

12 Dates to Know for the Bible to Flow



Prior to the coming of Christ, dates were measured in relation to the first Olympics (776 B.C.) so that people would say "*in the third year of the XI Olympiad*" which would be the date we know as 743 B.C. since an Olympiad occurred once every four years. Later, dates would be measured by the reigns of Roman Emperors. The Jews have kept time (and still do) using the A.M. (*anno mundi*) which is Latin for "Year of the World." Since the 8th century, Western Civilization has dated events with the tag B.C. (**B**efore **C**hrist) and A.D. (**A**nno **D**omini – The Year of Our Lord). When the abbreviations

are properly used, B.C. is placed after the year, and A.D. comes before the year (ex. **1500 B.C.** or **A.D. 1500**) The Jews measure time from the year they believe God created the world. A.D. 2019 is 5780 A.M. Around 1980, some influential academicians, including scientists at the Smithsonian, began using B.C.E. and C.E. to avoid having to use the name of Christ or the offensive "year of our Lord" in dating abbreviations. C.E. means "Common Era" and B.C.E. means "Before the Common Era."

4000 B.C.

The Creation of Adam

We will let people fall all over themselves attempting to prove the age of the earth, but we will politely bow out. Whether you believe the earth and universe are "billions and billions" of years old, or relatively young (e.g. "thousands of years"), knock yourself out proving it. I only point out the creation of Adam, the first man, on this date. Scientists recently finished tracing the human genome and "discovered" that all human beings descend from one man and one woman. Science only confirmed what the Bible reveals. Since nobody was around when the first man and woman appeared, it seems to me it takes greater faith to believe all humans evolved from amoebas and apes than it does Adam and Eve were created by God in His image (see Genesis 1:27).

2345 B.C.

The Flood of Noah



Some believe this flood is *global and catastrophic*, others believe this biblical flood is *local and hyperbolic* (exaggerated). As for me, since every nation of the world has a flood legend in her history, I lean toward a worldwide cataclysmic flood. God caused the population of the earth to perish because "man was evil." The re-population of the earth began again with Noah's sons (Shem,

Ham, and Japheth) and their descendants, from whom all the people groups of the world can be traced. The Table of Nations in Genesis 10 is a stunning study on the world's population growth, as well as a key that unlocks the door to different cultures that cover the globe. The population of the world can only be what it is today if you begin populating the world with people *from scratch* in 2500 B.C. Otherwise, the world's population by the scientific rate of growth (a doubling of population every 74 years) would have our world population in the trillions (instead of 7 billion).

2000 B.C.

The Call of Abram



Abram was living in "Ur of the Chaldees" (an ancient city in modern Iraq) when God told him to leave his country, his people, and his father's family to go *"to a land that I will show you"* (Genesis 12:1). This call of God to Abram is key to understanding the Bible. The Creator of the world is calling Abram to Himself to "make of him a great nation" (Genesis 12:2), through whom "all the peoples of the earth will be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

This call is the beginning the nation called Israel, through whom the Messiah - who would bless all peoples of the earth - would come.

Abram had a son named Isaac, and Isaac had a son named Jacob, whose name God changed to "Israel." Israel had twelve sons, from whom the 12 Tribes of Israel find their origin. Thus, in the Old Testament, God identifies Himself as "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exodus 3:6).

1500 B.C.

The Call of Moses



Though this date is approximate, I believe it is very close to accurate. We know that Israel and his family went down to Egypt during a great famine and stayed because of Joseph's influence (one of Israel's sons). Over the next three centuries, the Israelites *"multiplied greatly"* (Exodus 1:7) and grew into a mighty nation. The Pharaoh of Egypt who came to power grew afraid of the Israelites, so he enslaved them. God called an Israelite named

Moses to lead His people out of their bondage in Egypt. The United States has been a nation for 240 years, less time than Israel lived in Egypt, and has grown from 100 early settlers to 325,000,000 people. Even without population growth by "immigration" like the United States has had, it's not hard to understand how Israel became a "great nation" while in Egypt. When God called Moses at the burning bush, He said, *"I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"* (Exodus 3:6).

Moses led God's people out of Egypt *back to the land that God originally gave to Abraham*, the land of Canaan. When the Israelites left Egypt in the 15th century B.C., God made a covenant with them at Mt. Sinai. This *conditional* covenant of Law was a promise that IF Israel obeyed God, THEN Israel would be blessed by God. But IF Israel violated their conditions of the covenant, THEN Israel would experience the wrath of God. We call this covenant "the Old Covenant." Israel called it "The Law."

The Law included everything about Israeli life in their new land - the calendar, the festivals, the taxes, the sacrifices, Temple worship, Sabbath days, dietary laws, civil laws, etc., - literally everything about Israel revolved around God's Law. Why? The Law pointed to the Messiah who was to come through Israel to *"bless all the peoples of the earth"* (Genesis 12:3). Jesus came "to fulfill the Law." Jesus is the true and faithful Israel who is fulfills the Law and deserves all the blessings of God.

1051 B.C.

The Kingdom of Israel



God led Covenant Israel to the land of Canaan and empowered them to defeat the Canaanites and subdue the land (read Joshua and Judges). For the next four hundred years, God's people sought to live by the Covenant, but eventually they began to forget they were a special people in covenant with God. The Israelites began looking at neighboring nations with kings and wanted "a king" for themselves.

They asked their prophet Samuel for God to give them a king over Israel "like other nations" (I Samuel 8). When God allowed Israel to have a king, it was the beginning of a decline that eventually led to a complete divorce of God from national Israel because Israel "broke the covenant with God" (Jeremiah 3:8). Of course, this was all part of the providential.

God's Law was intended to reveal the depths of man's sin (Romans 3:7-25) and the beauty of mankind's Savior. Jesus fulfills the Law and gives perfect righteousness and corresponding blessings from God to all those who trust Him (Philippians 3:7-11). A kingdom is "a king's dominion" - and Israel had three kings in their history as a kingdom: Saul (1051-1011 B.C.) - David (101 - 971 B.C.) - Solomon (971 - 931 B.C.).

931 B.C.

The Division of the Kingdom of Israel



When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam wished to continue the heavy taxes his father had imposed to build the Temple. 10 tribes of Israel rebelled and started their own kingdom with another son of Solomon named Jeroboam. This split in Israel led to *two nations*. The 10 tribes formed a *northern kingdom* they called Israel and they moved their capital to a city they called Samaria. They built for themselves their own temple, and began to worship pagan gods. Two tribes - Judah and Benjamin - remained in the south and formed *the southern kingdom* called Judah. The southern kingdom kept Jerusalem as their capital, continued to worship at the Temple, and tried to keep their covenant with God. Of the **nineteen kings** that would eventually rule the northern kingdom of Israel, *not one of them was a good king in the sight of God*. Of the **twenty kings** that would eventually rule the southern kingdom of Judah, *about half were good, and the other half were evil*. You will never understand the Old Testament until you know that the prophetic books of the Old Testament are words of warning to either the northern kingdom or the southern kingdom to repent of their violations of their covenant with God and return to Him. The books of the Old Testament look like this:

Historical books (17 - Genesis to Esther)

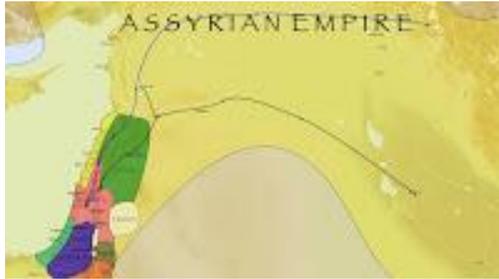
Poetical books (5 - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon)

Prophetical books (17 - Isaiah to Malachi)

You will only comprehend the last seventeen books of the Old Testament when you understand that the prophets who wrote the prophetic books were either speaking to Israel, Judah or both kingdoms.

722 B.C.

The Fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel



The northern kingdom of Israel never followed God in covenant relationship. Their nineteen kings were all evil. Stories like that of King Ahab and Jezebel reveal how lost the people of Israel and their leaders were. Prophets like Elijah, Hosea, and others came to northern Israel and spoke to the people and kings on behalf of God. Their message was "repent" or "perish." The people of Israel closed their ears to the warnings of God through the prophets, God then

raised up the Assyrians, the world's first empire, to bring to an end the northern kingdom of Israel. In 722 B.C. Assyria conquered the northern kingdom, took the Israeli men into captivity (Nineveh was Assyria's capital), and brought in pagan men they'd captured in other nations and forced them to intermarry with the Israeli women. The descendants of these "mixed marriages" were the Samaritans, considered "half-breeds" by the Jews of Jesus day. In fact, the Jews (Jew is an abbreviation for Judah, the people of the southern kingdom) would go to great lengths to avoid the Samaritans and the land in which they lived (Samaria). But not Jesus. "*He must go through Samaria*" (John 4:4) because Jesus is interested in giving life to the least, the lost and the littlest - those the world rejects. It was in the land of Samaria that Jesus met the woman at the well and gave her the water of life. Though the descendants of the mixed marriages were called "Samaritans," after the fall of the northern kingdom, the 10 northern tribes of Israel were forever lost - thus they are called the "Lost Tribes." The Mormons wrongly teach that these lost tribes became the Native Americans. In reality, the tribal identity of northern Israel was lost because they broke covenant with God, and God divorced Himself from them as a nation.

586 B.C.

The Fall of the Southern Kingdom

After the fall of the northern kingdom, the southern kingdom (Judah), composed of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, would be the only families of Israel remaining. Of course, the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Jesus) was to come from Judah, and the Messiah would "reign over the house of David forever." King David was from the tribe of Benjamin. So the promise God originally made to Abraham that through him "all the nations of the earth would be blessed" was still in effect. However, the people of Judah began to go the way of their northern brothers. Prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others began to warn Judah that they too would perish if they didn't repent and return to God. The world's second empire, the Babylonians, conquered the Assyrians, and in a series of three increasingly severe attacks on Jerusalem (609, 597 and 586 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, eventually destroyed the Temple and the city of Jerusalem, and took the Jews (the abbreviation for the people of Judah) into captivity. This captivity into Babylon (modern Iraq and Iran) is called "The Babylonian Exile." I date this 70 years of captivity from 609 B.C. when Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are taken by Nebuchadnezzar from Jerusalem to Babylon, to the fall of Babylon to the Persians in October of 539 B.C. Many amazing things occurred during the Jews captivity in Babylon. Synagogue worship begins. Daniel wrote his prophetic books and names the date for the coming of the Messiah. The "magi" from the East who came looking for "He who has been born king of the Jews" came because they knew Daniel's scroll. He was the most revered magi of them all, and he was a Jew who never went back to Jerusalem, but stayed in Babylon (and is buried in Iran).

400 B.C.

The Close of the Old Testament



When the Jews returned from Israel after their Babylonian captivity, they were led by men like Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah, and they rebuilt the walls and the city of Jerusalem. The Jews rebuilt the Temple itself and re-dedicated it in 516 B.C. They tried to get back to their normal lives in the land of Israel. Esther, a Jew born in Babylonian captivity, would remain in Babylon and eventually marry a Persian king named Xerxes. Her story is the last historical book of the Old Testament. A ton of people read the Old Testament and get confused because they don't realize if you wish to read the Bible chronologically, you must stop at the 17th book (Esther). The middle five books of

poetry in the Old Testament, and the last seventeen books of the Old Testament (the books of the prophets) *fit within the first seventeen books of the Old Testament according to the history of Israel*. It's interesting to note that though the Jews picked up their worship of God at the re-dedication of the rebuilt Temple in 516 B.C., the Spirit of God was never again present in the Temple worship of the Jews. It is during this time period (from the close of the Old Testament, to the coming of Christ) that there is the rise of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. When there is the worship of God without the Spirit of God, you will either have the rise of legalism (Pharisees) or the rise of liberalism (Sadducees). From the close of the Old Testament to the birth of Christ, you have a period where the Persians are defeated by the Greeks, the Greeks are then defeated by the Romans, and during the Roman rule of the world, the Messiah appears (see Daniel 11). Daniel prophesied all these events so precisely, skeptics assumed Daniel couldn't have written it (because man can't tell the future). These skeptics were silenced at the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls which contained the complete book of Daniel and showed it was written before the events occurred. Man may not know the future, but God does.

4 B.C.

The Birth of Christ



I won't get into the reasons why the scholars in the middle ages made a four-year error when they started B.C. and A.D. dating (Clue: It has to do with leap years), but it will help to you understand the span and scope of the Old Testament if you remember the numbers 4 and 0. **4000 B.C.** - *The Creation of Adam*. Take away a zero. **400 B.C.** - *The Close of the Old Testament*. Take away two zeroes. **4 B.C.** - *The Coming of Christ*.

Remember, Jesus Christ came "to fulfill the Law" and make a New Agreement with the world. The Old Covenant was a conditional agreement whereby those who perfectly obeyed God were perfectly blessed by God. In the New Agreement (Covenant), all those who trust Christ - who came to fulfill the Law - are perfectly blessed by God. The life, death and

resurrection of Jesus Christ is a life that actively fulfilled the Law through His personal obedience, and passively fulfilled the Law through His death in the place of sinners. The coming of God in Christ to this world is the center point of history. History is His story. I find it absolutely without excuse that Christians are very excited and talk to others more about Christ's second coming than we do His first coming. His coming in 4 B.C. changes everything.

A.D. 30

The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Christ



The death of Jesus Christ is God's mercy for sinners. God forsook the Son He loved that He might never forsake those who love His Son. The demons of hell will leave alone anyone who talks generically about God. But when someone begins telling others that "*God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself*" the demons go crazy. For those who have a hard time understanding how God can come to earth as a Man, it usually revolves around how the immortal, invisible and immutable Creator could ever be "limited" to a Man. The answer is beautiful. We worship and serve only one God.

But this God who created us so transcends our ability that we could never know Him except for the fact in His love for us God condescends to our level and reveals Himself to us. Christ came that we might know God. He is Emmanuel - God with us. When you come to understand that God conquered sin and death for those who will trust Christ, then the same power that raised Christ from the dead goes to work within you. Jesus came that we might have life, and this life is for those who trust Him.

A.D. 70

The Destruction of the Jewish Temple

The time between the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (A.D. 30) to the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans (A.D. 70) is what the Bible calls "*the last days.*" It's the last days of the Old Covenant, not the last days of the world. In fact, during this time of transition (40 years), the good news of what Christ came to do went to "the Jews first, then the Gentile" (Romans 1:16). Daniel prophesied the end of the nation of Israel (Daniel 9:24-27), and just like God gives a period of mercy during transitions in His dealings with His people (40 days of the flood; 40 years in the wilderness; 40 days of temptation, etc.), God gave His people 40 years before He brought the worship of the Jews at the Temple to an end. "The last days" of the Old Covenant are the beginning of a New Agreement between God and the world.

MIND THE GAP

The purpose of this study is to pay attention to the large gap of time between 400 BC to 4 BC. There is an abundance of literature written during this gap of time, but it is not included in our Protestant Bibles.

By the time we are through with our study, you will see how the world of Malachi is totally different than the world of John the Baptist. It will help you understand the Bible better than before.