the return will surprise everyone.
- **Premillennialism** views God's promise to Abraham as literal and therefore believes that the present age will be succeeded by the physical Kingdom of God. Jesus comes back before (*pre-*) this millennium to establish it. The period immediately preceding the return will be grueling for God's people, and therefore it is usually called *the Tribulation*. Since it may be identified by several rather evident features, the attentive can know when the return is approaching. The premillennial view is sometimes accommodated with a rapture of believers to the skies in connection with the return. Since such a rapture takes place after (*post-*) the Tribulation, this view is called *posttribulationism*, or short *post-trib*.
- **Dispensationalism** is a form of premillennialism. The difference is that it clearly divides history into a number of ages (dispensations), and that during one of these dispensations, the Tribulation, the Christian congregation will not remain on earth. Christ will come back "in part" *before* (or in some variants *in the middle of*) the Tribulation and through a *rapture* bring Christians "home" to heaven. After the Tribulation, they return together to establish the Kingdom of God. This view of a rapture before the Tribulation is called *pretribulationism*, or brief *pre-trib*. Since the rapture will come unannounced, also dispensationalists believe that Jesus' return will come surprisingly.
- **Postmillennialism** (not found in the figure) argues that Jesus' return will take place after (*post-*) the millennial Kingdom of God. When the Christian Church has succeeded in improving the world appropriately, and this condition has continued for 1,000 years, Jesus will return. Postmillennialism was probably more common in the past when there was widespread development optimism in the world.

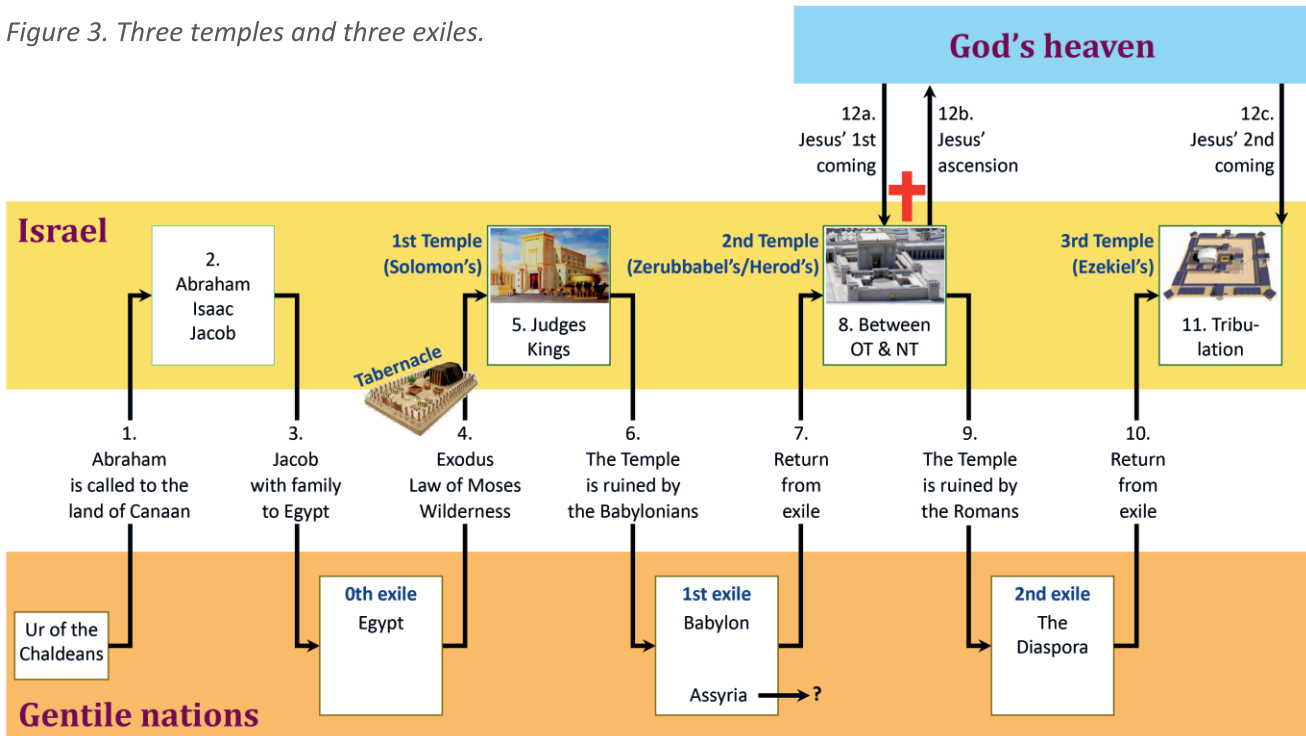
The chronology in this booklet is impossible to reconcile with amillennialism and postmillennialism. This may cause some proponents of these positions to view the chronology as uninteresting. I suggest the opposite: Let the chronology's decisive advantages (from the Introduction: biblical, complete, accurate, verified) trigger a rethinking of the theological position instead.

Perhaps the chronology may be reconciled with dispensationalism, even though a rapture before the Tribulation does not exist as an independent event in the chronology. I will not explicitly argue against such a pre-trib rapture, although I personally find it difficult to squeeze into the chronology's sequence of events.

Temples and Exiles

The chain of events in the chronology is associated with three temples and three exiles in Jewish history, and therefore we will take a closer look at these. Figure 3 illustrates it graphically where the colored fields describe what is happening in heaven, in Israel and in the surrounding Gentile nations. The numbers in the figure are explained below:

Figure 3. Three temples and three exiles.



1. The figure begins with God calling Abraham from his hometown Ur of the Chaldeans and telling him to settle in Canaan (which was the name of the land before it became Israel).
2. In Canaan, Abraham gives birth to a son Isaac, who in turn gives birth to a son Jacob. Later, Jacob changes his name to Israel, and his twelve sons become the forefathers of the tribes of Israel.
3. Jacob/Israel resettles to Egypt with his family (which at this time was the entire Jewish nation) due to famine in his homeland. There, the Israelites remain for more than 200 years, and after some time they become slaves in the country. This may be viewed as a prototype for the exiles in foreign countries, and therefore I have given it number zero in the figure.
4. The Israelites depart from Egypt under dramatic circumstances in what is called the *Exodus*, and seven weeks thereafter they receive the Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai. They are also instructed to build an itinerant sanctuary, a *Tabernacle*, which they will use during the subsequent and prolonged roaming in the wilderness. The goal is to return to Canaan, and after 40 years in the wasteland, the conquest of the land begins.
5. After Canaan is subjugated, it is initially ruled by judges. Later, a monarchy is introduced and the first kings are Saul, David and Solomon. The latter builds *the First Temple* which therefore holds his name.
6. Because of sin, God lets Jerusalem with its temple be devastated by a Babylonian army led by the mighty emperor Nebuchadnezzar. The people are taken captive to Babylon, which is *the First Exile*. (At this time, Israel is divided into two kingdoms, and the northern one is taken captive to Assyria instead.)
7. After 70 years in Babylon, the people may return home. (There are different opinions about what happens to those in Assyria.)
8. On returning home, the people begins to rebuild the sanctuary which therefore becomes *the Second Temple*. It gets its name from Zerubbabel who is project manager for the erection. Shortly after, the Old Testament silences, and when the thread is taken up again in the New Testament, the sanctuary is usually called Herod's Temple. This Roman ruler greatly enhanced and expanded it just before Jesus' first arrival. It is this Second Temple that Jesus visits when He is in Jerusalem.

9. Also the Second Temple is destroyed, this time by the Romans under the leadership of Titus, and it happens about 70 AD. At this event and some others shortly afterwards, the Jews are again dispersed among the Gentile nations. This is *the Second Exile* also called *the Diaspora*, and it is continuing today.
10. God has promised a return also from the Second Exile. It has already begun, but it is not complete until the Jews have resumed the sacrificial service and probably also built *the Third Temple*. This is called Ezekiel's Temple because this prophet describes it in detail in his Old Testament book.
11. The time from the completed return from the exile to Jesus' second coming is *the Tribulation*. It is a seven-year period that plays a central role in the Bible chronology.
12. Thus, Jesus' *First Arrival* occurs during the period of the Second Temple. After His death and resurrection, He returns to heaven at His ascension, and from there He will come back to earth at His *Second Arrival* shortly after the Tribulation.

About 2,000 years elapse between Abraham's birth and Jesus' first arrival, and then another 2,000 years to His second. During the first period, God prepares the Jewish nation to bring forth its Savior. During the second, the message of salvation is carried out also to the Gentile nations, while the Jews live in exile scattered over the world. But in the very end, the Jews will be reassembled to Israel to receive their Messiah at His second coming.

The task of the Bible chronology is to precisely date the central parts of this salvation plan of God, and we now have enough background knowledge to do just that.

Bible Chronology Basics

The Bible chronology presented in this booklet is referred to as *chiliasm* after the Greek word for a thousand which is *chilia*. The key ingredient of chiliasm is that the creation week in the Bible is both historical and prophetic: *Historically*, God created the world in six literal (24-hour) days and rested the seventh. *Prophetically*, this is mirrored in the Bible's documented history which consists of six millennia of work followed by a millennium of rest. This last *Sabbath Millennium* is the *Kingdom of God*, also called the *Kingdom of Heaven* or *the Millennium*. Figure 4 illustrates chiliasm graphically. (An alternative term is *millennialism* after the Latin word for a thousand, which is *mille*. However, often this term is used in a narrower sense than chiliasm and merely denotes the belief that the Kingdom of God will exist for a thousand years.)

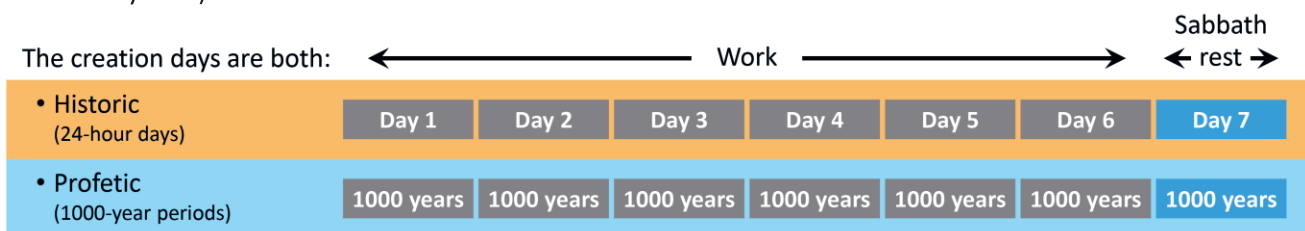


Figure 4. In chiliasm, each historic creation day is mirrored in a prophetic period of 1,000 years.

The parallel between creation days and historical millennia is suggested in Isa 46:10: **I am God... declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done**. The creation week portrays “the beginning” and the rest of Scripture describes “things that are not yet done” up until “the end”. However, chiliasm is not revealed in one single place in Scripture. It belongs to the truths that are *progressively revealed*, which means that God has granted the clues one by one while authoring the Bible, a period that took approximately 1,500 years. The complete picture of chiliasm was not obvious even when the Bible was fully completed. But today, almost 2,000 years later, chiliasm is beginning to be fully comprehensible, and the publication you hold in your hand hopes to contribute to these new insights. But I cannot emphasize enough that this increase in knowledge is not a result of new *revelations* from God. All we need to know is already documented in Scripture. However, the Holy Spirit is *enlightening* devoted Christians to discover new dimensions of the truths that are already there. God lifts a veil from our faces, making it possible to see existing Bible revelations in new perspectives. Therefore, as an author I make no claims whatsoever to any special revelations from God. My assertions may be checked against the Bible by anyone who so wishes.

So let us pursue the step-by-step revelation of chiliasm through the Bible. It begins early, in Gen 2:17 where God warns Adam: **Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for *in the day* that you eat of it you shall surely die.** Despite God's unambiguous rules of conduct, Adam ate of the tree and died accordingly, however not on the same literal day as the ingestion. He became 930 years old (Gen 5:5). How are we to understand this? One suggestion is that Adam immediately died *spiritually*, but this view is challenged by the fact that God's pronounced punishment clearly involved a *physical* death: **For dust you are, and *to dust* you shall return.** (Gen 3:19) It also contradicts Paul's interpretation of the event: **Just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus *death spread to all men*, because all sinned.** (Rom 5:12) Since it is physical death that affects all people, the death that resulted from Adam's sin must also be physical.

In the Psalms, Moses resolves the apparent conflict between Adam's prompt death and his high age: **You turn people back to dust [i.e. Moses speaks of the fall]... *A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by.*** (Ps 90:3-4, NIV) Therefore, from God's perspective there is a prophetic "exchange rate" between a day and a thousand years. Adam died the same "day" he ate, that is, during the same millennium. Also, nearly all of the patriarchs before the flood became almost 1,000 years old, but *no one* exceeded the limit. God simply limited the lifespan of man from being eternal to becoming 1,000 years maximum.

So it is obvious from the Old Testament that there is a link between days and millennia. However, we must go to the New Testament to get the full connection between the seven days of creation and the seven millennia of history. Let us start with the events on the *Mount of Transfiguration*. They are initiated by Jesus alerting His apostles that something great is about to happen: **There are some standing here who shall not taste death till they *see* the Son of Man coming *in His kingdom.*** (Matt 16:28) The fulfillment came after about a week: **After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was *transfigured* before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him... A bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son".** (Matt 17:1-5) When they came down from the mountain, Jesus explained what had happened: **Tell *the vision [horama]* to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.** (Matt 17:9) So the three apostles had received a *vision* or a *preview* of the coming Kingdom of God. They had "seen" it just as Jesus had predicted. The transfiguration that gave Jesus a shining face and white clothing relates to His status in the Kingdom, where He will have the resurrection body given to Him after three days in the tomb.

For the progressive revelation of chiliasm, it is essential that the event happened "after six days", that is, on the seventh day which is the Sabbath day. The vision of the Kingdom of God occurred on a Sabbath day because the realization of the same Kingdom will occur on the Sabbath Millennium. Luke's version of the event expresses the time differently: **About *eight days after* these sayings... He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.** (Luk 9:28) This is not a contradiction, but rather a testimony to the accuracy of the Bible. Matthew is written to Jews who *numbered* the days of the week, which means that after the sixth day comes the seventh which is the Sabbath day. Luke, on the other hand, is written to Gentiles who *counted* the days, which means that eight days elapsed from the prediction of the vision till its fulfillment. Therefore, the prediction must have been made on a Friday, eight days before the fulfillment. By combining the two pieces of information, we can rest assured that the events on the Mount of Transfiguration took place on a Sabbath day, and that is probably the whole purpose of the construction.

In the Old Testament, Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai is a prophetic pattern for the Kingdom of God, and also here it is emphasized that it occurred on the Sabbath day: **The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And *on the seventh day* He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud... So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain.** (Ex 24:16-18)

Peter was one of the three apostles who witnessed Jesus' transformation on the Mount of Transfiguration. He describes the event in his second letter: ***We... were eyewitnesses* of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son..." We heard this voice which came from heaven when *we were with Him on the holy mountain.*** (2 Pet 1:16-18) Peter refers to the event as a confirmation of Old Testament prophecies: **So we have the**

prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the one clothed in light [alternate translation] rises in your hearts. (2 Pet 1:19) “The day dawns” at the same time as “the one clothed in light” (compare Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration) comes to establish His Kingdom. So Peter must have known about the connection between *the Day* and *the Millennial Kingdom*, and this is confirmed two chapters later when he quotes from Psalm 90: Beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (2 Pet 3:8) The appeal “do not forget” reveals that the recipients understood the parallel between days and millennia, but it means more than that. Because Peter used the quote as a way of encouraging his fellow believers (who during persecution began to lose heart because of Christ's delay), it also means that they must have calculated the time until the return in millennium-days. They must have known and used chiliasm!

The last book of the Bible, Revelation, finally confirms the duration of the Kingdom of God. Long after the other apostles have died, John sees the Kingdom in a vision, and writes concerning the martyrs of the last times: They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (Rev 20:4) The figure is repeated six times in the chapter, and repetitions in the Bible usually mean that the conveyed information is important. And it is extremely important that the Kingdom lasts for exactly one thousand years since it completes the progressive revelation of chiliasm.

Also Hebrews reveals chiliasm, starting when its author quotes from the 95th Psalm: Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion in the day of trial in the wilderness... So I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest. (Heb 3:7-11) The referred “rest” is the final goal for the Jews after their forty years in the wilderness following their Exodus from Egypt. It is called rest because the people should settle down and farm the land of Canaan, and this as a contrast to the harsh slavery in Egypt. Sometimes, the land of Canaan is also called the *Promised Land* (though not in the Bible), and the reason God did not let His people enter into its “rest” was that they were rebellious and sinned against Him in the wilderness. Therefore, all men over a certain age (except two) died before reaching the Promised Land.

Then Hebrews makes an analogy between the rest in the Promised Land (after the Jews had been in the wilderness for 40 years) and the coming rest in the Kingdom of God (after believers have been in a spiritual “wilderness” for millennia). Thus, the Promised Land is a prophetic template for the Kingdom of God, and both also prophetically mirrors the seventh day of creation when God was resting. In the following quote, I have clarified which of the three rests is intended: Since a promise remains of entering His rest [Kingdom of God], let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it... For we who have believed do enter that rest [Kingdom]... For He has spoken...: “And God rested [7th creation day] on the seventh day from all His works”; and again...: “They shall not enter My rest [Promised Land].” ... Again He designates a certain day... For if Joshua had given them rest [Kingdom], then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest [Kingdom] for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest [Kingdom] has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His [7th creation day]. (Heb 4:1-10) I have bolded “day” to make the analogy between the seventh day of creation and the Kingdom of God even more obvious. Here it is reinforced by the fact that the Kingdom has its prophetic pattern in the Promised Land which, naturally, also was conquered on the seventh day: It came to pass on the seventh day... that Joshua said to the people: “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city [Jericho]!” (Jos 6:15-16)

The Third Day

The attentive Bible student notices that many of the events in the New Testament take place on “the third day” or “after two days”. Also this is explained by chiliasm. One day still corresponds to a millennium, but now we should not count from creation but from the first coming of Jesus, which means that the third day parallels the Kingdom of God. Some examples follow:

- ***On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee***. (Joh 2:1) At this wedding, Jesus performed His first miracle and turned water into wine. The water was given a new nature, and similarly a resurrected person will receive a new nature in the Kingdom during the third millennium (that is, counted from Jesus' first coming).

- **When the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there *two days*.** (Joh 4:40) This is part of a well-known Bible passage where Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. The relevant part for the Bible chronology is that Jesus stays with the Samaritans, who were counted as Gentiles, for two days. This means that Jesus remains with the Gentiles for the equivalent of 2,000 years, which is consistent with the salvation plan where the gospel has spread to the Gentiles since Jesus' first arrival. The Jews live scattered among the nations in the Diaspora, but *after the two days* they will again become a main focus of God's rescue plan.
- **When he departed, he took out *two denarii*, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you."** (Luk 10:35) This verse is from the well-known parable of the Good Samaritan. This person represents Jesus, and he pays two denarii to suffice *until he returns*. Why such an exact amount? The answer is given in another parable, that of the workers in the vineyard, where the value of one denarius is defined: **He had agreed with the laborers for *a denarius a day*.** (Matt 20:2) Thus, one denarius is one day's pay, and two are two days' pay. And two days corresponds to 2,000 years until the really God Samaritan, Jesus Himself, returns!
- Jesus said to some Pharisees: **Go, tell that fox [Herod], "Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and *the third day* I shall be perfected."** (Luk 13:32) Jesus is "perfected" in His millennial Kingdom, which will come "the third day", i.e. after 2,000 years.
- Jesus said **destroy this temple, and *in three days* I will raise it up**, and John explains that **He was speaking of the temple of His body** (Joh 2:19,21). Obviously, Jesus used the temple as a metaphor for His body that would be killed and resurrected. But this does not in any way rule out the possibility that He was also referring to the literal temple. On the contrary, there is a striking time parallel between the resurrection of Jesus and the rebuilding of the temple. (I will return to why I believe in such a reconstruction.) From the death of Jesus, it elapses two days until the resurrection and *exactly* 2,000 years until the rebuilding of the temple. We shall see later that Jesus died in 3992 AM and the Tribulation (when the temple is likely to be rebuilt) will begin in 5992 AM.

There is even an Old Testament passage that defines the time between Jesus' two comings as two days: **I will be... like a young lion to the house of Judah.** [This is Jesus according to Rev 5:5]... **I will return again to My place... *After two days* He will revive us; *On the third day* He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.** (Hos 5:14 - 6:2) Evidently, this is a description of what will happen at the return of the Lord.

The Scriptures in this chapter are prophetic patterns for the Kingdom of God, and they all describe events that will happen "after two days" or "on the third day". The Bible is packed with chiliastic clues for the observant. Therefore, chiliasm is not something forced upon Scripture, but it is well established in its fundamentals. But there is even more:

Jubilee Years

In Gen 6:3, God gives another clue for chiliasm: **My Spirit shall not strive with man** [Hebrew: Adam, i.e. all mankind] **forever... yet his days shall be *120 years*.** The meaning of this is also progressively revealed in Scripture, and 2 Pet 3:5-7 is an important part: **By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment.** The verses describe two occasions when God judges the world: through water at the flood and through fire at Jesus' return. In both cases it is *by the same word of God*. What word is this? Well, since a judgement means that God no longer has to "strive with man", what we just read in Gen 6 must at least be part of it. Here, God declares that His struggle with humanity will be limited to 120 years, and hence, *both* judgements are delayed by this time. The Flood came 120 years after God's proclamation, and the judgement at Jesus' return will come 120 years after creation. However, in this case it is not *calendar years*, but *jubilee years* counted from creation.

The jubilee years were introduced when God instructed Moses about the agricultural cycle that the people were to follow in the Promised Land: **For *6 years* sow your fields... But in the *7th year* the land is to have a year of sabbath rest... Count off *7 sabbath years*—seven times seven years—so that the seven sabbath years**

amount to a period of **49 years**... Then have the trumpet sounded... The **50th year** shall be a jubilee for you. (Lev 25:3-11, NIV) Again we see the pattern of six units of work plus one unit of rest. The land should be cultivated for 6 years and rest on the 7th, but in this case the rhythm is interrupted at regular intervals. After 7 such seven-year periods (which I will call “weeks of years”), that is after 49 years, a jubilee year should be inserted (figure 5). This Jubilee was very special: You shall consecrate the 50th year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. (Lev 25:10) So the Jubilee was a year of celebration, a time of rejoicing, and it would come in 50 year intervals.

	Harvest	Harvest	Harvest	Harvest	Harvest	Harvest	Sabbath
Year-week 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Year-week 2	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Year-week 3	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Year-week 4	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Year-week 5	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Year-week 6	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Year-week 7	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
							50

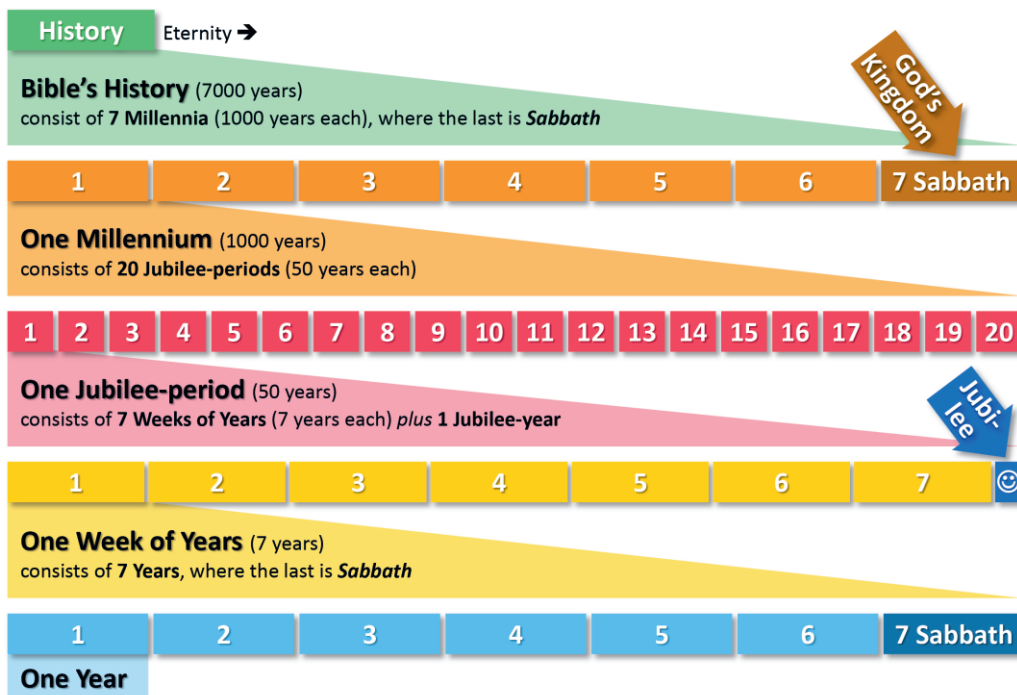
Figure 5. One jubilee-period is 50 years.

Now, let us do the math. The judgment at Jesus' second coming will be delayed 120 jubilee years, and 120 times 50 is - drum roll - 6,000 years. This time elapses between the creation and the Kingdom when God no longer will **strive with man** (as above). This means further support for chiliasm being truly biblical. And soon we will also see that all key biblical events (worth celebrating) occur in jubilee years. This conclusion is reached by simply adding time data in the Bible, and therefore the events become important milestones that verify our calculations.

To wrap up, let us combine the concepts we have encountered so far (compare figure 6):

- The entire biblical **history** between creation and eternity consists of 7 millennial periods where the last one is the Sabbath Millennium (Kingdom of God).
- Each such **millennium** consists of 20 jubilee periods of 50 years each.
- Each such **jubilee period** consists of 7 weeks of years plus one intercalated jubilee year.
- Each such **week of years** consists of seven years where the last one is a Sabbath year.
- Each such **year** is one lap for the earth around the sun.

Alternatively, if we start from the bottom of the figure: Seven years form a week of years. Seven weeks of years plus a jubilee year form a jubilee period. Twenty jubilee periods form a millennium. Seven millennia form the entire history.



Figur 6. History's division into:

- Millennia,
- Jubilee-periods,
- Weeks of Years,
- Years.

Other Calendars

Throughout history, many attempts have been made to trace biblical dates, and many different results have also been presented. Perhaps the most well-known chronology was made in the 17th century by the Irish Archbishop James Ussher, and he concluded that the earth was created in 4004 BC. Also the scientist Isaac Newton considered the Bible reliable in its time records, and he placed the creation in 4000 BC. Martin Luther assigned the year 3961 BC for the same event. The Greek Orthodox Church uses another Bible translation (Septuagint) for its calculations and sets the creation year to 5009 BC.

All these chronologies have one thing in common: They try to match biblical dates with secular ones. They date the biblical events using our Gregorian calendar which expresses the years as before or after Christ (*BC* and *AD* respectively). But such an adjustment to secular history is always challenging because non-biblical dating includes major uncertainties. For example, most secular scholars deny the historicity of the relatively recent Flood of Noah, which gives the early Egyptian dynasties earlier dates than what the biblical account of history allows. This problem is global because the chronologies of many other early civilizations are synchronized with that of Egypt. Also, lists of monarchs are often used for time estimates, but these too are burdened with uncertainties: a given king may have several different names, different kings may have the same name, two regents may have co-ruled during some time, a new monarch may have started a new calendar at his inauguration or the major “egos” may have inflated their time in power. Neither is radiometric dating with carbon-14 a universal solution to the dating problem, because samples are often contaminated by bacteria, water and dust.

The chronology here presented has no such bonds to secular history (unless the incentive is to calculate in what AD-year Jesus returns). It does not even use the Bible's own lists of regents, neither for the Southern Kingdom (Judah), nor for the Northern Kingdom (Israel). This is because these also contain interpretative ambiguities.

The Jews have their own official calendar which, like the Bible chronology, counts the years after creation (AM). However, *this is not the same calendar as the one presented in this booklet*. According to the Jewish timetable, Adam was created in 3760 BC. Their calendar is based on a source from about 160 AD named *Seder Olam*, and this text uses both biblical and secular dates. In his book *The Annals of the World*, the aforementioned James Ussher argues that the authors of *Seder Olam* deliberately manipulated its time data, the purpose being to prevent a prophecy in the book of Daniel to be linked to Jesus: **From the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem, *until Messiah the Prince*, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.** (Dan 9:25) From this prophecy, it is possible to calculate when Christ would come the first time (as will be shown later), and by adjusting the time data, the Jews wanted to prevent the early Christians from using the prophecy as a support for their claims that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Of course, the Bible chronology is not compatible with the so-called scientific ages of man and earth of millions and billions of years, respectively. However, this issue is far too extensive to be contained in this limited booklet, but allow me to assert that the primary reason for believing in a prehistoric earth is that the hypothetical evolution requires it. Without this unproven belief, neither science nor the Bible requires ages higher than a few thousand years.

The View of the First Christians

Long before Jesus and the first Christians entered the scene, the Jews had understood the link between a day and a millennium. After all, it is from the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) that we learn that Adam became 930 years even though he should die **in the day** (Gen 2:17) that he ate of the tree of knowledge. *The Book of Jubilees* (4:30), written in approximately 150 BC, expresses it: “[Adam] lacked seventy years of one thousand years; for *one thousand years are as one day* in the testimony of the heavens and therefore was it written concerning the tree of knowledge: On the day that ye eat thereof ye shall die.” The part I have italicized is a quote from the 90th Psalm, which means that Moses' association between a day and a thousand years was well known long before the New Testament came into being.

However, the Jews do not seem to have known about chiliasm, that is, the broader link between the six plus one creation days and history's six plus one millennia. For such an insight, the New Testament is required, and we have already seen that chiliasm is part of the apostolic teaching. However, there is no evidence that the apostles used chiliasm to try to calculate the time of Jesus' return, at least not in the beginning of their missions. The reverse is true: There is substantial evidence that they believed that Jesus would return during their lifetimes. Luke writes that [Jesus] *spoke another parable... because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately* (19:11), and below are some quotes that reveal the apostles' misconceptions:

- **Paul:** *We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.* (1 Thess 4:15) *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment... at the last trumpet [sounding at the return].* (1 Cor 15:51-52) *[God] has in these last days spoken to us by His Son.* (Heb 1:2) *For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry.* (Heb 10:37)
- **Peter:** *He... was manifest in these last times for you.* (1 Pet 1:20) *The end of all things is at hand.* (1 Pet 4:7) *When His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.* (1 Pet 4:13)
- **John:** *Little children, it is the last hour.* (1 Joh 2:18)
- **Jacob:** *You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand... Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!* (Jas 5:8-9)

The Bible gives a reason for the apostles' errors. After Jesus' resurrection, Peter asked Him what would happen to John, and He replied: *If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?... Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die.* (Joh 21:22-23) So the brethren concluded that Jesus would come back at least before John died. But they were mistaken, and therefore John makes an editorial comment in his gospel: *Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?"* (Joh 21:23) This is written late in John's life when he had come to the realization that the return would delay.

There is another possible reason for the apostles' and the first Christians' misconceptions about an imminent return. In Luke's 21st chapter, Jesus describes several signs that will precede His second coming, and He concludes with: *This generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. (v. 32)* A "generation" was considered to be 40 years (Heb 3:9-10), and since Jesus uttered the words just before His crucifixion in 30 AD, the believers assumed that He would return no later than 70 AD. Admittedly, Jesus had prophesied that *this gospel... will be preached in all the world... and **then** the end will come* (Matt 24:14), but since the apostles interpreted the term "all the world" as the part of the globe they were appointed to evangelize (in the Great Commission, Matt 28:18-20), they believed their mission was already accomplished. This is evident from for example Col 1:23 where Paul speaks of *the gospel... which **was** preached to every creature under heaven*. It was also known from the Book of Daniel that seven years of tribulation would precede Christ's return. Therefore, seven years were subtracted from 70 AD, which means that the Tribulation would start no later than 63 AD. And according Jesus' teachings, certain signs were expected to accompany the Tribulation, so when 63 AD arrived and no signs were visible, the apostles must have realized that they were mistaken and that Jesus would return in a possibly distant future. They had misunderstood Jesus. When He said "this generation will not pass away...", He did not mean the generation He spoke to (the apostles) but the generation He spoke of (the one which would experience the signs before the return).

Some readers may find it unlikely that the apostles could err. But they certainly could. The Bible describes an incident when Paul rebuked Peter: *When Peter had come to Antioch, I [Paul] withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed.* (Gal 2:11) Like all other people, the apostles matured during their lives, and because they were exposed to the teachings of Jesus, they grew in knowledge. However, it is important to realize the difference between what the apostles *believed* and what they *taught*. The divine inspiration of the Bible guarantees that their teachings are 100 percent reliable, even though they personally could be mistaken. So although the apostles believed that Jesus would return in the first century AD, the Scripture does not contain any such doctrine.

It must have been a huge disappointment when Jesus did not arrive as expected. This revised understanding can be clearly recognized by comparing Peter's two letters. In the first, he notes that *the end of all things is*

at hand (1 Pet 4:7) while in the second he exhibits a completely different attitude and urges patience regarding the return: **Do not forget... that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years...** (2 Pet 3:8) Both letters are written around 63 AD, and most likely Peter gained his modified insight between writing them.

It was not only the apostles that taught chiliasm but also the *earliest* Church Fathers. Some of them were disciples of the apostles and others lived a generation or so later, which means they all had personal experiences of what the apostles taught. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that they also shared their beliefs in chiliasm. Below quotes prove this:

- **Barnabas** (Paul's coworker): "The Lord will finish all things in six thousand years, for a day is with Him a thousand years... Therefore, my children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, all things will be finished. And He rested on the seventh day." (Epistle of Barnabas, XV)
- **Papias** (John's disciple) and **Clemens of Rome** (knew Paul): "Papias of Hierapolis, the illustrious, a disciple of the apostle who leaned on the bosom of Christ [i.e. John], and Clemens... the ancient and first expositors [of Scripture], who agreed with each other, who understood the work of the six days as referring to Christ and the whole Church." (Fragments of Papias, IX)
- **Irenaeus** (130-202): "For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded... And God brought to a conclusion upon the sixth day the works that He had made; and God rested upon the seventh day from all His works. This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed: it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the sixth thousandth year." (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, V, XXVIII, 3)
- And a few more short quotes without source references:
Hippolytus (170-235): "Six thousand years must be accomplished, in order that the Sabbath may come... For the Sabbath is the type and emblem for the future kingdom of the saints."
Commodianus (about 240): "We shall be immortal when six thousand years are accomplished."
Lactantius (260-330): "Since all the works of God were completed in six days, the world must continue in its present state through six ages, that is, six thousand years."

It is obvious that chiliasm was widely spread among the first generations of Christians. But this is not the case today. So what has happened?

Chiliasm Today

The first 2,000 years of Bible chronology are based on genealogies found in Genesis, and they reveal at what age the various patriarchs became fathers to their sons. By adding these paternity ages, it is possible to calculate how far history has progressed since Adam. However, there are two different versions of these ages derived from two different "editions" of the Old Testament. One is the Hebrew Bible called *the Masoretic text*, and the other is the Greek translation of the same text called *the Septuagint*. The latter adds several (usually 100) years to many of the patriarchs' ages when they received their sons. The outcome is that biblical history has progressed nearly 1,500 years longer in the Septuagint than in the Hebrew Bible.

We can only speculate why this is so, and here is one possibility: The Greek translation was made by Hebrew scribes *before* the time of Christ, and the commission came from the library of Alexandria in Egypt. From the Hebrew text it is possible to determine the time of Jesus' *first* arrival by using a prophecy in Daniel's book concerning seventy so-called year-weeks. (This prophecy will be investigated in detail later.) Perhaps the Jewish translators wanted to deprive the Gentiles of Alexandria of being able to calculate when the Jewish Savior would arrive, and therefore simply added several centuries to the genealogies?

Whatever the reason, the time data in the Septuagint give incorrect results. And the first centuries' Christians, including the apostles, often used this Greek translation. Most New Testament quotations from the Old Testament originate in it. Therefore, if the believers tried to calculate the time of Jesus' return, they would end up confused. And when nothing happened when Jesus "should have" returned, chiliasm was abandoned. There were also some Christians who used the Hebrew Bible, but for them the return was too far in the future to be of interest. Chiliasm was plainly forgotten!

But there is another and possibly even more essential reason why chiliasm has largely disappeared from Christian thinking. Its core idea is that all the seven millennia are *earthly*. The seventh is the consummation of God's salvation plan for this *earth*. Abraham received a promise of an *earthly* land. But the Greek influence (Platonism and Gnosticism) on Christianity shifted the focus from *earth* to *heaven*. A key ingredient in this philosophy is that man has a soul (or spirit) who is imprisoned in a material body from which he therefore needs to be freed. Christianity imported some of these ideas and began to envisage God's salvation plan as liberation *from* the earth (which is to be destroyed) rather than liberation *of* the earth (which is to be renewed). Of course, chiliasm has no place in such a mindset.

The Bible Chronology

Now, let us tackle the Bible chronology which, as we have seen, is based on chiliasm's 6,000 plus 1,000 years. Figure 7 gives a summary. (As an easily accessible overview, the chronology is also available as Figure 16 on the inside of the back cover.)

- The figure separates history into a number of **periods** (blue boxes), separated by **events** (blue arrows).
- The **durations** of the periods are specified in the boxes. A period may vary from 1 year to 2,000 years, even though all boxes have the same width. (That is, the time scale is not linear.)
- The black line specifies **years after creation**, also termed *anno mundi* abbreviated *AM*. For example, creation occurred 0 AM, Jesus was crucified 3992 AM and the Kingdom of God will begin 6000 AM. The AM-years are the sum of the durations of the events, counted from creation.
- Dark blue arrows show events occurring in **jubilee years**. Since these were to be celebrated every *fiftieth* year, they take place in years ending in -49 AM or -99 AM. (The *first* year starts in 0 AM and ends in 1 AM.) Therefore, the event-arrows point at the end of the period-boxes, and therefore these are terminated with dark blue stripes. As an example, the Exodus from the bondage in Egypt occurred in the 2,500th year, that is, in the year 2499 AM (which is a Jubilee).
- The **blue boxes** are required to prove that the biblical history is exactly 7,000 years. Conversely, the **gray boxes** are not crucial for a complete chronology, but they reinforce its reliability. Occasionally, they may also be used to demonstrate that an event occurs in a jubilee year.
- **Yellow boxes** are the **weeks of Daniel** or **WoD**, and they are of great importance for the second half of the chronology. As usual, jubilee years are indicated with dark blue stripes, and they must be intercalated after each seventh year-week (according to Lev on page 15).
- The separation into **phases** is added only for clarity. The numbering may be found in following chapter headings.

All time records are from the Bible and there are no gaps between the periods. Therefore, no guesses nor any comparisons with secular history are necessary. The next chapters describe the five phases in detail. The first one contains the first 2,000 years of earth history.

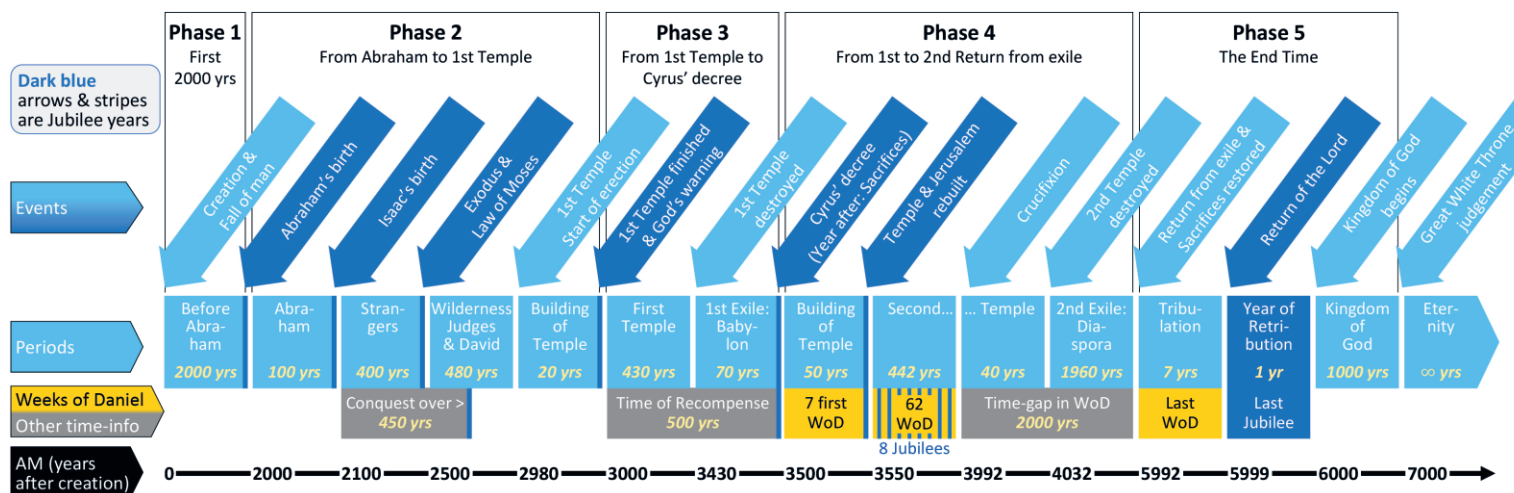


Figure 7. The Bible chronology.

Phase 1. The First 2,000 Years

In the 5th and 11th chapters of Genesis there is a genealogy that extends all the way from the first man, Adam, to the progenitor of the Jewish nation, Abraham. The life spans of the patriarchs are stated but also their ages when they became fathers to their sons. By adding these fatherhood ages we can determine when Abraham was born, and the exercise reveals that it occurred in 2008 AM. However, nothing forces the sons' birthdays to coincide with their fathers' birthdays. For example, when the Bible asserts that Adam was 130 years when he received Seth, it means that he was in his 130th year. In other words, he was between 129 and 130 years. (The Bible uses so-called *inclusive reckoning* meaning that a child is one year old at birth, or in his first year of life.) Therefore, to get the final figure as accurate as possible, half a year per generation must be subtracted on average. The table in figure 8 shows the patriarchs' paternity and life ages, and figure 9 on the next page illustrates it graphically. Both figures take the subtracted half year into account.

The two numbers marked in red in the table are not explicitly given in the Bible, but they may be computed from other *biblical* information (in a way that would make a half-year subtraction incorrect). Notice how God does not leave anything to speculation:

- Noah's age at the birth of Shem: Noah was 600 years old when the Flood came (Gen 7:11) and Arphaxad was born 2 years after the flood when Shem was 100 years old (Gen 11:10). At this time Noah was 602 years, that is 502 years older than Shem.
- Terah's age at the birth of Abraham: Abraham left Haran when his father Terah died (Acts 7:4), 205 years old (Gen 11:32). At this time Abraham was 75 years old (Gen 12:4), a difference of 130 years.

Figure 8. The patriarchs' fatherhood ages and life spans.

Patriarch	Born AM	Age at son's birth	Age at his death	Dead AM
Adam	0.0	130	930	929.5
Seth	129.5	105	912	1041.0
Enosh	234.0	90	905	1138.5
Kenan	323.5	70	910	1233.0
Mahalalel	393.0	65	895	1287.5
Jared	457.5	162	962	1419.0
Enoch	619.0	65	"God took him away"	
Methuselah	683.5	187	969	1652.0
Lamech	870.0	182	777	1646.5
Noah	1051.5	502	950	2001.0
Shem	1553.5	100	600	2153.0
Arphaxad	1653.0	35	438	2090.5
Shelah	1687.5	30	433	2120.0
Eber	1717.0	34	464	2180.5
Peleg	1750.5	30	239	1989.0
Reu	1780.0	32	239	2018.5
Serug	1811.5	30	230	2041.0
Nahor	1841.0	29	148	1988.5
Terah	1869.5	130	205	2074.0
Abraham	1999.5		175	2174.0

Based on this information we may conclude that Abraham was born in 1999.5 AM. This is right in the middle of the 2,000th year after creation and therefore in the 40th Jubilee. To be sure, the exactness of this figure cannot be validated because it is only statistically calculated, but with the assumptions made, it ends up *precisely* where it should for history to be 7,000 years. The precision in God's timing from Abraham and onwards will soon be demonstrated without statistical assumptions, and therefore there are good reasons to suppose that Abraham was born exactly in the 40th Jubilee. Note also that Noah died in 2001 AM which, considering the statistical uncertainties, very well may have coincided with Abraham's birth. A new era in God's salvation plan has replaced the old one.

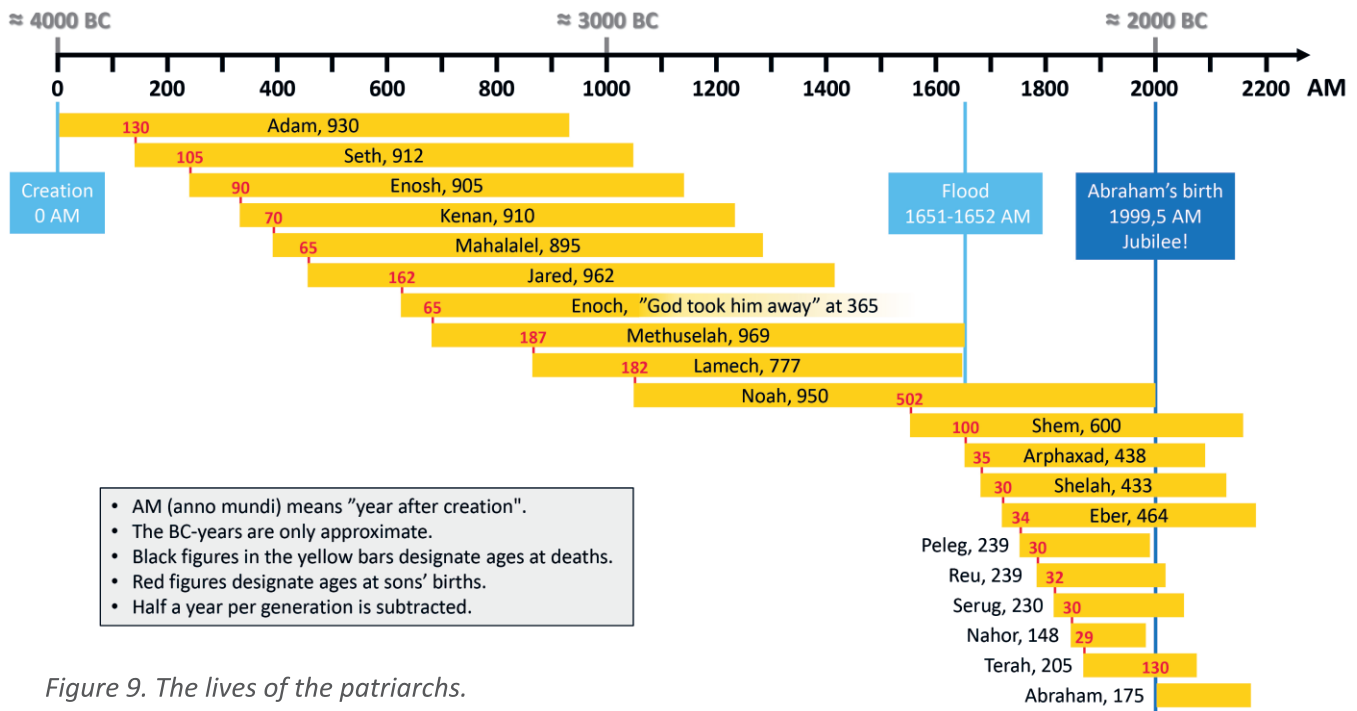


Figure 9. The lives of the patriarchs.

Phase 2. From Abraham to First Temple

The time from Abraham's birth until the inauguration of the First Temple is exactly 1,000 years:

- Abraham was **100 years** old when his son Isaac was born to him. (Gen 21:5)
- After the birth of Isaac, a harsh time followed for the people of Israel: *Your [Abraham's] descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them 400 years.* (Gen 15:13, quoted in Acts 7:6) The period begins with Abraham's first "descendant" (i.e. Isaac), and it ends when the Jews are no longer "strangers" (i.e. at the Exodus from the slavery in Egypt). This means that the patriarchs were considered "strangers" while still living in the land of Canaan, which is also indicated when Isaac blesses his son Jacob: *May God Almighty bless you... that you may inherit the land [Canaan] in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham.* (Gen 28:4)
- Israel's first temple was built by king Solomon, and the time for the start of its erection is defined in 1 Kings 6:1: *It came to pass in the 480th year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt... that [Solomon] began to build the house of the LORD.*
- In addition to the temple, Solomon built a royal palace for himself, and the erection times for the two buildings are carefully defined: *[Solomon] was 7 years in building [the temple]. But Solomon took 13 years to build his own house.* (1 Kings 6:38 - 7:1) The total time for the erections is confirmed in 1 Kings 9:10: *Now it happened at the end of 20 years, when Solomon had built the two houses...*

If we start with Abraham's birth in 1999 AM and add these times, we find that Isaac was born in 2099 AM, that the Exodus took place in 2499 AM and that the temple was completed in 2999 AM. These are the 2,100th, 2,500th and 3,000th years after creation respectively, and *all of them are jubilee years!* But as this was not enough, the 2,500th year is also a very special Jubilee. It is the 50th Jubilee (since a Jubilee period is 50 years and $50 \times 50 = 2,500$), which means it is the *jubilee of Jubilees!* Certainly, this is no coincidence since the year is of extraordinary importance to the Jews. In addition to the Exodus, the crossing of the Red Sea and the giving of the Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai occurred during this year. It may be said that the Israeli nation was born this year. It is the Maestro Himself who is conducting history here!

There is also another important event during this period that occurred in a jubilee year, and to trace it we proceed to Acts 13:17-20 (NIV): *The God of the people of Israel chose our ancestors; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt; with mighty power He led them out of that country; for about 40 years he endured their conduct in the wilderness; and He overthrew seven nations in Canaan, giving their land to His people as their inheritance. All this took about 450 years.* This 450-year period begins when God "chose our

ancestors”, which means the birth of Isaac. The chosen ones in Paul's terminology never include Abraham himself, since he had other sons besides the elect: **Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.** (Rom 9:7, NIV) The period ends when God “overthrew seven nations in Canaan, giving their land to His people” that is, when the conquest was *completed*. This is not the same event as when the conquest started with the crossing of the Jordan River and the defeat of Jericho. Of course, it takes a while to conquer a country which is also demonstrated by Ex 23:29-30: **I will not drive them [the Canaanites] out from before you in one year... Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.**

How long time did it take to conquer Canaan? We already have all the data necessary to resolve this issue. (See figure 10 which has figure 16 in light blue “in the background” to enable orientation.) We have identified two chains of events, both starting with the birth of Isaac. The first reveals that there are 400 years between the birth and the Exodus (Gen 15 above), and the second that it passes 450 years between the birth and the completion of the conquest (Acts 13 above). The 50 year difference has two components: the time in the wilderness and the time for the conquest. The wilderness took 40 years and therefore the conquest must have taken 10 years. It was completed in the 2,550th year AM (which is year 2549 AM), and hence we have another key event that happened in a jubilee year, this time the 51st.

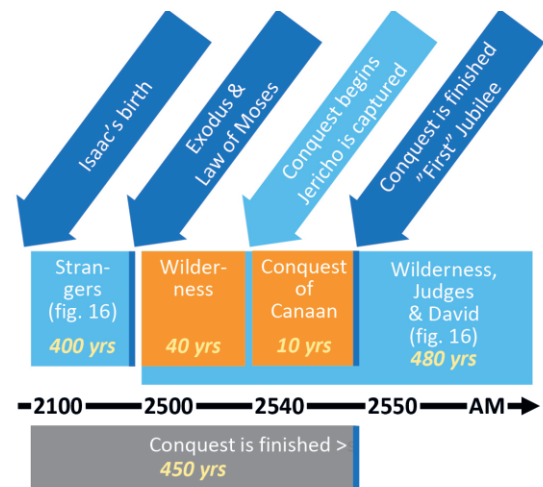


Figure 10. Also the conquest of Canaan was completed in a Jubilee year.

At the beginning of the forty years in the wilderness, God gave the Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai, and it includes following instruction: **When you come into the land which I give you... then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month... It shall be a Jubilee for you.** (Lev 25:2-10) This means that the Jubilees were not celebrated before the Law was given, which in turn means that the first Jubilee that was observed was the fifty-first since creation. But since this Jubilee perfectly fits into the historical suite of years evenly divisible by 50, it shows that God has directed history with a Jubilee beat even before He revealed it to His people.

Phase 3. From First Temple to Cyrus' Decree

The next phase of the salvation plan begins when Solomon's Temple was inaugurated: **When Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king's house... the LORD appeared to Solomon... and said to him:... I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever.** (1 Kings 9:1-3) But God also issued a serious warning about what would happen to both the temple and the people if they did not obey His commands: **But if you and your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes... then I will 1) cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and 2) this house... I will cast out of My sight.** (1 Kings 9:6-7) Since the Israelites did not obey this explicit warning in the centuries that followed, God effected both warnings by having the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar 1) *take the people into exile* after he had 2) *destroyed Jerusalem with its temple*.

430 years elapse from God's warning (at the inauguration of the temple) until its execution (at the destruction of the same temple). After this, the Babylonian captivity continued for another 70 years. These figures may be extracted from:

- In the book of Ezekiel, the time from the inauguration of the temple until its destruction is called “years of iniquity”. Their number may be computed from Eze 4:3-7 (mixed): **This will be a sign to the house of Israel... For I have laid on you [Ezekiel] the years of their iniquity... You shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem... and you shall prophesy against it... I have laid on you a day for each year... Lie... on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it... according to the number of the days, 390 days... When you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity**

of the house of **Judah 40 days**. At this time, the Hebrew nation was divided into two kingdoms, and Ezekiel should bear the iniquities of both by lying 390 days on one side for Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and 40 days on the other side for Judah (the Southern Kingdom). Ezekiel is also told that one day corresponds to one year. Thus, there is a total of 430 “years of iniquities”, and these constitute the time between the inauguration and the destruction of the temple.

- The Babylonian captivity persisted for 70 years which is revealed by, among others, Jer 25:11: **This whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years**. The period starts with the destruction of Jerusalem, which is evident from Dan 9:2 (NIV): **In the first year of [Darius’] reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last **70 years**.**

In summary, the total time from the temple's inauguration until the return from Babylon is 500 years, a number which is ingeniously confirmed by 2 Chron 36:20-21: **Those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon... until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath, to fulfill **70 years****. So the purpose of the captivity in Babylon was for the land to “enjoy her Sabbaths”, but what does this mean? We have previously seen (Lev 25:3-4, page 15) that the land should have a sabbath rest every seven years, and in Lev 26:32-35 God warned what would happen if the people did not heed this command: **I will bring the land to desolation... Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land... As long as it lies desolate it shall rest - for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it**. Since God's people did not obey His instruction to let the land rest, God *enforced* the rest by sending the farming people into exile. Thus, the 70 years in Babylon were a *compensation* to the land for the neglected sabbath rests. Let us now do the math: The 500 years between the temple's inauguration and the return from Babylon contain 10 Jubilee periods (of 50 years each), and each such period has 7 Sabbaths, giving a total of 70 Sabbath years that need to be compensated for. This is the exact length of the exile in Babylon, and during this time the land surely rested! God is very precise. Again.

There is yet another exquisite finesse here. The data so far reveal that the return from Babylon occurred in the 3,500th year after creation, which is the 70th Jubilee (3500/50 = 70). In Jer 29:10 (NIV), God promises His people that **when **70 years** are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place**, a commitment He fulfilled in a dual sense. The people were permitted to return home after *70 calendar years* of exile, and this event occurred when *70 jubilee years* had passed since creation. What awesome control our God has!

Phase 4. From First to Second Return from Exile

The next phase starts when the Jews reinstated the sacrificial service in Jerusalem after the return from the First Exile (in Babylon), and it will end when the Jews one more time reinstate the sacrificial service, this time after the return from the Second Exile (the Diaspora). Our knowledge about this phase in the biblical history mainly comes from a prophecy concerning seventy weeks which is recorded the Book of Daniel. (The weeks are yellow in figure 16 on the last page.)

Daniel was deported to Babylon as a young man, and he spent the entire 70-year exile in the royal court of Babylon. He studied the Scriptures with great zeal, and toward the end of the period he **understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last **70 years**** (Dan 9:2, NIV, and the word to Jeremiah is from Jer 25:11 and 29:10 as described above). Daniel had kept track of the time in Babylon and understood that the moment of release was at hand. Therefore, he confessed both his own and the people's sins because this was a condition God had stipulated to bring His people back (Lev 26:40). In Daniel's own words: **While I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel... the man Gabriel... being caused to fly swiftly... informed me... and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. **At the beginning of your supplications the command went out...** Therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision." (Dan 9:20-23) Obviously, the timing is important here. Gabriel was caused to “fly swiftly” to inform Daniel “while he was still speaking”. The message included a “command” that had gone out precisely “at the beginning of” Daniel’s supplications. What command is this?**

The answer is found in Ezra 1:2-3: **Thus says** [i.e. a “command”] **Cyrus king of Persia:...** *The LORD God... has commanded me* to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is among you of all His people?... *Let him go up to Jerusalem...* and *build the house of the LORD* God of Israel. The mighty Persian Empire had just conquered Babylon where the Jews were held captive. Cyrus was king of Persia at this time, and when he realized that there was a people deprived of liberty in Babylon, he issued a decree, a “command”, that the people was free to return home to Jerusalem and to rebuild the temple. This marks the end of the 70 years of captivity, and we saw earlier that it happened in the 70th Jubilee. But what does Cyrus mean by “God has commanded me...”? To understand, let us proceed to a mighty prophecy in Isa 44:24,28: **Thus says the LORD... who says of Cyrus,** “He is *My shepherd... saying* [i.e. a “command”] *to Jerusalem,* You shall be built, and to the *temple,* Your foundation shall be laid”. Thus, Cyrus is identified *by name* even through Isaiah uttered these words more than 100 years before Cyrus was even born! In his next chapter, Isaiah confirms that this is not a coincidence: **Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus...** I will give you... *hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the LORD, who call you by your name,* am the God of Israel. (Isa 45:1-3) Isaiah prophesies that Cyrus will be “saying to Jerusalem” (i.e. through a “command”) that it will be rebuilt together with its temple. The Jewish historian Josephus wrote in the first century AD that Cyrus became aware of his mission (to deliver the Jews) by reading or hearing about himself in the book of Isaiah. Who then introduced this Jewish prophecy to the Persian king? Daniel was in the Babylonian royal court (which was taken over by the Persians), and he may very well have done it. Imagine the king’s astonishment when he heard Isaiah’s prediction and realized “*that would be me!*” (Note that Cyrus is called God’s “shepherd” and God’s “anointed” which both are epithets for Jesus. Therefore, Cyrus is a prophetic pattern for Jesus in so far as he liberates God’s people. He also ensures that the temple is rebuilt which may be compared with the words of Jesus in John 2:19: **Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**)

This is why Gabriel was in such a hurry to inform Daniel that Cyrus *just* had issued his command for the deliverance of God’s people. Likewise, Daniel had just prayed for a collective repentance which was a condition for the release. Thus the liberation came *simultaneously* with Daniel’s prayer. Sometimes God may seem to delay His prayer answers, but definitely not in this case.

Approximately 50,000 Jews heeded Cyrus’ announcement and returned to Jerusalem. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, they began building the Second Temple. Immediately upon their return and long before the temple was erected, they restored the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law: **From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, although the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid.** (Ezra 3:6) This specific date is the Jewish New Year which coincides with the *Feast of Trumpets* in the fall (Lev 23:24). (The reason why the New Year takes place in the *seventh* month will be explained later.) The year was 3500 AM, which means it was the first day of the year after the 70th Jubilee. This date is *exactly* in the middle of the 7,000 years of biblical history, and now the next phase in God’s salvation project commences. This phase is described in a prophecy Daniel received concerning *70 year-weeks*:

Weeks of Daniel

The conversion between Gabriel and Daniel in Dan 9:20-23 (previous page) ends with an exhortation from Gabriel to **consider the matter, and understand the vision.** So let us do just that. (From Dan 9:24-27):

- **70 weeks are determined...**
One “week” consists of seven solar years, and it is defined by the agricultural cycle in the Mosaic Law (Lev 25:3-11, see page 15). Each such *year-week* began on the Jewish New Year (Feast of Trumpets), and it included six years of sowing and reaping followed by a Sabbath year when the land would rest. After seven such weeks (i.e. after 49 years), a Jubilee should be announced which thus becomes the 50th year. In like manner, *a jubilee year must be added after every 7 of Daniel’s year-weeks.* Within the 70-week period, 10 such intermediate Jubilees should therefore be inserted, which means that the entire period consists of 500 years (70x7 years + 10 Jubilees). The chronology puzzle cannot be resolved without these intercalated Jubilees. (Compare figure 11.)
- **... for your people and for your holy city...**
The prophecy is about Israel, the Israelites and Jerusalem. Nothing else.

- ... to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.
Since at least some of these events still lie in the future, the 70 weeks cannot be consecutive. There is a time gap somewhere.
- From the going forth of the command to restore... Jerusalem...**
This is where the start of the 70-weeks period is defined. The "command to restore... Jerusalem" is the aforementioned decree from Cyrus issued during the 70th Jubilee, 3499 AM. However, Daniel's first week cannot start immediately because all year-weeks begin on the Jewish New Year. Therefore, the returning Jews make their way home to Jerusalem and begin sacrificing, and precisely then the first week launches. This is why it was crucial to Ezra to exactly specify the date for the start of the sacrificial system (Ezra 3:6 on previous page). The year is 3500 AM.
- ... **until Messiah the Prince, there shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks. The street shall be built again, and the wall.**
Two time periods and two events are mentioned here. The grammatical structure shows that "Messiah the Prince" will appear at the end of both periods, which means that Christ's first coming will be in the 69th week. The second event is that Jerusalem's streets and wall are rebuilt (after the destruction of the Babylonians), which will happen at the end of the 7 weeks. This corresponds to 49 years, *but now it is crucial to intercalate the first jubilee year during Daniel's weeks.* This means that Jerusalem is restored 50 years after Cyrus' command, or in the year 3549 AM. So we have yet another important event that occurs in a Jubilee, this time the 71st.
- And after the 62 weeks...**
This means that together with the first 7 weeks, the event in the next bullet-point happens *after* the 69th week.
- ... **Messiah shall be cut off.**
Of course, this is the crucifixion of Jesus that thus occurs after the 69th week, that is, after 69 times 7 years *plus 9 intercalated Jubilees* (see figure 11), or after a total of 492 years. We will soon see that "after" means "six months after", and since the first week starts in the New Year of 3500 AM, the crucifixion takes place six months into the year 3992 AM. Therefore, the arrow for the crucifixion in figure 16 (last page) points a bit into the period-box starting in 3992 AM. The little word *after* is vital for the pieces of the chronology puzzle to fall into place.
- And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.**
This happens after the crucifixion, and it refers to the destruction of the Second Temple which took place about 70 AD. The "people" who carried out the demolition were the Romans and their "prince" (commander) was Titus. This means that Daniel got his information about the future destruction of the temple simultaneously and together with the information about Cyrus' decree to build it. This may be compared to the earlier event when Solomon was warned about the destruction of the First Temple at its very inauguration (according to 1 Kings 9, page 22).

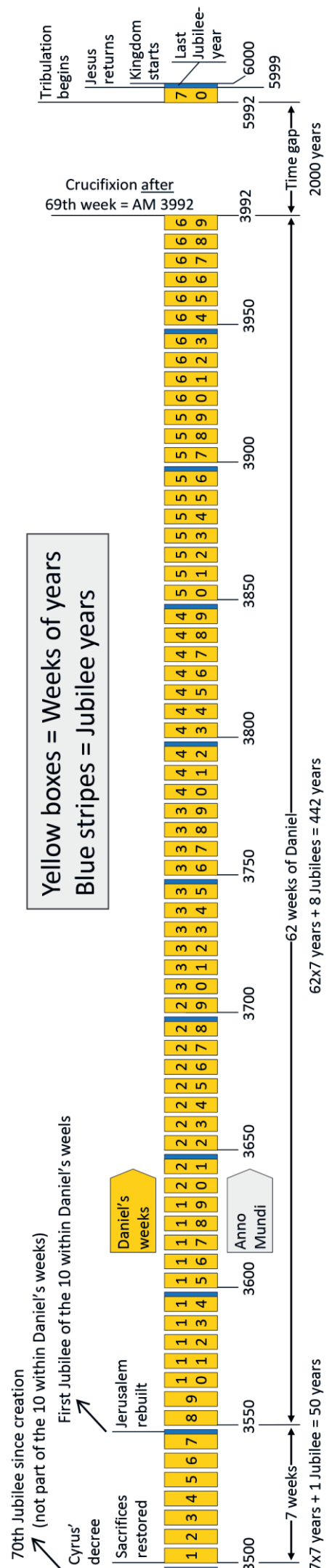


Figure 11. Daniel's year-weeks.

- **The end** of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for **one week**.

The prophecy has now come to the 70th and last year-week. It is still future, and therefore we will take a closer look at it in chapter *Phase 5, The End Time*. After the last week of Daniel, the tenth and final jubilee year must also be added.

Time Gap in the Weeks of Daniel

So the described model has a time gap between Daniel's 69th and 70th year-weeks. However, not all Bible scholars agree on the necessity of this gap, so it needs to be further justified:

As we have seen, the 70-week prophecy is only applicable to the Jews. However, today they are scattered in exile among the nations, and therefore their "prophetic clock" is suspended until they return to their homeland. When this reassembling is complete, the clock will start again together with the 70th and final week. We can also derive the time gap from the last four bullet points above: **After the 62 weeks** [plus the 7 first]... **1) Messiah shall be cut off...** And the people of the prince who is to come shall **2) destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end** of it shall be with a flood... Then **3) he shall confirm a covenant** with many for **one week**. (Dan 9:26-27) This passage describes a sequence of three events where 2) the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans occurs *between* 1) the crucifixion and 3) Daniel's 70th week. And since the crucifixion happens *after* the 69th week, the destruction of the temple must take place *between* weeks 69 and 70. From history we know that the time between Jesus' crucifixion and the destruction of the temple was about 40 years, which means that the time gap must be of at least this length.

In reality, the time gap will continue for 2,000 years. This may be understood from the previously quoted section in Hosea: **I will go away and return to My place [i.e. heaven]... He will revive us after two days... that we may live before Him**. (Hos 5:15 - 6:2, NASB) Jesus quotes from this passage and applies the phrase "I will go away" to His ascension: **I go away... where I am going [i.e. heaven] you cannot come**. (Joh 8:21, NASB) He declares this during the fall festivals six months prior to His crucifixion on Passover in the spring. (This is the reason we can specify "after" in Dan 9:26 above as "six months after": **[Six months] after the 62 weeks Messiah shall be cut off**.) 40 literal days elapsed between the crucifixion and the ascension, and then "two days" will pass *after which* "we may live before Him" at His second coming. With chiliasm's prophetic exchange rate between days and millennia, this means after 2,000 years. But not necessarily *immediately* after 2,000 years. We need to be more precise, and the Bible allows also this.

The time gap's 2,000 years may be split into two parts: the first starts when the 69th week ends and the second ends when the 70th week starts. The boundary between them is defined by the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans.

The first part consists of **40 years**, and it may be traced from the sign of Jonah: **For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**. (Matt 12:40) Now, many will certainly object: This sign is about the resurrection of Jesus on the third day. But for at least three reasons, I hold this interpretation as implausible. First, Jesus was not "three days and three nights" in the tomb, but only from Friday afternoon until Sunday morning. Second, **Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites** (Luke 11:30), and they knew nothing about three days in the stomach of a fish. And third, Jesus says that **an evil and adulterous generation... [will be given] no sign except the sign of the prophet Jonah** (Matt 12:39), while the resurrection was witnessed only by **believers: A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you [the apostles] will see Me**. (Joh 14:19) Also, 1 Cor 15:4-8 makes it clear that only "brethren" saw the risen Savior.

Since Jonah's sign was "to the Ninevites", it must be about something he revealed to *them*. And his message was: **Yet 40 days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!** (Jonah 3:4). Hence, it was about 1) a city's 2) destruction 3) after forty days. When Jesus applies Jonah's sign to His contemporaries, the three components become 1) the city of the "evil and adulterous generation" He was speaking to, i.e. Jerusalem, which will 2) be destroyed 3) after forty years. Here, a day corresponds to a prophetic year (and not to a millennium) which is also common in Scripture, for example in Num 14:34 and Eze 4:5. So Jesus prophesies that

Jerusalem will be destroyed in 40 years, which makes Jonah's sign a warning of a forthcoming judgment over the city. In retrospect, we know that the warning proved correct when the Romans 40 years later invaded Jerusalem and destroyed its temple.

But how are we to interpret the parallel between Jonah's three days and nights in the belly of the fish and Jesus' equal time in "the heart of the earth"? Well, the Greek word interpreted as "earth" might as well be translated "land", and "the heart of the land" is Jerusalem. With this reading, Jesus is saying in Matt 12:40: **The Son of Man will be three days and three nights in Jerusalem**. And an in-depth analysis of Jesus' last week in Jerusalem shows that He preached judgment over the city for *exactly three days*, from one meal on Saturday night (Joh 12:1-11) until another meal on Tuesday night (Mark 14:3-9). During this period, He proclaimed many prophecies against Jerusalem and its temple such as **your enemies... will not leave in you one stone upon another** (Luke 19:43-44), **the kingdom of God will be taken from you** (Matt 21:43) and **for what you see here... every one of [the stones] will be thrown down** (Luke 21:6, NIV). It was during the meal at the end of the three-day period that **Judas Iscariot... went to the chief priests to betray Him to them** (Mark 14:10), and this must have been the direct reason why Jesus could no longer openly preach judgment over Jerusalem.

Also other details of the sign of Jonah help us interpret it correctly. Jonah 3:3 reveals that **Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent**, and Jesus' preaching in Jerusalem had the same duration. Note also the wording in Matt 12:40 (previous page): **For as Jonah was... so will the Son of Man be...** The parallel may refer to the anguish and despair the two men must have experienced in their respective situations. But Jonah was not dead during the three days, and neither was Jesus.

The second part of the 2,000-year time gap is **1,960 years**. It starts when the first period ends, that is at the destruction of the Second Temple, and it ends when the 70th week begins. During this time, the Jews are in exile. The Bible has many analogies between the First Exile (in Babylon) and this Second Exile (the Diaspora), and one of these parallels will now help us to calculate its duration: **You shall be defeated by your enemies [refers to the 1st Exile]... And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you 7 times more** [refers to the 2nd Exile] **for your sins**. (Lev 26:17-18) The First Exile lasted 70 years, so "7 times more" is 490 years. However, the warning is repeated in verses 21, 24 and 28, which means it occurs 4 times in total. Therefore God will chastise the Jews one, two, three and four times, and each time lasts "seven times more" than the First Exile, i.e. 490 years. And 4 x 490 is 1,960 years.

To summarize: The time gap begins on the Jewish New Year just as the 69th week has expired. The New Year is also called the Fest of Trumpets, and it is part of the Bible's fall festivals. It is the first day of the year 3992 AM (see figure 16). Six months later, Jesus is crucified on Passover, which is part of the spring festivals. The year is still 3992 AM. (Remember, the New Year occurs in the fall and not in the winter.) A 40-year period follows until the destruction of the Second Temple, which therefore takes place in 4032 AM. Then the Diaspora follows which lasts for 1,960 years until, *but not into*, 5992 AM. After this, Daniel's 70th week follows, which like all year-weeks begin on the Jewish New Year, and the year is thus 5992 AM. We are now entering the next phase of God's salvation plan which we may call *the End Time*.

Phase 5: The End Time

The end time begins together with Daniel's 70th and final week, which is the last seven years preceding Jesus' return. It is also called the Tribulation because it will be a demanding time for God's people, during which there will be a conversion of the Jewish nation back to the covenant they are still under, that is the Old Covenant formulated in the Mosaic Law. For this purpose, the Jews will restore the sacrificial service in Jerusalem which is a direct parallel to what happened after the Babylonian captivity. Then the sacrifices were reinstated on the *first day* of the first year-week after the First Exile (according to Ezra 3:6, page 24). Now the sacrifices will be reinstated on the *first day* of the last year-week after the Second Exile (the Diaspora). The former event occurred on the Jewish New Year 3500 AM, and the latter will occur on the New Year 5992 AM. Probably, the Jews will also rebuild the temple just as they did after the First Exile. Last time it was met with great opposition (Ezra 4:4-5), and one can imagine what will happen when they erect the foundations of the Third Temple in Jerusalem!

But really, is the Old Covenant still in operation today? Yes, it is. Nowhere does the Bible imply it has terminated. The last petition of the Old Testament is to **remember the Law of Moses** (Mal 4:4), and about 500 years later Jesus confirms that the Law still applies: **Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill... Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law.** (Matt. 5:17-18) When the Bible speaks about the passing away of “heaven and earth”, it always implies the return of the Lord, and therefore the Mosaic Law will remain until then. This is the very reason why the Jews are in exile today. The Law contains not only blessings but also curses: **After all this, if you do not obey Me... I will scatter you among the nations... your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.** (Lev 26:27,33) *Just because* the law is still active, the Jews are presently dispersed among the nations. But this reality is changing, and when the Tribulation begins, we will see a full realization of God's many promises to reassemble His people, for example: **I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.** (Eze 36:24)

It is the Jews as a *nation* that are under the Mosaic Law while, naturally, *individual* Jews may choose to believe in Jesus and so become **redeemed from the curse of the law** (Gal 3:13). And Gentiles have never been under the law, neither as nations nor as individuals.

When discussing the year-weeks in Dan 9, I omitted part of the description of the 70th week, but now we have enough background to understand it better: **Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.** (Dan 9:27a) Thus, the final week has two parts (figure 12). The first one begins with the “confirmation” of a covenant, and since the wording reveals that it is an *existing* covenant, it ought to be God confirming the still-valid Mosaic covenant. This includes an offering service which will, however, cease “in the middle of the week” when somebody “brings an end to sacrifice and offering”. Whoever stops the sacrifices and thus puts a spanner in God’s work with His covenant, must be God's enemy. This means that “he” who establishes the covenant is not the same “he” who abolishes it, which unfortunately the translation seems to imply, but which is not required nor even suggested by the Hebrew text. Who then, is this “he” who prohibits the sacrificial service in the middle of the Tribulation?

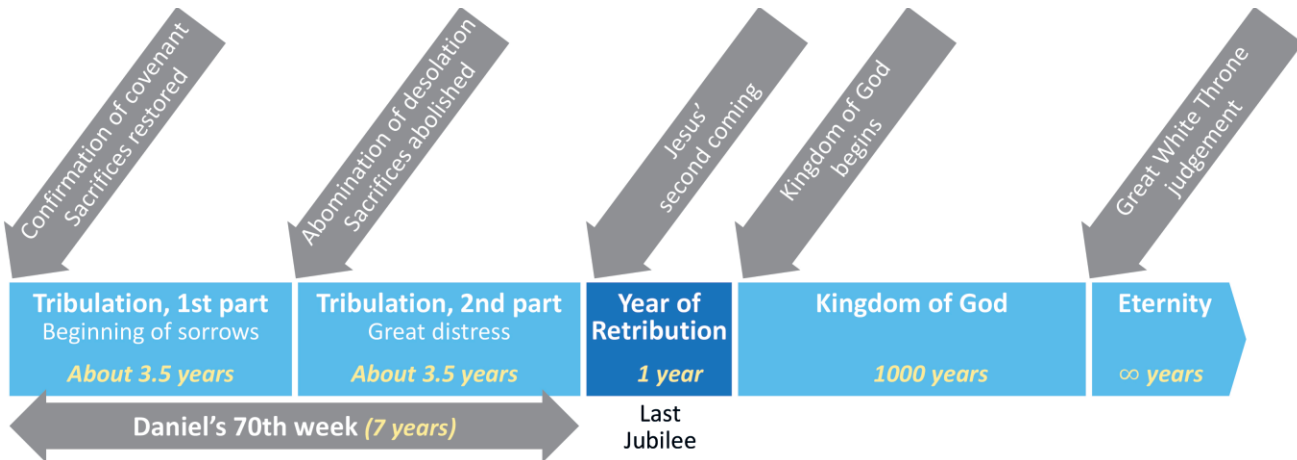


Figure 12. The End Time.

The verse continues: **On the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.** (Dan 9:27b) Now, let us use the word pair “abomination” and “desolate” as a key in the search for the man who will abolish the sacrifices. Next clue comes two chapters later: **A vile person shall arise... his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant... Forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress... take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation... He shall exalt and magnify himself above every god [and] shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods.** (Dan 11:21,28-36) This prophecy was fulfilled in the 2nd century BC when the Seleucid king *Antiochus Epiphanes* erected an idol, an “abomination”, in Jerusalem's Temple and under death threat forbade the Jews to sacrifice to their God. But the fulfillment does not end here, which may be understood by the fact that Jesus about 200 years later prophesied about the abomination of desolation as a yet future event: **When you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place... then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the**

beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Matt 24:15-21) Jesus' reference to Daniel shows that He links the already fulfilled prophecy with another and future realization. The upcoming "vile person" will also set up an abomination of desolation in the temple, and from Dan 11:21-36 (previous page) we understand that he will defile the temple as well, and abolish the sacrificial service that the Jews initiated about 3½ years earlier.

Also Paul describes the hateful man that is to come: *That Day [Jesus' return] will not come unless... the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself... so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God... The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan. (2 Thess 2:3-9) The resemblance to Dan 11 (previous page) is striking. The man is called *the Beast* in Rev 13 and sometimes he is also called *the Antichrist* (e.g. 1 Joh 2:18).*

The two parts of the Tribulation are also implied by Jesus in His eschatological sermon on the Mount of Olives. When the apostles ask *what will be the sign of Your coming?*, Jesus answers: *You will hear of wars and rumors of wars... Nation will rise against nation... And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the **beginning** of sorrows.* (Matt 24:3, 6-8) The "beginning" of something requires a continuation, and therefore Jesus goes on with the second part of the Tribulation: ***Then** they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake... Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many... but he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world... and **then the end** will come.* (Matt. 24:9-14)

"The end" is when Jesus returns, which therefore occurs *after* the Tribulation: ***Immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **Then**... all the tribes on the earth... will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* (Matt 24:29-30) It is these cosmic calamities Jesus spoke of when He said that *till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law* (Matt 5:18, previous page). Thus, it is not until then that the Old Covenant ceases to apply. Instead comes a *national* conversion of the Jewish people to the New Covenant. They will realize that it is faith in Jesus as the Messiah that saves and not the works of the Law. Zechariah prophesies about this transition: ***In that day** the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem... And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced [through the crucifixion]. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son [Jesus]. (Zech 12:8-10) Even the geographical place of the return is prophesied: **In that day** His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. (Zech 14:4-5)*

The 70th year-week closes the day before the Jewish New Year (Feast of Trumpets) in 5999 AM. However, the Kingdom of God does not start immediately. Remember, after every 7th week, a Jubilee must be inserted, and so also after the 70th. This is the last Jubilee, the 120th since creation, and there is every reason to celebrate because Jesus returns at its beginning. The rest of the year, He (along with His faithful) will need to clean up the earth before it can enter the rest in God's Kingdom. It needs to be sanitized after all the wars and environmental disasters that the end times have brought about, and the temple needs to be restored after Antichrist's defilement. Isaiah gives this year two completely different names: *For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, the **year of recompense** for the cause of Zion* (Isa 34:8) and *the **year of My redeemed has come*** (Isa 63:4). The difference in perspective depends on which group one belongs to. For God's enemies it means retribution and judgment: ***That day** is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation.* (Zeph 1:15) For God's friends, it means redemption and deliverance: *[He] will also confirm you **to the end**, that you may be blameless in **the day** of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Cor 1:8)

The Kingdom of God begins in 6000 AM, exactly six millennia after creation, and it will last for 1,000 years: *I saw the souls of those... who had not worshiped the beast or his image... and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.* (Rev 20:4) After the Kingdom, the Last Judgment falls: *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it... And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.* (Rev 20:11-12) Now the earth's 7,000-year history is over, and *Eternity* is on. The Bible does not say very much about this future state, but some clues are given: *Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father... Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.* (1 Cor 15:24-28)

Festivals of God

So far, we have only treated full years. I have emphasized that the biblical year begins at the Feast of Trumpets in the fall, but otherwise I have disregarded at what date during the year a certain event occurs. In this chapter and the two following, I will proceed and show that also the *dates* of the events may convey valuable prophetic information.

The Feast of Trumpets (and thus the Jewish New Year) has “always” been in the fall, and it still is. But when Passover was introduced at the Exodus, God gave further instructions to His people regarding their calendar: ***This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.*** (Ex 12:2) The departure from Egypt occurred in the spring so “this month” was a spring month, and from then on it would be “the first month of the year”. One could say that from this moment on, two different calendars coexist, and they are offset by six months: a *civil* calendar that begins in the seventh month in the fall and a *festival* calendar that begins in the first month in the spring. This explains the aforementioned enigma in Ezra 3:6, where the sacrificial service after the Babylonian captivity initiated a new year and a new year-week, even though it began on the first day of the *seventh* month.

Seven weeks after the Exodus, the Israelites received the Mosaic Law on Mount Sinai, and here God stipulated what festivals His people should celebrate (Lev 23). These festivals have a *historical* significance by symbolizing something that God has already done for the people, but because they are part of the Law and the Law provides **a shadow of the good things to come** (Heb 10:1), they also have a *prophetic* significance by pointing forward to upcoming events in God's salvation plan. The annual festivals are seven in number, and they appear in three groups:

- The ***spring feasts*** consist of different phases of *Passover*. Historically, they are about the Exodus from Egypt and the conquering of the Promised Land. Prophetically, they foretell the events at Jesus' first coming, that is, His death and resurrection. (These events *were* future when the Law was given.)
- The ***Feast of Pentecost*** is historically about the giving of the Mosaic Law, which launched the Old Covenant. Prophetically, it is about the giving of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, which launched the New Covenant. (Also this event was future when the Law was given.)
- The ***autumn feasts*** begin with the *Feast of Trumpets* (= New Year) and continue with the *Day of Atonement* and the *Feast of Tabernacles*. Historically, they are about the creation and the fall. Prophetically, they foretell the events at Jesus' second coming, that is, the return and the establishment of the Kingdom. (Also the “re-creation” after the Flood occurred on the New Year: ***It came to pass in the 601st year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth.*** (Gen 8:13) This was before the giving of the Law and therefore the “first month” refers to the one in the fall.)

Obviously, the feasts are celebrated on the same dates as the corresponding historical events, but from our perspective it is significant that also the future predictions (when they are already fulfilled) have occurred on the same dates as “their” festivals. Several of things Jesus experienced during His crucifixion week took place on the exact same days as the associated Passover days. And the Holy Spirit was given seven weeks after Jesus' resurrection *just because* the Law was given seven weeks after the Exodus (and therefore seven weeks pass between Passover and Pentecost). So even if the prophetic dimension of the fall festivals has not yet appeared, we can with confidence assume that *the events during Jesus' return will occur on the corresponding Feast dates*. So let us study them in more detail.

The Bible contains many testimonies that the return will be accompanied by mighty trumpet blasts. Jesus says that **[the Son of Man] will send His angels with a great *sound of a trumpet*, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds** (Matt 24:31), and Paul joins in with **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with *the trumpet of God*** (1 Thess. 4:16). In another passage, Paul clarifies *which* trumpet is meant: **We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed... at *the last trumpet*.** (1 Cor 15:51-52) This is the “last trumpet” of the seven that in the Book of Revelation accompany various phases of God's judgment, and it reveals that Jesus' return has come: **The *seventh angel* sounded [a trumpet]: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”** (Rev 11:15)

During the biblical feast year, the trumpet should be sounded on, obviously, the Feasts of Trumpets that occurred **in the 7th month, on the 1st day of the month** (Lev 23:24) in the fall. However, in jubilee years another rule applied: **You shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the 10th day of the 7th month.** (Lev 25:9) This was the *Day of Atonement* (Lev 23:27), and since Jesus will return in a jubilee year and accompanied by trumpet blasts, there are good reasons to assume that He will be coming on this very Day. Also, its symbolism (Lev 16) reflects the events of Jesus' return. As the name suggests, it was a day of reconciliation with God. It was the only day of the year when the high priest could enter the Most Holy place in the temple to bring atonement for His people. And since the Bible prophesies a national conversion of the Jewish people in connection with Jesus' return, also this will most likely occur on the Day of Atonement.

After the Atonement Day, the *Feast of Tabernacles* follows, symbolizing the Kingdom of God. At this occasion, the people was to take **branches of palm trees... [and] dwell in booths for seven days** (Lev 23:40-42). The booths symbolize the dwellings of God's people after the deliverance from Egypt, but also the dwellings in the Kingdom after the liberation from today's sinful world. That is why Peter wanted to build *boots* when he saw a vision of the Kingdom on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:5, RSV), and that is why the inhabitants of Jerusalem cut *palm* leaves when they for the first time received Jesus as king: **When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, [they] took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! The King of Israel!** (Joh 12:12-13)

Counting of Days

I will now zoom in further and show that the time information in Scripture is very precise also when it comes to the counting of days. See figure 13 where we have not previously encountered the 40 days in the “Middle of the Week” and the 10 days of “Darkness”. I will identify these two periods and begin with the darkness.

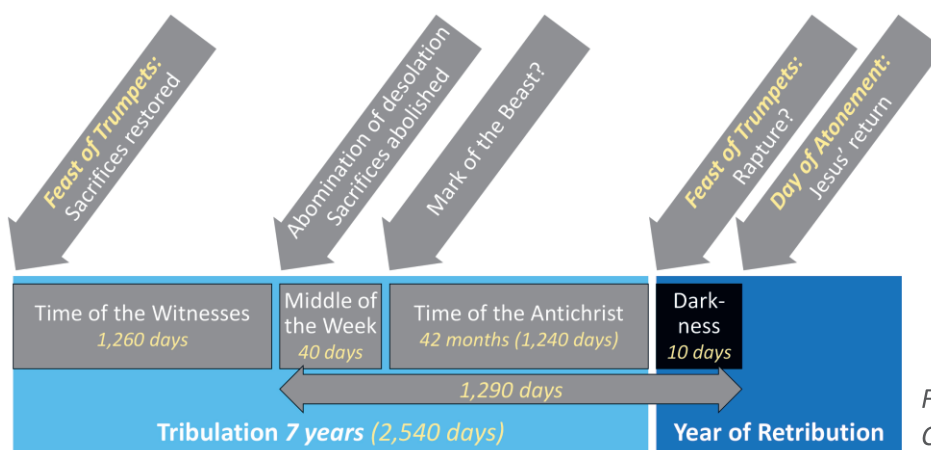


Figure 13.
Counting of days.

As we have seen, the last day of the Tribulation is the day before the Feast of Trumpets (New Year) on the 1st of the 7th month, and Jesus returns on the Day of Atonement on the 10th of the same month. The 10 days in between (with inclusive reckoning), I have called *Darkness* in the figure because I believe these are the days Jesus has in mind in Mark 13:24-26: **In those days** [plural!], **after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.** So the dark days come *after* the Tribulation, but Joel 2:31 prophesies that they will also come *before* the return: **The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.** Obviously, a few days pass between the end of the Tribulation and the return of Jesus, and their number (10) may be concluded from the Mosaic Law (in Lev 23) that stipulates 10 days between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. In the Jewish tradition, this time is called *Days of Awe*, and it is intended for self-examination and repentance before the Day of Atonement. Of course, the compact darkness will reinforce this awe when not only the symbols of Atonement approach, but the “real deal”, the Messiah Himself.

Maybe devoted Christians do not need to partake in these dark and dreadful days? The Bible speaks of a “snatching away” of believers in connection with the return: **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven... Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up... in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.** (1 Thess 4:16-17) It is possible that this “rapture” will occur on the Feast of Trumpets, and then, when Jesus comes back on the Day of Atonement, He will do so *together* with His faithful: **Behold, the *day of the LORD* is coming... Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You.** (Zech 14:1,5) Some Bible students would rather speak about a “snatching up” than a “snatching away” because the path “away” first goes “up” via the skies. Also other Bible passages describe such transfers arranged by God to other places on earth by way of the clouds: **By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had taken him.** (Heb 11:5) **Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven [or “skies”].** (2 Kings 2:11) This possibility opens up a completely different understanding of Jesus' expression for His second coming: **Of that day and hour no one knows.** (Matt 24:36) It was an idiomatic expression for the Feast of Trumpets, so Jesus was saying “I will return at the Feast of Trumpets”. (The rationale for the idiom is explained shortly.)

[This paragraph is intended for those who believe that Enoch and Elijah were taken to God in heaven without first having to die. (Remember the distinction on page 8 between heaven, the Kingdom of Heaven and the sky.) I believe this view contradicts other parts of Scripture. Heb 11 contains a list of faith heroes *which include Enoch*, and it ends with **these all died in faith** (verse 13). The fact that Enoch was “taken away so that he did not see death” simply means that he was rescued from an imminent murder threat from the wicked environment which later caused Noah's Flood. In Elijah's case, his disciples recommended a search for him because **perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has picked him up and set him down on some mountain or in some valley** (2 Kings 2:16, NIV). The most obvious reason why Elijah must have remained on earth is that he 14 years after his “ascension” wrote a letter to king Jehoram (2 Chron 21:12, and the 14 years may be inferred from an analysis of 2 Kings 1:17-2:18, 3:1, 8:17, 1 Kings 22:42,51 and 2 Chron 21:12,19). Furthermore, long after both Enoch's and Elijah's snatchings up/away, John's gospel states: **No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.** (Jn 3:13)]

To find the 40 days in the “Middle of the Week” in figure 13, we need to go back to Dan 9:27: **He shall confirm a covenant with many *for one week* [the Tribulation], but *in the middle of the week* he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.** Many Bible students regard the seven years of tribulation as consisting of two halves with 3½ years in each. That would mean that the “middle” is a point in time and not a period of time, which in no way is required by the biblical text. It is even improbable because the Bible does not express the lengths of the two parts as years, but as days and months respectively. During the first part, God will send two witnesses who will warn and encourage: **I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy **1,260 days**, clothed in sackcloth.** (Rev 11:3) During the second part, Antichrist will rule and ravage: **He [*Antichrist*] was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for **42 months**.** (Rev 13:5) Both these time intervals are equal to 3½ years *if* one assumes that one year is 12 months and one month is 30 days. However, neither of these assumptions describe reality. Therefore, we need to delve into some details in the Hebrew way of counting time:

The Jews use a lunar-based calendar, which means that a *new month* starts at a *new moon*. The time between two new moons is given for astronomical reasons, and it is 29.53 days. But of course, months must have an even numbers of days, and therefore their lengths differ. It is the average that is 29.53 days. For our purposes, it is therefore not precise enough to fix the lengths of the months to 30 days.

Nor can we mechanically set the duration of a year to 12 months. This is because the lengths of years and months depend on the movements of the earth and the moon respectively, and these are not synchronized in such a way that there is an even number of months per year. The Gregorian calendar compensates for this by varying the monthly lengths in such a way that the sum becomes 365 days per year (366 for leap years). But the Hebrew calendar cannot use this method because its months are based on the moon's *actual* advancement. This means, if nothing is done to compensate for it, that events occurring on certain dates will be offset year by year. The seasons will become out-of-sync so that, for example, the Feast of Trumpets will after a while have moved from fall to spring. To balance this, a *leap-month* is added at certain uneven intervals which gives some years 13 months instead. A consequence is that a certain date in the Hebrew calendar coincides with different dates in the Gregorian calendar. For example, the Jewish New Year may fall between September 5th and October 5th.

Today, every new Jewish month starts on a date that is astronomically calculated. Similarly, the leap months fall in predetermined years. The calendar is tabulated and therefore it is possible to know in advance when every new month, every feast and every leap month will occur. But that has not always been the case. Before the temple was destroyed in 70 AD, the calendar was *based on observations*. Since the Jewish day begins at sunset, a new month began when the first sliver of the new moon was literally seen over Jerusalem, a time that could vary both because of the weather and because of when during the day the new moon occurred. Neither was a leap month predictable. It was inserted if the barley harvest was not yet ripe when the first month (Nisan) would normally start. It was the priests who officially handled the tasks required by the calendar, and when the temple is rebuilt and the priesthood restored, the Jews may very well return to the observational calendar they had before 70 AD.

With this background it is possible to understand the idiomatic expression “the day no one knows” for the Feast of Trumpets. It is the only one of the yearly holidays that falls on the 1st of a month. This means that no one knew when it would come until the first sliver of new moon appeared, and then the day was already present. All the other festivals occur a number of days into the months, and therefore it was possible to calculate how many days remained from the new moon until the upcoming celebration.

Back to the time of the witnesses (1,260 days) and the time of the Antichrist (42 months). It should now be obvious that neither period needs to equal exactly 3½ years. We must do a more thorough calculation, and when we do, we will find that the Bible meets all expectations of precision:

- On average, there are 7 leap months in 19 years and therefore it is likely that the Tribulation will include 2 leap months. This makes it 86 months long (7 years x 12 months + 2 leap months).
- If the average monthly length is set to the actual 29.53 days, the Tribulation will be 2,540 days long (86 months x 29.53 days).
- The time of the Antichrist is 42 months, which equal 1,240 days (42 months x 29.53 days).
- Then, the “Middle of the Week” becomes 40 days long (2,540 days (whole Tribulation) minus 1,260 days (Witnesses' time) minus 1,240 days (Antichrist's time)).

The “Middle of the Week” begins with Antichrist abolishing the sacrificial service (Dan 9:27, previous page), which occurs simultaneously with his setting up the abomination of desolation in Jerusalem's Temple: **From the time that the *daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.*** (Dan 12:11) In this perspective, the 40-day duration becomes natural, since the number 40 is associated with trial, judgment, and punishment in the Bible. (It rained for 40 days at Noah's Flood (Gen 7:12), the time in the wilderness was 40 years (Deut 8:2), Goliath challenged Israel for 40 days (1 Sam 17:16), Jesus fasted 40 days (Matt 4:2) and so on.) What marks the end of the “Middle of the Week” (and the start of Antichrist's time) is more uncertain, but Rev 13:16-17 presents a possibility: **[The beast] causes all... to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and... no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.**

Also the 1,290 days in Dan 12:11 fit perfectly into the puzzle. They start simultaneously with the “Middle of the Week” which lasts for 40 days. Then the time of Antichrist follows with 1,240 days and “Darkness” with 10 days. The sum is exactly 1,290 days, which means 1,290 days elapse from the abomination of desolation until Jesus returns. The next verse continues: **Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the 1,335 days.** (Dan 12:12) Provided this period begins simultaneously with the 1,290 days, it takes us 45 days beyond the return of Jesus. However, what will happen then I do not know.

The 2,300 Days

In Dan 8:13-14, the Bible gives a day count that has frustrated many scholars: **How long will the vision be, concerning... the giving of both *the sanctuary* and the host *to be trampled underfoot*? And he said to me, “For **2,300 days**; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”** We have previously encountered this desecration of the temple: **Forces shall be mustered by [a vile person], and they shall *defile the sanctuary* fortress... take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.** (Dan 11:31) We also saw that this may be applied to both the historic Antiochus Epiphanes and the future Antichrist. Theologians have,

without success (?), turned the numbers back and forth to get the 2,300 days to match either of them. I propose a dramatically different solution: Antichrist is *the same person* as Antiochus (revived to life), and the days are *the sum of* his (not their!) defilement of the temple. (Note that this interpretation does not impinge on the biblical chronology in general.)

Before looking into how reasonable such an assumption is, I want to show how nicely the math falls into place. From historical sources (apocryphal 2nd Maccabees 10:5 and Josephus, History of the Jews 7:7), we can know that Antiochus defiled the temple for exactly three years. If we assume that there was no leap month during this time, it corresponds to 1,063 days (3 years x 12 months x 29.53 days). Since before, we know that the time of Antichrist is 1,240 days. The sum is 2,303 days which differs from the figure in Daniel's book by 3 days. The deviation may be explained by the variation of the lengths of individual months.

Now to the credibility of the idea that Antichrist is the same person as the revived Antiochus Epiphanes. Firstly, it is well known that God can raise a person from the dead, or as in Antiochus' case, can allow Satan to do so. For example, from Mal 4:5 at the very end of the Old Testament, we know that the prophet Elijah is coming back **before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD**. Secondly, there are several "enigmatic" Bible verses that are given a natural explanation if Antichrist has lived earlier. Rev 13:12 describes the **beast whose deadly wound was healed** and Rev 17:8 reveals: **The beast... was [as Antiochus], and is not [as dead], and will ascend [as Antichrist] out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition [as eternally dead]**. Other verses suggest in an alternative way that Antichrist has existed previously: **The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth [king], and is of the seven**. (Rev 17:11)

The end of Daniel's 11th chapter prophesies of a **despicable person** (v. 21, NASB) and his actions. What is described fits in perfectly with what Antiochus later did, but only until the 40th verse which reads: **At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack [the despicable person]**. Suddenly, from this verse until the end of the chapter, nothing agrees with what Antiochus did. This has puzzled many Bible interpreters, but with the proposed scenario it becomes logical: *The time changes from verse 40 but not the person*. The final verses still describe the same person but much later in history. Historical sources reveal how Antiochus died. When he had put an end to the sacrificial service in the temple, he left Jerusalem in the hands of one of his generals and left the city. In a foreign place, he was told that the Jews had rebelled, recaptured the temple and resumed the offerings. In anger, Antiochus turned back towards the city to remedy the situation, but on the way, he suffered a serious illness and died. It is *precisely* here that he will return as Antichrist, on his way to Jerusalem's Temple to put an end to the sacrifices.

Symmetries

God's salvation plan exhibits impressive time symmetries (figure 14). Admittedly, nowhere does the Bible suggest that such regularities should exist, but nevertheless they do. Maybe this is God's way to further authenticate the Bible's chronology?

In order to trace all the symmetries, we must add another piece of time data to those already identified: It elapses 430 years from when Abraham received his promise to become a great nation until the giving of the Law of Moses on Mount Sinai: **The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed... The law, introduced **430 years later**, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise**. (Gal 3:16-17, NIV) This is 30 years longer than the time from Isaac's birth to the Exodus (which took place on the same year as the Law was given), see Gen 15:13 on page 21. This means Abraham received his promise 30 years before he received his son.

Figure 14 reveals that Bible history is split into four 500-year periods: between Abraham's birth and the Exodus/Law, further to the First Temple's inauguration and God's warning, further to the return from the First Exile, and then on to the beginning of God's Kingdom. For the latter period, the time gap of 2,000 years has been subtracted since the prophetic clock for Israel is then on hold. The first three 500-year periods exhibit additional symmetries. There is 430 years between Abraham's promise and a (partial) fulfillment of the promise at Exodus. Then the promise is fulfilled for 500 years when God's warning for judgement comes. This judgement is delayed for another 430 years, and then it is enforced.

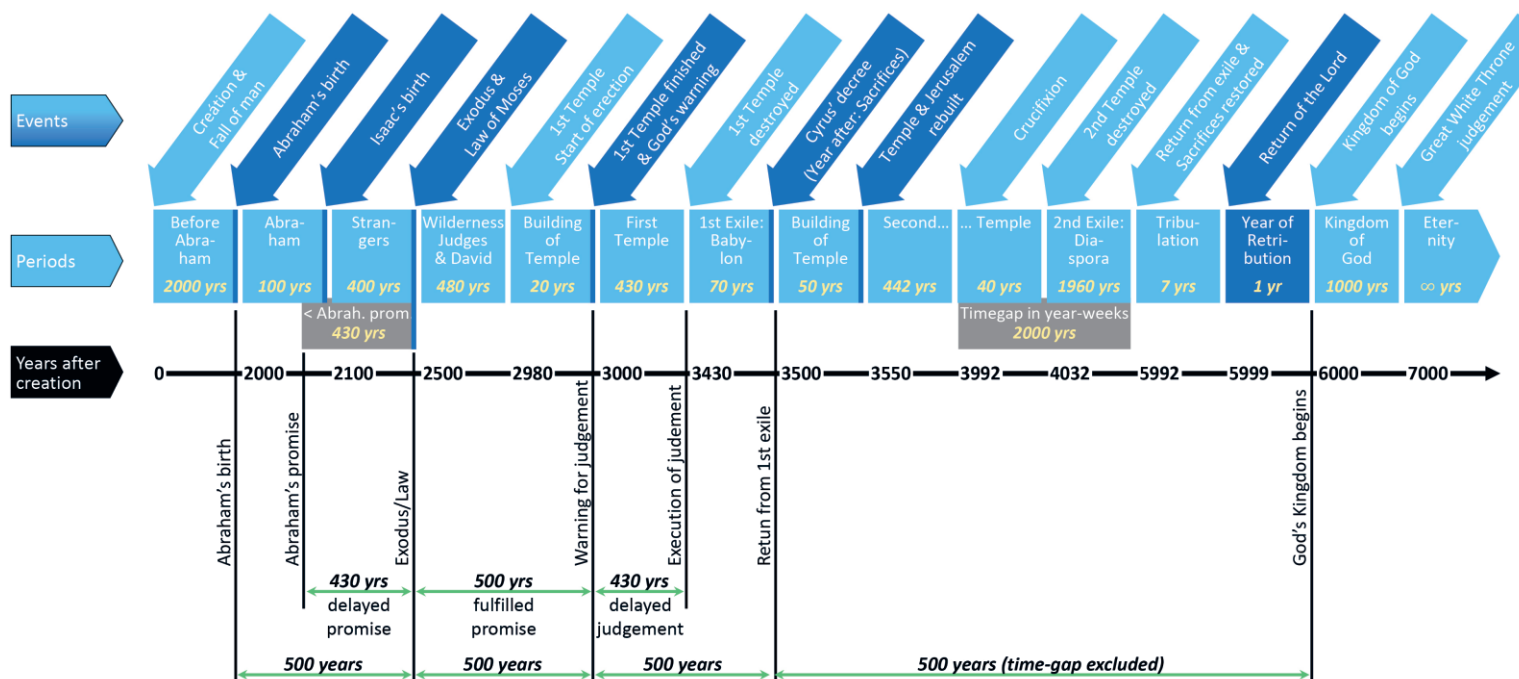


Figure 14. Symmetries in God's plan of salvation.

Summary

Figure 16 on the inside of the back cover summarizes the Bible chronology including the passages needed to calculate the 7,000 years of history.

The interpretive framework used in this booklet is called chiliasm which teaches that the creation days are both historical - with one day equal to 24 hours - and prophetic - with one day equal to 1,000 years. God's rest on the seventh day of creation is mirrored by the millennial sabbath rest in the Kingdom of God.

Chiliasm is progressively revealed through Scripture. Adam would die on the same day he ate of the forbidden fruit (Gen 2:17), but he also became 930 years old (Gen 5:5). Moses reveals the reason: In God's sight, there is a link between one day and one thousand years (Ps 90:4). To get the full connection between historical days of creation and prophetic millennia of history, we must go to the New Testament. For example, Peter uses the Millennium Week when he calls for patience when Jesus' return is delayed (2 Pet 3:8). There are also plenty of events in the Bible that occur *after two days* or *on the third day* (Hos 6:2, Joh 2:1, 4:40, Luke 13:32), which is because they are prophetic patterns for events surrounding Jesus' second coming *after 2,000 years* from His first coming. Other events symbolize the Kingdom of God, and therefore the Bible carefully documents that they occur on the seventh day (Matt 17:1, Ex 24:16, Jos 6:15). Finally, the Kingdom of God is confirmed to last for 1,000 years (Rev 20:4).

The Bible describes how God limits His struggle with humans to 120 years (Gen 6:3), and Peter links this to the time until the return (2 Pet 3:6-7). A *jubilee year* should be celebrated every 50 regular years (Lev 25:11), which means that 120 Jubilees equal 6,000 years. This gives another indication of the validity of chiliasm.

Several factors signal that God has purposely incorporated the chronology based on chiliasm into the Bible:

- It is 100 percent **Scriptural**. No dates from secular history, no astronomical events and no personal revelations have been used.
- It is **complete**. All necessary time data are available, and God has nowhere left the Bible student to guesswork.
- It is **exact**. A summation of the time data gives precisely the expected 7,000 years.
- It is **verified**. All important events worth celebrating occur in jubilee years. This is the case for Abraham's and Isaac's births, the Exodus from Egypt, the conquest of Canaan, the inaugurations of the 1st and 2nd temples, Cyrus' decree and Jesus' return. Moreover, the Exodus takes place in the 50th Jubilee (the nation is born in the Jubilee of Jubilees) and Cyrus's decree occurs in the 70th Jubilee (there is a double fulfillment of God's promised limitation of the Babylonian Captivity).

Some readers may ponder why Jesus' resurrection did not take place in a jubilee year. After all, it is a crucial event in God's salvation plan, and of course, it gives every reason to celebrate. The explanation is that the Bible chronology is written from a Jewish perspective, and they do not (as a nation) celebrate the resurrection. It is not important *for them*, or rather, they have not yet realized and accepted its importance.

We have now done the chronology puzzle to its last piece. *And it fits!* This proves that God has total control over both history and Scripture. He has made no mistakes whatsoever. Why then, has He hidden this for thousands of years and revealed it only now? Dan 12:9-10 has the answer: **The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end... None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.**

So, when does Jesus return?

In this final chapter, I will try to answer the question that I believe many have been asking throughout the booklet: *When* does Jesus return? For all those (and they are many) who believe this is a well-kept secret and therefore lacks an answer, I refer to the previous chapter on pages 4-6: *Should we know when Jesus returns?*

In a way, the question has already been answered in the previous analysis: Jesus will return in 5999 AM. But of course, such a date tells us nothing if we do not know where we are today in the train of biblical events. How far have we come since creation, and how far is left until 5999 AM? Therefore, for the answer to be of interest, we need to convert it from *years after creation* to *years after Christ*. This may be done, but *not without employing at least one extra-biblical piece of data*. So we are no longer on the totally reliable biblical basis.

We need to find an event that can be dated both from the Bible (expressed as years after creation, AM) and from secular history (expressed as years after Christ, AD). Our best option is the destruction of the temple under the Romans because it occurred relatively late, and hence has a relatively small uncertainty in its secular dating. The incident occurred in 4032 AM (according to the Bible) and in 70 AD (according to secular history). And if 4032 AM corresponds to 70 AD, it is an easy task to calculate what 5999 AM corresponds to. See figure 15.

The years in the figure are based on following calculation: In the Bible, 1,967 years elapse between the destruction of the temple 4032 AM and the return 5999 AM. In secular history, the same 1,967 years must elapse from the destruction of the temple 70 AD, which means that Jesus will return in 2037 AD. However, this figure must be adjusted for the fact that the Biblical and the Gregorian years do not begin concurrently. Jesus comes on the Day of Atonement in the beginning of 5999 AM when the Gregorian year has not yet turned into 2037 AD. Hence, the Biblical and Gregorian years are offset by about 3 months in the figure. This means that we will welcome Jesus at His return on the Day of Atonement in the fall of 2036 AD.

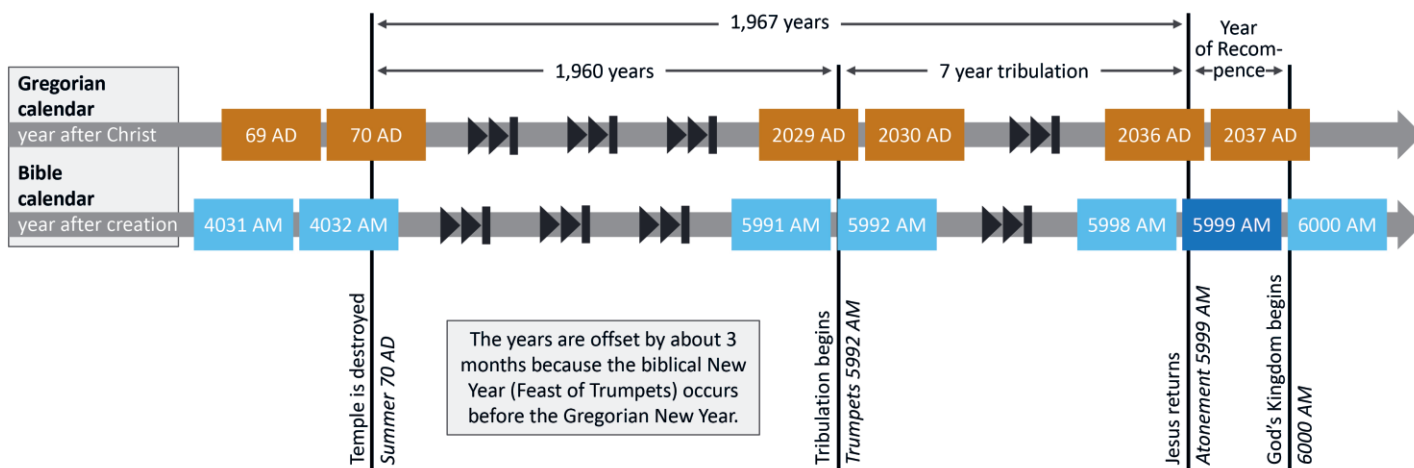


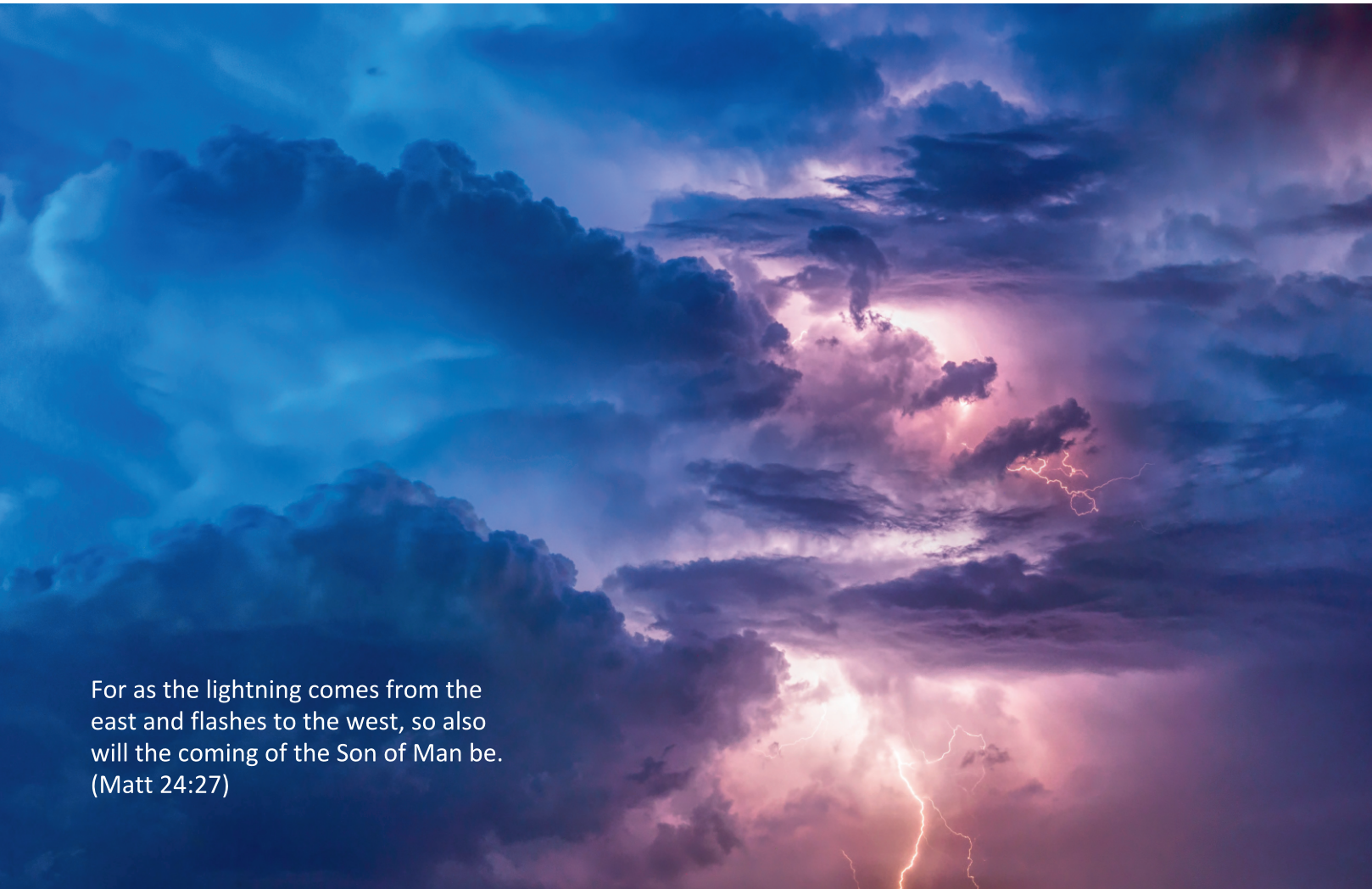
Figure 15. Conversion from year after creation [AM] to year after Christ [AD].

Remember the disclaimer: An uncertainty in the date for the temple's destruction will be inherited as an uncertainty in the date for Jesus' return. The experts are not completely in agreement, but most of them would say that the destruction took place in 70 AD. And the actual year may differ from this figure by no more than one or a few years. So even today, we can rather accurately know when Son of Man returns!

At what date in 2036 AD is the Day of Atonement? According to the calendar, it is on the first of October. However, this calendar is based on predetermined astronomical events, and as we have previously seen, the Jews may return to the observational calendar when the temple and the priesthood are back in place. This means that we cannot yet calculate the exact date of the return, even if we had known with certainty that the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. But when Antichrist sets up his abomination of desolation, then we will know that there are 1,290 days remaining! (See figure 13 on page 31.)

I mentioned earlier that many have tried to predict Jesus' second coming, and all have - as far as I know - failed. Probably, the most common reason is that they have used dates from secular history in their equations, and these are by nature more uncertain than the biblical ones. The numerous disappointments in trying to predict the day of the return have resulted in many disillusioned Christians today who do not want to repeat the same mistakes. But just as there is a risk in trying to calculate the timing, there is also a risk in refraining. What if the devil uses earlier mistakes as "the boy who cried wolf"? What if all earlier shouts that "the thief is coming" has made us negligent when the real thief stands at the door? (Notice, it is the day and not Jesus which is the thief according to 1 Thess 5:2.) Maybe our enemy uses the long line of unsuccessful "date-setters" to discourage Christians from even trying to answer questions concerning the timing of the return?

Knowledge about God's schedule for the return of Jesus is vital. It is a reminder that the time for evangelism is short, it urges us to start preparing for the rough times ahead, and it will be an invaluable help to endure until the hardships are over. **He who endures to the end shall be saved.** (Mark 13:13) Paul compares the Christian life to a sports race and calls for hard training to win the prize (1 Cor 9:24-27). A runner can discharge his last strengths by knowing exactly where the finish line is. The same goes for Christians. Why would the Bible encourage us to an athlete's discipline but at the same time withhold critical information about the duration of the battle?



For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Matt 24:27)

About the author

I was born in 1954 and live in Sweden. My wife Heléne and I have four grown children. I met Christ in 1975 during a college year in the US, and have since then had a great fascination with the Bible, especially when I discover things that prove its reliability, accuracy and internal consistency. I tremble before God's holiness, and I melt when I get a glimpse of His love. My formal education is in physics and mathematics, and my professional career has been in IT. As a layman in the theological field, I have been free to study Scripture without constraints from any particular teaching or denomination.

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About the book: The Maestro's Magnum Opus

(Available only in Swedish with the title *Mästerdirigentens Verk*.)

The chronology of this booklet is an extract from this far more extensive book, which describes the entire salvation plan from the Bible and anchors it in seven "ASPECTS": Archaeology, Science, Prophecies, External sources, Codes, Times (chronology) and Stars. (In Swedish "KUNSKAP" = knowledge.) Together they constitute decisive evidence of the Bible's divine inspiration.

Web: www.masterdirigentensverk.se (Swedish)



About the YouTube channel: Bible Channel

(Available only in Swedish with the title *Bibelkanalen*.)

The YouTube-channel contains PowerPoint-lectures with different topics from the book *Mästerdirigentens verk* including the Bibel chronology in this booklet, Jesus' second coming, creation/evolution and others.

Search "*Bibelkanalen*" on YouTube. (Swedish)

Full web-address: www.youtube.com/c/Bibelkanalen



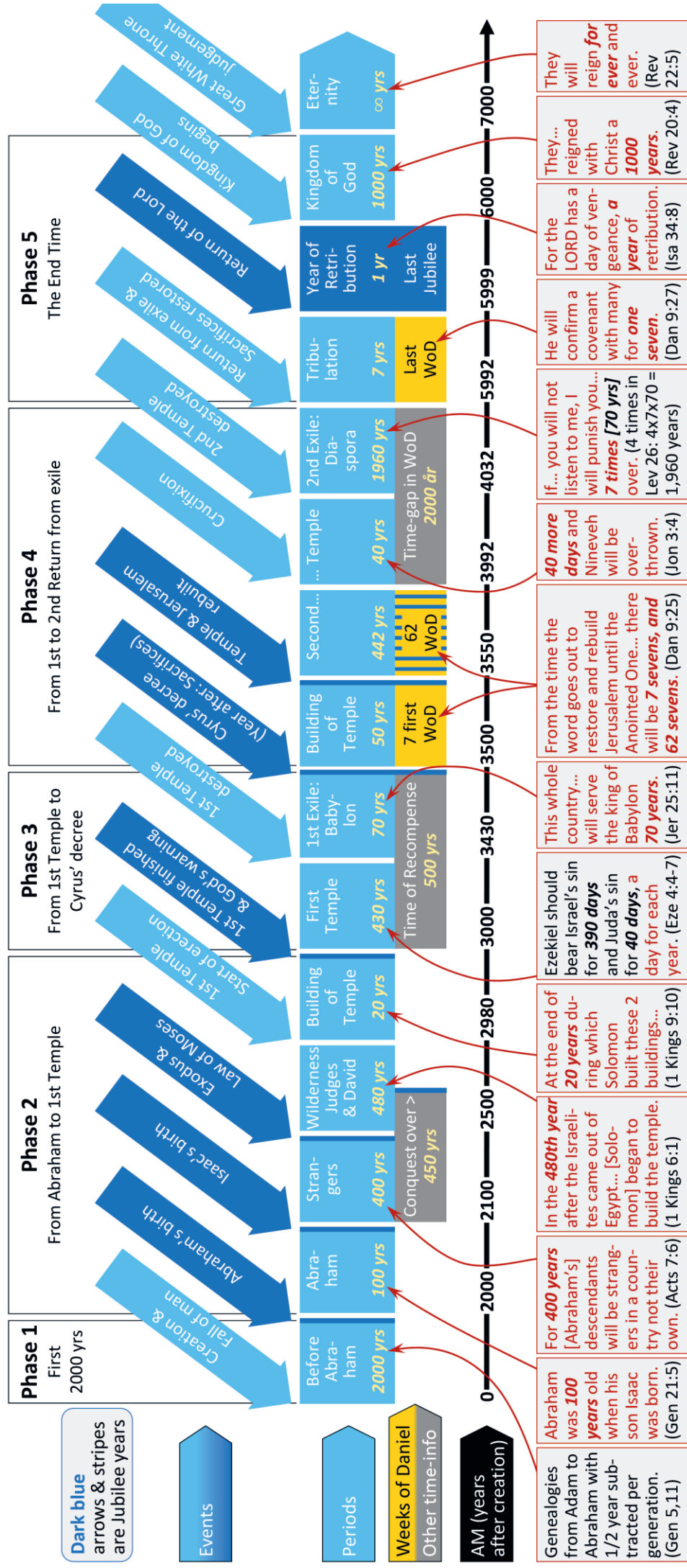
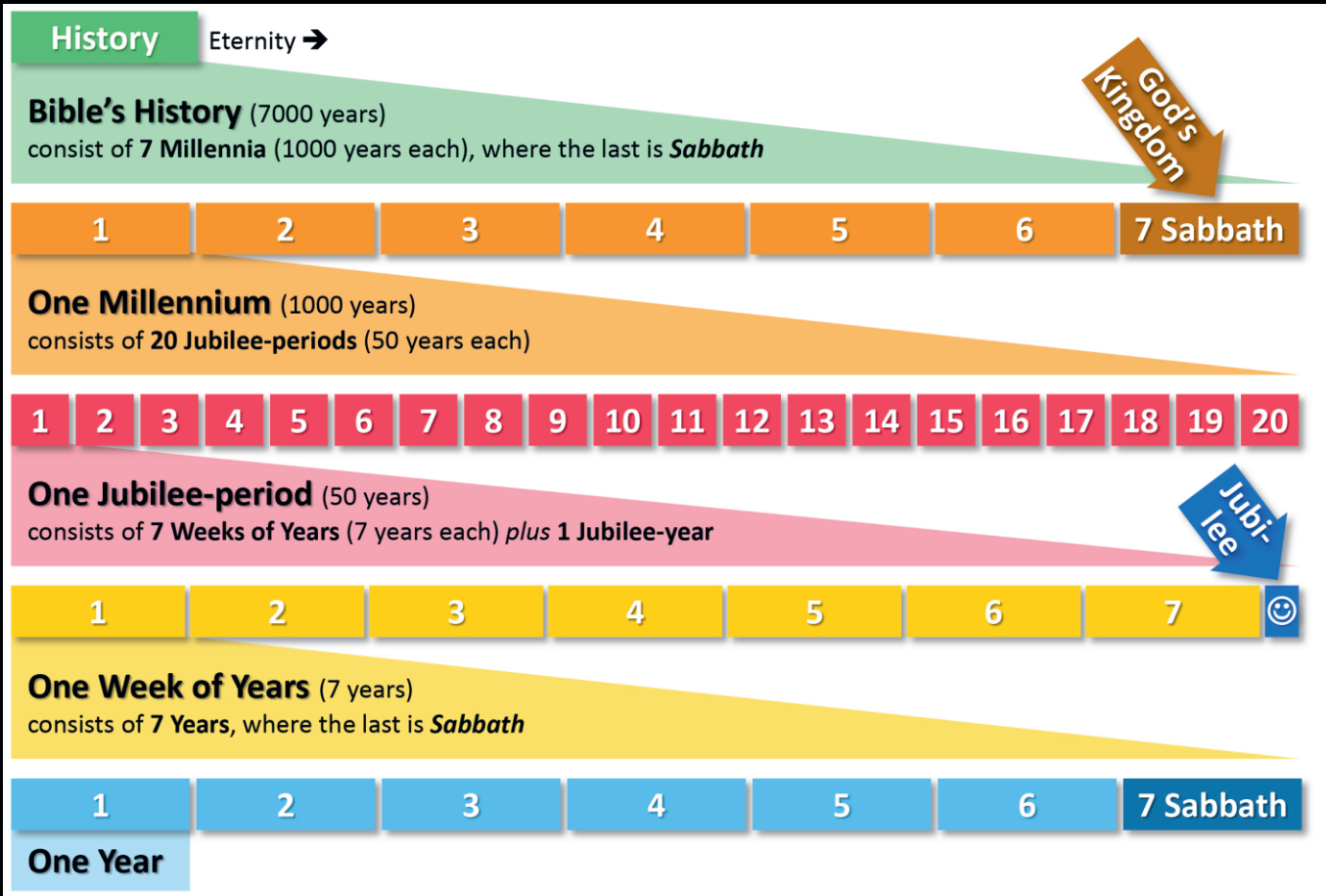


Figure 16. The Bible Chronology. (Bible quotes from NIV.)

Bible Chronology



This booklet contains a Bible chronology that encompasses historical events in God's salvation plan from creation to eternity. The chronology retrieves all of its time data from Scripture, and it is complete, accurate, and verified.

An important event in the chronology is Jesus' return to earth, and it will occur 5,999 years after creation. The booklet also converts this year and expresses it as years after Christ. However, here the accuracy is not the same, since such an operation must contain at least one piece of non-biblical time-data.



ISBN