

**TEACHERS' MANUAL**

**for**

# **Ancient World History**

**by**

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## PREFACE

More than a decade has passed since the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools began to publish materials and sponsor workshops that would produce manuals that would be beneficial and helpful to the teacher in the instruction of the seed of the covenant in the Protestant Reformed Christian Schools.

One of the earliest projects sponsored by the Federation was the production of a series of Ancient History outlines prepared by Mr. Fred Hanko and Miss Agatha Lubbers. These notes and teaching outlines never received wide distribution and were published in a very crude and easily expendable form.

During the past 18 months (since February of 1976) five teachers have been meeting on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The purpose of these meetings has been to revise the originally produced Ancient History outlines and teaching helps so that a revised manual could be produced. Many Scriptural references have been added to the outlines and the conclusions which include the interpretive ideas have been carefully studied and discussed. Long hours were spent discussing the problems of chronology. Papers have been included which discuss the problems faced by the members of the workshop in revising these outlines.

Much of the work of the members of the workshop and the discussion can not be included in this manual. The most substantial growth has resulted for the teachers themselves who have been working on this project.

The teachers who have worked on the project are the following: Mr. Fred Hanko, Mr. Calvin Kalsbeek, Mr. Harry Langerak, and Mr. Peter Vander Schaaf. Miss Agatha Lubbers served as director of the workshop and as editor of the teaching manual in Ancient History.

The members of the workshop make these materials available in the present form knowing that this is not the final word on the teaching of such an expansive subject as four millenia of world history. Certain topics because of the exigencies of time and publishing deadlines could not be included.

The members of the workshop solicit the suggestions of teachers so that revisions and improvements can be made which will make future manuals of this kind more beneficial and useful.

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## PROLOGUE

The Apostle Peter tells the Church of all ages that in the last days scoffers shall arise who will walk after their own lusts. (II Peter 3:3) They will hold down the truth in unrighteousness (Cf. Romans 1:18) because they are false prophets and false teachers who introduce damnable heresies. (II Peter 2:1) Many shall follow these pernicious ways and because of this the truth shall be denied.

The Church of God in all the ages of the history of this world has been called to battle scoffers and heretics but especially in these days when Modernism and Scientism abound the Church of the twentieth century is called to educate her sons and daughters in the Truth. Evolutionists, false philosophers, and sophists pervert the truth in the name of science and intellectual integrity. They are children of their father, the devil, who is the liar from the beginning. (John 8:44) Archaeological finds are given more credence than the Holy Scripture, which is the written record of the Word of God. It is God's inerrant revelation of His works and words to man.

Men declare that all things have continued uniformly since the beginning. They are those who deny the veracity of the Scriptural record that God in the beginning created the heavens and earth. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Cf. Hebrews 11:3, Belgic Confession, Art. 2, 12) Infidels and skeptics deliberately ignore the truth that "by the word of God the heavens and earth were made." (Cf. II Peter 3:5)

The Scriptures unequivocally state that the Word *was* in the beginning. The Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made through Him and without Him (i.e. Christ, the Word. made Flesh) was not anything made that was made. (Cf. John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:2-3)

The apostle Paul states with authority and clarity that the divine Word of John's gospel, chapter 1, is the image of true invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible whether thrones or principalities, or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (cohere hold. together, cf. Colossians 1:15-18).

In a day when humanism, dualism, and Satanism are gaining in strength in many institutions of education, it is important that all instruction of the history of the world be given from the perspective of the Word of God. Man by nature perverts and corrupts all that he sees. He does this in his interpretive activities too. He will hold down and suppress the truth. The invisible things of God and the creation of the world are clearly seen but man has become a fool. (Romans 1:18, 20)

The Lord saw this wickedness of man soon after Creation but 1650 years after he had created the world he announced that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6) Man served the creature and did not glorify God because he was unthankful. (Romans 1:21) Sin had born its ultimate fruit. The cup of iniquity was full. Man must receive his reward because the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23)

The Lord said, therefore, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and. beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." (Genesis 6:7)

God did exactly that. He destroyed what he had originally created so that the heavens and earth that now exist are not exactly the same, but they are preserved by the same creative word of God. (Netherlands Confession, Art. 12) The heavens and the earth that we now see are being kept until the day of judgment and the destruction of ungodly men. (II Peter 3:7; Job 21:30)

\* \* \* \* \*

These truths the seed of the Covenant must be taught. Godly parents have promised to train their children piously and. religiously. Parents, who fear God, have publicly said that they believe the doctrines contained in the Old and New Testament to be the word of God.

So that they may do this, thoroughly prepared teachers, and. instructors, who are consistently Christian must be employed. Such Christian teaching demands teaching aids, guides, and manuals written from the perspective of the Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions.

It is with this hope that these materials have been prepared and written for the instruction of the seed of the Covenant.

Agatha Lubbers

**TEACHING  
UNITS**

## UNIT I: FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

- I. Creation—(c. 4000 B.C.)
  - A. It is important that we stress here that the infallible Scriptures permit no interpretation but that God through His Son created the earth in six days of twenty-four hours. We believe that the earth is approximately six thousand years old. (Gen. 1 and 2; Eph. 3:9-10; John 1:1-3; Neth. Confession, Article 12.)
  - B. The creation was complete and perfect in every part. (Gen. 1:31)
  - C. Man was created in the image of God. He possessed true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. He was lord, of creation and lived in the Garden as friend-servant of God. (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord,'s Day 3; Gen.1:26-27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.)
- II. The Garden of Eden
  - A. The Garden of Eden was probably located at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
  - B. We have no idea concerning the length of Adam and Eve's lives in the Garden, but it seems to have been a rather short time. (Genesis 2)
- III. The Fall
  - A. As a result of the fall man became totally depraved; he can only will sin in all his thoughts and actions. He strives to subdue the creation to serve his evil desires. He deliberately and actively invents gods in opposition to the true God. His entire culture is anti-God. (Genesis 3:1-24; Netherlands Confession of Faith, Articles 14-17; Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 2-4.)
  - B. As a result of the fall, man lost the image of God, so that he no longer possessed any true knowledge, righteousness or holiness. Because he remains one who was created to bear the image of God, man has qualities, such as reason, which make him distinct from the animals. These qualities man uses to oppose the true knowledge of God and to invent other gods. The image of God which he lost can be restored only in Christ. (Romans 1; Eph. 4:24; Rom. 6:4; Gal. 6:15; Col. 3:10.)
  - C. Another result of the fall was that the earth was cursed. The ground itself that had previously been very fruitful now brought forth thistles and thorns. Bread and food would become available to man only in the sweat of his brow. "The whole creation groaneth and. travaileth in pain together until now." (Gen. 3:16-19; Romans 3:20-22.)
  - D. Each man is born with the knowledge that there is a God and that He must be served. Man, then, does not serve idols from ignorance but from the desire to suppress the truth. Thus every man is without excuse. (Romans 1:18ff.; Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 6:5.)
  - E. History is the story of the war of the "seed of the serpent" against the "seed of the woman." (Gen. 3:15) But the victory is also assured to the woman in Christ. This

war begins already in the war between the seed of Cain and Abel. (Heb. 11:4; I John 3:12.)

#### IV. The Earth Before the Flood

- A. It seems likely that it did not rain before the flood. There may have been no change of seasons. (Gen. 2:5-6; 8:22; 9:13.)
- B. There was probably a single land mass which separated to form the continents at the time of the flood. (Recent studies of plate tectonics verify this, although worldly scientists do not attribute the separation to the flood.)
- C. The great ages of men before the flood resulted in an extremely rapid growth of population. For a helpful discussion of this topic refer to *Old Testament History, The Prediluvian Period*, pages 28-38, by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema. Cf. Bibliography.

#### V. Civilization Before the Flood

- A. There was a rapid development of culture especially among the descendants of Cain. In a short time we read of the establishment of cities (Gen. 4:17), of domesticated animals, musical instruments, metalworking. (Gen. 4:19ff.)
- B. There was also a rapid development of wickedness. At the time of the flood the earth was filled with corruption. (Gen. 6:5)
- C. From the absence of any mention of it we can assume that there was no comparable advance of culture among the descendants of Seth. This was undoubtedly because they did not have the same goals as the Cainites. Their concern was not merely to make this world a better place in which to live. The descendants of Seth were fruitful, and multiplied, and replenished the earth and subdued it, but in these activities they “served the Creator rather than the creature.” (Rom. 1:25; I Cor. 1:26ff.; Eph. 4:24; Rom. 6:4; H.C. Hoeksema, *The Prediluvian Period*, Chpt. 4, pp. 39-51.)
- D. A form of public worship was begun early. (Gen. 4:26)
- E. There was a great falling away of the people of God. “The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose.” (Gen. 6:2)
- F. There were men of outstanding faith in those days, such as Enoch who “walked with God.” (Gen. 5:22-24; Heb. 11:4-7)
- G. By the time that the flood began, the only God-fearing people left on the earth were Noah and his family. Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, died the year that the flood came, 1656 years after the creation of the world. (I Pet. 3:20; Gen. 7:7)

#### VI. The Flood (c. 2300 B.C.)

- A. The flood occurred 1656 years after creation. (Gen. 5:1-32; Gen. 4: 16-24; H.C. Hoeksema, *The Prediluvian Period*, Chpt. 3, pp. 28-38, “A Significant Genealogy—Chronology.”)
- B. The flood was world-wide and destroyed all living animals and man except those saved in the ark with Noah. (Gen. 7:21-23; II Pet. 2:5; Job 12:15; Matt. 24:37, 39)



- C. The flood was the great catastrophe (kataklusmos, II Peter 2:5) of ancient history. There were undoubtedly tremendous changes in the surface of the earth as a result of it. (II Pet. 3:6; I Pet. 3:20; Luke 17:27) These questions may be considered:
  1. Was the earth first tilted on its axis at this time?
  2. Were the mountains made at this time?
  3. Were the continents formed in the upheaval that accompanied the flood?
- D. At the time of the flood the world had filled the cup of iniquity and had become ripe for Judgment. The destruction by the flood is a type of the destruction of the earth at the end of time. (Gen. 6:5, 11, 12, 13; Matt. 24:37, 39; II Pet. 3:8-10)
- E. The judgment of God upon the wicked of which the flood is an example occurs throughout the history of the world and culminates in the final judgment. (II Pet. 2:5; Heb. 11:7.; Ps. 29:10)
- F. The flood is also an example of the fact that God preserves His Church. This is one of the most important factors in the understanding and interpretation of history. The flood is salvation. (I Pet. 3:20-21; H.C. Hoeksema, *The Prediluvian Period*, Chpt. 9, "Salvation by Water," pp. 108-114)

#### VII. God's Covenant of Grace

- A. God's covenant is the relationship of friendship between God and His people in Christ.
- B. This covenant includes the promise of Christ, and through Christ, the preservation and eventual salvation of the entire Church.
- C. The judgment that God brings upon the evil world through the flood is also the salvation of the church. There is redemption through judgment. In this way God realizes His covenant of grace. (Gen. 6:17-18)
- D. The covenant, then, is the basic factor throughout history because in history God fulfills and is fulfilling His covenant.

#### VIII. Some conclusions and observations about the period before the flood.

- A. It should be emphasized that we believe that the Father by the Word, that is, by His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, hath created the heavens, the earth, and all creatures.

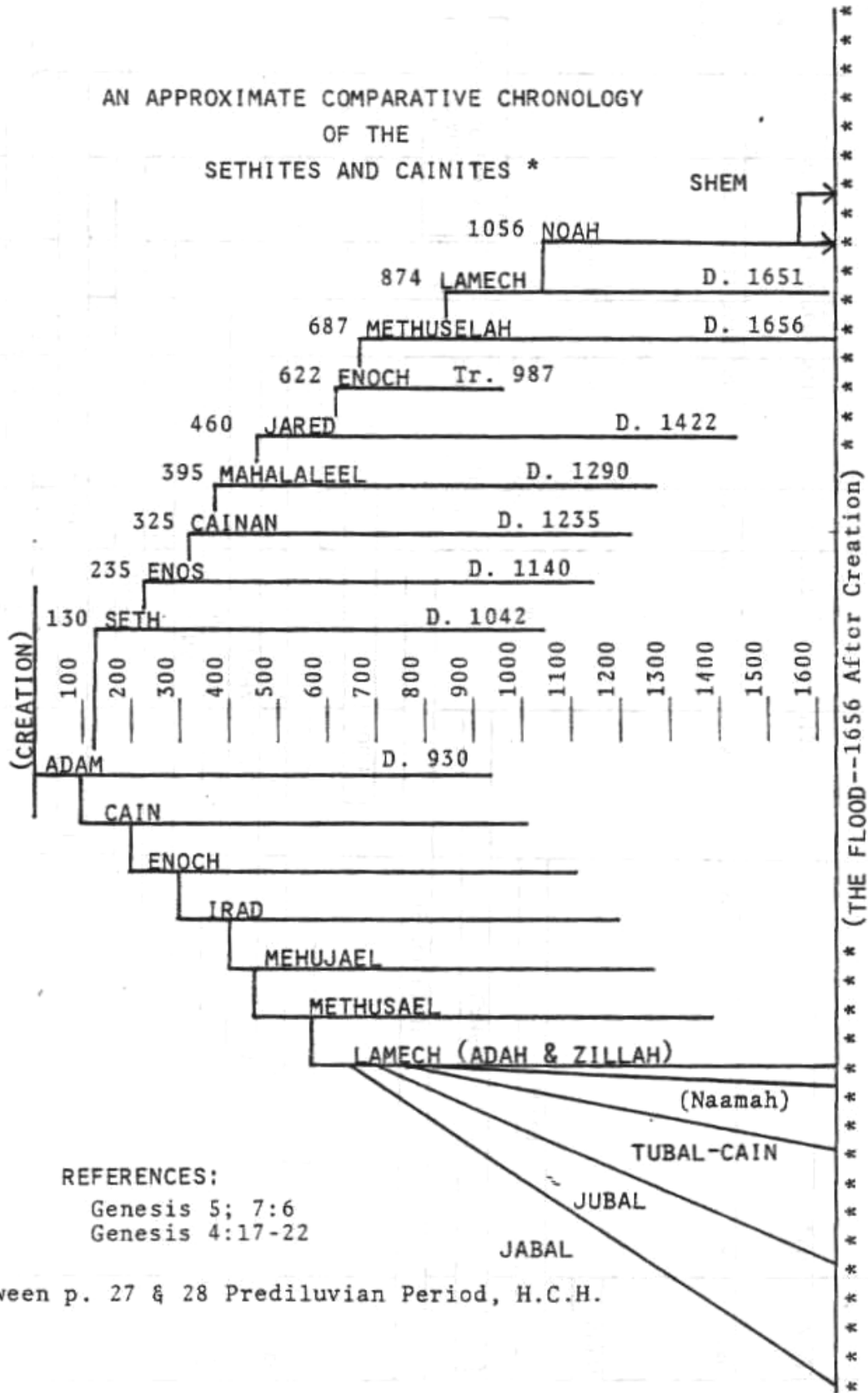
It is important that the teacher take time to read with the students Article 12, of the Netherlands Confession of Faith.

Several key passages of the Scriptures ought to be discussed and memorized. They are the following: Ps. 33:6; John 1:1-3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2.

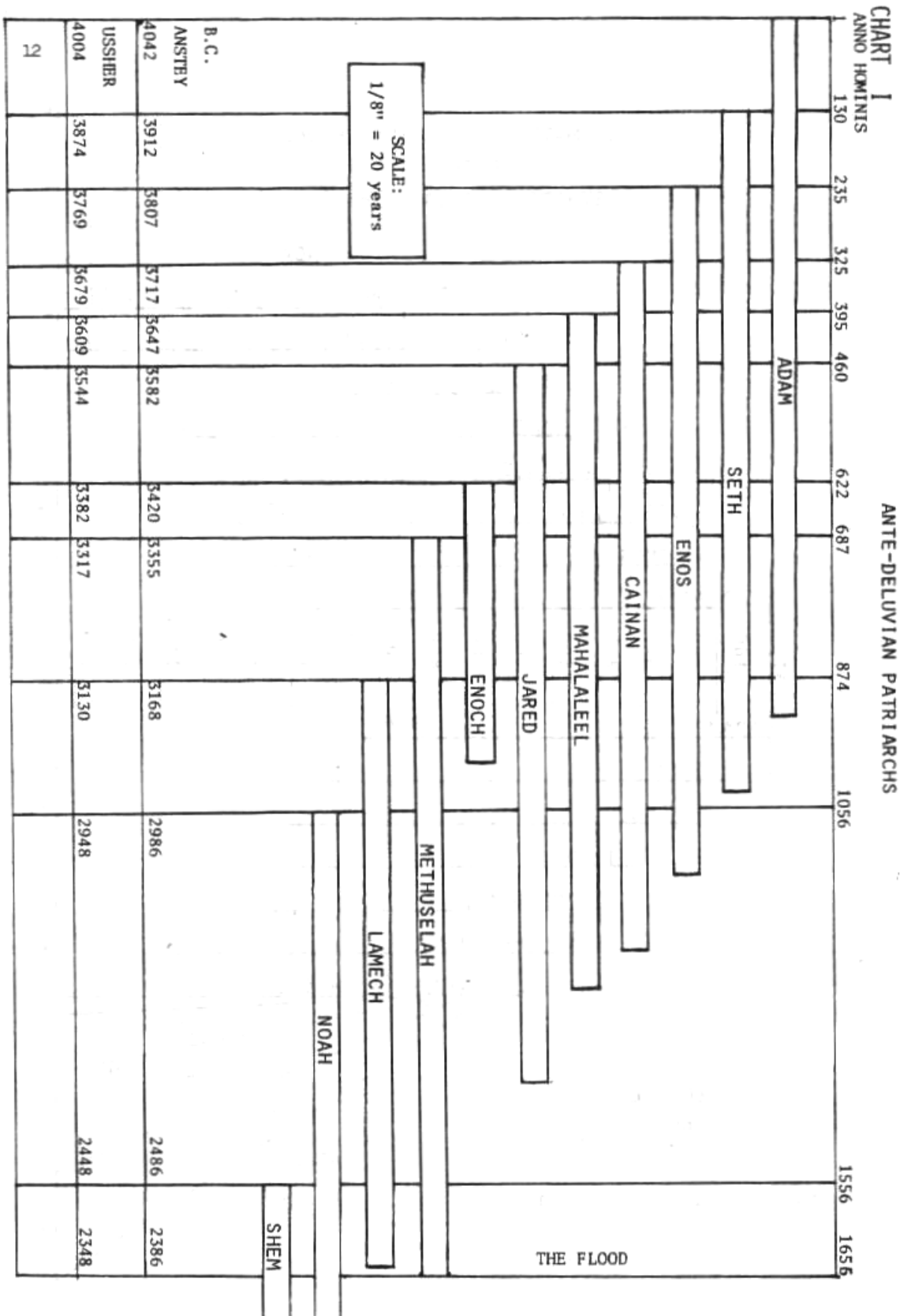
- B. There is evidence of a rapid development of sin. ("The organic development of sin is rapid in a race whose members live together for centuries." cf. Ophoff, p. 101.)
  1. The murder of Abel
  2. Lamech's boasting, Gen. 4:24.

3. “And God saw the wickedness of man...” Gen. 6:5.
  4. “...all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.” Gen. 6:12.
  5. Cain’s attempt to rise above the curse of God by building a city—this was an attempt to create a point of unity for a race scattered by the curse. Gen. 4:17.
  6. Attempt of man to free himself from the curse is evident also in the scientific discoveries (Jabal, Jubal, Tubal-cain, Gen. 4:19ff.).
  7. Son’s of God take the daughters of men—rapid falling away, Gen. 6:1.
- C. Evidence of persecution
1. The murder of Abel by Cain (Gen. 4)
  2. Enoch’s translation—“...and was not found.” Heb. 11:5. This seems to indicate that Enoch was being sought.
  3. The near extinction of God’s people at the time of the flood. The survival of Noah’s family could be attributed to the world’s curiosity concerning Noah’s ridiculous ark project.
  4. “Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord...” Gen. 4:26. God’s people publicly confessed God’s name in the world with persecution as a result.
- D. The Word of God was preserved.
1. Because of the long life span of man only a few years separated the lives of Noah and Adam.
  2. Also there is evidence of direct communication between God and His people. Adam, Enoch, and Noah talked with God. God talked with Cain. (Gen. 4:9ff.)
- E. God provided a way out for His people, who certainly recognized their hopelessness in the midst of that evil race.
1. “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord...” Gen. 6:8.
  2. The flood is a means God used to destroy the wicked and people (Gen. 3:15 is in part realized by the flood).
  3. Through the flood God reveals His promise. I Pet. 3:20 “...saved by water.” in the ark typifies being saved by Christ by cross.
  4. The world before the flood is a picture of a sin cursed world without a Hope.
- F. Parallels to history after the flood.
1. Cain’s establishment of a city typifies man’s rebellious nature as it is opposed to the commands of God throughout history. (Rom. 1)
  2. The people of God before the flood are in a hopeless position. The same is true of Israel among the nations and the church in the midst of the world. Throughout the ages the only hope of God’s people is God’s promise of redemption.

AN APPROXIMATE COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY  
OF THE  
SETHITES AND CAINITES \*



3. In the rapid development of sin history was rapidly repeating itself until at Babel God retarded the progress of the Beast—the Anti-Christian world



power.

4. "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37-39.

5. The new world after the flood can be somewhat compared to the new heavens and the new earth at the final return of Christ. The “new world” after the flood is referred to in Gen. 5:29 where Lamech names his son Noah, which means Rest or Comfort. Also see Gen. 8:21 where God promises Noah that He “will not curse the ground anymore for man’s sake.”
6. The deliverance by the flood points to our deliverance by means of the cross.

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Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology*, Chapter 2.

## UNIT II: FROM THE FLOOD TO ABRAHAM

- I. Important dates
- Sumerian civilization ..... 2315 - 2200 B.C.
  - Confusion of tongues ..... 2200 B.C.
  - Akkadian civilization ..... 2200-2017 B.C.
  - Ammorite invasion..... c. 2000 B.C.
  - Birth of Abraham ..... c. 1962 B.C.
- II. Geography
- A. The Fertile Crescent
1. The Fertile Crescent received its name from the facts of its shape and that it includes the largest area of fertile land in the Middle East. The Eastern tip of the Crescent is at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and the western tip at the southern end of Palestine. It includes generally the lands of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine.
  2. The climate is hot and dry. Irrigation is essential in Mesopotamia.
  3. Because of the fertile land the entire Fertile Crescent was populated by many groups of people who carried on a very active trade. These peoples had considerable cultural influence upon each other. The Fertile Crescent was the scene of almost constant warfare in ancient times for possession of the fertile land. (Cf. Gen. 14)
- B. Sumer
1. This name is given to the southern part of Mesopotamia from the Persian Gulf northwestward about 150 miles. This area is called Shinar in the Bible.
  2. The soil is extremely good for farming, but the dry climate requires irrigation with water from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
- C. Akkad—The land of Akkad was directly north of Sumer in Mesopotamia.
- D. City-states
1. During the early part of the history of Sumer there was no single government over the whole country. Several cities dominated the land around them.
  2. Several of these city-states are mentioned in Gen. 10. They include Babel, Erech, Calneh, and Accad. Ur, of which we read later in the Bible, and Larsa were also important.
- III. Important people
- A. Nimrod, “the mighty hunter,” built the Tower of Babel and tried to unite the people and keep them in one place contrary to the command of God. (Gen. 9:1, 10:9-11, 11:1-10)
- B. Sargon I was a strong ruler of Akkad who took over Sumer after the confusion of tongues.

#### IV. History

- A. After the flood Noah and his sons came to the land of Shinar and settled there. Because men's lives were long, the land rapidly became populated. (Gen. 11:2 and 10ff.)
- B. Soon cities were established and a civilization developed. The center of this civilization was at Babel, but it covered most of Mesopotamia.
- C. The Sumerian civilization included all the people that were then in the world, and all spoke the same language.
- D. The city-states were briefly united under the wicked Nimrod.
  - 1. It was Nimrod's intent to keep all people in one part of the earth. For this reason he developed also a unifying, anti-God religion.
  - 2. If Nimrod's plan had been successful, he would have established the kingdom of antichrist. This was the first manifestation of man's perpetual attempts to establish a universal kingdom opposed to God.
  - 3. His plan was frustrated by God through the confusion of tongues. (Cf. 11.0. Hoekaema, p. 43-51; Ophoff, p. 104-113.)
- E. The confusion of tongues
  - 1. God determined that the people would spread over the whole earth according to His command.
  - 2. Therefore God caused them to speak in different languages so that they were not able to understand each other. Gen. 11:1-10.
  - 3. It is probable that here the coloring and physical characteristics of the people were also changed so that this event also marks the beginning of the various races.
  - 4. The people scattered from Babel eventually to inhabit the entire earth. See the distribution described in Gen. 10.
  - 5. In general the people scattered over the earth according to families in the following manner: the descendants of Shem remained in the Fertile Crescent and spread throughout Arabia and Asia; the descendants of Ham occupied Africa and the land of Canaan (until the Canaanites were destroyed by Israel, Gen. 9:26); the descendants of Japheth settled in the area from the Indus River throughout Europe to the Atlantic Ocean. Acts 17:26
  - 6. The descendants of Shem who remained in the Fertile Crescent are usually called Semites. The descendants of Japheth are the Indo-Europeans, who are the ancestors of the Greeks, the Persians, the Romans, and the Germanic or Teutonic peoples. (Cf. Ophoff, p. 108-115; H. C. Hoeksema, p. 52-64.)
- F. The Semitic Akkadians took over the land of Shinar after the confusion of tongues. Their civilization carried on that of Sumer.
- G. The strongest ruler of Akkad, Sargon I, ruled the entire southern part of Mesopotamia about 2200 B.C.

H. The rulers of .Akkad gradually declined in power, and after two centuries of warfare with surrounding peoples, a new kingdom arose under Ammorite invaders which we call the Babylonian kingdom.

V. Characteristics

A. Government

1. Leadership in the early history of Sumer seems to have risen from the need for leadership and control of irrigation projects.
2. The city-states were ruled by one person who was both priest and king.
3. These rulers promoted the idea that they were representatives of the gods.

B. Religion

1. The people of Sumer worshipped many gods. Each city had its own particular god and individuals sometimes chose one of their own.
2. The gods were worshipped by prayer and sacrifice.
3. They made gods of many things of the earth: Anu (sky); Enlil (atmosphere and earth); Ea (waters) and others. Their gods often took the forms of human beings.
4. They built shrines for their gods called ziggurats.
5. Ritual prostitution was a part of their religion.
6. Schools for the training of priests and children of the wealthy were attached to the temples.
7. Much of their mythology is included in the epic of Gilgamish. In this epic are stories that contain a remarkable similarity to the Biblical accounts of the creation and the flood.

C. Architecture

1. Because of the absence of timber in their country, the Sumerians made most of their buildings of sun-dried bricks.
2. They made use of the arch in doorways and made vaulted ceilings and domes.
3. The most familiar example, to us, of their architecture is the ziggurat. This structure consisted of a solid mass of brick built in a series of from three to seven terraces. These terraces were connected by a long ramp or stairway to the top, on which was placed shrine to one of their gods. The ziggurat may have been the design used in the Tower of Babel.

D. Domestic affairs

1. They used the wheel and may have been the inventors of it.
2. By means of rafts on the rivers and caravans on the with many near-by countries.



3. They used copper tools for work in their fields and copper helmets and shields for war.
4. They were skilled in working with gold for jewelry and ornaments of it.

#### E. Language and writing materials

1. The Sumerians developed the cuneiform system of writing. This system consists of wedge-shaped marks in various sizes placed at different angles. These marks and groups of marks represented syllables and words, they had no alphabet.
2. The wedge-shaped marks were pressed into clay tablets with a pointed reed. The tablet was then hardened to make the impression permanent.
3. The scribe became an important and powerful part of society. His work was essential for all transactions in business and for all records.

#### F. Astronomy

1. They developed a lunar calendar. It was necessary to slip in an extra month now and then to keep the seasons in their proper places.
2. They were familiar with several of the planets, and they believed that the movements of the planets influenced the affairs of men. This is the beginning of the false science of astrology.

### VI. Achievements

- A. The major achievements of the Sumerian-Akkadian civilization are these: the calendar, the use of wheeled vehicles, the invention of a number system, a written code of laws, the making of copper and bronze tools.
- B. The Sumerians had two number systems, a base ten system, used by the common people, and a base sixty system, used by the priests. Remnants of the base sixty system remain with us in our measurements of seconds, minutes, hours, and degrees in a circle.

### VII. Conclusions

- A. The Sumerian civilization was the basis for the later civilizations of the Fertile Crescent. The later civilizations borrowed many of the achievements of the Sumerians. The cuneiform writing, for example, was used by the later Babylonians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans until 536 B.C.
- B. If you refer to Chart II, you will observe that the Sumerian civilization flourished during the days of Noah, Shem, and others who were living witnesses of the flood. These God-fearing people certainly testified of the truth to their contemporaries.
- C. The epic of Gilgamesh taken from the Sumerian poem *Atrakhasis Epic* and the Sumerian poem *Enki and Ninmakh* include perverted stories of the creation and the flood. They are obviously a deliberate suppression of the truth, since the writers had the testimony of living witnesses after the flood. Idol worship is not the result of ignorance. Rom. 1:18ff.

- D. The separation of the people of the earth, begun at Babel remains until the present time and will continue until the coming of the Antichrist. This separation is represented by the deadly wound of the beast in Rev. 13. In this way God prevented the premature realization of Anti-christ until the time when the Church would be gathered, as He had determined in His counsel. Deut. 32:8, Acts 17:26.
- E. From the Fall until the tabernacle at Sinai the head of the clan among God-fearing people acted as prophet, priest, and king. (Note Melchizedek Gen. 14:18ff.; Job, who sacrificed for his children, Job 1:5; children of the patriarchs spoke to their fathers of “the Lord, thy God.” The perversion of the true religion led to the horrible corruptions of religious practice, including perversion of the proper use of the body as in ritual prostitution.
- F. The same suppression of the truth is found in the false science of astrology.
- G. This civilization was well-known to Abraham since he was called by God from the great city of Ur. The civilization of Mesopotamia also influenced the people of Canaan during the days of Abraham. The kings listed in Gen. 14:1 came from Mesopotamia to invade the land of Canaan.
- H. The span of human life was remarkably shortened after the flood. Life became raw and it affected man’s health and physical endurance. (Cf. Ophoff, p. 100-101; H.C. Hoeksema, p. 68-70.)
- I. The curse of God upon the ground is found in Genesis 3:17-18, “...*cursed is the ground* for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.” This same curse is found in Genesis 5:28-29. Concerning Noah, Lamech says, “This same shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.”

The teaching of these texts is that God in a special way cursed the ground after the fall and before the flood. Cain’s attitude toward the soil indicates his special hatred of the curse of God against the ground. We do not know the exact nature of this curse against the ground but we do know that it made the task of making a livelihood from the soil very difficult.

After the flood this special curse against the ground was lifted for Noah’s sake and for the sake of all the elect seed who shall follow Noah. In Genesis 8:20-22 God says to Noah, “...I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake.” This does not mean that we do not feel the affects of sin and the curse of God in the post-flood era but it does mean that the special curse of God against the ground in the prediluvian period was lifted. It was not lifted as some have suggested because of God’s common grace or favor to all men. It was not lifted because man was by nature better after the flood than before the flood.

The reason must lie solely in the special dispensation of God’s grace to His people shown even in the things natural. The flood was an end of an era and it pointed to the final end when there shall be no more end or beginning of days.

We wish to warn here that the lifting of the special curse in no way makes possible natural progress for man so that he will really make some progress

toward the establishment of heaven on earth. This is the goal of every natural man. The nature of the curse and the development of sin is such that all apparent progress on the part of natural man is not progress. No matter how man manages creation or manages his own affairs he cannot achieve Utopia. This world must pass away. (cf. I Cor. 7:31; Ps. 39:6; I Pet. 1:24; 4:7; Jude 12-15; H.C. Hoeksema, pp. 4-13).

- J. The post-flood era resulted in the institution of the sword-power, that is capital punishment. Genesis 9:6 states as follows: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

This institution of the sword-power, and the necessity to kill him who kills, is not to be confused with the institution of government as some do. Civil government was given and was created when Adam was ordained as king under God of the whole creation.

When Adam sinned he perverted government. Because of this perversion of government the sword-power was given to Noah and his descendants. The sword-power is a God-ordained means to preserve life and to punish the murderer. Man will not recognize this God-ordained institution. In this way man continues to pervert society and eventually creates a society in which no man can live safely. (of. Ophoff, pp. 99-100; H.C. Hoeksema, pp. 14-23, "The Sword-Power Ordinance.")

TABLE OF NATIONS DESCENDED FROM THE SONS OF NOAH \*  
Cf. Genesis 10, 11, 25, 36



\* The Old Testament, p. 110-111, G.M. Ophof

## ISRAEL AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONS \*

The Human race classified.

### A. The Hamites.

1. The black race. Ethiopians or Negro.  
Home: Central and Southern Africa.
2. The Yellow race. Mongolian or Turanian.
  - a. The Chinese and Japanese and kindred peoples of Eastern Asia.
  - b. The Nomads (Tartars, Mongols of Northern and Central Asia and of Eastern Russia.)
  - c. The Turks, the Magyars, or Hungarians, the Finns, the Lapps, and the Basques, in Europe.
  - d. The Egyptians, the Lybians (modern Barbours).

### B. The Semites: Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Aramaeans, Arabians.

### C. Japhethites—Aryans, or Indo-Europeans.

1. Asiatics.
  - a. Medes
  - b. Persians
2. Classical Peoples.
  - a. Greeks
  - b. Romans
3. Celts.
  - a. Gauls (French)
  - b. Britons
  - c. Scots
  - d. Irish
4. Teutons.
  - a. Germans
  - b. Dutch
  - c. English
  - d. Scandinavians
5. Slavs.
  - a. Russians
  - b. Poles

\* *The Old Testament*, p. 108-110, by G.M. Ophoff.

*Nota Bene:* There is considerable disagreement today among Biblical scholars about the descendants of the Hamites and the Japhethites. Hyma and Stanton in *Streams of Civilization*, p. 217, write: “Scientists now believe the first people to settle in China were descendants of Noah’s son Japheth.” All the charts in the work of Hyma and Stanton tend to indicate that they sympathize with this view. No historical evidence is included to substantiate this view.

The relation of the nations to Israel of the Old Testament.

*Observation 1.* The nations included in the civilized world of ancient times before Christ are the following:

- a. Of the Japhethites only the Asiatics and the classical nations—Medes, Persians, Greeks, Romans. The Celts and the Teutons continued in a barbaric state, until the fourth century of our Christian era.
- b. All the Semite peoples.
- c. Of the Hamites both the Black races and the Yellow races, but of the latter only the Egyptians. Of the Japanese and the Chinese we know nothing. They were not included in our horizon until our modern era.

*Observation 2.* In ancient times there was only one people of true religion, that people was the Hebrews. Israel was the church.

*Observation 3.* The peoples to develop civilization in the Middle East were all the Semite nations with the exception of the Hebrews, and the Egyptian nation of the yellow race.

*Observation 4.* All these civilizations served the church in those ancient times. A remark about these civilizations. These civilizations are not to be condemned absolutely. What is of the flesh and not out of God is only the ethical spiritual content of these civilizations. Apart from their ethical content these civilizations are out of God and not out of the devil. In so far as they are out of God they served the church in a positive sense. Therefore God wanted them. This is not an argument for common grace.

*Observation 5.* The first civilized nation to which the church was thrown into contact is the Egyptian. Then through the centuries of the Old Dispensation the Hebrews were thrown into contact with the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans of the Semitic race and later toward the close of the Old Dispensation with the Medes and the Persians and still later with the Greeks and the Romans of the Japhethites race.

How the Lord used these races of men with respect to His people:

- a. He used them to develop for His people a civilization.
- b. He used them to scourge His people, the Hebrews. Throughout the entire Old Dispensation all these people were hostile to Israel.

Appendix. The Hebrews were also thrown in contact with the Hamatic races who dwelt on Israel borders—the Canaanitish races—the Amorites etc. and also with the Moabites and the Ammonites of the Semitic race.

*Observation 6.* The covenant with Noah. Said God to Noah, “And I will establish my covenant with you and with your seed of you.” Who is this seed? In the Old Testament dispensation this seed was the elect Hebrews only and all such from the surrounding nations who were brought into the church. In the New Dispensation this seed is all the families of the earth according to the election.

This is plain from the gospel as proclaimed by Noah a short time later. He said, “Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren. Blessed be the Lord of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.” Shem is Abraham and in the final instance Christ. Japheth is all the nations that sprang from him just enumerated. God shall enlarge Japheth. First in the natural sense he will have a prodigious offspring. But the prophecy in the last instance has a spiritual meaning. It means that Japheth shall have a large elect seed. The Lord will call His church in Japheth’s generations. And they all will dwell in the tents of Shem, that is in the house of God over which Christ has been set a priest. Ham with the exception of Canaan is also included in the nations of the earth, included in Noah’s spiritual seed in Ham’s generations. Thus we see that Noah’s seed, elect seed, includes all the families of the earth.

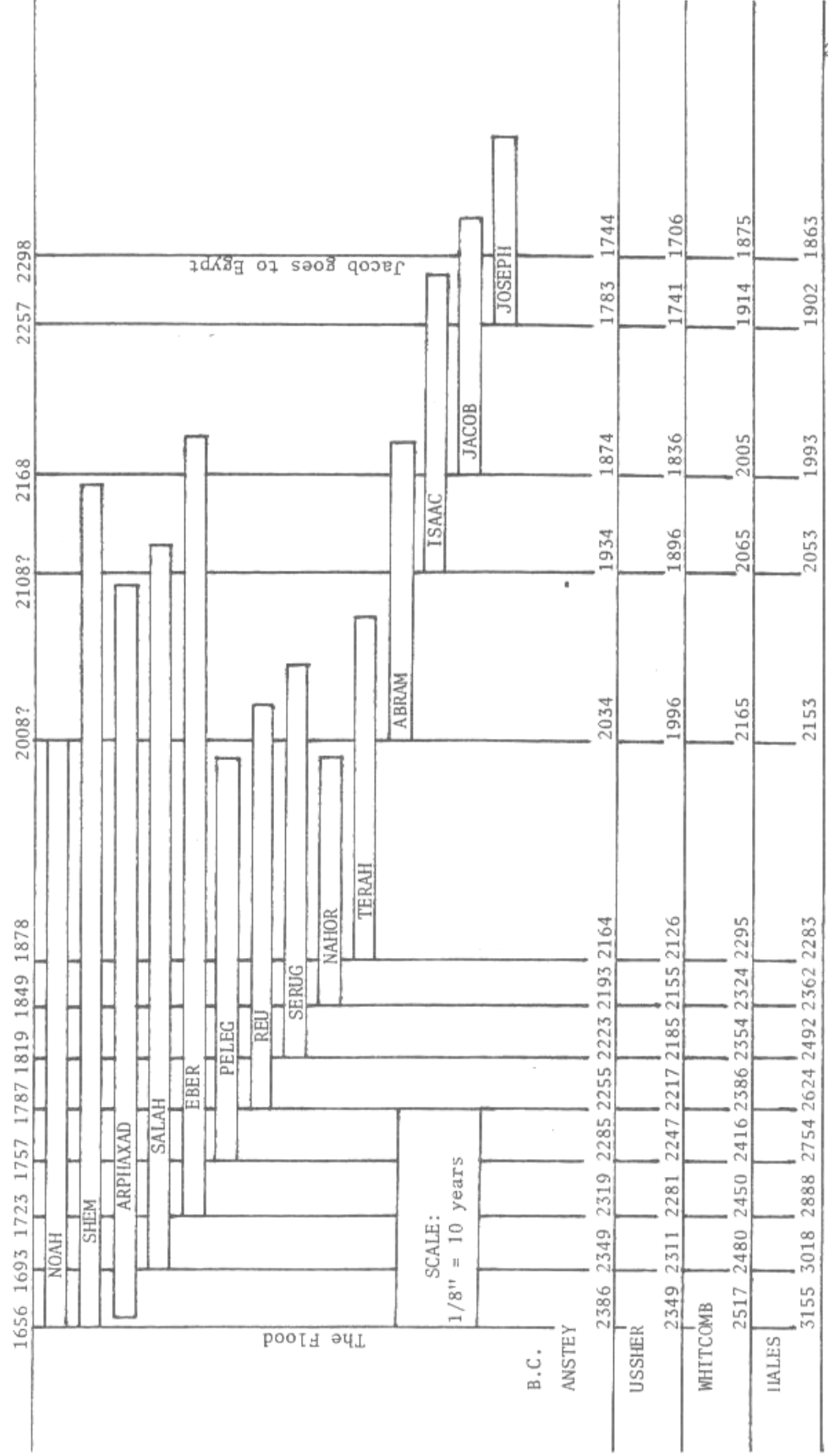
The covenant with Abraham, God said, “In thee will all the families of the earth be blessed.” Abraham is Christ. Christ was in his loins. So we see it is the same covenant.

*Observation 7.* The blessings of Abraham did not come to the Gentiles until the gospel period. The Gentile nations that lived outside the pale of the civilized world of ancient days fell heir to the civilization of the ancient world and to the blessings of Abraham.

*Observation 8.* All these Gentile nations were brought into the church during the first centuries of our Christian era. The thing to be noticed is that they were brought into the church as nations. The ruler would embrace Christianity and he would take with him into the church all his whole people that still, of course, would have to be labored with. The whole people would become nominally Christian.

*Observation 9.* The nations of the earth who were not brought into the church in these centuries are especially the Chinese, the Japanese, the black races of the heart of Africa and the Arabians. These people have not been brought into the church as nations until this day. This is true of the Japanese and Chinese. The church has labored among these people but thus far has seen little fruit upon its labors. These people are the Gog and Magog of the book of Daniel. According to that prophecy they will besiege at the end of time the holy city. The prophecy implies that as nation they will continue hostile to the church to the end of time. The holy city that they will attack is the church as established in the nation that now dwells in the era of the church.

CHART II  
 ANNO HOMINIS  
 POST-DELUVIAN PATRIARCHS



B.C.  
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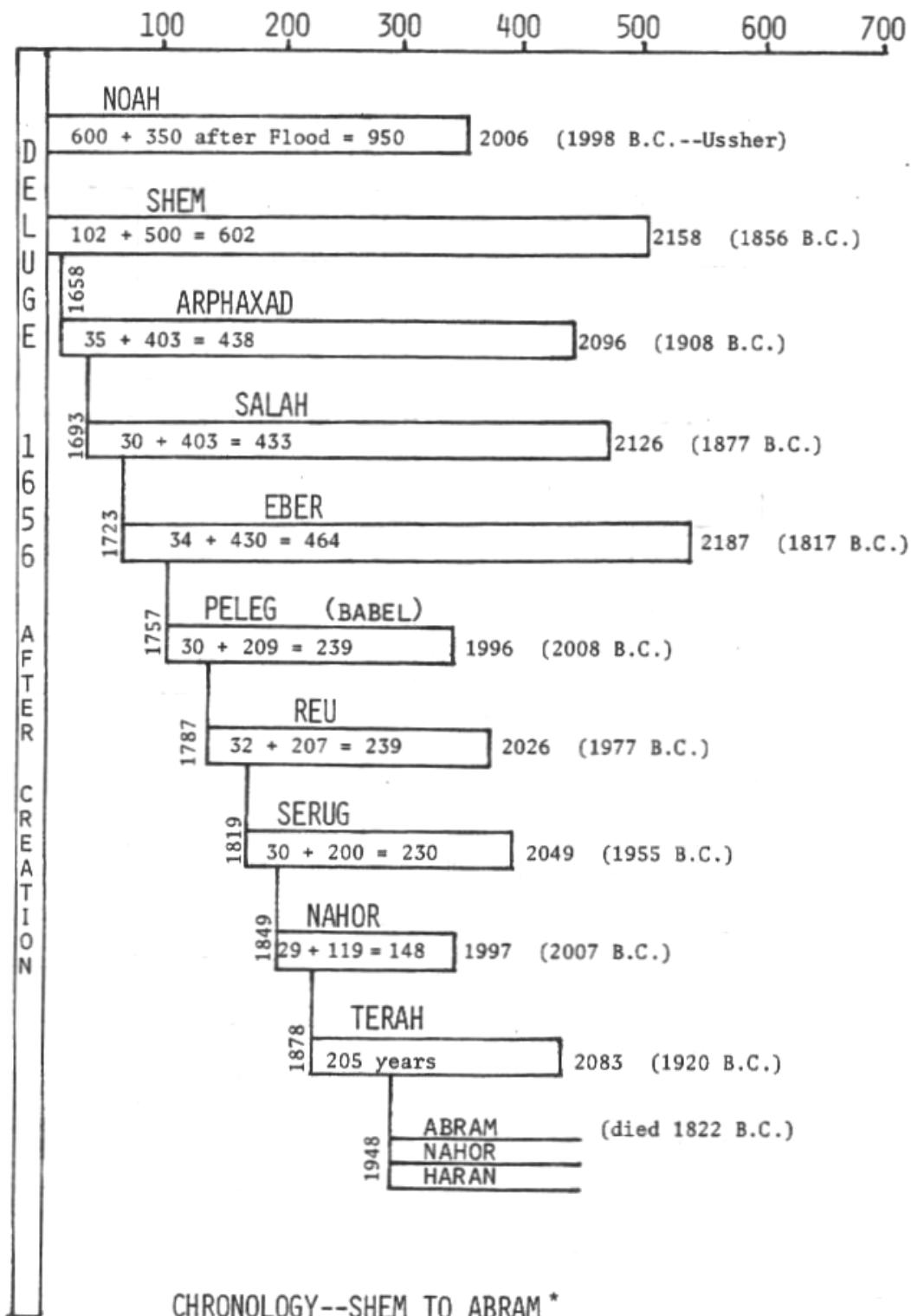
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 1914 1875  
 1902 1863





CHRONOLOGY--SHEM TO ABRAM \*

\*Taken from Old Testament History - The Postdiluvian World, H.C.H. between pp. 64 & 65.

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**UNIT III: THE HEBREWS:  
FROM ABRAHAM TO CHRIST  
c. 2000 B.C. to 100 A.D.**

I.	Important Dates	
	Flood .....	2315 B.C.
	Noah dies .....	1962 B.C.
	Birth of Abraham .....	1962 B.C.
	Abraham arrives in Canaan.....	1877 B.C.
	Birth of Isaac.....	1862 B.C.
	Birth of Jacob.....	1802 B.C.
	Death of Abraham.....	1788 B.C.
	Birth of Joseph .....	1711 B.C.
	Joseph Sold to Egypt.....	1694 B.C.
	Isaac Dies .....	1682 B.C.
	Jacob Goes to Egypt.....	1672 B.C.
	Jacob Dies .....	1655 B.C.
	Joseph Dies .....	1591 B.C.
	Exodus From Egypt .....	1447 B.C.
	Conquest of Canaan .....	1407 B.C.
	Period of the Judges .....	c. 1400-1040 B.C.
	The United Kingdom (Saul, David, Solomon) .....	c. 1040 B.C.
	The Division of the Kingdom .....	c. 931 B.C.
	The Ten Tribes (Israel) Taken Captive by Assyria.....	722 B.C.
	First Captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar .....	605 B.C.
	Second Captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar.....	597 B.C.
	Destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans .....	586 B.C.
	Return of the Exiles to Jerusalem .....	538 B.C.
	Temple Rebuilt by Zerubbabel .....	516 B.C.
	Walls of Jerusalem Rebuilt by Nehemiah.....	c. 445 B.C.
	Invasion of Palestine by Alexander the Great.....	331 B.C.
	Palestine Under the Ptolemies of Egypt.....	323-198 B.C.

Palestine Under the Seleucids of Syria .....	198-176 B.C.
Maccabean Period.....	167-63 B.C.
Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerizim Destroyed.....	128 B.C.
Pompey Takes Over Palestine for Rome .....	63 B.C.
Antipater, Herod the Great's Father, Governs Palestine for Rome .....	48-43 B.C.
Herod the Great Reigns as King of the Jews .....	37-4 B.C.
Birth of Christ .....	5 B.C.
Palestine Divided Between the Sons of Herod the Great and Other Roman Procurators .....	4 B.C.-37 A.D.
Crucifixion of Christ.....	30 A.D.
Herod Agrippa, Grandson of Herod the Great Reigns.....	37-44 A.D.
Troubles Multiply in Judaea .....	44-66 A.D.
Paul Appeals to Caesar .....	62 A.D.
The War With Rome and the End of the Second Temple.....	66-73 A.D.

## II. Geography

- A. The *Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible* makes the following understatement, "Palestine has wielded an influence in world history quite out of proportion to its size and natural resources."
- B. The geographic position of Palestine is especially important. It lies in the middle of the world powers of ancient history. It is on the only route between Egypt and Mesopotamia. As a result of this Israel has contact with most of the ancient civilizations, but it is also constantly invaded or threatened with invasion.
- C. Israel was one of the smallest and weakest of the nations and was constantly surrounded by the great powers against which there was no defense except Israel's God.
- D. The land surface of Palestine is mountainous and rocky except for a few fertile valleys. The climate varies greatly from the snowcapped Mt. Hermon to the tropical climate around the Dead Sea. The rainfall is light. Although the country was best suited for grazing during a large part of its history, it must have been very fertile during at least the early part of Israel's possession. (Compare the pastoral life of the Canaanites during the time of Abraham and the frequent famines with the "land flowing with milk and honey" described in the later history.) (Numbers 13:23-28.)
- E. The greatest extent of the Kingdom of Israel was during the time of Solomon who ruled the land from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates.

## III. History

- A. Patriarchal Period (c. 1900 B.C. -1700 B.C.)

1. The history of the Hebrews begins when Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees to go to the Promised Land. This took place about 1900 B.C. probably during the second ascendancy of Ur.
  2. The next 200 years the patriarchs wandered about in the land of Canaan. There God established His covenant with Abraham and promised to give the land to his seed. There Abraham rescued Lot from the kings of Mesopotamia and from there he went to sojourn in Egypt sometime during the Middle Kingdom of Egypt.
  3. About 1700 B.C. Joseph was sold to Egypt and became the means whereby the patriarchs were saved from the famine and brought to the land of Egypt to begin the period of bondage there.
- B. Exodus from Egypt to the Establishment of the Kingdom (c. 11450-c. 1050 B.C.)
1. Israel remained in bondage in Egypt until 1447 B.C. During most of this time the Hyksos kings had ruled in Egypt (1700-1550 B.C.). However, after these kings were overthrown, there arose a “king who knew not Joseph” (Exodus 1:8) who oppressed the Israelites and tried to destroy them by killing the male children. Near the end of this time Moses was born and was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” for his work in leading the people of Israel and in writing the first five books of the Bible. (Acts 7:22)
  2. After God had carried out His judgments upon Egypt, He led His people through the Red Sea and into the wilderness and destroyed Pharaoh and his army. At Mt. Sinai they received the law which emphasized the worship of God alone and received the ceremonies and rituals that pointed them to the coming of Christ. After this for their unbelief and lack of faith in God they were condemned to wander 40 years in the wilderness where God repeatedly showed them His hatred for sin and His mercy in spite of their unfaithfulness. (Numbers 14: 33-35)
  3. In 1407 B.C. Israel began the conquest of Canaan and the destruction of the Canaanites whose cup of iniquity had become full. The destruction of the Canaanites was the fulfillment of the curse of Canaan. (Genesis 9:25) The religion of the Canaanites was a horrible idolatry. They worshipped many gods including snakes. Their mythology is full of brutality; their gods enjoy the senseless slaughter of human beings. They sacrificed their children to idols.
  4. The Period of the Judges (c. 1400-1040 B.C.)
    - a. During the period of the Judges the people of Israel began to worship the gods of the Canaanites. Time and again God sent heathen nations to oppress the Israelites and, when they cried to Him, He sent judges to deliver them.
    - b. The record of this period is one of anarchy, poverty, and misery. (Cf. Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 4)

- c. Toward the end of this period the “Sea Peoples” invaded Egypt and were defeated. One of their tribes, the Philistines, settled in the south of Palestine and became a scourge to Israel. At the time of Eli the Philistines took the Ark of God and carried out such destruction upon Shiloh that the name Shiloh became a symbol of the wrath of God against the sins of Israel. (Jeremiah T:12ff; 26:6ff.) During the time of the Judges, the Philistines also held the closely guarded secret of iron production which made them stronger than the surrounding nations. (Cf. I Samuel 13:19-22)

### C. Establishment of the Kingdom to the Babylonian Captivity (c. 1040-586 B.C.)

#### 1. The United Kingdom (1040-931 B.C.)

- a. After the judges God appointed kings to rule over Israel.
- b. The first was Saul, who was the kind of king the people wanted and who soon showed the folly of their choice.
- c. Under David and Solomon the kingdom reached the height of its glory and the blessings that God had promised came upon Israel. The kingdom at this time extended from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt.
- d. Solomon built the largest smelter in the ancient Near East at Ezion-geber to smelt the ores from the Arabah mines.
- e. Solomon brought vast wealth into the kingdom for the building of the temple and the King’s palaces.
- f. The sins of Solomon led to the division of the Kingdom after his death. (cf. I Kings .11:9-12.)

#### 2. The Kingdom of Israel (931 B.C. -722 B.C.)

- a. The Kingdom of Israel, led by Jeroboam, turned away from the worship of God in the temple at Jerusalem to the worship of the golden calves at Bethel and Dan and eventually to the worship of Baal.
- b. The history of the kingdom is one of constant warfare.
- c. The early kings of Israel saw the rise of Syria with its capital Damascus. Syria often came to oppress Israel and Israel was often defeated by them. But God also showed that He was able to deliver Israel. (I Kings 20)
- d. King Omri built and fortified the city of Samaria.
- e. Ahab brought the worship of Baal into Israel from Phoenicia and was condemned by the prophet Elijah.
- f. There was a period of comparative peace during the time of Jeroboam II (c. 793-753 B.C.). He defeated Syria and increased the fortifications of Samaria.
- g. As the wickedness of Israel increased God sent prophets to testify against them and to warn of the coming captivity. (Hosea 9:3; Isaiah 8:4; 17:9-11; Amos 7:11; Micah 1:6-8)

- h. At the time of Jeroboam II Assyria was beginning its rise to power. Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel made an alliance to fight against Assyria and tried to make King Ahaz of Judah join them. But Tiglath-pilezer III (745-727 B.C.) came in time to prevent the conquest of Judah. (II Kings 16:5ff; Isaiah 7) Tiglath-pilezer III conquered the northern part of Israel and took some of the people into captivity. (II Kings 15:29) also confer notes on Assyria.)
  - i. Finally, during the reign of Hoshea, Shalmanezar V (727-722 B.C.) of Assyria came to besiege Samaria. After three years of siege Sargon II (722-705 B.C.) took Samaria in 722 B.C. and carried the nation of Israel away captive to be scattered among the nations. (II Kings 17)
  - j. As a nation Israel never returned to Palestine; only a few of the captives returned with the people of Judah.
3. The Kingdom of Judah (931-586 B.C.)
- a. The kingdom of Judah declined somewhat more slowly than did the kingdom of Israel.
  - b. Among the rulers of Judah we find a few good kings; i.e. Asa, Jehoshaphet, Hezekiah, and Josiah. There were, however, many more wicked kings than good kings.
  - c. God began to send the heathen nations into Judah to warn them and to punish them.
    - 1.) Shishak came from Egypt in the time of Rehoboam and took away some of the gold from the temple.
    - 2.) Hazael, king of Syria, invaded Judah during the reign of Joash and the treasures of the temple were given to him.
    - 3.) Ahaz gave gold from the temple to Tiglath-pilezer III (745-722 B.C.) of Assyria and used the gods of Damascus to desecrate the temple.
    - 4.) Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.), king of Assyria, besieged Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah and God showed that He only was able to deliver them.
    - 5.) A brief revival occurred at the time of Josiah (640-609 B.C.) but Josiah was killed when he fought against Pharaoh-Necho who was on his way to help the Assyrians against the Chaldeans.
  - d. The Assyrians and the Egyptians were defeated by the Chaldeans at Charchemish (605 B.C.) and in 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar came and took a part of the people of Judah into captivity.
  - e. Because they continued in sin, Nebuchadnezzar came in 586 B.C. and took away the rest of the people leaving Jeremiah and a few other hostages in the land.

- f. Throughout the period of the kings God had sent prophets to warn of the wrath of God and the coming captivity. (Isaiah 39:5-7; Jeremiah 25:8-11; 32:26-35; 29:15-23; Hab. 1:6-11) Nevertheless they refused to hear the word of God and obey His commandments. (II Chron. 36:15ff.)
- D. The Babylonian Captivity to the Intertestamentary Period (586-400 B.C.)
1. Final Deportation and Destruction to the Return from Captivity (586-538)
    - a. Besides those that went into captivity to Babylon some of the Jews may have been sold into slavery. (Amos 1:6, 9)
    - b. Some of the remainder carried Jeremiah to Egypt (Jeremiah 43:4-7). These Jews turned to idolatry in Egypt and were condemned by Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 44).
    - c. Some of the Jews that went to Egypt established a colony at Leontopolis and built a temple to worship God (c. 170 B.C.). These people remained in contact with the other Jewish exiles even after the return from Babylon. Later this temple was destroyed by the Egyptians and Persians and the colony eventually disappeared. (Of. Isaiah 19:19-22)
    - d. Edom made several cruel raids upon the people who remained in Palestine and were later punished by God for this. (Ezekiel 35; Obadiah; Jeremiah 49:7ff.)
    - e. Ezekiel was one of the chief prophets to comfort the captives in Babylon. His prophecies promised a return to Jerusalem and a fulfillment of the covenant promises.
  2. The Return to Jerusalem (538 B.C.) and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem to (c. 1400 B.C.) the Intertestamentary Period
    - a. In 538 B.C. according to the word of God and the proclamation of Cyrus the Mede, the exiles began to return to Jerusalem. (Isaiah 44:26, 28; Jeremiah 24:4-8; 25:12-14; 29:10; 32:37-44; Isaiah 45:1, 4-5; Ezra 1:2-14; II Chronicles 36:22ff.)
    - b. The first group to return was led by Zerubbabel or Sheshbazzar in 536 B.C. They laid the foundations of the temple but were not able to continue because of the interference of the surrounding peoples. (Ezra 5:16)
    - c. About 522 B.C. the building of the temple was resumed by the priests and Levites under the leadership of Joshua, the high priest. The encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah resulted in the finishing of the building of the temple about 516 B.C.
    - d. During the reign of Artaxerxes I (465-424 B.C.) two more groups returned to Jerusalem.
      - 1.) The first was led. by Ezra, who carried out a much needed reform among the people at Jerusalem. (Ezra 7ff)



- 2.) The second group was led by Nehemiah who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem in 444 B.C. and also served as governor of Jerusalem under the Persian King. (Cf. Nehemiah)
  - e. Soon after this the Samaritans built the temple on Mt. Gerizim. During this time the prophet Malachi recalled the people to correct priorities in their lives and their activities. Malachi was the last of the prophets sent by God. There would be a long famine of the word for about 400 years before the Word made flesh would appear on the scene in Bethlehem of Judea.
- E. The Intertestamentary Period Through the First Century A.D. (400 B.C.-100 A.D.)
1. The Empire of Alexander the Great and the Greeks (331-198 B.C.)
    - a. In 331 B.C. Persia was conquered by Alexander the Great and Palestine became a part of Alexander's empire.
    - b. But Alexander died in 323 B.C. and his empire was divided among his generals.
    - c. From 323 to 198 B.C. Palestine was dominated by the Ptolemies who also ruled Egypt.
    - d. During this time the Seleucid Empire, or Syria, made several attempts to take over Palestine and finally succeeded in 198 B.C. under the rule of Antiochus the Great.
    - e. Under the Ptolemies the Jews in Palestine were mostly left to themselves.
    - f. The most notable event of this time was the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, the Septuagint. This work was done in Alexandria in Egypt.
  2. The Rule of Syria Over Palestine (198-168 B.C.)
    - a. The period of the rule of Syria over Palestine was brief and violent.
    - b. The Syrian rulers wanted to unite their empire under the Hellenistic culture. When many of the Jews resisted the imposition of this pagan culture, the Syrians attempted to wipe out the Jewish religion.
    - c. The Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes led this attempt.
      - 1.) In 168 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes came to Jerusalem and desecrated the temple, taking away the furniture of the temple and the great curtain.
      - 2.) He prohibited sacrifices, outlawed the possession of copies of the Law, the keeping of the Sabbath, and the practice of circumcision on the penalty of death. He erected a Greek altar in place of the altar to Jehovah.
      - 3.) Large numbers of Jews who refused to submit were killed.

- d. To prove their submission the Jews were required to sacrifice to pagan gods. This led to the Maccabean revolt. (Antiochus Epiphanes is referred to in Daniel 7:6-8 and Daniel 8:5ff. He is a type of Anti-Christ, cf. Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14; Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; II Macc. 4:32-38)
3. The Maccabean Revolt (167-63 B.C.)
- a. The revolt was begun by a priest named Mattathiah who refused to sacrifice along with a Jew who had submitted to the pagan rule. Mattathiah killed this complying Jew and killed the officer enforcing this religious pagan sacrifice. Mattathiah then uttered his war-cry: "Let every one who is zealous for the law and supports the covenant come out with me!" (I Macc. 2:27). Mattathiah fled with his sons and followers into the hills and began the guerilla-type warfare that was to characterize this period.
  - b. The sons of Mattathiah continued the revolt when Mattathiah died about 166 B.C.
  - c. Judas Maccabeas (166-160 B.C.)
    - 1.) Judas Maccabeas fought a guerilla-type warfare against the Syrians and won several victories which forced the Syrians to withdraw in order to gather a larger army.
    - 2.) Judas then went to Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, and began worship there again.
    - 3.) The Syrians returned under the general Lysias and defeated the army of Judas.
    - 4.) Internal troubles in Syria, however, forced Lysias to grant the Jews religious freedom.
    - 5.) Having won this concession Judas continued to fight for political freedom.
    - 6.) Judas won one more victory, but in 160 B.C. his army was defeated and Judas was killed.
  - d. Jonathon (160-142 B.C.)
    - 1.) Jonathon, brother of Judas Maccabeas, returned to guerilla warfare with considerable success.
    - 2.) Internal troubles once more caused the Syrians to withdraw and Jonathon took over Jerusalem. Not only could pious Jews practice their ancestral religion but they also had a form of political freedom.
    - 3.) Under the guise of a negotiation and parlay, the Syrians took Jonathon prisoner and later killed him.
  - e. Simon (142-134 B.C.)
    - 1.) Simon fought several successful battles against the Syrians even though his army was greatly outnumbered.

- 2.) Simon gained political freedom for Palestine in 141 B.C. by destroying two Seleucid garrisons in Palestine.
  - 3.) In 134 he was brutally murdered by his son-in-law, Ptolemy Abubus, commander of Jericho. This happened at a family banquet and was done obviously because he hoped to gain his father-in-law's position.
- f. John Hyrcanus (134-103 B.C.).
- 1.) John Hyrcanus, the son of Simon, was acclaimed by the people as his father's successor in all offices.
  - 2.) After several years of disorder because of the untimely death of his father, John Hyrcanus was able to extend the territory to include Medeba in Trans-Jordan and Samaria. John also destroyed the temple of the Samaritans on Mt. Gerizim, 128 B.C. The Jews could now take ample vengeance on the Samaritans for all the vexatious trouble they had endured from them since the return from exile.
  - 3.) F.F. Bruce in *Israel and the Nations*, p. 172, says: "John's judaization of the Idumaeans could not be repeated with Samaritans. For the Samaritans were circumcised Israelites already, and very conscious of their ancient feud with the Jews. (cf. John 4) Far from their conquest leading to a rapprochement between the two groups, it embittered the Samaritans still more. John might raze their temple to the ground, but he could not deprive Mt. Gerizim of its sacred character, and it continued to be the Samaritans' holy place. For two generations the Samaritans chafed under the Hasmonaeon domination, until at last the Roman conquest of Palestine freed them from the Jewish yoke."
- g. Aristobulus I (104-103 B.C.)
- 1.) Aristobulus I, the son of John Hyrcanus, continued the work of conquest which John had carried forward so well.
  - 2.) Aristobulus took Galilee and during the short reign of one year forcibly judaized some of the Gentile groups living there and in the foothills of Lebanon.
  - 3.) During the time of Aristobulus the Maccabean movement more and more lost its religious motif and became more secular and nationalistic.
- h. Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.)
- 1.) Alexander Jannaeus, the half-brother of Aristobulus I, was raised to power as king and priest by Aristobulus' widow Salome, Alexandra. She became his wife.
  - 2.) Alexander Jannaeus, a very unlikely character for the high priesthood, extended Maccabean territory to its greatest extent.

- 3.) Alexander Jannaeus extended the territory southward by defeating Ptolemy of Egypt. He defended himself successfully against the Syrians and he defeated the Nabateans.
  - 4.) He suffered from ill health in the later years of his reign and died in 76 B.C.
- i. Salome Alexandra (76-67 B.C.)
    - 1.) Alexandra had been appointed to succeed her husband Alexander Jannaeus.
    - 2.) This she successfully did although she could not be the high priest.
    - 3.) When Alexandra died, a struggle for power arose between the two sons Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II.
  - j. Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II (67-63 B.C.)
    - 1.) Hyrcanus II, who was quiet and unambitious had served as high priest during the reign of his mother and should have been made the king as well, when his mother died.
    - 2.) Aristobulus II had been quietly preparing to take the throne.
    - 3.) Both appealed to Pompey for support but in 63 B.C. Pompey came to Jerusalem and took possession of Palestine for Rome.
4. Roman Control of Palestine (63 B.C.- 100 A.D.)
    - a. When Rome gained control of Palestine in 63 B.C., Palestine was put under a Roman representative in Syria.
    - b. When Julius Caesar defeated Pompey in 48 B.C., he made Hyrcanus II ethnarch of Palestine but put the real power in the hands of the procurator, Antipater of Idumaea. Antipater knew the value of having the substance of power even if he did not have the title.
    - c. When Antipater was murdered in 43 B.C., Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus II, tried to take over with the help of the Parthians. Herod, the son of Antipater, defeated Antigonus with the help of the Romans and so an Edomite was made king of Judaea. This is Divine irony. The land of Jacob-Israel is ruled by Esau and not the King of the Jews, son of Jacob-Israel.
    - d. Herod the Great ruled Judaea from 37 to 4 B.C. He tried to promote the Hellenistic influence in his kingdom. To do this he built several cities which were made centers of Greek culture. He also rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem. Herod is best known as the ruler of Judaea at the time of the birth of Christ and for the slaughter of the children of Bethlehem. (cf. Matthew 2).
    - e. Upon his death, Herod's kingdom was divided among his three sons. Several procurators also ruled. (4 B.C. - 37 A.D.)

- 1.) Archelaus ruled Judaea, Samaria, and Idumaea. (Matt. 2:22) He was deposed in 6 A.D. and was replaced by a Roman procurator. The fifth in succession of these procurators was Pontius Pilate.
  - 2.) Herod Antipas was ruler of Galilee and Perea. (Luke 3:1) It was he who beheaded John the Baptist. (Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29). Jesus appeared before him during his trial. (Luke 23:6-12).
  - 3.) Philip, the third son of Herod the Great, was tetrarch of the region east and northeast of the Sea of Galilee. (Luke 3:1).
- f. In 37 A.D. Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, was made king of Galilee and later king of Judaea. He persecuted the early church killing James and imprisoning Peter. (Acts 12) He was killed in 44 A.D. by a terrible disease sent by God because he exalted himself in his pride. (Acts 12:20-33).
  - g. After the death of Herod Agrippa, Judaea was again put under Roman procurators. The third of these procurators was Felix, under whom Paul was imprisoned and sent to Caesarea. (Acts 21:27; 24:27) Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. It was before Festus and Agrippa II, King of Galilee, that Paul made his defense and appealed to Caesar. (62 A.D.) (Acts 25, 26)
  - h. About 65 A.D. the Jews began open rebellion against the Romans which continued until 70 A.D. when Jerusalem was taken and the temple was destroyed never to be rebuilt. (See Matthew 24:1, 2; Mark 13:1, 2; Luke 21:5, 6, 20-24.) This destruction of the second temple occurred on the anniversary, August 27, 70 A.D., of the destruction of the first temple by the Babylonians in 581 B.C. Between April and September 26, 70 A.D., the city was surrounded. By September 26 the whole city was in Titus's hands. It was razed to the ground, only three towers of Herod's palace on the western wall were left standing, with part of the western wall itself.

#### IV. Conclusions

- A. The Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament were given by God to the Hebrews and were written in the Hebrew language by men (Moses and the prophets) who "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." These Scriptures we have available to us today, and they are the infallible and inerrant record of the Word of God. Although many other nations and religions claim to have divinely inspired Scriptures too; it is only the Israelites to whom God gave divine infallible revelations concerning Himself and His will for all these from before the foundations of the very world in which history occurs. (Cf. II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; Netherlands Confession, Articles 1-6)
- B. Israel alone proclaimed the one, true God. It is not true that Israel, in common with all the other nations, first believed in polytheism (many gods). Nothing is farther from the truth. Originally, the heathen were not idolaters. Cain did not bow the knee before an idol of wood or stone, etc. Neither is it true that Israel first worshipped other gods. Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. did not

worship many gods. They worshipped the only true God. And Israel is the one nation in the midst of the world which was the people of the living God. (Genesis 12; 15:1; 17:1; Exodus 20:1, 2; II Chronicles 6:1-11; Exodus 6:2, 3.)

- C. The nation of Israel was the instituted church. The story of Israel is the history of the work of the Son of God in His gathering, defending, and preserving His Church. The relevance and importance of this history is rooted in the establishment and maintenance of the Covenant of God from Adam through Abraham and his descendants to Christ. (Cf. Galatians 3:15-18) Hence, it is a lie of darkness that Israel's contribution to the world was their religion which was characterized by the belief in one God. Israel did not exist to give a contribution to the world. Besides, let no man maintain that the world of today has adopted Israel's monotheism. The Netherlands Confession says that "We know God by two means." Therefore it is true that, although the world does not fall down before idols of wood and stone, they worship God not in spirit and in truth but according to the wicked imaginations of their carnal and corrupt hearts. (Heidelberg Catechism, question 54)
- D. The history of the nation of Israel is the story of the apostatizing of many who were called Israel; it also includes God's warning concerning the evils of such apostatizing, a call to repentance to come out from among evil doers, and a punishment of those who were unfaithful. The fundamental message of the history of Hebrews is that God is always faithful to His people even though they are not faithful to Him. (Nehemiah 9; Lamentations 3:22-25; Habakkuk 3:17-19)
- E. History is the unified working out of God's determinate counsel. (Acts 2:23) The events of history cannot be separated even though we cannot always show the relationship between these events in history. All the nations of the world serve the purpose of God in purifying and saving His church. Just as the reprobate serve the elect in this world so the children of men always serve the cause of God in the salvation of His church. This meant that God would use the nations of the world to punish His people and in this way cause the wonder of grace to operate in the people of God. This was true because Israel is a Miracle people. They were not merely another people among many other nations. Purification comes therefore, through the great trials and afflictions. There is therefore a symbolic character to the history of the people of Israel which is exactly antithetical to that of the heathen nations of the world. God judges the heathen; he sets them on slippery paths. For Israel, however, there is salvation and redemption through judgment. (Jeremiah 31:27-34)
- F. Secular historians who do not accept the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament to be an infallible record of history distort history in the following ways:
  - 1. They treat the Hebrews simply as another people whose main contribution to the world has been their peculiar conception of God who is Jahweh (Jehovah).
  - 2. They write the history of the Hebrews from a human, mythological and sometimes legendary point of view. The men of God were not heroes of faith (Cf. Hebrews 11) but were merely great visionaries among the people called the Hebrews.

3. They discuss the development of religious ideology among the Hebrews in terms of an evolutionary conversion of the people from the worship of many gods to the worship of one God. This is comparable to the conversion of the Arabian tribes to the service of Allah under the influence of Mohammed and his followers.
  4. They consider the Bible to be a body of literature which is equal or superior in some ways to other religious literature such as the *Koran* of the Mohammedans.
- G. In the book *Israel and the Nations* by F.F. Bruce, p. 225 we find the following interesting comment.

With the fall of the temple and the abolition of the sacrificial ritual, the Second Commonwealth of Israel, with its priestly constitution, came to an end. No doubt many thought at the time that the national life Israel itself had come to an end. But the event proved them wrong. The disappearance of the temple order marked the beginning of a new and glorious chapter in Israel's story, which does not come within the scope of this book.

This comment by Bruce is formally correct. There is a sense in which Israel has risen from the dust of degradation to be a nation of relative importance today. It is true that the nations of the world thought for many centuries that the national life of Israel was ended. There is an important sense, however, in which the comment of Bruce is very incorrect. The disappearance of the temple order did not occur in A.D. 70. The temple order had been annulled when the veil of the temple was rent at the time of the crucifixion of Christ (c. 30 A.D.) The unrepentant and unbelieving Jews restored that veil but the significance of the veil was gone. There was no longer any need for the shadows and types. That nation of Israel had no significance any longer after Christ had come and had been crucified according to the determinate counsel of God (Cf. Acts 2:23; Acts 7). To the Samaritan woman Jesus had said, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father... But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:21-24) This was truly possible after Pentecost.

There is a glorious chapter for the Church, the true Israel, but the significance of any important history of Israel as a nation is past. (Heidelberg Catechism, question 19; John 18:36; Daniel 7:13-14.)

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“Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges”  
“Old Testament Kings and Prophets”  
“Babylonian Captivity, Part I and Part II”



CHART III

MOSES TO THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Anstey	Keil	Usher	Whitcomb			
			1525			1538
						Thutmose I
						1508
						Thutmose II
						1504
						Hatshepsut-Thutmose III
						1483
				Moses		Thutmose III
						1450
				Exodus		Amenhotep II
1530	1492	1492	1445			1423
						1410
						Thutmose IV
1489	1453	1453	1405			Amenhotep III
				Joshua		1377
1482	1445	1429	1381			Amenhotep IV
1469	1435	1402	1380			Tutankhamon
1461	1427	1394	1373			Ay
				Mesopotamian Oppression		1358
						1349
						1345
				Othniel		Horemheb
1421	1387	1354	1334			1318
				Moab Oppression		Rameses I
1403	1369	1336	1316			Seth I (Sethos)
				Ehud		1301

SCALE:  
1/8" = 5 years





CHART IV

DIVIDED KINGDOM THROUGH THE CAPTIVITY

SCALE: 1/8" = 4 years

JUDAH		ISRAEL		DAMASCUS		ASSYRIA		EGYPT	
Ansey	899	Rehoboam	Jeroaboam	c. 940	Hezion (Rezon?)	934	Assur dan II	934	Sheshonk
Usher	975	Abijam 2 yr.	Nadab 1 yr.	931	Tabrimmon	924	Adadnirari II	924	
	882		Baasha	c. 910				912	
		Asa	Elah 2 yr. Zimri 7 da. Omri	c. 890				890	
				886				883	
				874					
	839		Ahab		Benhadad I		Assurnasirpal II	859	
		Jehoshaphat		853					
	817		Ahaziah 2 yr.				Shalmanezzer III		
	813	Jehoram	Joram	841					
	810	Ahaziah 1 yr.							
	803	Athaliah	Jehu		Hazael		Shamshi-Adad V	824	
				814				810	
		Joash	Jehoahaz	801			Adadnirari III		
			Jehoash	798					
	763			793					
	723	Amaziah			Benhadad II		Shalmanezzer IV	783	
				772				773	



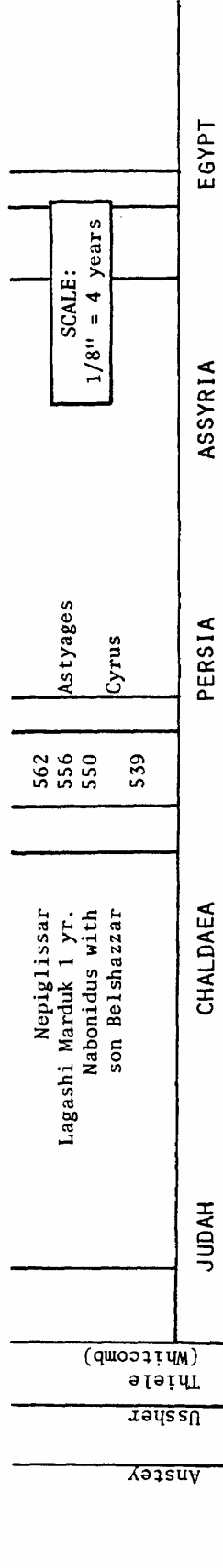


CHART IV DIVIDED KINGDOM THROUGH THE CAPTIVITY



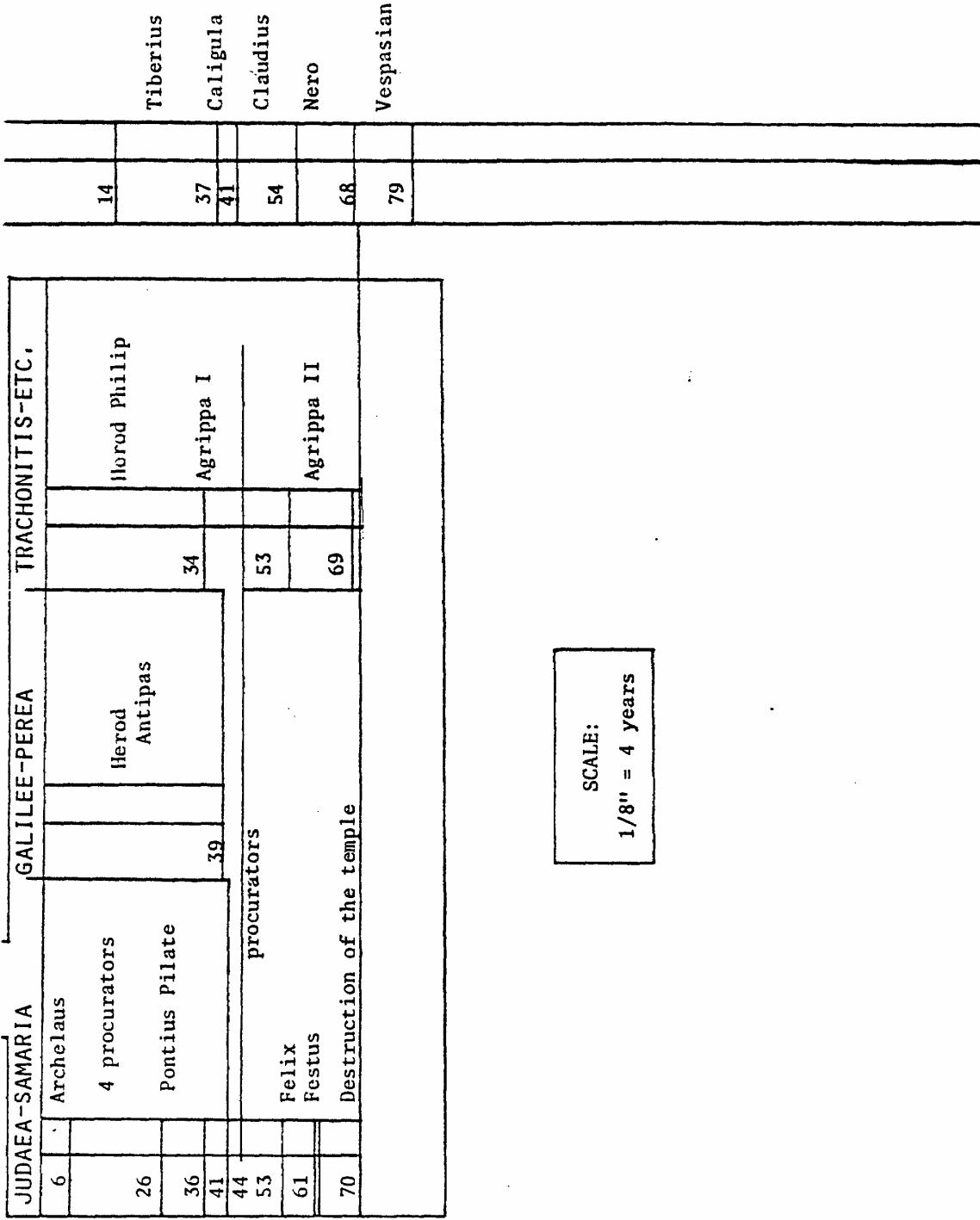
323	← --- -- Alexander "the Great" -- -- -- -- -->	335	Artaxerxes III	338	Greeks defeated by Philip
	PTOLEMIES	331	Ochus		
	Ptolemy I Lagi	312	Darius III		
285			SELEUCIDS (Syria)		
		280	Seleucus I	290	ROME
		261	Antiochus I	264	Samnite Wars
246		246	Antiochus II	242	First Punic War
221		226	Seleucus II		
203		223	Seleucus III	218	
			Antiochus III "the Great"	202	Second Punic War
181		187	Seleucus IV		
		175	Antiochus IV Epiphanes		
		167			
		163			

SCALE:  
1/8" = 4 years



CHART VI MACCABEAN REVOLT TO DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

EGYPT		PALESTINE		SELEUCIDS (SYRIA)		ROME	
146	Ptolemy VI Philometer Roman domination	169	Maccabean revolt Judas Maccabeus	163	Antiochus IV Epiphanes		
		160	Jonathon	150	Antiochus V	149	Third Punic War
		143	Simon	145	Demetrius I	146	
		134	John Hyrcanus	142	Alexander Balus		
			Aristobulus I 1 yr.	139	Antiochus VI	133	Gracchus Reforms
		104	Alexander Jannaeus	129	Demetrius II		
					Antiochus VII	123	
		76	Alexandra	64	Pompey takes over for Rome		
		67	Aristobulus II			60	First Triumvirate
		63	Roman rule through Syria Hyrcanus II (Ethmarch)			49	Julius Caesar
		47	Antipater (procurator)			44	Second Triumvirate
30	Roman province	43	Herod "the Great"			31	
		40	Birth of Christ				Augustus
		c. 5 A.D.				A.D.	



SCALE:  
1/8" = 4 years

## UNIT IV: EGYPT

### I. Important Dates

Old Kingdom .....	c. 2200 – 2000 B.C.
Middle Kingdom.....	c. 2000 – 1700 B.C.
Rule of the Hyksos Kings .....	c. 1700 – 1550 B.C.
Empire at its Zenith.....	c. 1550 – 1150 B.C.
Assyrians conquer Egypt .....	672 B.C.
Egypt annexed by Persians .....	525 B.C.
Egypt becomes part of Alexander’s Empire .....	331 B.C.
Egypt becomes a Roman province.....	30 B.C.

### II. Geography

#### A. Valley and delta

1. The valley is over 500 miles long and ranges in width from less than half a mile to over fifteen miles.
2. The delta is about 100 miles long and 150 miles wide where it flows into the Mediterranean.

#### B. Location

1. It is worth noting that Egypt is near enough to the civilizations of Mesopotamia to have contact with them, and yet it is isolated from them by the Red Sea on the east and the desert of the west.
2. The history of Egypt, therefore, is not characterized by the constant warfare that is found in the Fertile Crescent. Further, the civilization of Egypt is much different from that of the Mesopotamian civilizations.

#### C. Climate — The climate is extremely hot and dry. All of Egypt except the valley and delta is desert in which agriculture is impossible and few people live.

#### D. The Nile River

1. The Nile is an essential part of Egyptian history because it is the only factor that makes human life in Egypt possible.
2. The people of Egypt have always depended on the Nile River for irrigation of crops, for annual deposit of new soil, and for a means of transportation. For many years the Egyptians calculated the year by the rise and fall of the Nile. The size of the Nile’s yearly flood was even used as a basis for determining taxes.

### III. Important People

- A. Khufu (Cheops) (c. 2000 B.c.) was the builder of the Great Pyramid. Apparently one of the strongest of the kings of the Old Kingdom.

- B. Thutmose III (1481-1447 B.C.) was the greatest warrior of the Empire Period. His armies conquered Syria and Palestine. He built a fleet that conquered the Aegean Islands. He built the huge Temple of Amon at Karnak.
- C. Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV; Amenophis IV) (1375-1358 B.C.) tried to force Egypt from the worship of many gods to the worship of one god, Ammon, (Aton) the sun god. He was different from previous Pharaohs in other ways. He only had one wife the beautiful Nefertiti. Some suggest that he was influenced by the writings of the Hebrews or by the power of the Hebrew God shown during the ten plagues. He was negligent in the care of his Empire and as a result the Empire began to decline. He lost Syria to the Hittites.
- D. Rameses II (1301-1234 B.C.) reconquered Palestine and Syria. In a great battle with the Hittites at Kadesh he was defeated and had to make a treaty with them. (It is claimed by some historians that he was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. This would mean that the period of the Judges would only be about 200 years. These dates do not agree with those of Ussher nor those that have been adopted by the members of the workshop which has compiled the notes in this manual.)
- E. Shishak (c. 935 B.C.) invaded Judah at the time of Rehoboam. (I Kings 14:25-28)
- F. Pharaoh Necho (609-594 B.C.) sent out a fleet of ships that is believed to have circumnavigated Africa. He fought against Josiah, king of Judah, at Megiddo in a battle in which Josiah was killed. The Egyptian armies and armies of Assyria were defeated by Nabopolassar and the Chaldeans at Haran in 609 and again by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish in 605. (II Kings 23; 29; II Chron. 35:20-24; Jeremiah 46:2)
- G. Pharaoh Hophra (588-569 B.C.) was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar when Nebuchadnezzar was engaged in the siege of Jerusalem. He had come to fight the Chaldeans because of an alliance with Jehoiakim. (Jer. 37:5)

#### IV. History

- A. The kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt were united by Menes.
- B. During the period of the Old Kingdom, the capital was located at Memphis. The kings of this period were strong enough to keep the people in subjection and to build the pyramids with slave labor. The period was brought to an end by civil war.
- C. The Middle Kingdom (c. 2000-1700 B.C.) was contemporary with the early Babylonian Empire. During this period the capital was at Thebes. It was brought to an end by the disloyalty of the army and the chief officials of the kingdom.
- D. The Hyksos came from somewhere east of Asia Minor (1700-1550 B.C.). They were shepherd kings and were driven out about 1550 by a group led by one of the priests of Egypt. During this time Joseph came to Egypt and Jacob came with his possessions. (Genesis 46:28-34)
- E. After 1550 B.C. Pharaohs arose who forgot the great contributions of Joseph. They put the descendants of Jacob and Joseph in bondage. (Cf. Exodus 1:8)

- F. During the Empire Period (1550-1150 B.C.) Egypt began to expand beyond its natural boundaries. It controlled the land that included Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Nubia. The decline began during the time of Akhenaton (1375-1358 B.C.) and by the time of David (c. 1000 B.C.) it had lost its territory in the Fertile Crescent.
- G. Egypt was claimed as part of the Assyrian Empire and later was conquered by Cambyses of Persia (525 B.C.).
- H. In 331 B.C. it became part of Alexander's Empire, and after his death, it was ruled by the Ptolemies.
- I. In 30 B.C. it became a Roman Empire and continued a life of vassalage to the Arabian Moslems or Western nations until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### V. Characteristics

- A. The people — The people of Egypt are descendants of Ham. They must have come to Egypt only a short time after the Confusion of Tongues.
- B. Religion
  1. During most of history the number of different gods. The most important ones were Osiris, the god of agriculture and the Lower World, and Re, the sun-god, also called Ammon.
  2. They believed that gods revealed themselves in the form of animals. They worshipped a sacred bull, called Apis, from which the people of Israel got the idea of the golden calf. (Exodus 32)
  3. They believed in a kind, of life after death in which a person would live much as he did on earth. They believed that each person would have to appear before Osiris to account for what he had done in life.
  4. These beliefs accounted for the fact that the Egyptians carefully preserved the bodies of the dead. Tombs were decorated with pictures that the spirit might enjoy after death. During the Old Kingdom slaves were often killed and buried with the king or noble so that he might have someone to work for him after his death.
- C. Architecture
  1. Pyramids were built during the Old. Kingdom. Stones were brought from across the Nile and. put in position by slave labor. The pyramids were covered with a sheath of limestone.
  2. The temples were built in a post-and-lintel style; large stone pillars with slabs of stone across the top.
- D. Government
  1. The ruler carried the title Pharaoh. He was an absolute monarch with power of life and death over his subjects and was owner of all of the land. (Cf. the stories of Joseph and. of Moses; Genesis 37-43; Exodus 2-5.)

- E. Writing and language - The earliest form of Egyptian writing was hieroglyphics, picture writing. They later developed an alphabet having 24 symbols. The material on which the writing was done was papyrus, made from a reed that grows along the banks of the Nile.
- F. The Hyksos taught the Egyptians the use of the horse and chariot for war. This contributed to the Empire Period which followed.
- G. Tools and Weapons
  - 1. Copper and bronze were used during most of their history until the last part when iron was used, but only for a few things.
  - 2. The Egyptians are credited with the invention of the hoe for use in agriculture.
- H. Arts and crafts
  - 1. They produced fine linen that is still the envy of the modern world.
  - 2. They were skilled in making furniture, jewelry, and pottery.

## VI. Summary of achievements

- A. Crafts—linen, pottery, jewelry
- B. Agriculture—hoe, irrigation
- C. Architecture—pyramids and temples
- D. Mathematics—geometric figures, parallelograms and triangles. Computed the value of  $\pi = 3.16$ .
- E. Astronomy—development of a solar calendar having 12 months of 30 days and a 365-day year.
- F. Language—hieroglyphics, an alphabet, writing based on their alphabet (demotic and hieratic)

## VII. Conclusions

- A. The Egyptians produced one of the major civilizations of the ancient world. Separated from the violence and destruction of the Fertile Crescent, they produced an unusually high degree of secular and pagan culture.
- B. The Egyptians influenced the other civilizations of the world especially during the Empire Period (1550-1150 B.C.). During that time they traded with the Mediterranean Islands and they controlled and traded with the Phoenicians.
- C. For Israel, Egypt was the house of bondage, the picture of the bondage of sin. (Cf. Exodus 13:3; 20:2; 1:14; Romans 8:15; Galatians 5:1)
- D. The learning and knowledge of the Egyptians was used by God to prepare Moses for leadership of the people of Israel, the building of the tabernacle, and the writing of the Pentateuch at the direction of God. (Hebrews 11:23-28; Exodus 2:9)

Edersheim says:

The devout student of history cannot fail to recognize it as a wonderful arrangement of Providence, that the beginning and close of Divine revelation to mankind were both connected with the highest intellectual culture of the world. When the apostles went forth into the Roman world, they could avail themselves of the Greek language, then universally spoken, of Grecian culture and modes of thinking. And what Greece was to the world at the time of Christ, that and much more had Egypt been when the children of Israel became a God-chosen nation. Not that in either case the truth of God needed help from the wisdom of this world. On the contrary, in one sense, it stood opposed to it. And yet while history pursued seemingly its independent course, and philosophy, science, and the arts advanced apparently without any reference to Revelation, all were in the end made subservient to the furtherance of the kingdom of God. And so it always is. God marvelously uses natural means for supernatural ends, and maketh all things work together to his glory as well as for the good of His people. (Vol. 1, p. 9, Section 2)

Edersheim says again:

Israel may have adopted and adapted much from Egypt but it learned only from the Lord God, who, in every sense of the expression *brought out* His people with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. (Vol. 1, p. 22, Section 2)

- E. The idolatry of Egypt became a snare to Israel in the worship of the golden calf at Sinai and possibly in the calves that Jeroboam placed at Dan and Bethel in Israel. (Exodus 32; I Kings 12:28)
- F. Egypt was used for punishment of the Kingdom of Judah when Shishak invaded in the reign of Rehoboam (I Kings 14:25-26; II Chronicles 12:2-12)
- G. Oddly enough Egypt became a symbol of comfort and security for the faithless of Israel. When the way became difficult, they often wanted to return to Egypt, and later, when the kings were threatened, they turned to Egypt for help when they should have trusted in their God. (Cf. Exodus 6:3; Numbers 11:4-6; 14:2-4; Isaiah 30:1-7; 31:1-3; Jer. 43:7)
- H. The destruction of Egypt was infallibly prophesied many years before it actually happened. (Isaiah 19-20; Ezekiel 29-32)
- I. Pharaoh, the king of the Egyptians, was especially raised up by God so that God could show his power over the nation of Egypt and so that the name of God might be declared throughout all the earth. Pharaoh is, therefore, the classic example in all of earliest history that “the Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.” (Cf. Exodus 9:16; 14:11; Proverbs 16:4; Romans 9:17)

Note concerning spelling of names of Egyptian kings.

One of the difficult and often confusing aspects of the study of Egyptian history is that many of the Egyptian kings have names that have two or even three different spellings. Most history texts will somewhat eliminate the confusion by giving at least two of the variant spellings.

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## UNIT V: BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

- I. Important dates
  - Period of the Empire ..... 1800-1600 B.C.
  - Invasion of the Hittites..... 1595 B.C.
- II. Geography
  - A. See “From the Flood to Abraham,” Unit II.
  - B. At its greatest extent the Babylonian Empire included almost all of the Fertile Crescent.
  - C. The capital of the empire was at Babylon.
- III. Important people — Hammurabi (1728-1686 B.C.) is the most important person of the Babylonian Empire. He established order and good government. He built many new buildings in Babylon and restored the temples in Larsa, Eridu, Lagash, Ashur, Nineveh, and other cities. He built new canals for irrigation around Babylon. He claimed the title of priest-king under the god Marduk. He is best remembered for his code of laws.
- IV. History
  - A. About 2000 B.C. the power of Akkad was declining. Various peoples struggled for power in the Fertile Crescent, among them the people of Man, the Elamites, and the Amorites.
  - B. An Amorite tribe moved south in the Fertile Crescent and conquered Sumer and Akkad.
  - C. Hammurabi greatly expanded the empire all the way to Palestine. (Some authorities identify Hammurabi with the Amraphel mentioned in Genesis 14:1. The generally accepted dates for him, however, do not fit with the dates of Abraham.)
  - D. After Hammurabi the Babylonian Empire soon shrank in size and declined in power until Babylon fell to a Hittite invasion in 1595 B.C. This devastating Hittite incursion was very brief.
  - E. The Hittites returned to their home in Asia Minor and Babylon was overrun by the Kassites, a relatively barbarian tribe which ruled Babylon until about 1175 B.C.
- V. Characteristics
  - A. The Babylonians adopted most of the civilization of Sumer-Akkad including the cuneiform writing and forms of architecture.
  - B. Religion
    1. They adopted all of the heathen gods of Sumer and Akkad.
    2. They invented one god, called Marduk, which was supposed to be supreme over all other gods.

3. They believed that when a man sinned his personal god deserted him and evil spirits entered his house or his body. The resulting sickness or ill fortune could be cured by exorcism, charms, and amulettes.
4. They believed that they could foretell the future by examination of the livers of animals and by movements of the planets.

#### C. Astronomy

1. They invented clocks and sun dials for keeping time.
2. They gave names to many of the constellations.
3. Their knowledge of the heavens was complete enough to enable them to predict eclipses of the sun and moon.

### VI. Achievements

- A. In the field of astronomy: knowledge of the heavens and devices for keeping time.
- B. Most important achievement: the Code of Hammurabi which became a model of the systems of law of many later civilizations.

### VII. Conclusions

- A. The revival of the false science of astrology in our day indicates that the depravity of the human heart does not change. Man will not confess that the only source of knowledge of the future is the Word of God.
- B. Much has been written about the similarities between the Mosaic Law and the Code of Hammurabi. Writers make much of the fact that both of these systems follow the principle of “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” The similarities, however, are only superficial. The Code of Hammurabi is law made by man; the Mosaic Law is God-given. Hammurabi’s Code contains many laws concerned with the idolatrous worship of many gods; the Mosaic Law is based on the principle of love for God and love for the neighbor for God’s sake. Hammurabi’s Code is based on rigid social classes: if a nobleman puts out the eye of one of his peers, his own eye was to be put out, but if he put out the eye of one from the lower classes, he was to pay a small fine. In the Law of Moses sin is treated alike in every person.

Why are these laws similar at all? Even after the Fall man retained “remnants of natural light” (Canons III-IV, Article 4). Besides, the requirements of God’s law were passed on by Noah and his God-fearing descendants. Sinful man recognizes the need for social order for his own survival. Romans 2:14-15

- C. The period of the Babylonian Empire is contemporary with the lives of the patriarchs in Canaan and the beginning of the Israelite’s sojourn in Egypt. Throughout this period Egypt and Babylon fought for control of Palestine.
- D. As the Babylonians developed their civilization from a purely natural viewpoint, they also developed in sin. This is in harmony with the Word of God which teaches that man develops in a two-fold way. From a natural point of view he increases in knowledge but he also advances in a spiritual way—always he

develops in sin and descends ever more deeply into the mire of sin and corruption.  
(Cf. II Timothy 3:7-8; I Corinthians 1:19-20)

## UNIT VI: HITTITES

- I. Dates
  - Old Kingdom ..... 1740 – 1460 B.C.
  - Conquest of Babylon..... 1595 B.C.
  - New Hittite Empire ..... 1460 – 1190 B.C.
  - Neo-Hittite (Syro-Hittite) Kingdom ..... 1190 – 717 B.C.
  - Defeated Rameses II at Kadesh ..... 1290 B.C.
  - Conquered by the Aegeans. .... c. 1190 B.C.
- II. Geography
  - A. The Hittite civilization was located in the eastern part of Asia Minor. At its greatest extent it reached as far east as Lake Van and south to include the northern part of the Fertile Crescent.
  - B. The capital of the Hittites was at Hattusas (Hatushash).
  - C. Little of the land of eastern Asia Minor is good for farming. Much of the land is hilly and rocky. Hattusas is located on a high, barren plateau. The hills are rich in iron, copper, and silver.
- III. History
  - A. Before 2000 B.C. people were settled in Asia Minor who called their land Hatti. They had their capital at Hattusas. These may have been of Heth, the son of Canaan. (see Genesis 10:15 and 24:5, 7 and 10).
  - B. About 1800 B.C. these “Hattites” were conquered by another people who spoke an Indo-European language, now known as “Hittite.”
  - C. Through the following years the common people spoke “Hattite,” while the rulers and upper class spoke “Hittite.”
  - D. During the period of the Old Kingdom Labarnas II (1650 - 1620) rebuilt Hattusas and expanded his kingdom, Mursilis (1620-1590) conquered Syria and Babylon. He did not maintain rule over Babylon, however. Telepinus I (c. 1525-1500 B.C.) ruled as a limited monarch with an assembly of nobles.
  - E. Then followed a period of weakness. The civilization at Mitanni had been built by the Indo-European Hurrians. Mitanni conquered Assyria and then attacked the Hittites and burned Hattusas. Egypt, which had been under the Hyksos, expelled the Hyksos and allied with the Hittites against Mitanni, which was then defeated.
  - F. Under Suppiluliumas (Shubbiluliuma) (1380-1340 B.C.) the Hittites became powerful again. He fortified Hattusas, conquered Mitanni, and reconquered Syria and a number of other small states. Under the next two rulers much of western Asia Minor was conquered and the great Rameses II of Egypt was defeated in the battle of Kadesh.

- G. The Hittites' power again gradually declined until they were conquered by the "Sea People" or Aegeans about 1190 B.C.
- H. The survivors fled to Syria where the Neo-Hittite civilization continued at Carchemish until it fell to the Assyrians in 717 B.C. Although the original Hittites had used the cuneiform writing, the Neo-Hittites used hieroglyphics.

#### IV. Characteristics

- A. The Hittites seem to have been greatly influenced by the Babylonian culture. They used cuneiform writing; their religion and literature are similar, they developed their own forms of sculpture which was imitated by Assyria.
- B. The Hittites are believed to have been the first to have used horse-drawn chariots for war, also adopted and developed by the Assyrians.
- C. Their main occupation was farming, but mining and metal-working were also important.
- D. They are important in history in part because of the virtual monopolies they held on the sources and production of iron. Since iron weapons were far superior to the bronze weapons used by most nations, the Hittites were powerful in war themselves and were in a position to control the power of other nations.
- E. The Hittites mentioned frequently in the Old Testament seem to be descendants of Heth who did not migrate north to Asia Minor, but remained in Canaan. (Genesis 15:20; 10:15; 23:3, 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 27:46; 49:32; I Chronicles 1:13)
- F. The Hittite religion included a multiplicity of gods, inherited from Nomadic days, and the Great Mother goddess, an earth goddess of nature, whose worship was indigenous to Asia Minor. (Cybele—nature goddess or Mother Nature of Asia Minor was still worshipped during the time of the first century A.D.)

#### V. Conclusions

- A. The Hittites were one of the early nations used by God to begin the destruction of the early Babylonian Empire when it had become corrupt and decadent.
- B. Just as the sons of God in the beginning saw that the daughters of men were fair so also unbelieving Esau took as his wives Judith and Bashemath, Canaanitish women, who were daughters of the Hittites. They were a grief to Isaac and Rebekah and therefore Jacob was sent to the land of Rebekah's origins to get himself a wife. (Cf. Genesis 26:34-35; 27:46; 28:8-9)
- C. The Hittites who descended from Heth, the second son of Canaan, were a strong but unbelieving people. When the nation of Israel came to Canaan from Egypt, they were told that one of the unbelieving and idolatrous nations that must be driven from the land were the Hittites. (Cf. Genesis 10:15; Exodus 23:28-33)

## UNIT VII: PHOENICIA

### I. Dates

Phoenicia was an independent collection of city-states from about 1200 to about 700 B.C.

Seige of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar ..... c. 585 – 573 B.C.

Fall of Tyre to Alexander..... 332 B.C.

### II. Important person—Hiram, king of Tyre during the reign of Solomon, is important for his relations with Solomon. He made agreements with Solomon by which he provided wood and other materials for Solomon’s building projects, especially the Temple. I Kings 5; II Chronicles 2.

### III. Geography

- A. Phoenicia is located north of Palestine along the Mediterranean Sea.
- B. The land surface is very mountainous and rocky with very little that is good for agriculture.
- C. The forests of cedar trees were very useful to the Phoenicians for the building of ships and buildings.
- D. The coastline has sites for several fine harbors. Such cities as Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos became the leading commercial cities of the ancient world.

### IV. History

- A. The history of Phoenicia is the story of the dominance of one or another of the major cities at various times. The whole country never gained a high degree of unity.
- B. Tyre was the dominant city during much of Phoenicia’s history. This was due to the fact that Tyre was protected by its position on an island while the other cities were often dominated or possessed by other empires. At different times Phoenicia was controlled by the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and the Persians.

### V. Characteristics

#### A. Religion

- 1. They were worshippers of a large variety of idols, called Baals, including Moloch, Asherah (Ashteroth or Astarte), and Malquart (the idol favored by Ahab of Israel). Through their influence Baal worship was introduced into Israel. I Kings 16: 30-33
- 2. In times of emergency they offered human sacrifices to Moloch.
- 3. Their kings claimed to be half-gods, e.g. King Ethbaal.
- 4. Sacrifices were supposed to bring fertility to the soil and guarantee abundant crops. (The drought in Israel during the reign of Ahab illustrated the inefficacy of Baal.)

## B. Arts and crafts

1. The Phoenicians are credited by some with the invention of glass. It is certain at least that they developed the art of making fine glass and uses of glass.
2. They were highly skilled in metal-working, pottery-making and the manufacture of textiles.
3. They invented a purple dye made from the murex shellfish. This purple dye was so rare and valuable that purple was associated in all countries with royalty.

## C. Ships and trade

1. They built the best ships of any nation. The Persian kings ordered Sidon to build a fleet for the Persian invasion of Greece.
2. They developed the skill of navigation by the stars that enabled them to sail out of sight of land.
3. Their ships sailed to all parts of the Mediterranean, to England, and even around Africa. (There are a few scholars today who claim that the Phoenicians even sailed to America.)
4. The Phoenicians carried on trade with all nations, bringing cereals, wines, textiles, olive oil, and precious stones from the Near East and returning with lead, gold, and iron from the Black Sea, silver from Spain, tin from Britain, and slaves from everywhere. They gained a reputation throughout the Mediterranean for their wily dealings and their greed.
5. They established colonies in many places: Cyprus, Sicily, Sardinia, Spain, and North Africa. The most famous of their colonies was the one at Carthage, established 846 B.C.

## D. Culture

1. The Phoenicians, who were Semites, developed a culture largely borrowed from the Egyptian and the Mesopotamian cultures.
2. Their most notable achievement was the distribution of culture throughout the Mediterranean lands. There is some argument about whether the Phoenicians got their alphabet from the Hebrews or gave it to the Hebrews. In any case, the Greeks adopted the alphabet of the Phoenicians and passed it on to the European civilizations.

## VI. Conclusions

- A. The Phoenicians are known for their development of many skills: Glass, textiles, dyes, and ships. The spread of the alphabet to many nations was an enormous contribution to communication.
- B. Through their trade and the establishment of colonies the Phoenicians spread the culture of the ancient world to all parts of the Mediterranean. They were the carriers of civilization.

- C. The Phoenicians had a great deal of influence upon Israel. The wood for the Temple and palaces of Solomon came from Lebanon. Baal worship was introduced into Israel by the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal of Sidon. Baal worship brought untold misery to Israel.
- D. The Phoenicians' unscrupulous pursuit of wealth contributed to their fall. Ezekiel 26-28
- E. In spite of specific prohibitions and warnings (Leviticus 18:21, Deuteronomy 12:29-32) the people of Israel and Judah continued to sacrifice their children to idols. (II Kings 16:2; I Kings 11:5 & 7; Jeremiah 32:35) This was a particularly vile sin because it was a deliberate denial of the covenant of God to kill one's own children.



## UNIT VIII: ASSYRIA

- I. Important Dates
  - Nineveh, Calah, and Resen Founded ..... 2200-2100 B.C.
  - Tiglath-pileser I attempts expansion of kingdom ..... 1118-1078 B.C.
  - Period of the Empire ..... 900-612 B.C.
  - Israel Taken Into Captivity ..... 722 B.C.
  - Sennacherib loses 185,000 men outside Jerusalem ..... c. 700 B.C.
  - Nineveh captured by the Chaldeans and Medes ..... 612 B.C.
  - Nebuchadnezzar takes all from allies ..... 605 B.C.
- II. Geography
  - A. The beginnings of Assyria were located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the northern part of Mesopotamia. The capital was the city of Nineveh on the Tigris River.
  - B. The soil here is less fertile than that of Babylonia to the south, however, the climate is more invigorating in contrast with the innervating heat of the Mesopotamnia. The country is somewhat mountainous.
  - C. Trees and rocks located here provided sources for building materials that were lacking in Babylonia.
  - D. At the height of its power the empire included all of the Fertile Crescent and Egypt.
- III. Important people
  - A. Shalmanezar III (860-825 B.C.) extended the boundaries of Assyria to include Phoenicia. In 851 B.C. he fought against 12 kings including Ben-hadad of Syria and Ahab of Israel. His records show that he received tribute from Jehu, king of Israel.
  - B. Tiglath-pilezer III (745-727 B.C.) is also known as Thai. He is credited with starting the practice of taking conquered enemies into captivity. He took the northernmost tribes of Israel into captivity. Several kings of Israel are mentioned in his annals, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea, as well as Ahaz, king of Judah. See II Kings 15:19-29.
  - C. Shalmanezar V (727-722 B.C.) made Hoshea, king of Israel, his tributary. When Hoshea tried to get help from Egypt and began a revolt against him, he conquered Israel and began the final seige of Samaria. II Kings 17:3-5
  - D. Sargon II (722-705 B.C.) was king when Samaria fell. He carried 27,290 of the Israelites into captivity in Assyria. He also conquered Ashdod in the land of the Philistines. II Kings 17:1-18; 18:9-12; Isaiah 20:1
  - E. Sennacharib (705-681 B.C.) built a large and beautiful palace in Nineveh. In 689 he destroyed Babylon. He is best known for his seige of Jerusalem during the

- reign of Hezekiah which was suddenly ended when the angel of the Lord destroyed his army. He was murdered by his sons. II Kings 18:7-chapter 19; II Chronicles 32:1-26; Isaiah 36-37.
- F. Esarhaddon (681-668 B.C.) rebuilt the city of Babylon which had been destroyed by his father. He took some of the remaining people of Israel into captivity. Ezra 4:2. He sent another group of people to live in Samaria. II Kings 17:24ff. Manasseh, king of Judah, paid him tribute.
  - G. Assurbanipal (668-626 B.C.) was the last powerful king of Assyria. He is known in secular history for the huge library which he collected. Twenty-two thousand volumes of this library have been found and these shed a great deal of light on the civilization of the Assyrians. He is probably the king who took Manasseh, king of Judah, captive to Babylon and later restored him to his throne. II Chronicles 33:11, 13.

#### IV. History

- A. The first Scriptural and historical reference to Assyria is that concerning the founding of the chief cities by Assur and/or Nimrod. (There is some argument among scholars about this.) Cf. Genesis 10:11, 22; I Chronicles 1:17)
- B. Mitanni and Hittites, Babylonians and Elamites long prevented Assyria's expansion. Therefore the first notable Assyrian attempt at expansion occurred at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C. under king Tiglath-pileser I (1118-1078 B.C.)
- C. Two hundred years were to pass, however, before the Assyrians were able to pursue a successfully aggressive policy. Assyria was controlled by Babylonia. When the power of Babylonia declined, Assyria was overrun successively by the Egyptians and Hittites.
- D. Under a few strong rulers Assyria gradually became strong and extended its territory. It conquered Phoenicia in the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and gained control of the important trade routes under rulers such as Shalmanezar III (860-825 B.C.)
- E. The period of the strongest kings of Assyria was contemporary with that of the later kings of Israel. Tiglath-pilezer III conquered Syria, which had been a threat to Israel for many years. (732 B.C.)
- F. An important historical event was the capture of the Ten Tribes of Israel under Sargon II (722 B.C.). The destruction of the Kingdom of Israel meant that Assyria would be used as an instrument of judgment against Israel by God.
- G. After Assurbanipal the kingdom declined rapidly, and only a few years later the great city of Nineveh fell to the Chaldeans and the Medes (612 B.C.).

#### V. Characteristics

- A. The Assyrians adopted much of the culture of the Babylonians.
- B. Religion — Their religion was in many ways like that of the Babylonians: they adopted all of the Babylonian gods and believed in demons, magic, and astrology. Their chief god was Ashur.

### C. Art and architecture

1. In keeping with the nature of the Assyrians, their art was concerned with war and violence. They are best known for their carving of bas-reliefs showing scenes of warfare and hunting, and for their sculpturing of animals, especially lions. Few sculptors in history have been so successful in showing the pathos of the wounded beast.
2. Their architecture was largely borrowed, e.g., they got the method of glazing brick from Egypt and the arched doorway from Babylonia. They used both wood and stone as well as brick for building.

### D. The Assyrians were a cruel people whose culture was centered around the business of warfare.

### E. Justice

1. They had judges whose business was to hear evidence and pronounce judgment. Sometimes they resorted to the "river ordeal." The suspect was thrown into the river; if he floated, he was innocent; if he sank, he was guilty.
2. The kings boasted of their cruelty to captured people. Robinson in *Ancient History*, p. 97-98, says:

Through her conquests Assyria acquired a reputation for cruelty almost without parallel in history. There is no denying that the Assyrians flayed their enemies alive, impaled them, and butchered them. The difference between them and their contemporaries, however, lay not in the fact of barbarous acts, which have been practiced by all states of all periods; rather, the Assyrians stand out because they made torture and destruction a regular pattern of conquest, partly, of course, to convince others of the wisdom of surrendering without a struggle. Incidentally, had they not proudly recorded their actions for all posterity to read, their reputation might be different. Nor did the Assyrians' policy of transplanting entire populations from one area to another stem from sheer delight in the heartless, but rather from a determination to break stubborn national resistance and to discourage the restive from rebellion.

### F. Government -- The kings were the absolute rulers, but immense power was given to the military chiefs.

### G. Decline

1. The constant warfare of the Assyrians resulted in a drain of manpower for other purposes.
2. The peasants were taken from the land to fill the ranks of the army. Much of the land lay idle.

## VI. Achievements

- A. Their achievements were mostly in the means of fighting. They were the first to use iron weapons. They produced faster chariots. They produced battering rams and platforms on wheels, with defenses against arrows, that could be moved against a wall to place the attackers on the same level as the defenders. The troops were organized in small fighting units; fortified camps served as safe bases from which to launch an attack; the whole science of warfare was studied.

B. Although they produced little that was original, they were known for their fine pottery and their sculpturing of animals.

C. Robinson says in *Ancient History*, page 98,

...the great constructive achievement of the Assyrians was the creation of abiding type of polity known as the Oriental Monarchy. It was they, too, who developed a system of provincial administration which became the basis of the Persian Empire. The chief contribution of Assyria to history, however, lies in the protection it gave to Babylonian civilization at a time when it might otherwise have been engulfed by barbarian inroads.

## VII. Conclusions

A. The main purpose of the Assyrians was that they were the instrument used by God for the judgment upon the kingdom of Israel for its wickedness. As the kings and the people of Israel became more wicked, the kings of Assyria gradually took more and more of their land. Eventually they carried out completely the full wrath of God when the Kingdom of Israel was taken to captivity to become the "Lost Ten Tribes." (cf. II Kings 17:6-18; Isaiah 10:5-15)

B. The reasons for the decline and fall of Assyria are important. The reason given by many historians is that the wealth and manpower of the state was drained by the constant warfare so that it eventually fell prey to foreign invaders. The real reason for their fall is given in Isaiah 10:5-30. Assyria is destroyed because they are proud and claim to have conquered in their own strength, because they refuse to recognize the God of Jerusalem, and, because they have threatened the Kingdom of Judah and mocked its God. (Cf. Prophecy of Nahum, chapters 1-3; Zephaniah 2:13-15)

C. Assyria was not left without a witness from God Almighty. Jonah preached to Nineveh sometime during the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. perhaps during the reign of Tiglath-pilezer III (7145-727 B.C.). The subject of the book of Nahum is Nineveh, the great capital city of Assyria. In this book Nahum predicts in the ears of the Ninevites the destruction of Nineveh and the land of Assyria. It was undoubtedly during the reign of Assurbanipal (668-626 B.C.) that Nahum prophesied. The concern of the God of heaven extends beyond Israel to the whole world. He leaves all, men without an excuse. Jesus refers to the early repentance of the Ninevites (Jonah 3:5) and contrasts it with the repentance of His Jewish hearers in Matthew 12:41 and Luke 11:32. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES FOR ASSYRIA

Study carefully the prophecy of Nahum. The prophecy of Nahum includes some of the most graphic poetry in the entire Old Testament and is concerned exclusively with the destruction of Nineveh and Assyria.

Read “The Threat of Assyria” by Allan Millard in *Eerdman’s Handbook of the Bible*, p. 395. (Excellent brief review of the history of this period as it relates to the children of Israel.)

Read the poem “Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind” by Carl Sandburg to illustrate what happens to civilizations and cities like Nineveh. Nineveh was destroyed to be uncovered years later by archaeologists.

Read the poem “Choruses from ‘The Rock’” by T.S. Eliot.

Read the poem by George Gordon Lord Byron, “The Destruction of Sennacherib” written in 1816 A.D. This poem illustrates graphically and in picturesque language the destruction of the forces of Sennacherib outside Jerusalem in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

Study the Ancient Assyrian Inscriptions relating to Biblical History quoted from Anstey’s *Chronology of the Old Testament*.

ANCIENT ASSYRIAN INSCRIPTIONS RELATING TO  
BIBLICAL HISTORY \*

A. Shalmaneser II (III)

1. The Kurkh Monolith

In this he says that in the 6th year at' his reign he left Nineveh, crossed the Tigris and the Euphrates, and came to Syria where he captured "12,000 chariots, 1200 carriages and 20,000 men of Ben-hadad of Syria, 700 chariots, 700 carriages and 10,000 men of Irhuleni of Hamath, and 2000 chariots and 10,000 men of Ahab of Sirhala. (Israel)" overthrowing all the 12 kings whom Ben-hadad of Syria had brought him. (854 B.C.)

2. The Bull Inscription

"In my 18th year the sixteenth time the river Euphrates I crossed, Hazael of Syria... I overthrew. 18,000 men of his army with weapons I destroyed. 1121 of his chariots, 470 of his carriages, with his camp, I took from him. To save his life he fled. After him I pursued, in Damascus his royal city I besieged... In those days the tribute of Tyre and Zidon, of Jehu son of Omri, I received..."

3. The Black Obelisk (referring to the same event as above—2)

"Tribute of Jehu son of Omri, silver, gold, bowls of gold, cups of gold, bottles of gold, vessels of gold, maces, royal utensils, rods of wood I received from him." (B.C. 842 Schrader)

B. Tiglath-pileser III (IV) from a marble slab from his palace.

1. Part of a marble slab from his palace

"In the course of my campaign... tribute of the kings... Azrijahu of Judah... Asurijahu of Judah (Azariah = Uzziah)." (738 B.C. Smith)

2. On another marble slab from his palace

"Of Azariah my hand mightily captured... Nineteen districts of the town Hamath, together with the towns in their circuit, which are situated on the sea of the setting sun, which in the faithlessness made revolt to Azrijahu (Azariah = Uzziah), I turned into the territory of Assyria. My officers, my governors I placed over them." (B.C. 738 Smith)

3. From the same piece of marble slab as 2 above

"The tribute of Kustaspi, Resin of Syria, Menahem of Sanaria and (14 other kings and one queen are named) I received. In my 9<sup>th</sup> year."

4. From a marble slab from the palace at Nimrud

"The cities Gil(ead), Abel (Beth-maacha?)... which is the boundary of the land of Beth-Omri (Samaria) I turned in its entire extent into the territory of Assyria. I set my officers and veceroys over it (cp. II Kings 15:29; 16:9-16; I Chronicles 5:6-26; Isaiah 7:1-9:1)

“The land of Beth-Omri (Samaria)... the goods of its people and their furniture I sent to Assyria. Pekaha (Pekah) their King... and Asui (Hoshea) I appointed over them... their tribute of them I received.” (Cp. II Kings 17:1) (740 to 730 B.C.)

5. A summarizing triumphal inscription of Tiglath-pileser III (IV) records the fact that he received tribute from a very large number of kings, among which is included the name of Yauhazi of Judah (Ahaz) (cp. II Kings 16:8; II Chronicles 28; Isaiah 7:1-9:1)

#### C. Sargon II

1. From the triumphal Inscription at Khorsabad (722 B.C. Smith)

“...Samaria... I carried off 50 chariots, my royal portion... tribute the same as that of the Assyrians I fixed upon them.”

2. Passage from Sargon II's Annals

“Samaria I besieged. I captured. 27,290 people dwelling in the midst of it I carried captive, 50 chariots from among them I selected, and the rest of them I distributed. My general over them I appointed and the taxes of the former King I fixed on them.

#### D. Sennacherib

1. Part of the Taylor six-sided clay cylinder, an account of his third campaign

“As for Hezekiah of Judah, who had not submitted to my yoke, 46 at his strong cities, together with innumerable fortresses and small towns dependent on them, by overthrowing the walls and open attack by battle engines and battering-rams I besieged, I captured; I brought out from the midst of them and counted as a spoil 200,150 persons, great and small, male and female, besides mules, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep without number. Hezekiah himself I shut up like a bird in a cage in Jerusalem, his royal city. I built a line of forts against him, and I kept back his heel from going forth out of the great gate of his city. I cut off his cities which I had spoiled from the midst of his land, and gave them to Metinti, King of Ashdod; Padi, King of Ekron; and Zil-baal, King of Gaza, and I made his country small. In addition to their former tribute and yearly gifts, I added other tribute and the homage due to my majesty, and I laid it upon them. The fear of the greatness of my majesty overwhelmed him, even Hezekiah, and he sent after me to Nineveh, my royal city, by way of gift and tribute, the Arabs and his body guard whom he had brought for the defence of Jerusalem, his royal city, and had furnished with pay, along with 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of pure silver, carbuncles, and other precious stones, a couch of ivory, thrones of ivory, and elephant's hide, and elephant's tusk, rare woods of all kinds, a vast treasure, as well as the eunuchs of his palace and dancing men and dancing women, and he sent his ambassador to pay homage and to make submission.” (cp. II Kings 18:13-19:37; II Chronicles 32; Isaiah 36 and 37)

- quoted from Anstey, Martin, *Chronology of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1973



**UNIT IX: CHALDEANS**  
**(LATER BABYLONIANS)**

- I. Important dates
- Period of the Empire ..... 612 – 538 B.C.
- Destruction of Nineveh..... 612 B.C.
- First captivity of Judah..... 597 B.C.
- Final captivity of Judah and destruction of Jerusalem..... 586 B.C.
- II. Geography
- A. See “From the Flood to Abraham,” Unit II.
- B. At its greatest extent the Chaldean Empire of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. included all of the Fertile Crescent to the borders of the land of Egypt.
- C. The capital was at Babylon which became one of the largest and most beautiful cities in the world under the Chaldeans.
- III. Important People
- A. Merodach-baladin (c. 711 B.C.) was the first Chaldean to rule Babylon. He was engaged in constant warfare with Assyria and was finally defeated by Sennacherib. He sent messengers to Hezekiah hoping to gain his help against the Assyrians. (Cf. II Kings 20:12; Isaiah 39.)
- B. Nabopolassar (625-605 B.C.) is considered the founder of the Chaldean Empire. He united with the Medes and destroyed Nineveh in 612 B.C. (Cf. Zephaniah 2:13-15)
- C. Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 B.C.) is the greatest and most important of the Chaldean kings. He began his rule by defeating the Assyrians, who were allied with Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt, in the battle at Carchemish in 605 B.C. In 597 B.C. he came and took Jerusalem and took many of its upper class people captive, among whom were Daniel and his friends and the prophet Ezekiel. (II Kings 24:10-16; Daniel 1:1; Ezekiel 1:1, 2, 3; 40:1) In 586, after vassal King Zedekiah had rebelled, Nebuchadnezzar came and took most of the rest of the people of Judah into captivity. (II Kings 25:1-25; II Chronicles 36:11-21; Jeremiah 39)
- Nebuchadnezzar built great temples and palaces in Babylon. (Daniel 4:30) “Is not this great Babylon which I have built.” He was punished for his pride by being driven out from men for a time. He lived in a state of insanity as an animal. (Daniel 4)
- D. Evil-Merodach (562-559 B.C.) released Jehoiachin from prison and treated him kindly. (II Kings 25:27; Jeremiah 52:31-34) He was a very poor ruler and was assassinated by the priests of Babylon.
- E. Nabonidas (555-538 B.C.) is believed to be the last king of Babylon. He spent most of his reign restoring the temples of the gods of his empire. Belshazzar, whose story is told in Daniel 5 was his son and heir to the throne.

#### IV. History

- A. The history of the Chaldeans begins with the Iranaeans who began coming into Babylonia about 1000 B.C.
- B. They became rulers of Babylonia under Merodach-baladin but were soon conquered by Assyria.
- C. With the destruction of Assyria in 605 the Chaldean Empire became the world power. It had its brief period of glory under Nebuchadnezzar II.
- D. After Nebuchadnezzar the kings were less strong and there was constant struggle between the kings and the priests.
- E. The empire came to a sudden end when Cyrus, king of Persia came and conquered Babylon in 539. The partiality of Nabonidas for other gods offended the priests of Marduk, who secretly urged Cyrus to invade Babylonia.

#### V. Characteristics and Achievements

- A. The Chaldeans adopted much of the culture of the preceding civilizations of Babylonia. Their religion, their system of writing (cuneiform), their architecture were all adopted from the Babylonian civilizations.
- B. Religion.
  - 1. The Chaldeans made divinities of the sun, the moon, and the five known planets.
  - 2. The great god of the Chaldeans was Marduk.
  - 3. The Chaldeans were great believers in astrology. Note how Nebuchadnezzar is surrounded by magicians, astrologers, soothsayers, and Chaldeans.
- C. Astronomy.
  - 1. The Chaldeans kept a record of continuous observations of the sky for 360 years.
  - 2. They calculated the length of the year, coming within 26 minutes of its actual duration.
  - 3. They calculated the time of the revolution of the moon.
- D. Architecture—The outstanding example of their architecture is the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, which Nebuchadnezzar built on his palace for his wife, who longed for the mountains of her homeland in Media. (cf. *Streams of Civilization*, Hyma & Stanton, p. 101-102.)

#### VI. Conclusions

- A. The Chaldean Empire is the means that God used to punish the people of Judah for their continued unfaithfulness. (Cf. Jeremiah 25:8-U; Habakkuk 1:6-12)
- B. A remarkable fact is that God reveals His power so forcefully to Nebuchadnezzar. The first chapters of Daniel show how Nebuchadnezzar was finally forced to confess that God was the only God of heaven and earth.

- C. The downfall of the Chaldean Empire is clearly a judgment of God upon them for their worship of idols and for their pride. (Cf. Jeremiah 25:12-14; 50; Isaiah 13; 47; Daniel 3 & 4)
- D. Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the image (Daniel 2) is a remarkable revelation of the future history of the world. This dream, with the visions told in Daniel 7 and 8 should be studied in connection with the world powers that arise later in history.
- E. The captivity was for the purging of Judah. (Cf. Micah 4:8-13.) The point of Daniel is that the kingdoms of this world must serve the kingdom of Christ which shall destroy them all.

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Oosterman, *Story of the Old World*, Teachers' Manual, p. 8-12.

## UNIT X: MEDO-PERSIANS

### I. Important Dates

- Earliest king according to tradition was Deioces..... c. 708 – 655 B.C.  
Period of the Persian Empire ..... 550 – 331 B.C.  
Fall of Babylon and return of Jewish Exiles by Cyrus ..... 538 B.C.  
Defeat of the Persians at Salamis..... 480 B.C.  
Fall of the Persian Empire..... 331 B.C.

### II. Geography

- A. The empire of the Medes before 550 B.C. was located northeast of Mesopotamia and included the Zagros Mountains and part of the Iranian plateau.  
B. The Persians were originally located east of Babylonia and north of the Persian Gulf in the southern part of the Iranian Plateau.  
C. At its greatest extent the Persian Empire included Thrace in the Balkan Peninsula to the Indus River, and from the Aral Sea to Ethiopia.

### III. Important People

- A. Cyaxares (633-584 B.C.) joins with Nabopolassar in the destruction of Nineveh. Cyaxares took eastern Assyria and the provinces north and east of the Tigris. The Persians became his vassals.  
B. Cyrus (559-529 B.C.) is called the builder of the Persian Empire. He took over the Empire of the Medes, conquered Lydia, and ended the empire of the Chaldeans. He issued the proclamation that allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. (II Chronicles 36:21-23; Ezra 1:2-4; Isaiah 4:28; 45:1-4)  
C. Cambyses II (530-522 B.C.), son of Cyrus, conquers Egypt in 529 B.C.  
D. Darius Hystaspes (Darius I) (521-486 B.C.) built up the elaborate organization of the Persian Empire. He built a war fleet with the help of the Phoenicians. He ordered the first of the Persian campaigns against Greece and was defeated at the Battle of Marathon. Under his rule the temple at Jerusalem was completed and dedicated, 515 B.C. (Ezra 6:13-22) (Not necessarily to be confused with Darius of Daniel 6.)  
E. Xerxes I (Ahasuerus) (486-465 B.C.) continued the campaigns against Greece. Although he succeeded in burning Athens, his navy was defeated at Salamis and his army driven from the Balkan Peninsula after a battle at Plateas. (479 B.C.) He is the Ahasuerus of the time of Esther and Mordecai. (Esther 1-10)  
F. Artaxerxes I (465-424 B.C.) was ruler of Persia when Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to rebuild its walls and order reforms among the people. (445 B.C.) (Nehemiah 1-6)

### IV. History

- A. The earliest history of the Japhetic or Indo-European Medes goes back to Deioces (c. 708-655 B.C.) and the capital city at Ecbatana. His successor Phaortes became a vassal of the Assyrians.
- B. The empire of the Medes rose to power around 625 B.C. The Medes combined with the Chaldeans to destroy Nineveh in 612 B.C.
- C. Cyrus, originally king of Anshan, began to unite the Persian tribes. He became ruler of the Medes (549 B.C.) when the army of the Medes turned against their ruler and accepted the rule of Cyrus.
- D. Cyrus then began to expand his possessions. He fought in Asia Minor and conquered Lydia and captured its ruler, Croesus (546 B.C.) He then returned and conquered Babylon and its ruler Belshazzar. Daniel 5.
- E. Cyrus' successor, Cambyses II, conquered Egypt.
- F. The Empire reached its greatest height under Darius, who organized the government of the provinces and started the wars with Greece.
- G. During the reign of Xerxes I, the Persians were driven out of Greece with the loss of part of their army and navy.
- H. The Empire declined under the succeeding rulers until Alexander the Great brought about the final collapse in 331 B.C. at the battle of Arbella.

## V. Characteristics

### A. Government

1. The organization of the empire is considered one of the major achievements of the Persians. This work was done mostly by Darius I.
2. The Empire was divided into 21 Provinces, or satrapies, each of which had three rulers: a military governor, a civil governor, and a visiting official called the "eyes and ears of the king." These officials were all directly responsible to the king.
3. Roads were built connecting all parts of the empire and an empirewide postal service was set up. (Esther 8:13-14)
4. The people of the provinces were allowed to keep their own languages, customs, and religions. They were required to pay tribute and furnish soldiers for the armies.

### B. Religion

1. The official religion was Zoroastrianism, begun by Zoroaster about 600 B.C. The sacred writings are in a book called the Zend-Avesta.
2. They believed that the world was a battlefield for the struggle between good and evil forces. Man was obliged to join the struggle on the side of one or the other.
3. They believed that a good god, Ahura Mazda, a god of fire and light, would reward those who fought on the side of the good.

4. The god of the evil forces was Abriman, the god of darkness.
5. They believed that all men would eventually be saved but the wicked had to be purified first by punishment.
6. Some of these ideas were adopted in the Manichaeian heresy after the time of Christ.

#### C. Architecture

1. The Persians adopted many architectural ideas from others: Babylonian terraces, Assyrian winged bulls, Egyptian colonnades.
2. Great palaces of stone were built at Susa (Shushan) and at Persepolis.

#### D. The people

1. The Persians were Indo-Europeans — descendants of Japheth.
2. By this time Indo-Europeans were also dominant in Greece and Rome.

#### E. Language

1. The Persians used the cuneiform system but modified it to 43 symbols most of which stood for letters instead of syllables.
2. The official spoken language was Aramaic.
3. The Persians were the last people to use the cuneiform. By 100 B.C. it was no longer in use anywhere.
4. The key to Persian writing for modern scholars is the huge carving on the cliff at Behistun which records the achievements of Darius I in three languages.

### VI. Achievements

- A. Secular historians consider the organization of the Persian Empire to be its greatest achievement.
- B. They returned the Jews to their homeland and promoted the building of the temple and the walls of Jerusalem as the prophets had foretold.
- C. They made a kind of synthesis of the previous civilizations.
- D. They were the first to use stamped coins, e.g. the gold daric.
- E. They rebuilt the canal from the Nile to the Red Sea.

### VII. Conclusions

- A. The Persian Empire is referred to several times in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 2 it is the breast and arms of silver in the image of Nebuchadnezzar; in Daniel 7 as a bear with three ribs in its mouth; and in Daniel 8 as the ram with two horns. The ribs in the mouth of the bear are sometimes interpreted as representing the three kingdoms conquered by the Persians. The two horns of the ram represent the kingdoms of Media and Persia.
- B. The Persians were the instrument of punishment against the Chaldeans for their wickedness and for their pride. Jeremiah 25:12-14; Isaiah 13:17-22.

- C. The Persians invitingly carried out the promise that the captives of Israel would return to their own land. Jeremiah 24:4-8; 29:8-14; 32:37-44.
- D. Although Cyrus did not believe in God, he was used by God to return the captivity of Judah. Isaiah 44:26, 28; 45:1, 4, 5.
- E. The Persian Empire brings to an end the large number of kingdoms and the constant warfare of the Fertile Crescent beginning the unity that we find at the time of Christ.

Robinson in Ancient History, p. 113, writes:

The year 539 B.C. is one of the decisive dates in the history of the ancient Near East. For more than two millenia (perhaps slightly less, editor) Semitic power and influences had dominated Mesopotamia and adjoining lands. Akkad, Babylon, Phoenicia and Palastine, Assyria, and finally Babylon once again had had their day. Now their place was taken by a new force, a mighty world state, which was to solidify Asia in the first Pax Orientalis. Stretching at its greatest extent from European Thrace to India, the Achaemenid dynasty was to endure for more than two centuries, until the coming of Alexander the Great. Inevitably, perhaps, the Persians longed to conquer the Greeks of the mainland, as they had already those along the coast of Asia Minor, and eventually the great issue of Europeanism and Orientalism was decided by such immortal battles as Marathon, Thermopylae, and Salamis. The stage of history, that is to say, is now to contain both East and West, but by the time these battles were fought the Greeks and their forerunners had gone through a long and remarkable development. We must, accordingly, turn to Greece before we follow the expansion of the Persian Empire.

- F. The decline and fall of the Persian Empire was brought about by the inefficiency of the later emperors. They began to live in wealth and luxury and ignored the work of government. The provinces began to revolt weakening the Empire.
- G. The fall of the Semitic nations into the control of the Persians is the beginning in a natural sense of the westward movement. The course of the gospel and the establishment of the New Testament Church has a westward course. This is therefore the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Noah in Genesis 9:27 that Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem. This was true both naturally and spiritually.



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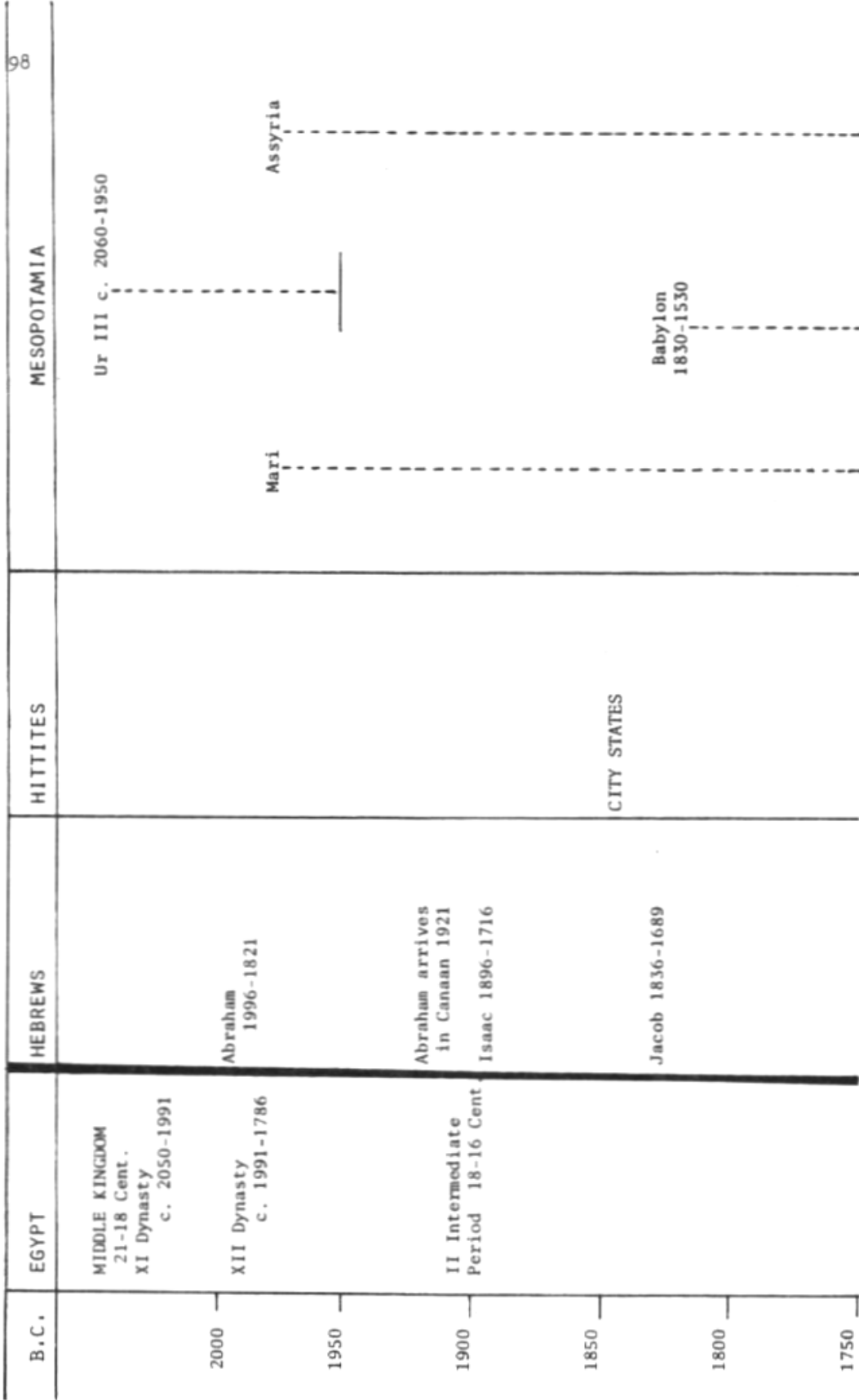
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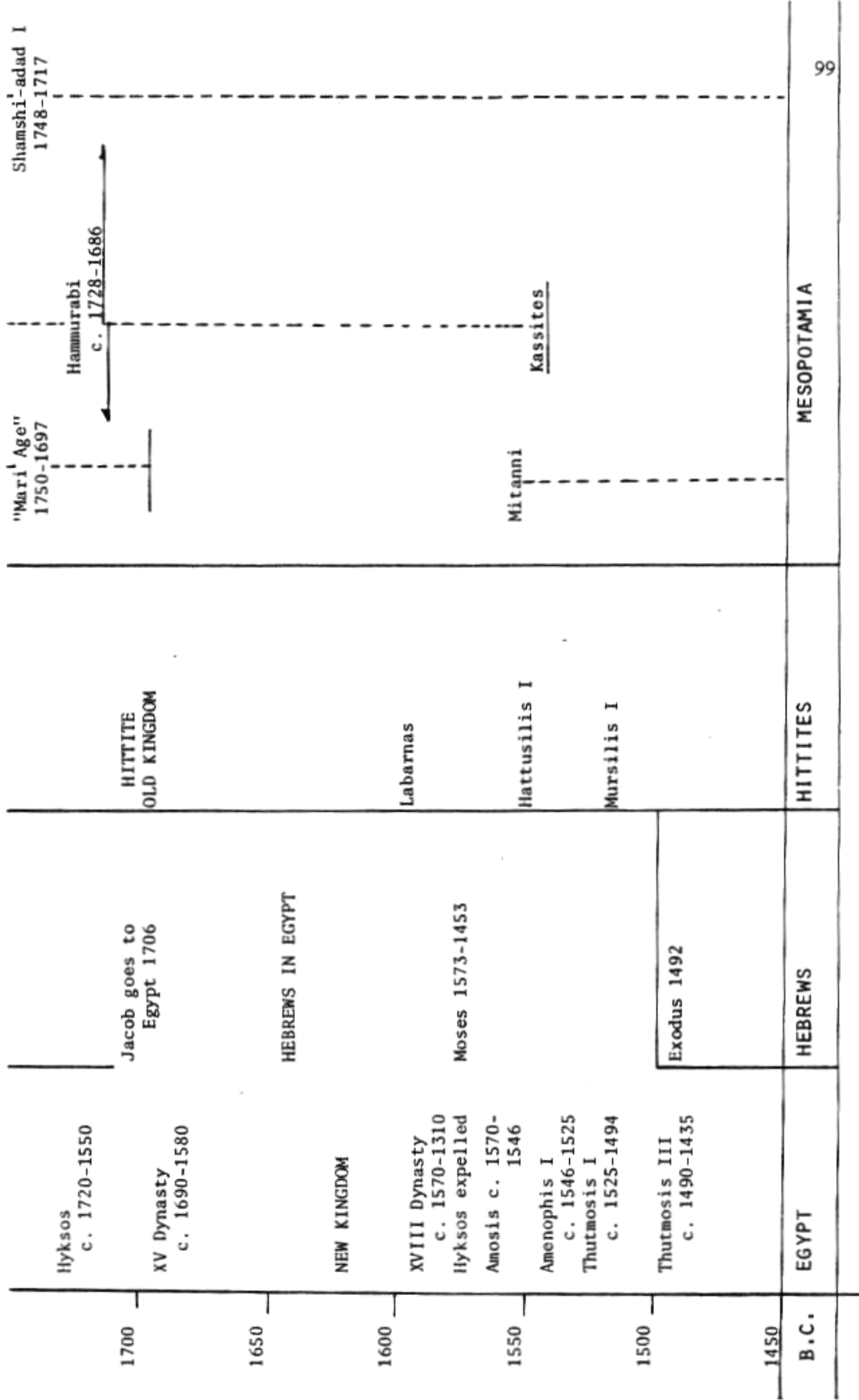
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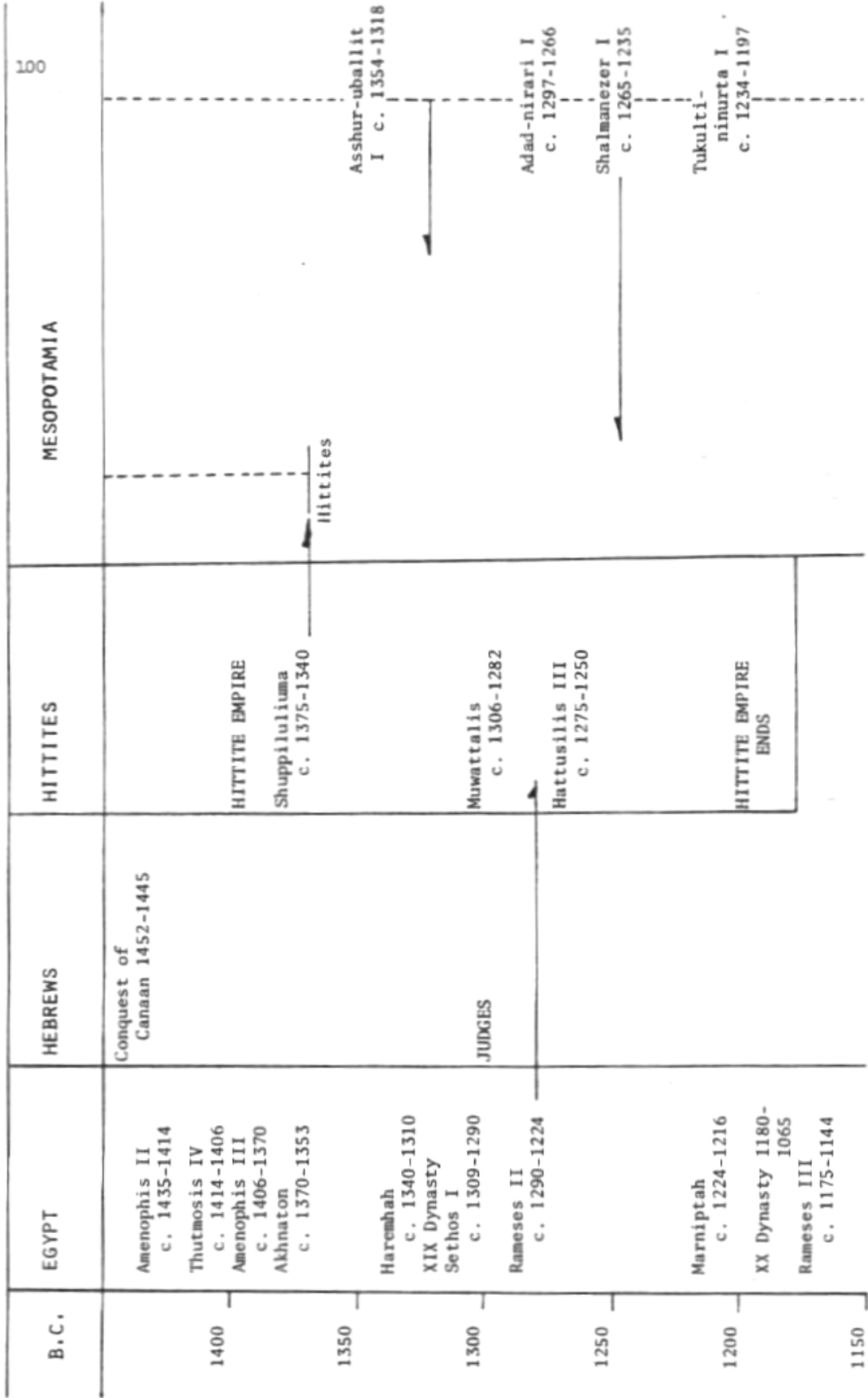
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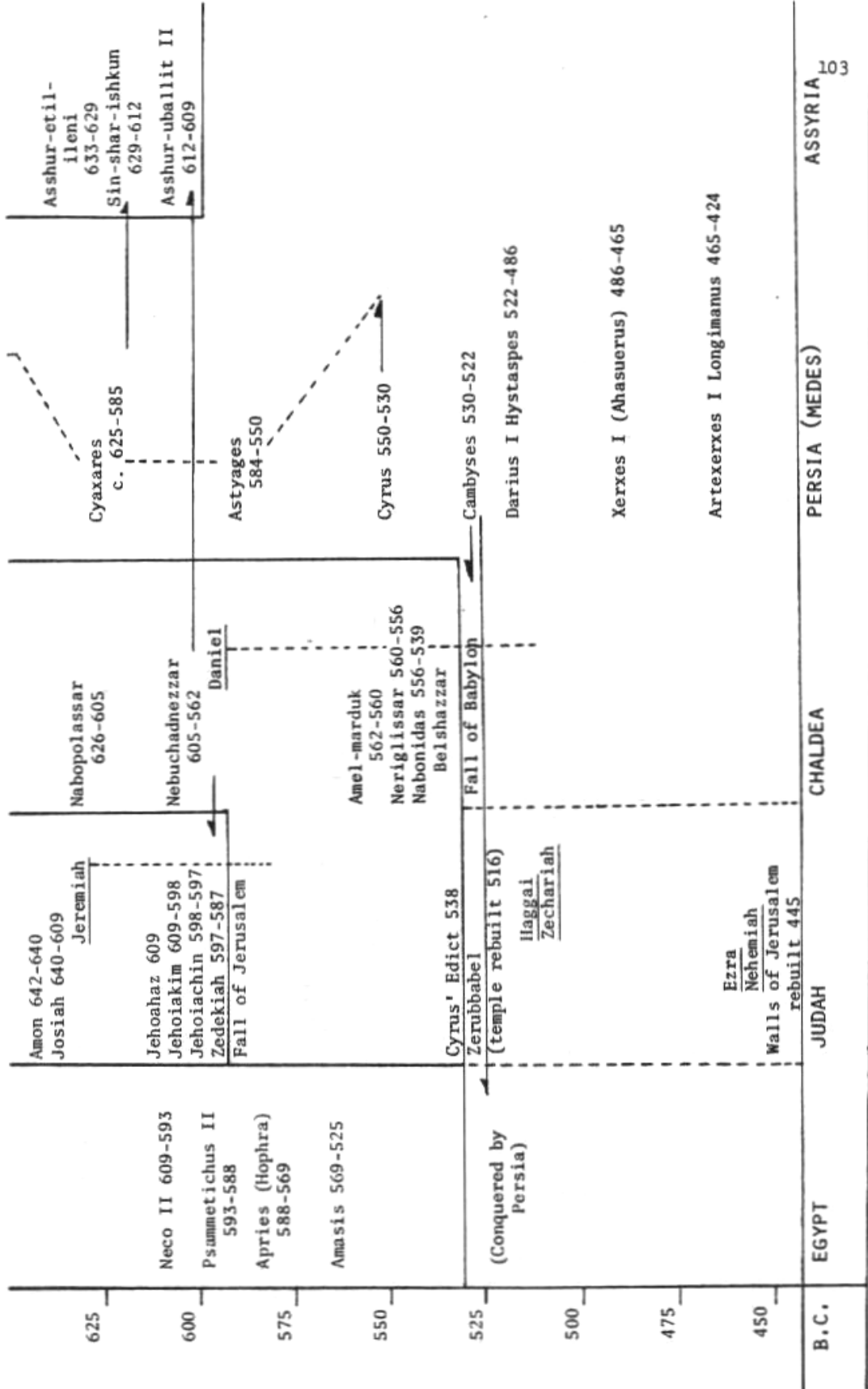


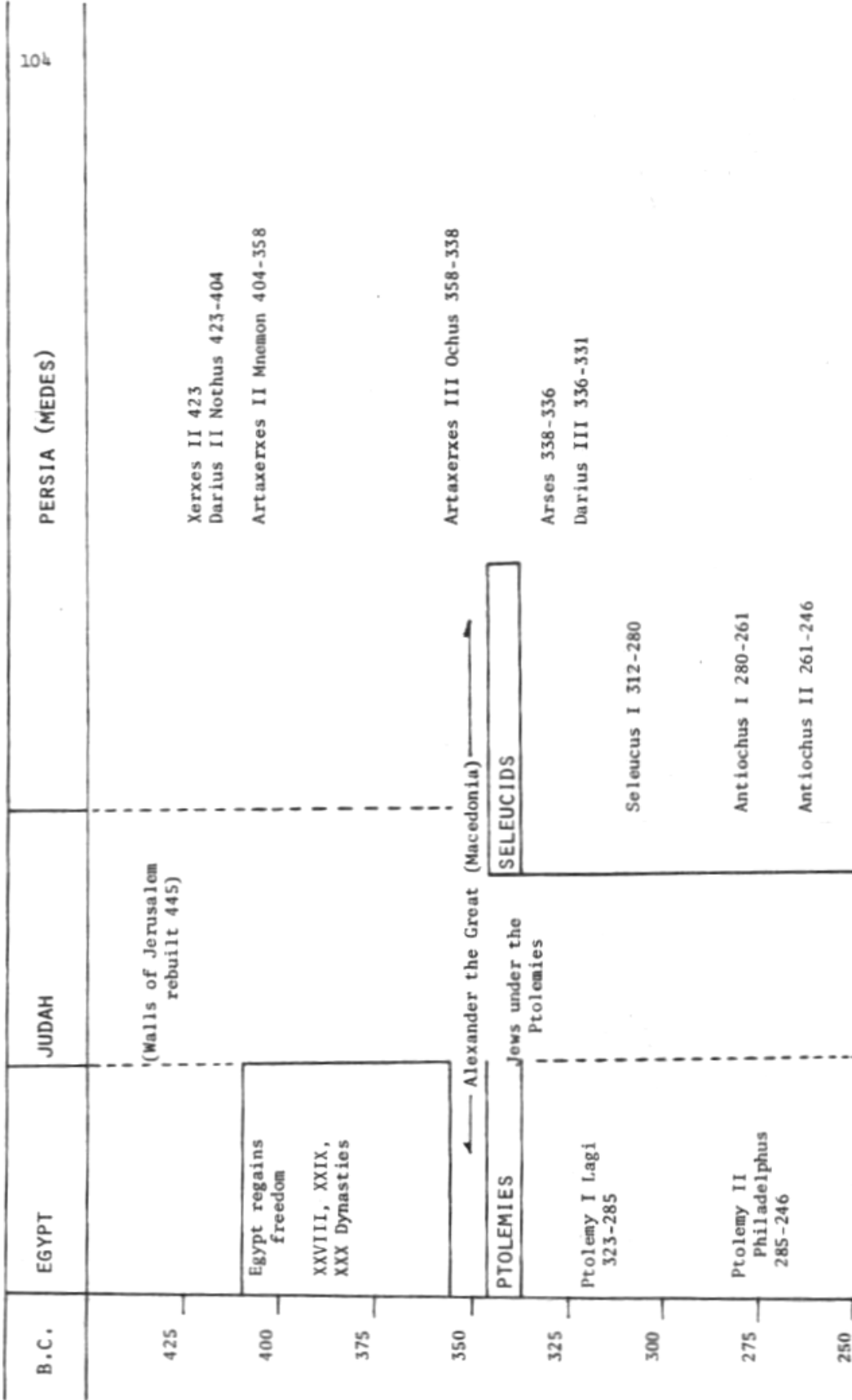






B. C.	EGYPT	JUDAH	ISRAEL	DAMASCUS (SYRIA)	ASSYRIA
825		Amaziah 839-810	Jehoash 841-825	Hazael c. 842-806	
800		Uzziah 810-758 <u>Joel</u>	Jeroboam II 825-784 <u>Jonah</u> <u>Amos</u> <u>Hosea</u>		Shamshi-adad V 824-811 Adad-nirari III 811-783
775			Zachariah 773-772 Shallum 772 Menahem 772-761 Pekahiah 761-759 Pekah 759-738	Bonhadad III	(Assyrian weakness)
750	XXIII Dynasty c. 759-715	Jotham 758-742 <u>Micah</u>			
725	XXIV Dynasty c. 725-709 XXV Dynasty (Ethiopian) Shabako c. 710-696 Shebteko 696-685 Tirhakah 685-664	Ahaz 742-726 Hezekiah 726-698 <u>Isaiah</u>	Hoshea 730-722	Rezin c. 740-732	Tiglath-pilezer II 745-727 Shalmaneser V 727-722 Sargon II 722-705 Sennacherib 705-681
700		Manasseh 698-643	Captivity 722	Fall of Damascus	
675	XXVI Dynasty 663-525 Psammetichus I 663-609		CHALDEA	PERSIA (MEDES)	Esarhaddon 681-669
650					Assurbanapa 669-633







225	Ptolemy III Euergetes 246-221	Seleucus II 246-226
200	Ptolemy IV Philopater 221-203 Ptolemy V Epiphanes 203-181	Seleucus III 226-223 Antiochus III (the Great) 223-187
175	Ptolemy VI Philometer 181-146	Seleucus IV 187-175
150	Roman domination	Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) 175-163 Antiochus V 163-162 Demetrius I 162-150 Alexander Balus 150-143 Demetrius II 145-139; Antiochus VI 145-142 Antiochus VII 139-129
125		
100		
75		
50	Roman province	
B.C.	PTOLEMIES	SELEUCIDS

Jews under the Seleucids

Maccabean Period  
Judas Maccabeus 166-160  
Jonathon 160-143

Simon 142-134  
John Hyrcanus 134-104

Aristobulus I 104-103  
Alexander Jannaeus 103-76

Alexandra 76-67

Aristobulus II 66-63  
Jews under the Romans

(Herod the Great--40-4 B.C.; Birth of Christ--4 B.C.)

(Pompey takes the Persian Empire for Rome)

## UNIT XI: THE GREEKS

### I. Important Dates

Aegean Age.....	c. 2000 – 1150 B.C.
Minoan Civilization on Crete.....	c. 2000 – 1450 B.C.
Mycenaean or Actaeon dominance .....	c. 1450 – 1150 B.C.
Dorian invasions and Greek Middle Age.....	c. 1150 – 900 B.C.
Greek Colonization and Expansion .....	c. 900 – 600 B.C.
Rise of Athens.....	c. 650 – 460 B.C.
Persian Wars .....	490 – 479 B.C.
Golden Age of Athens .....	460 – 429 B.C.
Peloponnesian Wars.....	432 – 402 B.C.
Macedonian Domination.....	346 – c. 200 B.C.
Fall of Greece Under Roman Domination .....	c. 200 – 133 B.C.
Hellenism Becomes the Hellenistic Age.....	c. 323 – 146 B.C.
Fall of City of Corinth and Romans take Greece.....	146 B.C.

### II. Geography

- A. Historic Greece is located on the southern part of the Balkan Peninsula.
- B. Attica and Peloponnesus, both mountainous peninsulas, are the two historic parts of ancient Greece. They are separated by the Gulf of Corinth and are connected by the Isthmus of Corinth.
- C. Greece is primarily mountainous and is divided by the Balkan Mountains. In these mountains are the fabled Mt. Olympus and Mt. Parnassus. Forests at one time covered these mountains but now most of the trees have disappeared. Man in his normal exploitation of natural resources has disposed of much of the valuable land cover that would have reduced soil erosion. For this reason soil, which was always poor in Greece, is becoming less fertile.
- D. The coastline of Greece is very broken and many excellent harbors made the sea an important part of the Greek story and way of life.
- E. Three historic seas surround the peninsula. They are the Aegean on the east, the Ionian on the west, and the Mediterranean on the south.
- F. Climate in Greece can be characterized as Mediterranean type. The winters are hardest in the mountains, and the climate ranges from temperate to semitropical in the lower areas.
- G. There are few important rivers in Greece. The Achelous in northern Greece and the Alpheus in Peloponnesus are the only ones worth mention. The underground rivers in Greece are prevalent because water sinks through holes in the surface of

the limestone soil in the Greek peninsula. This phenomenon resulted in the caves with stalagmite and stalactite deposits.

- H. Greece is surrounded by islands which tell much of the history of ancient Greece. The Aegean Sea is so thickly sprinkled with hundreds of islands that it is almost impossible to cross the Aegean without seeing land all the way and in a number of directions at the same time.
- I. Crete is the most important of these islands because her history is closely related to later Greek history and serves as the source for the earliest evidence of past civilizations, Crete is about 185 miles long and from seven to 35 miles wide.

### III. History

#### A. Minoan or Aegean Civilization (c. 1800-c. 1450 B.C.)

1. The Minoans is the name given by archaeologists and secular historians to the earliest inhabitants of parts of the world called Greece today. These early inhabitants were part of the "Sea Peoples." They lived on the shores and islands of the Aegean Sea. For this reason this early civilization is also called the Aegean Civilization.
2. These early inhabitants of Crete and adjacent islands and seashores were in all probability not descendants of Japheth. They were more likely to have been descendants of Ham. The Scriptures in Genesis 10:14 speak about the descendants of Ham. These descendants include the Caphthorim. On the basis of evidence found in Deuteronomy 2:23; I Chronicles 1:12; Amos 9:7; and Jeremiah 47:4, it is possible to conclude that the Caphthorim were the ancestors of the Philistines, who later settled on the southeastern shore of the Mediterranean. These ancestors of the Philistines who originally inhabited Capthor or Crete were associated with the empire builders who developed the Minoan civilization.
3. The Minoan civilization which has been studied by archaeologists is best preserved on the island of Crete. Archaeologists and historians have uncovered the remains of a civilization which once flourished at Cnossus, an ancient Cretan capital.
4. It is generally conjectured and accepted that the height of Minoan or Cretan civilization of the Aegean area was around 1500 B.C. Crete, Egypt, and the kingdom of the Hittites (all three originally founded by descendants of Ham) were the great powers vying for supremacy in the ancient world of this time. The early civilizations of the Fertile Crescent had by this time fallen into a state of decadence and subjugation to Egypt and the Hittites. Gordon Oosterman says, p. 38, "The influence of the Hittites on the Aegeans is usually underestimated."
5. Mines was the Cretan king and was the ruler of an advanced civilization. The term "Mines" is a term like Pharaoh that means king. Great commerce was conducted between the Egyptians, the Hittites, and the Minoan kingdom, in addition to the constant struggle for supremacy. Cretans or Minoans were reported to be artistic and made finely decorated clay vases which were in

much demand by the Egyptians. Advocates of the evolutionary Bronze and Iron Age theories argue that Minoan production of bronze weapons, locks, and keys represents a further advancement over the techniques of Hittites and others who successfully mined and smelted iron ores. Aegean art found in the ruins of Crete is more spontaneous and certainly more sensuous too than the massive and more stylized art of the Egyptians.

6. Minoan writing was not highly developed. The records of their culture indicate a mixture of Egyptian hieroglyphics and Babylonian cuneiform writing. Clay tablets found in the ruins of a destroyed palace indicate a linear writing scratched on clay tablets.
  7. About 1400 B.C. Cnossus was invaded and destroyed by rebels from the mainland. These invaders were undoubtedly descendants of Japheth who may have first settled on the shores of the Black and Caspian Seas and then following the profile of the rugged Grecian peninsula had migrated to these shorelines and islands. (of. Genesis 10:2-5 for information concerning the descendants of Japheth.) At first these invaders may have been vassals of the more powerful Minoan civilization but in the course of years these Indo-European migrants revolted against the exploitation of the Minoans.
  8. It is a very real possibility that the origin of the Philistines can be traced to the overthrow of the Minoan kingdom. In Amos 9:7 we read of the work of God in His taking Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor. The Philistines were the Sea Peoples and the island of Crete was once called Caphtor. In Jeremiah 47:4, we read, "...for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the country (or isle) of Caphtor." We recognize and readily admit that the evidence concerning the Philistines is not as specific as we should like it to be. The term country or isle could also refer to any maritime or coastland area and therefore some geographers and scholars claim that the Philistines migrated from a coastal area somewhat further east and south of the land of the Philistines occupied during the times of the judges and the kings of Israel and Judah. (c. 1400-900 B.C.)
  9. Concerning the Cretans the Apostle Paul says about 1500 years later that their prophets correctly described the Cretans as "liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." (Cf. Titus 1:12-13) The Cretans of the time of Titus, the first bishop of the church at Crete, were not an honorable people. Oosterman writes, p. 38, "Several writers also suggest that the Cretans were powerful drinkers, attested to by archaeological evidence of numerous wine cups and beer mugs, the latter fitted with filters. It was here in the land of habitual notorious liars that the Gospel of Truth came and, as the epistle of Paul to Titus indicates, believers were gathered into the fellowship of Christ." (Cf. Titus 3:14)
- B. The Archaean or Mycenaean Dominance (c. 1450-1150 B.C.)
1. The Indo-European or Japhetic Achaeans migrated south and settled in central and southern Greece. Exactly when this began to happen we do not know but we can conjecture that these descendants of Japheth migrated south from the shores of the Black and Caspian Sea. (Cf. Genesis 10:2-5) These migrants

spoke a language which is today called Greek—one of the Indo-European languages. The word Greek or Greece is the Anglicized Roman term for lands called *Helles* by the inhabitants of Greece. The name which we use is derived from a small tribe, the Graeci, who lived along the Adriatic coast. The Old Testament word for Greece is *Yavan*. (Genesis 10:14-5)

2. A Greek is a native of Greece, not a Jew or some other barbarian or Indo-European. Two words are used in the New Testament Greek to refer to the Greeks: *Hellenes* and *Hellenistai*. The term *Hellenes* refers to the inhabitants of Greece or their descendants (of. Acts 17:1; Romans 1:14); but it is also used as a virtual equivalent of “Gentile” to describe those who are not of Jewish origin (of. Romans 10:12; Galatians 3:28). The term *Hellenistai* is more difficult to explain. Some want to explain that this term refers to those Jews who were Hellenized after the conquests of Alexander the Greek and the whole Hellenistic Age. They were Jews therefore who could only speak Greek. There were other Jews, however, who spoke Greek but they also knew a Semitic language like Hebrew or Aramaic. These were called *Hebraioi*. (Cf. Acts 6:1; 9:29; 11:20; Philippians 3:5).
3. The Achaeans who migrated to the shores of the Greek peninsula, Peloponnesus began to trade with Crete and eventually came under the domination of the Minoan empire. The Achaean city of Mycenae revolted against Crete and replaced Crete as the center of Aegean civilization sometime in the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C.
4. The Achaeans are described as being tall, fair-skinned and intelligent. Many Achaeans and later barbarian invaders married the early Aegean survivors. From this marriage a mixture arose which later would be the people we call historically the “ancient Greeks.” However from the city of Mycenae came the language which today we call Greek and which was the basis for the worldwide language imposed by Alexander and used by the Romans; i.e. the *Koine*. Scholars have identified their language on the basis of the recent decipherment of the Linear B Script which goes back to second millennium B.C. When the Achaeans emerge into history they belong without great distinction to both sides of the Aegean Sea.
5. In 1184 B.C. the Trojan War is reported to have occurred. This fabled conflict between the Achaeans and citizens of the citadel of Troy (Agamemnon, lord, of Mycenae, combined with princes of the mainland to overthrow the city of Troy according to Homer) on the west coast of Asia Minor near the Hellespont. Troy had a critical position because she could control the commerce between the Black and Aegean Seas. The Achaeans who refused to pay the toll exacted by the Trojans, who had become rich in this way, led an attack against the city that resulted in a ten-year siege of Troy. This conflict is described in the Iliad, an epic of the Greek poet Homer (9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.). The German archaeologist Schliemann of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is responsible for many discoveries associated with this event.

6. Civilizations rise and fall. The invasion of Troy by the inhabitants of Mycenae signals the end of a civilization. The next group of insurgents from the north would sweep down to eradicate all traces of the proud capital of the Mycenaeans.
- C. Dorian Invasions and the Greek Middle Age (c. 1150-900 B.C.)
1. The Dorians were a fierce Indo-European tribe from the north.
  2. The Dorians were the final cause for the ending of the Aegean Age. The Dorians destroyed the Achaean capital city of Mycenae.
  3. Two hundred years of disorder and bloodshed followed the invasion of the Dorians and this is sometimes referred to as the Dark Age of Greece or the Greek Middle Age.
  4. The Dorians were the chief founders of the city of Sparta.
  5. This event was a kind of turning point in the history of the Greeks. It meant that once again the Greeks would develop the independent city-states for which they became famous. The Greeks were isolated from one another because of the very nature of the terrain of their peninsulas and therefore they developed politically as independent city-states.
- D. Greek Colonization (c. 900-c. 600 B.C.)
1. After the vicious and barbaric Dorian invasion the Greeks recovered and there was a great increase in population.
  2. Because of this increase in the population farm land became scarce and the Greeks were forced to leave the mainland to establish colonies on the Aegean Islands. This abrupt colonization resulted in colonies on the Mediterranean coast of Asia Minor, Sicily, and the peninsula of Italy.
  3. The ships of Greeks developed from small round-bottomed boats to somewhat longer kinds with flatter bottoms and furnished with fifty oars and armed with a bronze beak for attack. Navigation and colonization continued on to Spain for gold, silver, and copper, and beyond the Pillars of Heracles to distant Britain for tin. Massilia (Marseilles) became the chief center of Greek culture in the western Mediterranean.
  4. Colonization of this kind meant the extension of the city-state concept of government and the extension of the inquisitive, probing, rational Greek mind.
  5. Shortage of land has caused the Greeks to turn to trade and shipping. The islands of the Aegean and the Mediterranean became stepping stones and stop-over points to Phoenicia, Egypt, and Asia Minor.
- E. The Rise of Athens (c. 650-460 B.C.)
1. Whereas the development of the Greek city-state was one of the most important characteristics of Greek political history, we should especially notice the rise to power of the most famous of all these city-states—Athens.

2. Various theories are extant concerning the founding of Athens. Hyma and Stanton state that Athens was perhaps founded by descendants of refugees from the previous civilization of Mycenae. Robinson says, p. 1514,

The Athenians, moreover, were Ionian Greeks; they did not inherit from the migrations the curse of serfdom, with all the hatred and fear which it engendered. In place of the Dorian Invasion Attic tradition points to a steady, even development, a fact that archaeology, and particularly the continuous series of pottery, proves.

The evidence for the background of Athens is very flimsy but Athens did become known as the citadel of the Greek city-state concept. Athens most clearly typified and articulated the Greek ideal of man's ability to govern himself. This ideal of self-government was rooted in an equal opportunity whereby each man is sifted down to the position to which his natural gifts entitle him.

3. Democratic government undoubtedly gradually developed in Athens. There was first a king from the earliest origins in the 1100's or 1000's B.C. until 800 B.C. Gradually, however, the control of government passed into the hands of archons. Between 700-650 B.C. we read of nine officials who were the Aristocratic Council. The Assembly was open virtually to all citizens who owned property but this Assembly had limited powers. This was the beginning therefore of the form of government known as oligarchy when a few men rather than one man or all men have the control of the government and the decisions that must be made.
4. Draco (620 B.C. was one of the early archons appointed to draw up a code of laws for the Athenians. This was done to forestall any attempt at tyranny which the common people and the tenant farmers might want instead of the aristocratic government to which they were subject. It is obvious therefore that Athens experienced a very modified form of democracy in which aristocracy ruled—i.e. an oligarchy. All Greek thinkers are agreed that tyranny is the worst of all governments even though the *hoi poloi* may want it. Tyranny is the application of unlawful or unnatural force: even though it be beneficent in its aims and results, it is still bad because it destroys self-government.

Euripides wrote:

“No worse foe than the despot hath a state, Under whom, first, can be no common laws, But one rules, keeping in his private hands The law.”

5. Solon (594 B.C.) was appointed because of bitterness between the social classes and the possibility of civil war. Solon worked toward economic reform in the form of repeal of the debt-slavery law, and limiting the amount of land one man might own. His work empowered the Assembly rather than the Aristocratic Council to vote on laws by the adoption of a new constitution.
6. Peisistratus (560 B.C.) was a powerful aristocrat who became a dictatorial leader of the Athenian government because of a civil war which followed Solon's term in office. He was called a tyrant, but he championed the cause of the common people.

7. Cleisthenes (508 B.C.) became a second aristocratic ruler in Greece and he firmly established the principles of democracy in Athenian government by declaring the Assembly open to every free Athenian whether he owned or did not own property.
  8. Having placed the city population in the saddle, it was clearly the duty of Cleisthenes to ensure that this element, should not support a restoration of tyranny. He devised the curious but effective scheme known as Ostracism—so called since the voting was done on ostrak or potsherds whereby the people came together once a year, and provided there was a quorum of 6,000, voted a man whom they judged dangerous into exile.
  9. Athens was a democracy but there were real conservative checks, such as absence of pay for public service which kept the very poor from continuous participation in the Assembly and the courts. The Athenian conception meant that the city was a community in which its members were to live a harmonious common life, in which as many citizens as possible were to be permitted to take an active part, with no discrimination because of rank or wealth, and in which the capacities of its individual members found a natural, spontaneous, and happy outlet. In some measure this was true but it was an ideal and not a fact. Athens was not “heaven.” At its best therefore the city-state as idealized by the Greek mind was only a qualified success.
- F. Sparta, The Military or Warrior State
1. The peninsula Peloponnesus was divided into several states and one of these states was Laconia, the homeland of the Spartans. Sparta was the city-state that was originally settled by the Dorians who had destroyed the Mycenaean civilization.
  2. Sparta was a city-state that had an extremely harsh form of government. Spartans were simple, frugal, severe, sternly disciplined and brave people.
  3. The Spartan government was headed by two kings and the Spartans believed that a citizen was important not as a person but only for what he could do for the state.
  4. Spartans adopted this militarist attitude because these Dorian descendants forced rebellious subjects into slavery. These slaves of the Spartans were called *Helots*. They often rebelled and to prevent them from rebelling the sole task of the Spartan was to become a well-disciplined and effective soldier.
  5. Spartan babies who were born with physical defects were of no use to the state and were taken to a selected place and left to die.
  6. Spartan boys stayed with their mothers until they were seven and then went into rigorous training. Spartan boys were taught little art and literature but were rigidly disciplined in bodily training and exercises.
  7. Spartans could marry but they had to eat and sleep in the soldiers’ barracks.
  8. Spartan girls were also rigidly disciplined and given hard physical training so they would become mothers of healthy boys.



9. Sparta is one of the earliest examples of a totalitarian state such as appeared on the scene in the twentieth century too in which each citizen exists for the sake of the state by military discipline.
10. Although Athens also was to glorify citizenship in the name of the state, there was a happy versatility to citizenship in Athens that did not exist for the Spartan citizen. Pericles wrote in taking an obvious fling at Sparta with its rigid military discipline as follows:

We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they (the Spartans) from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face.

11. In opposition to the Spartan goal of militarism, therefore, the Athenian ideal and boast was that sheer intellectual ability could cause them to surpass other nations—in art, in craftsmanship, in naval warfare, and in statesmanship.

#### G. Corinth

1. Corinth founded by people of many different backgrounds is located on the isthmus joining the peninsula of Peloponnesus to mainland Greece.
2. Shipbuilding and shipping became Corinth's major sources of income so it became a cosmopolitan and an international city. It became, therefore, one of the foremost cities to establish colonies abroad.
3. The system of government in Corinth was similar to Athens. They knew that a king threatened individual freedom so they selected a dictator (established a tyranny) who remained ruler as long as he could keep the support of the citizens of Corinth.
4. Periander (625-550 B.C.) was one of Corinth's greatest dictators. He developed businesses, encouraged trade relations with other coastal cities, and built a paved highway across the isthmus.

#### H. Ionia

1. Ionia was an important area located on the coast of Asia Minor and contained the cities of Samos, Miletus, and Ephesus.
2. These colonies were founded by Athens and were an important means whereby Greek culture spread through the Mesopotamian area because of athletic and music festivals that were held in these cities during the Hellenistic age of Greek culture.
3. Ionia was responsible for improving Greek culture by adapting the Phoenician alphabet to the Greek language.

#### I. Persian Wars (490-479 B.C.)

1. While Athens was striving for democracy and Sparta was perfecting her military state, Persia reached the height of her power (6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) Cyrus the great king of Persia came into Asia Minor and defeated King Croesus of Lydia.

2. By 500 B.C. king Darius of Persia had extended his empire to include all of Asia Minor. This is the work of the second beast of Daniel 7:5 and the kingdom of silver spoken of in Daniel 2:39.
  3. When the Greek colonists in Asia Minor revolted against the authority of the Persians they called for help to Athens. The Ionians were defeated in spite of help from Athens. Miletus was burned and a library with their art work was destroyed.
  4. This intervention on the part of the Athenians caused Darius to become very angry and after suppressing the revolt he sent messengers into all the Greek cities demanding that they recognize him as the supreme of land and sea. He demanded as a symbol of their obedience a jar of water and a jar of earth.
  5. Many Greek cities obeyed but Sparta and Athens refused and so Darius prepared for war. In 490 B.C. Marathon, a city 25 miles from Athens, became the scene of the conflict. Here the Athenians defeated the Persians without the help of the Spartans who delayed in sending troops because of a religious festival. They delayed in spite of the fact that Pheidippides ran the 150 miles in 2 days.
  6. Fearing another Persian attack the Athenians persuaded other city-states to join in a federation for a common defense.
  7. In 480 B.C. Darius' son Xerxes (the Ahasuerus of Esther 1-10) captured and burned Athens in spite of the heroic efforts of Leonidas at the narrow pass of Thermopylae.
  8. Themistocles, the Athenian admiral, insisted on the construction of an Athenian fleet of ships. In the decisive Battle of Salamis the Athenians were successful against the over-confident Persians. The light ships could outmaneuver the more cumbersome Persian Fleet.
  9. A year later in 479 B.C. the allied Greek forces under the leadership of the Spartan king defeated the Persian army at Plataea.
- J. The Golden Age of Athens (460-429 B.C.)
1. Athens had been the chief leader in allying the Greek city-states against the Persians and now she kept these city-states in a loose federation called the Delian League. (Named after the island of Delos where the Greek fleet was kept and also named in honor of the Delos as the home of one of the deities of the early Greeks.)
  2. Athens needed the support of the other Greek city-states after the disaster of the Persian victory in 480 over Athens. Gradually, however, the growth of Athenian strength caused this to become less of a federation and more of an Athenian Empire. The defense fund contributed by the city-states was moved to Athens and was spent for the rebuilding of Athens and for temples on the Acropolis or Mars Hill; particularly the Parthenon.
  3. Pericles, an aristocrat, was Athen's greatest leader. He was wise, temperate, and also possessed the strength, the patience and ability to plan. He said of the

Athenians, “For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness.” He was elected general and master of the city of Athens continuously for thirty years (461-429 B.C.). He used his great oratorical power to strengthen the democracy of Athens. He spent money for temples and increased the size of the Athenian navy. He encouraged sculptors, architects, philosophers, and playwrights. Athens became the paragon of cultured cities.

#### K. Peloponnesian Wars (Civil Wars in Greece) (432-402 B.C.)

1. As Athens became the leader of the Greek city-states after the decimation of the Persian Wars other city-states became envious of the Athenian superior position. They were especially envious of her greater prosperity brought about by her trade which was becoming increasingly more prosperous and comprehensive.
2. With Sparta and Corinth at the head of some of the Greek city-states a new alliance was formed called the Peloponnesian League. This alliance arrayed itself against Athens in the Peloponnesian War which started in 432 B.C. The struggle which lasted some thirty years raged over Greece leaving much devastation and destruction in its wake. At the height of the struggle in 429 a plague struck the city of Athens and they lost their brilliant leader Pericles. Finally in 402 B.C. Athens was starved into signing a treaty that made her subject to Sparta.
3. During the next 50 years, however, the Greek city-states warred among themselves. Sparta became a worse threat than Athens. The Greek city-states then united against Sparta.
4. This disunity was to set the stage for the Macedonian domination. Demosthenes had warned in speeches called Philippics that Philip of Macedonia was planning the eventual take-over. Few listened.

#### L. Macedonian Domination and Decline (346-c. 200 B.C.)

1. Because of the refusal of Greek states to unite, proud Athens and other Greek city-states were attacked and finally conquered in 338 B.C. This domination by the Macedonian royalty brought the Hellenic period of Greek development to an end.
2. The Macedonians were from the same stock as the Greeks and King Philip II admired the civilization of the Greeks. The Macedonians took Greek culture with them when they conquered new lands and peoples. This activity served to prepare for the Hellenistic Age.
3. When King Philip II was murdered in 336 B.C., the throne passed to Alexander who was then only twenty years old. At sixteen Alexander had voiced the fear that his father would leave him no worlds to conquer and he believed he was destined to conquer the world.
4. Alexander was well-fitted for the task both mentally and physically. His tutor had been the famous teacher Aristotle who had agreed to teach Alexander

because he believed like Plato that a properly educated king would make the best ruler. (Because of the troubles and revolutions in Greece the philosophers had lost faith in the democratic system and method of government.) Alexander was an athletically inclined youth. This was evident in his ability to train horses. He was witty. Diogenes was lying in the sun and Alexander asked Diogenes what he could do for him. Diogenes replied, "Move, so you won't keep the sun off me." Alexander showing good humor and wit coupled with a high regard for himself said, "If I were not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes."

5. During the next 13 years Alexander demonstrated his military genius by promptly squelching revolts on his borders in Greece and by consummating the war with Persia which had been begun by his father.
  - a. Alexander marched across Asia Minor, Phoenicia, Palestine and Egypt and was hailed everywhere as a liberator, crowned Pharaoh and hailed as a god because he abolished the hated tribute exacted yearly by the Persians.
  - b. Alexander promptly conquered all the realms of Persia, the lands of the Fertile Crescent, and a part of India.
  - c. He chose Babylon as the capital of his empire because it was closest to the center of his vast holdings.
6. Alexander tried to combine the ideas of East and West in his mad quest for power and prestige but his veteran Macedonian troops objected strenuously to the Persian customs he adopted and revolted.
7. Alexander denounced them with a tremendous speech and sent some 10,000 of his followers back home. There were those who relented after Alexander called attention to the successes of the army under his leadership but there was constant tension.
8. Soon after this incident Alexander, who was only 32 years old, became ill with fever and died. He left an empire which fell into disorder and eventual ruin.
9. In 323 B.C. the great Empire of Alexander fell into the hands of his generals, who were both ruthless and power-hungry. Those with a real claim to the throne were murdered. This included all of Alexander's wives, his baby son, mother, and brother Philip.
10. The empire was a cause for struggle for seven years and then four outstanding leaders divided the empire among themselves.
  - a. Antigonus controlled Greece and the territory from the Mediterranean Sea to Central Asia.
  - b. Cassander ruled Macedonia.
  - c. Ptolemy Lagi ruled Egypt and southern Syria.
  - d. Lysimachus took over the leadership of Thrace.

11. The struggle was not completely over. Ptolemy gave Syria to his favorite general, Seleucus. Seleucus then captured the Asian territory of Antigonus. This established the Seleucid Kingdom in Mesopotamia and Syria.

#### M. The Hellenistic Age (c. 323-146 B.C.)

1. Alexander's greatest influence on civilization was through his attempt to blend the Greek and Persian cultures. This syncretic effort on his part and on the part of his followers which lasted for about 200 years has been called by historians the Hellenistic Age.
2. The greatest areas of Hellenistic influence were in the Middle East and Egypt. Alexandria in Egypt and Antioch in Asia Minor were the two most famous Hellenistic cities that were built. They were carefully planned with long straight streets and a grid pattern for the blocks. Fine libraries, museums, and Greek temples were constructed. They in time replaced Athens as the cultural centers in the ancient world. Many of the great debates between church leaders during the period from 100 – 500 A.D. occurred because of disagreements between the scholars in these areas.
3. One of the most important developments during the Hellenistic Age was the development of the Greek language. This development resulted in a language spoken by the common people and became the language of the educated people of the Roman Empire and of the business community. It was known as the *koine*.

#### N. The Fall of Greece Under Roman Domination

1. The extensive but very temporary empire of Alexander had fallen rapidly into the control of the generals of Alexander and so ended the vast holdings of the Greeks in the name of Alexander.
2. After the period of Macedonian dominance in Greece (323-200 B.C.) from the death of Alexander until the kings and rulers of the third century B.C. the history of Greeks gradually fell under the control of the Roman conquerors.
3. From 200 B.C. until 133 B.C., when the last king of Asia Minor willed his kingdom to Rome, there was continued disintegration and further loss of power.
4. Greece became a subjugated land, a tributary of the Romans.

### IV. General Characteristics and Important People

#### A. Art and architecture

1. Phidias — friend of Pericles, built great gold and ivory statues of Zeus and Athens — decorated the Parthenon.
2. Praxiteles — constructed famous statue of Hermes and infant Dionysus, only authentic original Greek sculpture.

3. Greek sculpture is characterized by calmness, poise, and dignity. Laocoon and Discus Thrower are two showing violent action or pain but come from a later period of Greek sculpture, probably the Hellenistic period.
4. Temple was the chief medium of architectural expression. Early temples had rows of columns only at the ends of the buildings with a narrow porch but later columns were extended all around the building. (Examples of this type of structure can be found in buildings in Washington D.C.)
5. Three orders of architecture are distinguished amongst the Greeks. These orders are established from the form of columns used to support the roof of temples and other buildings.
  - a. *Doric* — plainest, no base and only a very plain capital.
  - b. *Ionic* — capital of many scrolls and slender supporting column.
  - c. *Corinthian* — very ornate, used more by the Romans.
6. Parthenon — located on the Acropolis in Athens. This building is one of the most famous structures characteristic of Greek architecture. Parthenon served as a temple for Athens, a Christian church, and a Mohammadan mosque. It was nearly wrecked when the Turks used it as a powder magazine.
7. Erechtheum — was another famous temple on the Acropolis. This temple is especially, notable because of the Porch of Maidens where six figures of women, instead of columns, hold up the roof.

#### B. Language and Literature

1. Homer — referred to by the Greeks as *the poet*. Composer of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, immortal epic poetry.
2. Hesiod — composer of the epic, *Theogony*, which relates the stories of Greek divinities, and *Works and Days*, a poem dealing with farm life.
3. Pindar — a later poet, who wrote lyric poetry. This poetry was recited as the lyre was played and dealt with feelings and emotions rather than great deeds and characters. Later a pattern for English odes.
4. Sappho — a woman poetess; she also was famous for the lyrics which she wrote.
5. Herodotus (484-425 B.C.) — historian who wrote after the Persian War. This was the beginning of recorded history. His great work was a history of the Persian Wars. He did not always confine himself strictly to his subject because there is much in his history about Egypt and other countries as well as about the Greeks and the Persians. He attempted to make his story interesting rather than always to be sure everything was historically correct.
6. Thucydides (471-400 B.C.) — another famous Greek historian. Because of his participation in the Peloponnesian War, he was qualified to tell about it. He wrote in a way that he made sure that he told the truth and discussed cause and effect. He examined evidence and was generally impartial.

7. Xenophon (430-355 B.C.) — wrote *Anabasis*, which is a story of the “march of the ten thousand” Greeks into the heart of the Persian Empire. They met very little opposition during their invasion. Xenophon also wrote the *Memorabilia of Socrates*, indicating that he was either a pupil or friend of this most famous of Greek philosophers.
  8. Demosthenes — prince of Greek orators. He alone stood up against Philip of Macedon when Philip was planning to take control of Greece.
  9. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides — Greek dramatists of the fifth century B.C. These three were writers of tragedy. “Tragedy” meant in the first place “goat song,” because a goat was sacrificed in connection with its presentation. Greek tragic dramatists constantly emphasized that man should not aspire too high or the gods would bring him low by some terrible punishment.
  10. Aristophanes — was the great comic dramatist. He was a comedian who enjoyed ridiculing some weaknesses in the everyday life of the people.
  11. Greek language — The Greek language itself should be remembered as a literary contribution to which we are much indebted. Very many scientific words are taken directly from the Greek as well as some in everyday speech. The first manuscripts of the New Testament scriptures also were written in the Greek. The Septuagint is the translation of the Old Testament Hebrew scriptures into the Greek.
  12. The Greek theater was also part of the Greek culture. This theater was very different from the present-day theater. Every performance was outdoors in the daytime with no elaborate scenery or stage setting. All the actors were men or boys.
- C. Greek Philosophers and Scientists and their influence.
1. Philosophy is a Greek word which literally means “the love of wisdom.” Greek thinkers and dreamers however dealt with a form of philosophy which is commonly referred to today as metaphysics. Metaphysical investigation to these Greek thinkers meant a study of what the world is and the way men ought to act. The mind of man was thought to be supreme. The result of this was the development of rationalism. (Cf. I Corinthians 1:22)
  2. Thales — was the first famous Greek philosopher. Lived in Miletus, in Asia Minor. He gained fame by predicting an eclipse and worked out a number of fundamental geometric principles. (c. 600 B.C.)
  3. Pythagoras — was born on the island of Samos, interested in geometry and developed the famous Pythagorean Theorem. He believed the earth to be the center of the solar system and that planets go around it. Everybody else believed this for many centuries. The Bible even seems to support this belief. (c. 550 B.C.)
  4. Anaxagoras declared the sun not to be a god but a flaming rock, maybe larger than Peloponnesus.

5. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are the most well-known and important of ancient philosophers. The lives of these men overlap to some extent the whole period from Pericles to Alexander the Great.
  - a. Socrates (470-399 B.C.) great moralist. “Know thyself” he urged. Know what is good and do what is right was his teaching. He originated the “Socratic” method—teaching through questioning. Socrates was finally accused of corrupting the Athenian youth by teaching disrespect for the Greek divinities and was sentenced to die by drinking the poison hemlock.
  - b. Plato (427-347 B.C.) was the greatest pupil of Socrates. It is Plato’s writings which tell us about himself and his teacher, Socrates. Plato met his followers in the famous athletic field of Athens known as the Academy. Plato was also a moralist with “lofty ideals.” He believed in a future life as well as existence prior to that upon earth. Plato’s most ambitious and important work was the Republic. In it he established his ideas concerning an ideal form of government. Plato became very disturbed with democracy as it was practiced in Athens. He advocated a form of government in which the aristocratic intellectual, the philosopher-king would rule.
  - c. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) was the important student of Plato. He is considered the authority in almost every line of thought—logic, language, ethics, and politics. He wrote on a wide variety of subjects. College students still study the rules of logic which he worked out. Aristotle is the first thinker of whom we know that believed the earth to be round. He reached this conclusion by observing the shadow cast by the earth during an eclipse. Aristotle was the teacher of youthful Alexander. He accepted the task because he believed like Plato that a properly educated king would make the best ruler.
6. Sophists — these were lesser lights in the realm of philosophy. They were men who traveled from place to place teaching for pay. Some of them lacked moral principle and intelligence of the great philosophers but by tricky use of the language were able to make people think they were much wiser than they really were. Socrates exposed their insincerity.
7. Epicureans were followers of Epicurus (342-270 B.C.). He taught the people that they should be good because by being good they could get the greatest amount of happiness out of life. Later his philosophy was perverted by Romans into: “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.”
8. Stoics were followers of Zeno. They derived their name from *stoa*, or “porch” where they met with Zeno. Zeno taught that people should live in accord with reason and nature. Stoics also believed men should live simple lives devoid of luxuries. They should accept hardships and disaster with little or no emotional display.
9. Eratosthenes (276-195 B.C.) was an Alexandrian Greek who lived after the Hellenistic period and was one of the greatest geographers of his time. He



believed the earth to be round and figured the size of it only about one-seventh larger than it really is. He constructed the most accurate map until the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

10. Ptolemy (about 150 A.D.) was another geographer and it was he who set up the theory of the solar system which learned men have accepted for hundreds of years. Earth center of solar system.
11. Euclid was the first great student of geometry. He first reasoned out the majority of propositions in the subject.
12. Archimedes of Syracuse in Sicily worked out many principles in solid geometry and also a number of the laws of physics.
13. Hippocrates (about 460-377 B.C.) tried to put medicine on a scientific level. The Greeks made slow progress, however, because they disliked cutting the human body. An Alexandrian writer did discover that the arteries carry blood instead of air as was once thought.

#### D. Religious Influence in Greek Life.

1. Greeks worshipped many gods. Only the best-educated Greeks were interested in philosophy but all Greeks were interested in religion because every man is innately religious. Every man has glimmerings of Natural light which are referred to in the Canons of Dort. Every man seeks after some god and makes something his god even though by nature the truth is held down in unrighteousness. (Cf. Romans 1) Greek religious life was influenced to a great degree by superstition and the thoughts and ideas of the average man rather than by the ideas of the scholar and thinker.

Homer the great poet established the home of the gods as Mount Olympus. The whims and fancies of the gods were favorite subjects of the myths and were said by the Greeks to explain storms and the changing of the seasons. Gods were not believed to be morally perfect and showed human emotions as jealousy and anger and even made fools of themselves on occasion.

The three greatest gods were Zeus, Athena, and Apollo.

- a. Zeus was the father and ruler of all the other gods. He was the protector of those in distress and the giver of justice. Lightning and thunder were believed to be expressions of his anger or displeasure.
- b. Athena was the goddess of wisdom and daughter of Zeus. They believed she had given them the precious olive tree and taught them to weave cloth. Athens was named in her honor and the Athenians especially looked to her for protection. Athena was a symbol of courage, self-control, and dignity.
- c. Apollo was the sun god. Apollo inspired the poets and musicians of Greece. Playing soft music on his lyre he went about protecting flocks in the field. Apollo was even more honored than Zeus because they believed he could foresee the future.

Hera was the wife of Zeus and protected married women and kept a watchful eye on all husbands. Aphrodite was goddess of love and beauty. Hermes was messenger of gods and protector of commerce and was famed for his winged feet. Poseidon was lord of the sea. Pan was the best known of the spirits and he was mischievous. He was “goat-footed, two-horned, and the lover of din and revel.”

2. The Greeks honored the gods by displaying man’s skill. The Greeks regularly held great religious festivals in honor of the gods. These festivals took the form of athletic contests and others were held to display poetic or artistic skills. The best known of the athletic contests was the Olympics which began in 776 B.C. and every four years thereafter. At other competition young men submitted poems and plays to be judged. To the Greeks it was not strange to use games, plays, and literature to honor the gods because any action of man, if it were well done, was pleasing to the gods.
3. Signs and oracles were believed to reveal the future.
  - a. Divination—From the Babylonians the Greeks adopted the belief that it was possible to foretell the future by interpreting certain marks found on livers and kidneys of animals. These devious means for predicting the future are called divination.
  - b. Oracles—Many Greeks believed the gods had empowered certain priests with ability to foretell the future. These priests could be found at various oracles located throughout Greece. The most famous was the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi in central Greece. Here a priestess sat in a cave inhaling vapor that rose out of a deep cleft in the rocks. Here she would mumble answers to questions given to her.
4. Fate ruled gods and men alike. Even though the Greeks brought their questions to the priests and the oracles they did not really believe that the gods had the answers to the questions because these gods were men. They were like other men except that they did not get old and die. They believed that the real ruler of both gods and men was the natural law of the universe, or fate.

Greek philosophers, dramatists and scientists believed that all occurrences have natural causes and that all events occur according to natural laws. Because the gods were ruled by the same natural laws as men, the Greeks did not worship their gods as those who served the true and living God. Their religion was not so much devotion as mechanical and a matter of keeping the gods in good humor. Because of this religious structure the Greeks learned more about moral behavior through drama and philosophy than through their religion.

5. The Greeks were concerned mainly with life on earth.
  - a. The Greeks believed that after death most men went to an underworld known as Hades. This was ruled over by the god Pluto. Heroes and men of importance went to another underworld called the Elysian Fields.

- b. Greeks paid little attention to life after death but were concerned primarily with life today. They were this-worldly and not other-worldly. They believed that the best life for a Greek citizen was to be devoted to the interests of his city-state. The making of a proud and beautiful city was far more important than to build tombs or live a life of sanctification and concern with the things which are eternal and lasting.
6. The student of history may wonder concerning the interest of Greeks in religion. They were not the chosen people of God and God had not chosen to reveal himself in any special ways to these people and yet they were religious. We can only say that these people willfully rejected God and held down the truth of God in unrighteousness and served other. They sinned against the first and second commandments but they must needs serve gods because every man is innately religious. This is in his very nature. The fact that they worshipped other gods indicates a departure from the worship of the true God and this sin passes on upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate God. (Cf. Exodus 20:1-5)

#### V. Achievements

- A. An improved alphabet was one of the major achievements of the Greeks. The Greeks had inherited an alphabet from the Phoenicians but this alphabet they improved and changed. The Greek alphabet has become the standard and source for all the alphabets of modern Europe. The Greek alphabet consists of twenty-four letters. It has consonants that are pronounced as those in English but the vowel sounds are more like those in German.
- B. The Greeks also developed a government in which all men ideally were to participate—democracy. The theory of democracy as propounded by the Greek thinkers but not necessarily practiced by the Greeks was a pure form of democracy in which all citizens could participate. This was true to a greater or less degree. It is questionable that this was the very first form of such a governing process since it has been found in other societies. It is the earliest one of which we have an accurate accounting. The historian James Breasted wrote that “the democracy of Athens was most undemocratic in its treatment of... outsiders in the other cities of the empire.”
- C. The Greeks also theorized concerning beauty in art—e.g. architecture, sculpture, and literature. Their works evidence, however, that they were interested merely in the beautiful body and therefore can be criticized because they “served the creature more than the creator.” Their humanism is reflected in their artistic productions.
- D. The Greeks produced great literature and profound philosophies. See the discussion of these literary productions in the previous section of the outline.
- E. The Greek language became the basis for a world-wide language which developed during the Hellenistic Age.

#### VI. Conclusions and Significance

- A. We have followed the history of ancient Greece from the Aegean Age through the Hellenic Age, and have ended with the Hellenistic Age. According to pagan legend and lore the Hellenes are the historic inhabitants of Greece. The poet Homer has collected these legends, and from him we have learned about their fabled ancestor Hellen. But these Greeks who tell their stories did not acknowledge the living God. (Cf. Romans 1:28) They were unbelievers. The truth is that the Greeks are chiefly descendants of Japheth. Daniel 11:30 speaks about the ships of Chittim or Cyprus that shall come against Darius the Mede as Greece begins to extend herself. (cf. Jeremiah 2:10)
- B. The sons of Japheth went out from the face of God and were not part of the nations to whom God revealed Himself until after the death of Christ After Pentecost (c. 30 A.D.) the Gospel of peace was preached to all men. (Isaiah 66:19) The Gospel was preached to the whole Hellenized or Hellenistic world and as many as were ordained unto everlasting life believed and were saved. "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region." (Acts 13:47-49) In Acts 14:15-17 Paul and Barnabas are in Lystra of Asia Minor and they say: "We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
- C. Persia had been the world power which conquered proud Babylon. Persia is the kingdom represented by the breast and arms of silver in the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel 2:32. Persia is the bear in Daniel 7:5 and the ram which had two horns in Daniel 8:3-4. These passages describe the brutality of Persia. This Persian Empire sent its armies east and then west to the shores of the land of Greece resulting in the Persian Wars of the fifth century B.C.
- D. Greece became one of the great empires in the rise and fall of civilizations and kingdoms. Keeping the view of history in mind that has been adopted in the historical section of these notes, we should be able to understand the prophecy in the Old Testament Scriptures. Persia must be overthrown by Greece because the trend in the history of the world is definitely westward. One kingdom rises and then falls, and another greater western kingdom rises to take its place. Greece-Macedonia will finally be conquered by Rome. Greece-Macedonia is represented in Daniel 2:32 as the brass belly and thighs of the image. The leopard in Daniel 7:6 is Alexander or the Greece-Macedonia power and also the he-goat in Daniel 8:5-8. Alexander came from the west, and the prophet Daniel speaks of the he-goat coming rapidly from the west. Alexander extended his empire to the whole civilized world in eleven short years. The leopard is also a symbol of speed and strength. The rise and fall of Greece is prophesied in Daniel 8. When the he-goat had become very strong, the great horn was broken (that is Alexander) and in its

place came forth four notable horns toward the four winds of heaven. This is prophetic of the dividing of the conquests of Alexander into four parts. (See notes on the history for this division of the kingdom.) Out of one of the four notable horns came a little horn which waxed exceedingly great toward east and south and toward the pleasant land. The little horn which waxed exceedingly great toward the pleasant land (Canaan) was Antiochus Epiphanes of the Seleucid dynasty, that Old Testament monster of iniquity and type of the anti-christ. He was Antiochus IV, the 13<sup>th</sup> king of the Seleucid Dynasty which in 40 years became master of Asia Minor, Syria, and the more westerly part of Alexander's eastern dominion. (175-164 B.C.) Antiochus also represents the clash between the Hellenistic movement and the traditions of the Jews.

- E. We believe that all history is the working out of God's eternal counsel. We likewise believe that there are two kinds of people in the world—elect and reprobate. (Romans 9:10-13; Ephesians 1:11) This fact influences and directs the interpretation and understanding that we have of history. Just as reprobation serves election so the world and the history of the pagan world serve the church and the history of the church. This is also true of the history of the ancient nations and the chosen nation of the Lord from whom the Christ, the Messiah, should come. All history must exist for the sake of Christ and His church. (Cf. Colossians 1:17; John 17:5) All history serves to realize the coming of this Christ, and He must come at just the right moment—the fulness of time. (Hebrews 1:1-6; Galatians 4:4)
1. Jesus must be born in the fulness of time. All things must work together unto the realization of the supreme moment of the ages.
  2. This moment of the fulness of time must be characterized by two things.
    - a. The world must have developed a wonderful civilization from a purely natural point of view. That had happened because of the Hellenistic movement which had been initiated through the conquests of Alexander the Great.
    - b. The world must have reached the depth of spiritual shame and intellectual corruption. Acts 17:22-31 is Paul's speech on Mars Hill or the Acropolis in Athens where stood the Parthenon, the paragon of Athenian religiosity and ungodliness. And yet Paul said, "...the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."
    - c. The moment of the fulness of time is a moment when man has completely shown himself to be man-centered and humanistic. The Lord in His providence and His sovereign counsel causes the fulness of time to occur so that Christ, who was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, can be declared unto all men. (Cf. John 1:1-4; I John 1:1-3)
- F. For Americans and for Reformed Christians in America the study of the history and culture of Ancient Greece is important because we live in a democracy which has its philosophic roots ultimately in the ideology of those who describe Greek

government (i.e. Locke, Plato, Aristotle). Although Greece did not usually live up to the expectations of those who described the ideal form of government, the thinking of the Greek scholars has been passed on to the modern philosophers. Men have used these ideas to justify and to describe the mode of government known as western democracy. Democracy should not be understood to be the God-ordained form of government for which all men must necessarily strive. Democracy exactly fits the humanistic mold of the Greeks. Every man is autonomous. Every man can decide for himself according to his ability what is the prescribed ideal rooted in the “natural order” of things. There is a sense in which the ideals of democracy are a manifesto for anarchy and lawlessness. Witness the working out of the ideals of democracy in our own country. We must remember in our instruction which is given in the Christian school that God is true and every man is a liar by nature. He holds the truth down in unrighteousness. (Romans 1)

- G. The Greeks emphasized the supremacy of reason and man’s ability by logical deduction to discover the laws of nature. This is a corollary to the belief that man is autonomous and that government “of the people, by the people, and for the people” is the right kind of government. Although it is certainly true that logic and reasoning are important, there is a far more basic commitment that we have to divine revelation. Rationalism and the worship of man’s humanity which is characteristic of all paganism and which had to come to its height of development in the ideology of the Greeks, is foolishness. In *Theaetetus* Plato quotes Protagoras (c. 481-411) who said, “Man is the measure of all things.” Plato is therefore a fool. God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (I Corinthians 1:20-21)

- H. One of the important aspects of the highly-developed ancient Greek civilization was the city-state. After Greek influence had extended toward the East, the Greek city-state fell into ruin and decay. The Hellenization of the Orient brought with it a counter culture from the Eastern world. Gradually, therefore the Hellenio-Oriental civilization of the Hellenistic period was formed. In this civilization the city citizen had no share in guiding the affairs of the great nation or the empire as he had in the more autonomous city-state. The patriotic concept of a native-land was completely lacking in the world empire formed as the result of Alexander’s conquests. The gradual decadence of Greek city-states which were engulfed by the Hellenistic world plus the wars and rivalries of the second and third centuries B.C. made it possible for a new military power in Rome to take control over this world. (Cf. Daniel 2:31-35; 2:40.)
- I. The Greek language became the basis for the *koine* or the Greek dialect that developed during the Hellenistic Age (325-150 B.C.). This language was adopted by the intellectual and business community and became the medium for the preaching of the gospel during the ancient period from 30 A.D. until the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The history of the Jewish nation between the prophecy of Malachi and the coming of Christ in Bethlehem is also contemporary with this history of

the development of vernacular Greek. Alexander and the Greeks were instruments in the working out of God's counsel so that the Gospel might be preached in all the world. God uses means and He controls these means not mechanistically but providentially. The original Scriptures of the New Testament are preserved for us in manuscripts which contain the *koine* or vernacular Greek.

- J. The Greeks were democratic, but they were more religious than democratic. The gods of the Greeks were humans with heroic attributes. The Greeks worshipped idealized humanity. Their gods were, however, deceitful fornicators for whom temples were constructed. Many of the cities worshipped local gods and goddesses, (of. Acts 14:13; 19:27) and other gods collected during the Hellenistic Period through contact with the Eastern nations. The philosophers like Socrates and Plato claimed to be monotheists and wanted to demythologize the Greek religion. They only added their own myths. Paul refers to the phenomenon of religiosity among the Greeks in Acts 17:16ff. The Greeks had an altar to almost every god, and they also had an altar to the UNKNOWN GOD. This was about 50 A.D. and was 400 years after the philosophers Socrates and Plato had lived and died. The Greeks were ignorant, and Paul declared that this Unknown God whom they ignorantly and superstitiously served is the true God who made the heavens and the earth and who will cause all men some day to stand in judgment at the resurrection. This the Greeks, who are like modern unbelievers, did not want to hear.

## VII. Bibliography and Teaching Resources

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## UNIT XII: ROME

### I. Important Dates

Early Italy.....	c. 2000 – 800 B.C.
Etruscan Settlement .....	c. 800 – 600 B.C.
Height of Etruscan Civilization .....	c. 600 – 500 B.C.
Greek Colonization of Italy and Sicily .....	c. 750 – 500 B.C.
The Roman Republic .....	c. 500 – 31 B.C.
Romans gain control of Italian Peninsula.....	c. 500 – 275 B.C.
Punic Wars.....	265 – 146 B.C.
Gracchus Reforms.....	133 – 123 B.C.
Civil War Between Marius and Sulla .....	87 – 82 B.C.
Triumvirate of Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus.....	60 B.C.
Dictatorship of Julius Caesar .....	49 – 44 B.C.
Mark Antony and Octavius Caesar rule jointly .....	44 – 31 B.C.
Period of Empire Beginning with Caesar Augustus .....	31 B.C. – 476 A.D.
Barbarian Invasions .....	250 – 476 A.D.
Fall of Rome .....	476 A.D.

### II. Geography

- A. The boot-shaped Italian peninsula projects about 700 miles into the Mediterranean Sea.
- B. The Italian peninsula is surrounded by three extensions of the Mediterranean Sea. On the east is the Adriatic Sea, on the south is the Ionian Sea, and on the west is the Tyrrhenian Sea. The Alps Mountains lay in the north, and they separate this peninsula from the rest of the continent of Europe.
- C. Four islands are located south and west of Italy. Sicily is the most southerly and lies at the toe of the Italian peninsula. Sardinia, Corsica, and tiny Elba lie to the west of the peninsula.
- D. The climate is a Mediterranean type of climate—cool, rainy winters and hot, dry summers.
- E. Italy is mountainous, but the mountains do not break up Italy into separate parts as the mountains of Greece had done. The Apennine Mountains begin in the north and run the length of the peninsula, almost completely occupying the eastern and southern parts of it. Rich deposits of copper ore were originally found there.
- F. Most of the rivers of importance run westward out of the mountains toward the broad fertile plain along the Tyrrhenian coast.



1. The broad plain along the Tyrrhenian Sea is the only important farm land except for the Po Valley in the north.
2. The best harbors are found in the bays and the mouths of the rivers along this western coast. Here the city of Rome was built on the Tiber River near one of Italy's natural harbors.

### III. History

#### A. The Beginnings of the western Mediterranean civilization. (c. 2000-800 B.C.)

1. Civilization began to develop in the western Mediterranean area after the confounding of the language of the people at Babel. (c. 2000 B.C.)
2. We know little about the earliest inhabitants of this area because there is no written history. The written history that did exist prior to 400 B.C. was destroyed by the invading Gauls in 390 B.C.
3. Historians have conjectured on the basis of archaeological evidence and on the basis of the existence of information from other civilizations that, while the Greeks were pushing southward into the Greek peninsula, the western tribes of Indo-European blood crossed the Balkan Peninsula and entered the western Mediterranean world on the Italian peninsula.
4. Cretan merchants were undoubtedly trading prior to 1500 B.C., and the migrations from the north must have begun as early as 1800 B.C.
5. These migrants from the north were separate tribes. They were named the Ligurians, Venetians, Iapygians, Italians, Etruscans, Umbrians, Sabines, Samnites, Sabellians, Oscans, and Latins. The Romans were a sub-tribe of Latins which in turn were a branch of the Italians. Historians suggest that the early Italians had little contact with other civilizations, however, this is mere conjecture. Most historians also describe the early Italic tribes as plain peasant folk who cultivated their little fields and, pastured their flocks. They were supposedly illiterate peasants who were a hardy and courageous people.
6. Across the Mediterranean Sea, to the south of the Italian peninsula the Phoenicians had established Carthage as a colony by 800 B.C. Speculation suggests that here too a much earlier civilization existed.

#### B. The Etruscans (c. 800-500 B.C.)

1. The earliest advanced civilization in the peninsula seems to have been developed by the Etruscans. (c. 800-500 B.C.) This was happening in the north while the Greeks and the Phoenicians were establishing colonies along the coasts in the south.
2. The Etruscan civilization is important because it seems to be related to the Hittite civilization of Asia Minor. Some of the elements of eastern civilization were therefore brought into Italy by these Etruscans. They introduced the chariot, the arch in building, and divination by studying the liver of a sheep.
3. Etruscan designs repeat those of Egypt, and Assyria. Etruscans brought with them the alphabet devised by the Phoenicians. They were likewise skillful

craftsmen and discovered the copper in the mountains to develop their bronze industry.

4. The three primary Etruscan deities were Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. These deities the Romans also worshipped.
  5. The Greek historian Herodotus, who is not always as factual and accurate as a historian should be, is credited with recording a story about the Etruscans as descendants of the Lydians of Asia Minor. A severe famine supposedly struck the country of Lydia, and the king devised a plan to save lives. He ordered the people divided into two groups. Lots were cast to see which group would stay in Lydia and which would have to leave to find a new place to live. The Etruscans were the group led by Tyrrhenus, the king's son to live in the Italian peninsula. They were Lydians, therefore, who changed their name to Tyrrhenians, and therefore the Tyrrhenian Sea is named after them.
  6. The decline and fall of the Etruscans occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., and after this century they were pushed back by the Romans into what was later named after them—Tuscany.
  7. The overthrow of the Etruscans by Rome in 509 B.C. marked the beginning of the eventual overthrow of Etruscan dominance in Italy. The Gauls, and the Samnites collaborated with the Romans in dethroning the cruel Etruscans who had exploited this part of the world for so many centuries.
- C. Carthaginians and Greeks (750-50 B.C.)
1. The Carthaginians of North Africa were also establishing themselves on the coast of Sicily, in isolated spots of Italy, and in southern Spain. This was during the period of their merchantile prosperity. (Cf. unit on the Phoenicians)
  2. The Greeks in the period from 750 to 500 B.C. also founded colonies and city-states in Sicily and southern Italy. It was these Greeks which provided the balance of power that prevented the Carthagians and Etruscans from becoming exorbitantly powerful on the peninsula. Even though the Greeks failed to unite in a strong permanent state in the West, the influence of their civilization in the West was very important. Great architecture and other cultural productions were developing in Sicily. The ideas of Archimedes represented the influence of Hellenistic culture at Syracuse, Sicily.
- D. Earliest Rome (c. 1000-c. 500 B.C.)
1. On the south bank of the Tiber River lived a group of Italic tribes called the Latins. These Latin tribesmen settled the 700 square mile area which was later to become Rome, the capital of a world-wide empire. (cf. Daniel 2:3; 7:7).
  2. At first the Etruscans and Romans traded with each other, but about 750 B.C. one of the Etruscan princes drove out the last of the line of Latin chieftains and took possession of the stronghold. Rome became a city-kingdom under an Etruscan king, and it remained such for two-and-a-half centuries.

3. From these Etruscan masters the Roman farmers learned to build temples and roads, but they also learned highly efficient effective Etruscan methods of warfare.
  4. Etruscan life and civilization modified by that of the Greeks shaped Roman life after 600 B.C. In 509 B.C. the Romans successfully drove out the cruel and tyrannical Etruscan kings. A revolt by the Etruscan nobles and the eventual Roman kings initiated the overthrow of Etruscan rule in Rome.
- E. The Development of the Roman Republic (c. 500-250 B.C.)
1. The Greeks exerted tremendous influence on the progress of the Roman civilization and culture.
    - a. Because the early Romans and other Italians were unlettered, they possessed no written language. As a result many legends developed concerning the origin of Rome (i.e. Romulus-Remus Legend told in the *Aeneid* by Virgil.) The Latins had their own language, and even during the control by the Etruscans the Etruscan language which used Greek characters died out. The Greek alphabet was adopted by Rome, and also traces of Greek speech can be found in the Latin language. The Phoenician garment called by the Greeks a *Kiton* was called by the Latins a *Ktun*, and in the course of time they dropped the *K* and gave the word a Latin ending *IC* and so it became our familiar word “*tunic*.”
    - b. The Greeks must have influenced shipbuilding, money, and systems of measure—all elements of commerce and trade.
    - c. The Romans certainly compared their religious practices with that of the Greeks. There was a great similarity, although the religion of the Romans was more mechanical and revolved around the ritual of sacrifice.
    - d. There is a remarkable similarity in the government of Greeks and that adopted by the Romans. Once again the superiority of the Romans over the Greeks resides in the area of organization and practical legal concepts. (i.e. Codified and written laws.)
  2. The Government of the Italian peninsula
    - a. Earliest Rome was controlled by the King and a leading council of Elders—called the Council of 300. This Council of 300 was composed of patricians who had been in power when the Etruscans were overwhelmed and cast out in 509 B.C.
    - b. By an agreement and compromise with the people, the patricians (rich landowners and descendants of founding families) established the Roman Republic, and two of their number called Consuls were elected for one year to be heads of the state. These two consuls could not be re-elected for ten years, and in this way they hoped to eliminate the tyranny of the past.
    - c. This republic, which was supposed to represent all classes, did not do so in practice. The plebeian (small independent farmers and artisans) had little voice. In 494 B.C. the plebeians, who were desperately needed in the

army, went on strike because they had no actual voice in the government. The result was that the patricians were unable to succeed without the help of the plebeians and so they gave them a larger share in the government.

- d. The Senate (from Latin *senex*, meaning “old man”) was the Council dominated by Patricians from whom the Consuls were elected each year. The senators gave advice to the Consuls on such things as declaring war, restoring peace, and making new laws of all sorts. In order to give the plebeians more voice in legal matters four or more Tribunes would be elected to voice the opinions of the plebeians and to protect the rights of the plebeians in legal cases. The Tribunes had the right to “veto” (I forbid) the action of the Senate, Consuls or other officers.
- e. Concessions to the plebeians did not cause all problems to cease in the struggle between the patricians and the plebeians. The struggle between the “haves” and the “have-nots” resulted in the plebeians securing more and more rights and/or benefits during the first two centuries. This was not always good for the republic, however. Rome eventually became a welfare state and contributed to the destruction of Rome.
- f. In order to assure legal continuity and consistency the old existing laws were reduced to writing and were engraved upon twelve bronze tablets in 450 B.C. These were placed in the Roman Forum which was the political, business, and religious center of Rome. (cf. Oosterman, p. 70.)
- g. Eventually the Senate was brought under the control of a new rising nobility. The Senate again gained control of the law-making process. It alone could propose laws to the “popular assemblies” which had been created. The Roman Senate became the supreme leader of the state.

#### F. Roman Expansion in Territory (500-275 B.C.)

1. During the years 500-275 B.C. Rome had to establish herself. She did so by allying herself with other cities in Latium called the Latin League. This was a loose union, but it lasted 150 years and resulted in the eventual expansion of Roman domination.
2. At the end of the 150 years of the existence of this Latin League Rome fought a brief war with her former allies and subjugated them. The year 338 B.C. marks the defeat of the Latin tribes and the break-up of the Latin League giving Rome undisputed leadership along the Tiber River. (The same year Philip of Macedon defeated Greek cities.)
3. The years 325-290 B.C. were dominated by the Samnite Wars. These wars were waged against a group of Italic tribes in the Apennine Mts. and the plain of Campania. In the battle of Sentinum (295 B.C.) the combined forces of the Gauls, the Etruscans, and the Samnites were crushed by the Roman forces giving Rome possession of central Italy and making her the leading power on the peninsula.
4. The Greeks were the only obstacle to complete control of the peninsula after the crushing of the Gauls, Etruscans and Samnites in the north. In 275 B.C.

with help of Carthage the Romans defeated Tarentum, the important Greek city-state in the south. The Greeks, who were losing strength at home, could not support the Greek city-states on the Italian peninsula, and so Rome slowly drove the Greeks from the peninsula and gained control of everything from the Arnus River (Arno) in the north to the toe of the peninsula.

#### G. The Struggle with Carthage—Punic Wars (265 – 146 B.C.)

##### 1. The Causes and Background

- a. In about two-and-one-half centuries the tiny republic on the Tiber had attained sole mastery of Italy. Its only rival in the Western world was oriental and Semitic Carthage.
- b. Carthage, a city of 750,000 people, had been founded as a Phoenician trading post in 814 B.C. Carthage had become the leading trading country in the West Mediterranean area.
- c. Although Rome in an earlier time had formed a joint military alliance with Carthage, that time was no more, and Rome looked with jealousy at this rival. Rome was the ruling city of Italy and was responsible for the protection of the Italian coast against invaders and for the defense of Italy's commerce against any people that might attempt to damage it. Carthage was the chief offender. There were also clashes of interest between Rome and Carthage on sea and in southern Italy and Sicily.

##### 2. The First Punic War (261-241 B.C.)

- a. In 264 B.C. a quarrel over the control of Sicily plunged Rome and Carthage into the first of a series of wars which would last about 100 years.
- b. For 23 years the First Punic War (*Punic* is a form of adjective Phoenician) dragged on while Hamilcar Barea, the Carthaginian commander, plundered the coasts of Italy with his powerful fleet.
- c. In 242 B.C. a fleet of two hundred improved battleships was built and assembled by the Romans. With these battleships and a superior army the Carthaginians were defeated and were forced to accept the severe terms of Rome.
- d. The Carthaginians had to pay war damages and were to relinquish any claims they might have to Sicily and neighboring islands.

##### 3. The Second Punic War (218-201 B.C.)

- a. The Second Punic War is sometimes called the Hannibalic War in honor of the son of Hamilcar, great general of the First Punic War. Hamilcar had been defeated and humiliated. Hannibal had acquired an intense hatred for the Romans. At nine years he had sworn to carry on with the plans of his father, and at 24 when his father died he completed conquest of Spain as far as the Ebro River.

- b. Rome expected that the second war should be fought either in Spain or Africe, but Hannibal had other plans and intended that Rome should fight a defensive battle on her own soil.
  - c. In order to accomplish his plan Hannibal intended to surprise the Romans by coming in from behind. To do this Hannibal had to cross the treacherous Alps Mts. with a task-force of 40,000 men which included 6,000 cavalrymen and fighting elephants. He began in the summer of 218 from the Ebro River in Spain and was crossing the Alps as the snowstorms of autumn began to sweep in.
  - d. Having conquered tremendous obstacles, with an army reduced to 34,000, and with little hope for renewed supplies, Hannibal began his peninsular campaign against Rome. Hannibal's superior military genius helped him defeat the Romans three different times, and it was only because of the selfishness of the Carthaginian nobles, who refused to send help, that he was not successful in his attempt.
  - e. His brother Hasdrubal followed the same route after Hannibal had been in Italy for ten years. The reinforcements of Hasdrubal never reached Hannibal at the tip of Italy because his army was destroyed by a Roman army in 207 B.C.
  - f. The hindrance policy of the Romans made it impossible for Hannibal to conquer the Romans. When Scipio attacked Carthage instead of attacking Hannibal, Hannibal had to return to Carthage. In 202 at Zama, North Africa, Hannibal was defeated by the Roman Scipio for the first time in his life, and it was enough.
  - g. One of the stipulations of the peace treaty concluding the Second Punic War was that Carthage might never go to war again unless it first conferred with Rome.
4. The Third Punic War (149-146 B.C.)
- a. Fifty years passed and the Third Punic War began as a result of the attempts of a North African prince to extend his possessions at the expense of Carthage, and Carthage struck back. (Rome did not need much of an excuse to fight. She was looking for an excuse to destroy Carthage.)
  - b. This, however, was contrary to the peace treaty of 201 B.C. and Rome attacked Carthage.
  - c. Carthage held out for three years, but in 146 B.C., Carthage was defeated.
  - d. Cato the Roman had advocated the complete destruction of Carthage. His desires were fulfilled when the city was completely destroyed, the ground plowed over, and was sown with salt to symbolize the complete ruin of Rome's once proud rival.
  - e. The Roman Senate had pronounced a curse upon anyone who attempted to rebuild Carthage; however Julius Caesar began the rebuilding of Carthage although not to its former glory.

- f. With the fall of Carthage Rome was the supreme leader in the Western Mediterranean world. Ironically 5½ centuries later Vandals who settled in Carthage assisted in the overthrow and destruction of Rome.

#### H. The Republic Expands (c. 250-133 B.C.)

1. During the Punic Wars, the Romans became involved with problems of other countries outside the geographical area of Italy. Although the motives were at first a combination of self-interest to protect themselves and an unselfish desire to help people win their freedom, they believed that both the Macedonians and the Seleucids—left-overs from Alexandrian times—were threats to Roman trade interests.
2. During the fifty years between the Second and Third Punic Wars, the Romans began a series of attacks that led to the eventual conquest of Greece. Philip V of Macedonia, who had supported Hannibal during the Second Punic War, was attacked by the Romans in retribution. Philip had been extending his holdings at the expense of Rome and others.
3. The Romans were forced to fight the Seleucids of Syria who controlled all of Mesopotamia. The Seleucids had also supported Hannibal giving him a place of refuge after his defeat and flight at Zama. Hannibal later tried to help the Seleucids capture Macedonia, but the Romans defeated him and Hannibal took poison rather than be captured.
4. In 168 B.C. the Seleucids tried to conquer Egypt. The Romans stopped them and made Egypt a Roman protectorate.
5. Rome destroyed Corinth in 146 and placed Greece under the Roman governor of Macedonia.
6. In 133 B.C. one of the last kings of Asia Minor willed his throne to the Romans.

#### I. Decadence of the Roman Republic and the Gracchus Reforms (146-123 B.C.)

1. By 146 B.C. great changes had taken place in the Roman Republic. The Republic had acquired vast amounts of territory which included Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Spain, North Africa, and Greece. The Romans also had encouraged the Hebrews to rebel against the Seleucids and were giving Palestine and Egypt protection.
2. Two serious problems faced the Republic because of this state of affairs.
  - a. The first problem concerned the governing and the providing of work for the displaced members of the plebeian class. Many had lost their land while fighting in the wars of Rome. In addition the plebeian class was displaced because large numbers of slaves were reducing the jobs for the freemen who roamed the streets of Rome.
  - b. The second problem involved the defense and control of the vast territory controlled by the republic. The republic had gained control of these areas by using the skills and strength of the artisans who had gone to war, but

these people would no longer serve in the army voluntarily. A new state of existence prevailed and a new kind of army would have to be developed.

3. Tiberius Gracchus, the grandson of Scipio, hero of the battle of Zama, where Hannibal had been defeated, 202 B.C., was elected as tribune, (133 B.C.). He submitted to the assembly a law for the reassignment of public lands and for the protection of the dispossessed farming class. It was an endeavor similar to that of Solon in Greece. He secured passage of the law but was not supported by the senate. In fact he was slain by a mob of Senators.
  4. Gaius Gracchus gained the same office as his brother in 123 B.C. He also took up the struggle of the farmers. His attempt resulted in riots in which he was killed in 121 B.C.
- J. The Rise of One-Man Power: Marius and Sulla: The First Civil War (c. 100-79 B.C.)
1. The years following the death of the Gracchus brothers were years of rivalries between generals and politicians.
  2. One of the most pressing problems was the need to revise the method of staffing the army. If the Roman Republic were going to maintain control over all its conquered territory, changes would be necessary in the structure of the army.
  3. Defeats to armies in North Africa and Gaul, and revolts of the people in many territories caused Gaius Marius, one of two consuls elected at the beginning of the first century B.C. to conscript the first professional army in Roman history. Landless citizens were hired, but the problem with mercenary troops is that they gave their support to the commander who paid their salary and did not fight out of the motive of patriotism. Generals exploited this kind of situation.
  4. The years 100-79 were also marked by a power struggle between the Senate of Rome and the General Assembly of the Allied Italian states. Citizens of the Italian territories had not received the rights of citizenship like the people of Rome. This they resented. The General Assembly chose Gaius Marius former consul as its leader and spokesman, and the Senate chose Cornelius Sulla to suppress the people and to oppose Marius. In the ensuing Civil or Social War, Sulla emerged victorious. As dictator he attempted to strengthen the Roman government so that it could govern its territory without the problems which had been developing as the Republic matured. In 79 B.C. Sulla stepped down as dictator.
  5. In spite of these efforts by Sulla the years from 80 until 55 B.C. were chaotic years. A half million persons lost their lives in an attempt to obtain the reforms they desired.
- K. The First Triumvirate (Julius Caesar, Pompey, Crassus) 60 B.C. and the Overthrow of the Republic.



1. Immediately following the retirement of Sulla as dictator (79 B.C.) and his death in 78 B.C., there was agitation for the repeal of his hateful laws which gave so much power to the Senate. The Senate and its consuls ruled for nine years according to the rules of dictator Sulla, but the people longed for a military leader who could fulfill their wishes and free them from “their chains.”
2. In 70 B.C., Pompey, a young general, was elected consul; under his influence the senate repealed the laws of Sulla. Pompey further impressed the people by making the Mediterranean Sea safe for commerce by clearing it of the Cilician pirates. He burned their docks and strongholds. He concluded a war with Mithridates of Pontus and Tigranes of Armenia. He crushed the remnant of the kingdom of the Seleucids and made Syria a Roman province. He entered Jerusalem and brought the home of the Jews under Roman control. By 63 B.C. he could return to Rome clothed in splendor as the great conqueror of the Orient.
3. While Pompey was abroad on his conquests Julius Caesar, a nephew of Marius, became a popular hero in Rome because he supported all the legislation against the hateful laws of Sulla. He exalted the cause and memory of Marius. Caesar later was suspected of association with the rebel Catiline party. This suspicion, whether just or unjust, was a severe set-back in his political career. Cicero became the consul and leader of a new middle party.
4. Crassus, a rich senator and aristocrat, would be the third member of the triumvirate. He was not as talented nor as famous as Pompey or Julius Caesar, but his wealth was a worthy asset as these men attempted to establish themselves in positions of power.
5. The three men, Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus became associated in a plan in which
  - a. Julius Caesar would run for consulship
  - b. Pompey would receive his requests that were denied him since his return from war.
6. Julius Caesar became consul in 59 B.C. but realized that if he were to become powerful he must have an army. Julius had helped Pompey when he became consul in 59 B.C., but he also helped himself by obtaining an appointment as governor of Illyria and Gaul. This gave him a position of authority on both sides of the Alps. Caesar assembled an army; his military skill and ingenuity resulted in the conquest of Gaul by 50 B.C. He was a clever politician too. He sent back his account of the Gallic Wars—*Commentaries on the Gallic Wars*. These made him popular with the masses and prepared him for his re-election as consul.
7. While Caesar was victorious in Gaul, the Senate and Pompey were becoming jealous of him. Crassus had been killed fighting in Asia, so the struggle boiled down to a clash between Pompey and Caesar. Pompey knew that he must retire Caesar if he were to keep the position of power he wanted. Under

Pompey's influence the Senate ordered Caesar home, but Caesar knew that this meant his downfall and possible execution. Instead he disobeyed the Senate, crossed the Rubicon with his army and began in earnest his pursuit of the fleeing Pompey. Pompey fled to Greece and then to Egypt where he was beheaded by Pharaoh. Before returning home Caesar repulsed revolts in Syria, North Africa, and Spain. Palestine became a province of the Roman Empire. Caesar returned triumphantly to Rome in 45 B.C. as Pompey had done twenty years earlier.

#### L. Dictatorship of Julius Caesar (49-44 B.C.)

1. During his brief but illustrious career Julius Caesar established himself as the undisputed leader of the Roman Empire and the first emperor, although he never officially accepted the crown. He was accused of wishing to be king, and the senators did not trust nor were they willing to accept his lust for power.
2. From 49 B.C. and his first conquest of Italy and Pompey until he returned to Rome in 45 B.C., he was wholly occupied outside of Rome with eastern campaigns and conquests repeating much of what Pompey had originally done but extending the influence of the Roman Empire.
3. When Caesar returned triumphantly to Rome, he immediately began to reshape the Senate by increasing its size which by now numbered 600 rather than the original 300. He filled the Senate with cohorts and adherents so that the Senate lost the respect of the people.
4. After his return Caesar ruled only briefly because a conspiracy of Senators observing Caesar's rise to power planned his death. On March 15, 44 B.C. approximately one year after his return from the conquest of Pompey, he was stabbed to death in the Senate House.
5. During his brief rule which was ended 3 days prior to his intended campaign against the Partians east of the Euphrates, he had accomplished much. His chief interest was in instituting the reforms suggested by the Gracchus brothers a century earlier. Some of his accomplishments were the following:
  - a. He gave homes on public land to 80,000 citizens
  - b. He cut down the number of people supported by free grain.
  - c. He improved the government of the provinces and of the cities of Italy.
  - d. He reorganized the coinage system of Italy.
  - e. He arranged for the rebuilding of Corinth and began the rebuilding of Carthage.
  - f. He admitted Gauls and some others to citizenship.
  - g. His conquests in Gaul gave Roman civilization three or four hundred years to develop in that part of Europe and held back for that length of time the Germans, who otherwise might have overrun the region.

- h. He arranged plans for the rebuilding of Rome.
  - i. He laid out great roads along the important lines of communication, and he planned to cut a sea canal through the Isthmus of Corinth.
  - j. He put an end to centuries of inconvenience with the Greco-Roman moon-calendar by introducing into Europe the practical Egyptian calendar, which we are still using, though with inconvenient Roman alterations. (Only one inaccuracy which concerned leap year was found in the Julian calendar and that was cleared up in the calendar of Pope Gregory XIII in S.D. 1582.)
6. The imperial sweep of the plans of Julius Caesar included. far-reaching conquest into new lands like the subjugation of the Germans. Had Caesar been able to carry out these plans, perhaps the language of the Germans today would be a descendant of Latin, like the speech of the French and the Spanish.
- M. The Beginning of the Empire under Augustus Caesar and the End of the Civil War (30 B.C. – A.D. 14)
1. The period of Augustus Caesar (Octavian), adopted son and grandnephew of Julius Caesar, marked the official end of the Roman Republic. Octavian did not have free sway at first because he was forced to subdue the conspirators against his uncle, Julius. He had to conquer the armies of Brutus and Cassius and then was forced to subdue Anthony and Cleopatra who had taken over the eastern half of the Empire. This Octavian did in 31 B.C.
  2. By 27 B.C. the new government was fully organized, and from this time we may properly speak of the Roman Empire. Because the Roman people were sensitive about “kings” and “dictators,” Octavian had himself entitled “Augustus” which could be translated “the majestic.” Augustus lived simply and made no attempt to surround himself with the show and dignity of Oriental rulers. He might be seen walking the streets of Rome like any other citizen.
  3. The Roman Empire which emerged under the watchful eye of Augustus assumed a dual character in which the republican aspects of Rome were restored to dignity. The Senate could not dispense with the power of Caesar had they wanted to. They gave him more and more powers. The Senate had no real power because they had lost control of the army. The influences from the Orient tended to make the position of Augustus more and more that of a monarchy and changed the structure of Rome from that of Republic to that of an Empire with an emperor.
  4. The renowned *Pax Romana* was nurtured under the watchful eye of Augustus. Augustus adopted a peace policy and did not attempt to extend the boundaries of the empire but simply adopted the previous boundaries. He made an honest attempt to defend that which had been gained. To defend these areas and to govern them Augustus maintained a large standing army. The great task of Augustus was to organize the provinces of the conquered areas in the Mediterranean world. (Cf. Luke 2:1-2). This Darius had attempted

unsuccessfully to do five hundred years earlier. Some of the organization of Augustus included the following:

- a. He improved the system of governors of the provinces. (Cf. Luke 2:2)
  - b. Finances of the Empire were regulated for the first time. (Cf. Luke 2:3)
  - c. Augustus authorized and supervised the building of roads which had been proposed by Julius so that Roman legions could quickly march to trouble spots. These roads were also used for commerce and trade.
5. The civilization of the Augustan Age in Rome is sometimes called the Golden Age of Rome. This period was characterized by prosperity and artistic accomplishment.
- a. New temples and other public buildings were constructed, and the general appearance of Rome was changed. It was no idle boast of Augustus when he said that he had found the city of Rome one of brick and had left it marble.
  - b. Augustus encouraged great poets such as Virgil and Horace. Rome's most famous historian, Livy, wrote at this time.
6. In the year A.D. 14, during the month of August, the first of the great emperors died after 45 years of service. An account of his deeds was left in a monument of Ancyra in Bithynia of Asia Minor.

#### N. The Julio-Claudian Emperors (A.D. 14-68)

1. Four rulers who succeeded Augustus were known as the Julio-Claudian emperors. Tiberius (Luke 3:1) (A.D. 14-37) and Claudius (A.D. 41-54) were fairly good rulers. Caligula (A.D. 37-41) and Nero (A.D. 54-68) stand out as examples of the corruption of absolute rule.
2. Nero was the last and best remembered of the descendants of the family of Augustus. His reign (A.D. 54-68) was to end the First Century of Peace of the Roman Empire. Nero was not the true son of Claudius Caesar, but Agrippina the last of the wives of Claudius Caesar gained the throne for her son, Nero. Seneca, the philosopher, was the chief educator and teacher of the sensual Nero.
3. Nero's reign can be briefly characterized as one of infamy rather than one of fame and honor. He received the crown by the assassination of Claudius in A.D. 54. Nero was devoted to art and practiced it personally but cared little about the government which was left in the hands of court favorites. He toured the cities of Greece as a musical composer, competing for prizes in dancing, singing, and chariot races. As a companion of actors, sportsmen, and prize fighters, he became entangled in the meshes of court intrigue which led to the execution of Seneca, assassination of his son Claudius, the murder of his wife and the assassination of his own mother, Agrippina. His wild extravagance, excessive taxation, and his senseless murders were stirring up resentment that was to result in his fall.

4. During the year A.D. 64, a great fire broke out in Rome. The fire burned for about a week destroying many buildings and the beautiful palace of Augustus. Rumor suggested that Nero had set fire to the city himself, but he accused the Christians of having started the fire and executed a large number of them with horrible tortures.
  5. Most scholars believe that it was during Nero's reign as emperor that the Apostle Paul appealed to the emperor in Rome and spent several years in Rome. Paul may have been killed in one of the "purges" of Nero. Tradition states that Peter was also martyred about this time.
  6. Nero's treatment of Rome's only able men, the tremendous taxation, and his general misrule led the Senate to decide upon his death. Nero theatrically stabbed himself in A.D. 68. The death of Nero brought to an end the Julian line of emperors and marked the end of the first century of peace.
- O. The Advent of the Flavian Dynasty and the Second Century of Peace (A.D. 69-96)
1. After the death of Nero a year of confusion followed. Different segments of the army attempted to make their generals emperor.
  2. Vespasian (A.D. 69-79), the commander in Syria, succeeded in establishing himself as the ruler of the whole Empire. He was a plain, honest man, who ruled well. During his reign the Jews in Jerusalem suffered a terrible punishment from God. They had rebelled against the Roman rule during Nero's time of mismanagement of the Empire. Vespasian's son Titus captured Jerusalem (A.D. 70). When the Jews refused to accept the terms he offered them, many thousands of them were killed and many more were sold into slavery. The Temple of Herod was destroyed (Cf. Matt. 24:1-2; Luke 19:41-44) according to the word of Jesus, and Jews were forbidden to enter their beloved city. It became instead a Roman colony under a different name. Judea at the same time became a Roman province.
  3. Titus (A.D. 79-81) reigned briefly, but he was personally one of the finest of the Roman emperors. He was the second in the Flavian family and did much to make the northern frontiers of the empire safe. It was during his reign that the volcano Vesuvius erupted; the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were covered with ashes and lava, from this eruption.
  4. Domitian (A.D. 81-96) was the third in the family of the Flavian dynasty. He was responsible for the persecution and death of many Christians including a niece. During his reign the apostle John was exiled to Patmos. His rule was strong. He adopted the frontier lines laid down by Augustus and planned their fortification with walls wherever necessary. He began the protection of the exposed border between the upper Rhine and the upper Danube. He pushed further into Britain but failed to check the dangerous power of the Dacian Kingdom on the lower Danube.
- P. The Five Good Emperors (Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antonius Pius, and Marcus Aurelius) (A.D. 96-180)

1. Nerva (A.D. 96-98) The selection of Nerva began a succession of five good rulers. Nerva was selected by the Senate from its own numbers. He selected Trajan and adopted him, grooming him for the position of emperor. The system worked well and the next four emperors were probably the best in the history of Rome. The church had a brief period of respite.
2. Trajan (A.D. 98-117)
  - a. The adopted son of Nerva followed him. He was a fine general and conquered the territory of the lower Danube known as Dacia. As a result there exists on the map of Europe in that area the name Rumania. The Rumanians speak a language derived from the Latin. Trajan also annexed territory in Asia beyond the Euphrates River and ruled over more territory than any other Roman emperor before him.
  - b. The spirit of the age was to ignore the Christian religion as much as possible. When charges were made against Christians and Christians refused to forsake their Christian principles, the rulers were compelled to put the Christians to death.
  - c. During the reign of Trajan, the governor of Bithynia, the younger Pliny, corresponded with Trajan. Pliny claimed that the Christian religion had claimed many who were previously pagans. He discovered therefore that the pagan temples were almost deserted, and that consequently fodder for the sacrificial animals was fast becoming unsaleable. To Pliny, Trajan wrote as follows: "You have taken the right line, my dear Pliny, in examining the cases of those denounced to you as Christians, for no hard and fast rule can be laid down, of universal application. They are not to be sought out; if they are informed against, and if the charge is proved, they are to be punished, with this reservation—that if anyone denies that he is a Christian, and actually proves it, that is by worshipping our gods, he shall be pardoned as a result of his recantation, however suspect he may have been with respect to the past. Pamphlets published anonymously should carry no weight in any charge whatsoever. They constitute a very bad precedent, and are also out of keeping with this age."
  - d. During the time of Trajan, Simeon, a bishop who succeeded James in Jerusalem was martyred. Ignatius the bishop of Antioch was martyred in Rome in A.D. 107.
3. Hadrian (A.D. 117-138)
  - a. The successor of Trajan was Hadrian, another able soldier, but he had the judgment of a statesman. He decided to withdraw his troops from Trajan's more distant conquests so that the frontiers of the Empire could more readily be defended. In Britain Hadrian's wall arose, and from the Rhine to the Danube he built fortified barriers to keep out the wild natives of the northern part of the dominion. The famous Pantheon in Rome was also built during his rule. This is a huge mausoleum constructed with a solid

domed concrete roof. It shows that Romans almost 2000 years ago were employing concrete on a scale that we have just begun to learn to imitate.

- b. Hadrian was forced to quell uprisings among the Jews who had not lost their desire to rebuild the Temple and restore glory to Jerusalem. In A.D. 130, Hadrian declared his intention to raise a shrine to Jupiter on the site of the Temple; in A.D. 131, he issued a decree forbidding circumcision and public instruction in the Jewish Law. The Jews revolted, but Romans destroyed 985 towns in Palestine and killed 580,000 men. Many more died through starvation, disease, and fire. So many Jews were sold as slaves that their price fell to that of a horse. The Jews were levied with a heavy tax; they might come and weep before the ruins of the Temple but once a year. The pagan city of Aelia Capitolina rose on the site of Jerusalem with shrines to Jupiter and Venus, and with theaters and baths.
  - c. Little historical evidence is available concerning martyrdom of Christians during the reign of Hadrian.
4. Antonius Pius (A.D. 138-161)
- a. The era of Antonius Pius can be briefly characterized as one in which there were no serious calamities or disturbances. He seemed therefore to be a most admirable ruler. In spite of all the outward prosperity (witness the magnificent buildings in all parts of the Empire), the Mediterranean civilization ruled by Rome was declining. Antonius Pius hardly showed enough energy to maintain the foreign prestige of the empire, and his successor should have to face a serious menace in the east as the Parthians made trouble.
  - b. Hadrian's decrees against the Jews were somewhat softened by Antonius Pius, but the Jews did not recover from the disasters of the revolt in Hadrian's time—Bar Cocheba's revolt. Durant writes:

From this moment they entered their Middle Ages, abandoning all secular learning except medicine, renouncing every form of Hellenism, and taking comfort and unity only from their rabbis, their mystic poets, and their Law. No other people has ever known so long an exile, or so hard a fate. Shut out from their Holy City, the Jews were compelled to surrender it first to paganism, then to Christianity. Scattered into every province and beyond, condemned to poverty and humiliation, unbefriended even by philosophers and saints, they retired from public affairs into private study and worship, passionately preserving the words of their scholars, and preparing to write them down at last in the Talmuds of Babylonia and Palestine. Judaism hid in fear and obscurity while its offspring Christianity went out to conquer the world.
  - c. Little is known concerning the official attitude of Antonius Pius toward Christianity. Polycarp of Smyrna was martyred in A.D. 155. He is believed to have been a disciple of the apostle John and was brought to the amphitheatre in Smyrna for execution, having been accused of atheism because there were no images in the Christian houses of worship. As an old man of 80 years, he refused to deny Christ.
5. Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180)

- a. Marcus Aurelius was the last of the “Five Good Emperors.” He was the nephew and adopted son of Antonius Pius. He showed undoubted ability as a statesman, but he would have greatly preferred to devote himself to reading, study, and philosophy. In his *Meditations*, which he wrote while guiding operations of the legions among the forests of Bohemia, he best expressed some of the ideas of Stoic philosophy.
- b. During the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Justin Martyr was killed. He had fled to Rome, but when he returned to Greece in A.D. 163, he was martyred. Also during the time of Marcus Aurelius there are reports of severe persecution and mob violence in sections around Lyon, Gaul (France).

Q. Civil Wars and The Reign of the Barrack Emperors (A.D. 180 – 284.)

1. Following the death of Marcus Aurelius the most serious problem was the selection of a new emperor. The Romans had never passed a law of succession allowing the emperor’s son to become the next emperor. This was left to the old emperor, the Senate, the Praetorian Guard, and the army. Gradually the Praetorian Guard gained complete authority and was rewarded handsomely by the emperor for its support. The early days of this system worked fairly well, but, as with all systems, this system too lost its effectiveness. With the death of Marcus Aurelius the army legions stationed in the provinces revolted against the new emperor Commodus (A.D. 180-193), the son of Marcus Aurelius.
2. The assassination of Commodus gave the army officers an opportunity for a long and continuous struggle for power. The century from A.D. 180-284 is often referred to as the time of the Barrack Emperors because the emperors were fighting for their own positions of importance. This was also therefore part of the cause for the decline of Rome.
3. Septimius Severus (A.D. 193-211)
  - a. Septimius Severus was the beginning of a line of kings who held the balance of power until A.D. 235. His son Caracalla A.D. 211-217, had conferred citizenship on all free men in the empire but was assassinated. El-Cabel (A.D. 218-222) and Alexander Severus (A.D. 222-235) were the last of the descendants of Septimius Severus.
  - b. During the rule of these emperors the history of Christianity went through periods of persecution and peace. Septimius Severus in A.D. 202 directed persecution against Christians in Alexandria, Egypt, and in Carthage. An edict by Septimius Severus in A.D. 202 forbade proselytism or missionary work on the part of both Jews and Christians. Leonidas, the father of Origen, was martyred during this time. During the reigns of Caracalla, El-Cabel, and Alexander Severus the church experienced the beginning of a period called the First Long Period of Peace. Alexander Severus who wanted to merge all religions into one, placed busts of Christ and Abraham in the temples of the heathen gods.



4. The barbaric troops in one province after another set up their puppet emperors to fight among themselves for the throne of the world. Each time a new emperor would be proclaimed the news would be followed by news of his assassination. More than twenty-seven emperors claimed the throne of the world in a period of less than a century. The student of history can understand why historians have referred to this period in the decline of the Roman Empire as the period of the Barrack Emperors. Each emperor in his turn was set up and then overturned by soldiers.
5. After the assassination of Alexander Severus in A.D. 235 there was a period of fifty years of little public order as the plundering troops tossed the scepter of Rome from soldier-emperor to another of his kind. Life and property were nowhere safe; turbulence, robbery, and murder were everywhere prevalent. The well-ordered empire of Augustus and his successors in the first few centuries A.D. was being turned into a shambles.
6. During this period from A.D. 235 to A.D. 284, the church was relatively free from persecution. The emperors were so busy with their own affairs that they did not bother the church. Only during the years A.D. 249-251 did severe persecution afflict the Church. During these years Emperor Decius Trajan initiated and directed a fierce persecution within the empire because he considered the Church to be a state within the state. In the year A.D. 250, Decius Trajan issued an empire-wide edict which insisted that all men return to paganism. The edict of Decius Trajan commanded provincial governors and magistrates, assisted where necessary by local notables, to superintend the sacrifices to the gods and to the genius of the emperor. These sacrifices were to be performed on a fixed day. Many Christians rejected the Christian religion because they feared the results. Other Christians brought certificates which falsified their true relationship to the Christian religion so that they would not be punished. The following certificate of sacrifice was discovered in Egypt in A.D. 1893.

To the commissioners for sacrifices in the village of Alexander's island, from Aurelius Diogenes, son of Satabus, of the village of Alexander's Island, aged 72; scar on right eyebrow. I have always sacrificed to the gods, and now in your presence, in accordance with the terms of the edict, I have done sacrifice and poured libations and tasted the sacrifices, and I request you to certify to this effect. Farewell. Presented by me, Aurelius Diogenes. I certify that I witness his sacrifice, Aurelius Syrtis. Dated this first year of the emperor Caesar, Gaius Messius Quintus, Trajanus Dacius, Pius, Felix, Augustus.

Dacius Trajan died fighting against the Goths, and with his death the persecution stopped. The period therefore from A.D. 251-303 has been called the Second Long Period of Peace for the church. The edict of Gallienus (A.D. 260-268) declared an end to the persecution of the church and actually restored to the church her confiscated property. Eusebius, the historian, gives a copy of the Edict of Gallienus to bishops of the church as follows:

I have ordered the bounty of my gift to be declared throughout the world that places of worship be restored. And for this purpose you may use this copy of my rescript that no one may molest you. And this that you may now lawfully do has long

been conceded by me. And therefore Aurelius Cyrenius, the chief administrator will keep this copy which I have given.

#### R. Diocletian (A.D. 284-305)

1. In A.D. 284 Diocletian became the emperor of Rome. With the coming of Diocletian a new type of government emerged. Diocletian became an oriental despot rather than follow in the footsteps of the western predecessors. The emperor was influenced instead by the Persian Sassanian kings, and he adopted their customs in such matters as court costume, court symbols and other related customs. The emperor became divine and now was to be worshipped as the oriental sun-god.
2. Also during the reign of Diocletian the empire was reorganized. Diocletian moved the capital city of the empire to Nicomedia in Asia Minor so that he would be nearer to the source of many of the imperial problems and placed the city of Rome and the western part of the empire under the control of Maximian. Each part of the empire had an additional ruler. Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great, was the Caesar in the West and Galerius, the son-in-law of Diocletian was the Caesar in the East. Maximian and Diocletian were to be titled "Augustus." Diocletian intended that the Augusti should retire eventually and the two Caesars should take their places as Augusti and appoint new Caesars thus eliminating the possibility of the confusion and civil war that had prevailed for the fifty years prior to his reign.
3. Diocletian stayed in the east and the other Augustus, Maximian, made his capital in Milan, Italy. When Diocletian decided to retire to private life, his system did not work out as he planned. In the ensuing civil war, Constantine emerged as victor and became master of the West.
4. The wife of Diocletian and his daughter were catechumens in the doctrines of the church. Eusebius, the historian of Caesarea, tells us of the great increase of the membership and power of the Church in the early part of the reign of Diocletian. Galerius was primarily responsible, it seems, for the change in the attitude of Diocletian toward the Christian religion. The *Edict of Gallienus* (c. A.D. 260) was repealed and Vateria's harsh laws against the church were reenacted.

The years of peace for the church were ended and the Edict of A.D. 303 persecuting the church is reported by Eusebius as follows:

...Imperial edicts were published everywhere ordering that the churches be razed to the ground, that the Scriptures be destroyed by fire, that those holding office be deposed and they of the household be deprived of freedom, if they persisted in the profession of Christianity. This was the first edict against us. But not long after other decrees were issued, which enjoined that the rulers of the churches in every place be first imprisoned, and thereafter every means be used to compel them to sacrifice... April, A.D. 304... Imperial edicts were issued, in which by a general decree, it was ordered that all the people without exception should sacrifice in the several cities and offer libations to the idols.

5. In the midst of the persecution civil disorder struck the empire, and Diocletian and Maximian resigned their positions. Galerius clung tenaciously to his

position but finally had to admit defeat. He was smitten with a terrible disease and his foes increased in number. In spite of attempts by Maximian and others it was necessary for Galerius to recant, and he issued the *Edict of Toleration* in A.D. 311.

Among our other regulations to promote the lasting good of the community we have hitherto endeavored to restore a universal conformity to the ancient institutions and public order of the Romans; and in particular it has been our aim to bring back to a right disposition the Christians who had abandoned the religion of their fathers... After the publication of our edict ordering the Christians to conform to the ancient institutions, many of them were brought to order through fear, while many were exposed to danger. Nevertheless, since many still persist in their opinions, and since we have observed that they now neither show due reverence to the gods nor worship their own God, we therefore, with our wonted clemency, in extending pardon to all, are pleased to grant indulgences to these men, allowing Christians the right to exist again and to set up their places of worship; provided always that they do not offend against public order. We will in a further instruction explain to the magistrates how they should conduct themselves in this matter. In return for this indulgence of ours it will be the duty of Christians to pray to God for our recovery, for the public weal, and for their own; that the state may be preserved from danger on every side, and that they themselves may dwell safely in their homes.

- S. A Brief Summary of Government's Attitude and Behaviour Toward the Christian Religion
1. During the early history of the Christian religion it seemed that Christianity was more readily tolerated than it was in the later days of the first century of the Church. Christianity seemed at first to be identified with Judaism; Judaism was tolerated by the Roman state as long as its followers were not rebellious and paid their tribute.
  2. Persecution was not continuous and unrelenting during the second and third centuries. There were times of relative calm for the church. There were two periods of peace in which there was no persecution by imperial edict.
  3. Few Christians lived out a natural life of 60 or 70 years without experiencing some period of persecution in their lives.
  4. Attacks against the Church were largely local until the time of Decius Trajan in the middle of the third century. Under Decius Trajan and later emperors the persecution took on an empire-wide scare. There was no general persecution during the years A.D. 68-180.
  5. When Christians were persecuted, the treatment varied but usually it meant some form of torture, reprisal, deprivation, or death.
- T. Constantine the Great (A.D. 312-337)
1. In A.D. 313 Constantine had established himself as the emperor in the West, and by A.D. 324 he had definitely established his authority in the East, too.
  2. Imperially Constantine continued the policy of Diocletian. The emperor was an absolute monarch although he did introduce some important changes.

3. Constantine established a new Rome in the east. He chose Byzantium, an ancient Greek town on the European side of the Bosphorus. It was a significant location because it overlooked both Europe and Asia. It was well situated to be the center of power in this far-flung and disintegrating empire. By A.D. 330 this ancient city was beautified by stripping many other ancient cities of its monuments and artifacts. This city was to be named Constantinople.
4. Constantine did not intend to break the empire in two, but he did so. Slowly the West became more and more a part of the Barbarian acquisitions, and the tradition of world unity under Rome meant less and less. As a result the West would split from the East, and the East would go on for a thousand years. Constantinople would become the center of learning, culture, and trade. It was a Christian city and would not fall to the infidel Moslems until A.D. 1453.
5. Constantine also established Christianity as a legal and favored religion. One of his first acts of importance after having established himself as emperor in the West was to issue and publish the *Edict of Milan*, A.D. 313. The story is told that Constantine, the son of a Christian mother, had seen a sign of the cross in the sky and had at this time professed his faith. If he was a Christian, he was a very inconsistent Christian, remaining the high-priest of the sun-god, too. He was not baptized as a Christian until just before his death it is more likely that Constantine was an accomplished politician and knew what he must do to bring peace to the realm and to exert his authority over the Roman Empire.
6. Constantine was also busy attempting to bring peace in the realm particularly in the East where doctrinal strife by members and leaders in the Christian Church was threatening to break apart the empire. He had commanded his secretary and bishop Hosius from Spain to investigate and bring together, if possible the warring parties in Alexandria. Two men were chiefly involved in this struggle known as the Arian Controversy. They were Anus, a presbyter of Alexandria, and Athanasius, the archdeacon of the bishop Alexander of Alexandria. Each side enlisted by every possible means as much support as they could. The eventual result was that Constantine called the first Ecumenical Synod of the Christian Church (A.D. 325) which met in the little city of Nicea in Asia Minor. Constantine presided over this council consisting of 318 holy fathers of church and other important dignitaries. The result of the work of this Council was the condemnation of the errant doctrine called Anianism, which denied the deity of Christ, and the adoption of the orthodox doctrine which said that Christ is of the same substance as the Father. This doctrine is preserved for us in the first of the written ecumenical creeds known as the Nicene Creed. (Cf. Belgic Confession, Article 9).
7. Perhaps without realizing it, Constantine, the Roman emperor, had become an instrument in the counsel of God to decree a council of churchmen that would write and issue a creed that has remained an orthodox statement of the truth to the present.

8. Although Christianity was not the official religion of the state, it was nevertheless patronized by the state through the efforts of Constantine. Durant observes that Constantine's exemption to Christian institutions was not completely unique because there had been exemptions to pagan priest and pagan religious institutions in the past. Nevertheless it is unique that the Christian religion which had previously been despised is now patronized by the emperor of the Roman Empire.
    - a. Constantine made grants from his treasury for the building of churches.
    - b. He made grants for the support of the clergy from his own treasury.
    - c. Constantine exempted the clergy from taxation.
    - d. Constantine replaced the eagles on his standard with the sign of the cross or the labarum.
    - e. In addition to calling the Synod of Nicea in A.D. 325, Constantine had previously called the Council of Arles in A.D. 314 in which he attempted to settle a controversy between the Donatists and others in the church. The Donatists believed that the church was becoming lax in its policy of receiving lapsed members and officials back into the church and positions of authority in the church. The Donatists were condemned.
    - f. Sunday was proclaimed a day of rest by Constantine in A.D. 321.
  9. Constantine also seemed to be effected by Christian morality. The following changes are examples.
    - a. Official sacrifices and libations were ended.
    - b. Crucifixion as a method of punishment was abolished.
    - c. Infanticide and abortion was suppressed.
    - d. Slavery was modified.
    - e. Gladiatorial games were suppressed.
  10. Near the end of his life, A.D. 335, he divided his vast empire among his sons and his nephews. His sons and nephews spent years fighting for supremacy, but it was not until A.D. 361 that Julian the Apostate achieved such supremacy. Julian was devoted to the old literature and philosophy of the Greeks. He renounced Christianity and did all he could to retard its progress and restore the Hellenistic ideology. He was the last of the emperors to actively oppose Christianity and is called Julian the Apostate. As he lay dying he is reported to have said, "Thou hast conquered, Galilean."
- U. Theodosius (A.D. 378-395)
1. Theodosius was the last of the great emperors of the last century of the empire's existence in the West to unite and rule the whole Roman Empire.
  2. In the year A.D. 380 just 17 years after the death of Julian the Apostate, Theodosius declared that all subjects of the empire must accept the Christian faith as this faith is stated and defined in creed of Council of Nicea.

3. When Theodosius also became emperor of the West in A.D. 392, he continued the policy he had begun in the east in A.D. 380. Under Theodosius, therefore, Christianity became part of the law of the empire. All inhabitants of the Roman Empire were required to profess themselves Christians on the pain of being outlawed or exiled. This law was the death-blow to the paganism of Julian, but it did not strengthen the Christian religion. It made Christianity the religion of the masses. This was bad for the Christian religion.
4. Many temples and idols were destroyed, and, by A.D. 400 most of pagan worship was a thing of the past. We can be certain that even though the institution of paganism was gone the attempts of the devil and all the forces of antichristian paganism would attempt to convert the Christian religion into a ritualistic paganism. We see some of the effects of this attempt in the history of the church in the Middle Ages and once again in the modern period among the churches that should be truly Protestant and Reformed.
5. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that even though the outlawing of paganism seemed like a tremendous victory for the Christian religion, which less than a century before had been persecuted, it was not such a great victory. The new state of affairs meant that in the churches of the empire there were many who were not Christians. A religion controlled, by the state always becomes apostate. It is a forerunner of the great anti-Christian regime which is predicted and portrayed in Revelation 13.

#### V. The Barbarian Invasions

1. The Roman Empire had fallen upon hard times. The causes for the decline and eventual fall of the Roman Empire were evident. There were both internal causes and external causes for this decline and its eventual fall. The internal causes were such things as:
  - a. An empire that encompassed so much territory that it could not be ruled permanently by one authority.
  - b. Emperors who were weak and often corrupt and self-serving.
  - c. Government in many provinces in the empire which was corrupt and oppressive so that the provinces were brought to financial ruin and to rebellion.
  - d. The system of slavery worked out in Italy and other parts of the empire its inevitable disastrous effects by weakening the character of the people and was a cause for great waste of human and natural resources.
  - e. A decline in the population of the empire because of unwise economic policies which enriched a few and caused the middle and lower classes to be impoverished.
  - f. The strength of the Romans of some of the provincial peoples was eaten out by moral decay. This decay affected all classes of society and could be seen in dishonesty, in sensuality and disregard of marriage. It could be observed in the degrading and immoral popular amusements of the day.

2. The invasions by the Barbarian tribes from the north which began already in the third century were the chief external cause for the decline of the Empire. These attackers were not simply making raids, but they were in the process of procuring new homes and sites to live. Great migrations of people were pouring into Europe from the east, and these migrations actually changed the face of Europe. For five centuries those migrations occurred. The beginning of this process falls in the two centuries of history from A.D. 200-400. In the first century A.D. the Romans recognized the German power and accepted the Rhine-Danube frontier, except for Dacia (modern Rumania), but in the second century the Germans pressed on the boundaries of the empire hard enough to strain the Roman power to the utmost. Emperors had to stand them off by receiving some tribes as allies, by giving them lands, and by taking some of their fighting men into the Roman army. In this way the army became increasingly German, and the empire became increasingly vulnerable to the eventual attacks of the German people in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.
3. We will not discuss this at any further length because there is another section in these outlines devoted to this history.

#### W. The Fall of Rome (A.D. 476)

1. Students should know that the Fall of Rome occurred in A.D. 476. This had not been the first incursion into Italy. Already in A.D. 410 the Visigoths under Alaric had virtually consummated the destruction of the Roman empire in the West by sacking the city of Rome. However Odoacer, a German chieftan, dethroned Romulus Augustus, the last Roman emperor in the West in A.D. 476. When the boy emperor, Romulus Augustus, was deposed Odoacer (Odoavakar) made himself emperor.
2. Although Pope Leo was to hold back the Hums from Rome, the Visigoths and later the Ostrogoths would not be detained. In A.D. 493 King Theodoric of the Ostrogoths replaced Odoacer of the Visigoths. Theodoric could not read, but he was wise and tried to create order. He could not make his restless warriors settle down to live in peace. Roads and bridges crumbled, fields were left untilled, and pirates and bandits roamed the Empire. All evidence of the grandeur of Roman civilization began to disappear.

#### X. The Empire in the East

1. Although the Barbarian Goths had been able to take Rome, the empire in the East had resisted the attacks of the Goths. In fact Arian missionaries had lived among the Goths. These missionaries from the East led by Ufilas had translated the Scriptures into the Gothic language. Unfortunately the ideology of these missionaries was Arian, and so the Goths did not have a proper conception of Christ as the son of God, who is in substance very God as the Father is God.
2. A.D. 476 is the date usually accepted for the Fall of the Roman Empire. This is erroneous. Rome fell in the West but no one at this time considered the Roman Empire to have fallen. Zeno (A.D. 474-491) was the emperor. He was

waging fierce battles in the Church and never recognized Romulus Augustus. Julius Nepos had been assassinated and so there was no emperor in the West. Zeno considered himself sole emperor.

3. The achievements of the classical age that had been preserved by the Roman Empire was preserved by its heir, the Eastern or Byzantine Empire. This Empire remained intact for nearly a thousand years after the Fall of Rome. The Byzantine half of the Empire continued to flourish because the eastern cities remained prosperous.
4. During the Middle Ages the Byzantine Empire maintained a semblance of order in the East and resisted the inroads of the Moslem faith although the Christian religion became decadent and ritualistic.
5. The Christian Church supported by the power of the papacy eventually adopted a similar responsibility in Western Europe. This is, however, the story of the Middle Ages.

#### IV. Characteristics, Achievements and Important People

##### A. Roman Government

1. Representative government. Rome was a republic. A republic is not necessarily a democracy, however. Rome was not a democracy in the accepted sense of "one man one vote." The balance of power was not in the hands of all the people (the demos) but lay in the hands of the patricians. Even when the plebeians were given law-making rights some of the more influential and stronger plebeians had become wealthy and they merged into the old patrician class and adopted patrician aims and ideas as their own. This is the course and goal of all human institutions. Every man is for himself and the devil can take the hindmost.
2. Roman law. Roman laws were basically just and equitable. When the "Twelve Tables" of the law were written (460 B.C.) three men were sent to Athens to examine the laws of Solon and also to southern Italy to study the manners and customs of the Greeks living there. As time went on, the Romans developed a more complex legal system whose principles are embodied in much of Western civilization today. The basic principle of Roman law is that a law should be "what a man of common sense and good faith would deem to be right." The accused is innocent until he is proved to be guilty. The 6th century emperor Justinian used the Roman laws and incorporated Christian ethics when he authorized Tribonian to construct the Justinian Code or Digest.

##### B. Roman Life

1. Early Romans can be said to have led simple lives and served their country out of a true sense of patriotism and loyalty. Farms became large and many small farmers were put out of work and joined the city mobs. When the farms were populated with slaves brought back by generals and farmers lost their farms, Rome began to degenerate rapidly and fall into decay.



2. The family was the basis of early Roman life. The father was the undisputed head of the family and had complete authority over the lives and property of his children until his death. The Roman wife was honored and respected. Cato even complained that the wives were openly influencing elections during the later stages of the Republic.

#### C. *Pax Romana*

1. *Pax Romana* is the Roman Peace in the empire of the first two centuries A.D. This peace spread through the entire area of the empire. With this peace went the spread of Graeco-Roman culture. This peace also made possible the spread of Christianity.
2. During this peace citizenship was given to people outside the area of the province and city of Rome. Roman citizenship during this era was valuable and a great honor. Remember how the Roman citizenship of the Apostle Paul often saved his life. (Acts 16:21, 37, 38; 22:25-29; 23:27; 25:16.)

#### D. Religion in Rome

1. In the days of the early Republic Roman religion reflected the interest of the Romans in farming. The most honored goddess was Vesta, the protectress of the household and the hearth.
2. After the Romans came into contact with the Greeks, they adopted much of the Greek religion. Zeus and Hera became Jupiter and Juno; Athena became Minerva; Aphrodite became Venus; Ares became Mars; and Poseidon became Neptune. (Cf. Oosterman, p. 72)

#### E. The Perils of Conquest

1. The conquests of Rome brought many riches to the city of Rome. Generals brought back slaves to do the work and life became a round of pleasure. The people were simply given things so that dictators and autocrats could take over the government.
2. The Roman had been known for his self-reliance and his stoicism. Nothing appeared to affect him adversely and he took everything as if it meant nothing in his life. Now, however, he lost this self-reliance and depended both in his economic and his political life on the handouts of those in power. Political interest dies with the loss of economic interest.

#### F. Elaborate Cities and Luxurious Houses

1. Wherever the Roman went he built beautiful and elaborate cities. He also built luxurious and spacious houses & the age in which he lived was the Golden Age. Pompeii and Herculaneum are two cities preserved under the lava of Vesuvius that present unique insights into Roman life during this Golden Age.
2. Lead pipes carried running water and hot air ran under the floors to warm the rooms in winter.
3. Elaborate bathhouses were erected to serve as resorts both for past-time and for exchanging the gossip of the day. Slaves gave rub-downs with scented

oils. Libraries and gymnasiums were part of the more elaborate salons. There may have been 170 of these establishments in Rome at one time.

4. Rome was not without its difficulties, however. Health conditions in the crowded city were not ideal; in 364 B.C. a great pestilence desolated Rome.

#### G. Roman Literature

1. Roman literature is based on Greek works but adapted to practical purposes by the Romans.
2. Before the Romans came into contact with the Greeks they had nothing which can be properly called literature.
3. The great contributors to Roman literature were the following:
  - a. Cicero (106-243 B.C.) was a great Roman orator who made political speeches or orations in the Senate. These are models of the best Latin composition and became models for many writers in the modern languages, particularly the German.
  - b. Plutarch (A.D. 246-120) wrote life stories of 23 Greeks and 23 Romans called *Plutarch's Lives*. He was particularly interested in the collapse of the Republic from 100 B.C. till A.D. 30.
  - c. Julius Caesar wrote lively descriptions of his military campaigns. (*Gallic Wars*)
  - d. Livy (59 B.C. – A.D. 17) wrote a history of early Rome. Most of it is lost.
  - e. Tacitus (A.D. 55-120) gives a picture of early Rome during the time of the first five emperors.
  - f. Vergil (70-19 B.C.) was a poet who is best known for the *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* relates the myth of Aeneas' voyage from Troy to Italy. It is an epic poem dedicated to the life of Caesar Augustus.
  - g. Horace (65-8 B.C.) is noted for his odes.
  - h. Ovid (43 B.C. – A.D. 17) wrote the narrative poem *Metamorphoses*. Legendary and historical characters are described in 15 books beginning with the creation of the world and ending with the deification of Caesar and the reign of Augustus.
  - i. Seneca (c. 4 B.C. – A.D. 65) was a Roman philosopher and writer of tragedies.

#### H. Latin Language

1. The Latin language spread over all parts of the Empire in 500 years so that even erudite Greeks were using the language of the Latins.
2. Although the Hellenistic movement had fostered the growth of the *koine*, the Latin language eventually helped to bind the Roman Empire into one great world-state.
3. Latin became the language of the scholars, the courts, and the church.

4. The Romance languages, Italian, French, Rumanian, Spanish, and Portuguese are directly based on the Latin language.
- I. Roman Science
1. The Romans were not great scientists but they borrowed much from the Greeks and could put Greek ideas into practice better than the Greeks.
  2. The Greeks were the important scientists of the Roman Empire just as the Germans were some of the most sought after scientists in modern times.
  3. Alexandria was the center of science during the Roman rule.
    - a. Claudius Ptolemy (A.D. 127-152) was an astronomer who theorized that the sun revolved around the earth. This idea was believed for many years.
    - b. Galen (A.D. 130-200) was the physician who discovered that the arteries are filled with blood and not air.
- J. The Romans were Skillful Engineers
1. The Romans built bridges, roads and aqueducts. Some of these are still in use today. One of the very first public works after early Rome was surrounded by a wall was the construction of a large sewer to drain a marshy valley between the Palatine and Capitoline hills, a sewer still functioning in modern times.
  2. The Romans later became interested in more artistic architecture and designed bigger and better things than they had seen in Greece.
    - a. Hadrian's Pantheon was a temple to the gods with a dome of concrete that spans a 142 foot chamber.
    - b. The Colosseum was constructed. It was an open air arena holding 50,000 spectators.
    - c. The Baths of Diocletian held three thousand people.
  3. Romans developed a kind of concrete to conserve marble.
  4. Romans used the dome and the arch in much of their architecture. (Cf. National Geographic publication, *Greece and Rome, Builders of Our World* for excellent illustrations.)
- K. Roman Education
1. Roman education was practical. Prosperous families sent their sons to private schools or tutors. Many of the tutors and instructors were Greek slaves, who trained the boys.
  2. Some went to a kind of public elementary school supported by the government but for a small fee the boys were taught music, geography, history, mathematics, and passages from Greek and Roman literature.
  3. When a boy was 12 he could enter an advanced government school to train himself to become a clever politician concentrating on oratory.

4. Girls never went to school for by the time a girl was fifteen she was usually married to a man chosen by her father.
- L. The Poor, Free Bread, and the Circuses
1. The poor were kept content with their poor position and squalid living by gifts of free bread.
  2. Entertainment was provided by “sportsmen” who were willing to endanger their lives in gladiatorial combat. Schools were established to train freemen for this activity. Previously only slaves or condemned criminals would participate. The people were usually only satisfied when one of the gladiators was killed in the combat. Wild bulls and tigers were substituted when public interest began to wane. (One could possibly discuss and associate modern professional sports in connection with this activity of the Romans.)
  3. Christians in Rome and other parts of the Roman Empire were particularly admonished not to attend these activities. If one were a gladiator or charioteer, he could not be considered for membership in the early church. A huntsman could not be considered either because he was one who went to look for the animals that were used in these activities. (One could discuss various activities such as automobile racing and contact sports of various kinds in connection with the condemnations by the early church.)
- V. Christianity and the Roman Government
- A. The Origin of Christianity
1. From the beginning God had determined that he would send the Christ, the Messiah into the World. (John 1:1-14) The Triune God had determined that Christ, who is the Son of God, the second person in the Divine Trinity, should come into the world to save His people from their sins. God promised this when man fell into sin because of the fall of Adam. (Genesis 3:15)
  2. God chose a people and in the old dispensation that people followed the line of Seth. These people were to be the Shemites from whom Abraham and Jacob, who is later called Israel, descended. From among all the nations in the world the Lord chose the Jews. To them alone He was Jehovah God. To them alone was He pleased to reveal Himself in spirit and in truth even though the other nations were left without excuse. They held the truth in unrighteousness. (Romans 1:18 ff.)
  3. All the Jews looked with eager expectation for a Messiah. However, the Jews were a corrupt and self-seeking people and therefore the leaders of the people did not understand the real Christ. In fact most of the people did not understand that the Messiah would be a spiritual king. He would come but not to sit on the throne of David and rule as an earthly king. He would be meek and lowly sitting upon the colt the foal of an ass. He would be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He came to establish a spiritual, heavenly kingdom which should have its primary place in the hearts of His people until His second coming on the clouds of heaven. (Isaiah 53, Zechariah 9:9)

4. The true people of God waited patiently—sometimes almost hopelessly until there was only one left who could be a true descendant of David and that was Mary, a virgin engaged to be married to Joseph. Upon her the spirit of God descended. She was the blessed among women and she conceived in a miraculous way and became the mother of the Miracle of all miracles. She was to be the mother of the SEED, who is the Christ. In Him all nations will be truly blessed.
5. The Incarnation is the greatest event in all history and it occurs when Caesar Augustus was emperor of the whole world. The birth of the Son of God must occur when the whole world was to be taxed or enrolled. (Micah 5:2) The event must occur when crowds converged on the city of David, Bethlehem, and there was no room for the Savior of the cosmos. The only place He could be born was in the stable of an inn. (Even history books have no real place for the Christ of the Scriptures.)
6. Into a world of Graeco-Roman culture as this was forced upon the Jewish state the Christ must come. He must come as the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6) into a world of conquest and strife. In the day of the Roman-imposed peace He comes with peace but it was the peace that passeth all understanding. It was not physical peace.
7. The way of salvation was prescribed for Christ before He came into the world. The types and shadows in Israel were evidence that the way of salvation is through blood. Blood must flow and it must be the blood of one who is both very God and real righteous man. (Heidelberg Catechism, questions 16, 17, 18, 19)
8. The Messiah must also die when the entire world was united. There must be one government because the suffering and death of Christ must be the condemnation of the world as well as the redemption and salvation of the Church. The world must be represented at the trial of Jesus the Lord. Christ is not sentenced, therefore, in a remote corner of the world. Even though Christ dies according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, it is also true that the death of Christ was an outrage and murder. The governor who presided at Christ's trial was Pontius Pilate, a Roman governor. He represented the world. No man could be put to death except by the permission and pronouncement of the Roman authorities. The world was to be held accountable for the suffering and death of Christ.

#### B. The Spread of Christianity

1. When Christ hung on the cross and was sealed in the tomb the Jews thought that Christ and the movement which He had originated had come to an end. This could not be because Christ had promised that He would come out of the grave. Christ says concerning the cause of which He was the originator and founder in Acts 1:7-8 the following:

It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon

you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto *the uttermost part of the earth*.

2. Jesus had chosen certain representatives and leaders and these received the promise which was intended for the whole church. The cause of Christ cannot fail and shall go forward. "The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church." (Matt. 16:18)
3. Jesus had promised too that He would send them another Comforter (John 14) which is the Spirit of Christ. This Spirit He would shed abroad in their hearts. When they should receive this Spirit they will be impelled, empowered, and instructed to do nothing else but preach the Gospel. (Cf. Acts 2)
4. Jesus chose to Himself those who should be leaders in the spread of the Gospel. One of the leaders in this great task, the apostle to the Gentiles, was Paul who stood out as the chief of sinners by profession and confession. He was also the leading means for the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles.
5. The Romans during the time of Paul had accepted and manufactured a religion of their own. This religion was based on the religion of the Greeks and was adopted at least in part as a result of the Hellenizing influences during the time of Alexander. Elements of the eastern religions had infiltrated the religious ideas of the Romans. (Cf. Acts 14 and 17) This ancient paganism was rooted in a certain nature worship (Cybele, nature goddess) and was polytheistic. The only spot in the empire where the worship of the only true God could exist was in Judaea but, even here true religion had been contaminated and perverted by the ideas of men. (James 1:28).
6. Christianity spread from Judea to Syria, to the cities of Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, to Rome, and finally to all the provinces of the empire. This early spread of Christianity was caused in part by the tremendous persecution of the Christians by the Judaists and unbelievers in Jerusalem and Judea. These did not wish to tolerate the religion they thought they had destroyed. The zealous attitude of the followers of the crucified, resurrected, and ascended Christ could not be vanquished by the attempts of the Jews to squelch the teachings of Christ and His apostles. Even when they fled to other lands they carried with them their beliefs and convictions. Coupled with this dispersion through persecution went the official preaching of the Gospel by Paul and other missionaries. They went first to the Jews of the dispersion and also preached salvation to the Greeks. In this way the prophecy that "Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem was fulfilled." (Genesis 9:27, Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:13-14; 3:6)
7. When Christianity first came into Greece and Rome the Christians were persecuted severely. Most of the hardship that Christians endured and that early missionaries endured was from the Judaizers who attempted to subvert the gospel. (Galatians 2:13ff.) The later persecutions by the Gentiles were excused on the ground of political necessity but they remain a dark blot on the history of the empire. The new religion could not be destroyed but it continued to spread and exercise its influence on all phases of Roman life.

8. After Christianity became the patronized religion of the empire under the influence of Constantine the Great, it was accepted as the religion of the state. Theodosius stands out as the great leader of the Roman state demanding that all men become Christians according to the doctrines of the Nicene Creed. This was not good for the Church.

### C. The Growth of Church Organization

1. With the spread of Christianity throughout the provinces the ecclesiastical trappings seemed to resemble that of the organization of the empire. As false doctrines began to develop the church adopted an organizational structure which would give stability and serve as a wall of defense against errors such as Gnosticism and Arianism. Some examples of this organizational structure are the following:
  - a. In the town the parish church was presided over by the parish priest. Early these men were called presbyters.
  - b. A number of parish churches were grouped together into a diocese (a governor's area of jurisdiction) and governed by a bishop.
  - c. A number of dioceses were united into a province under a higher church officer called a metropolitan or archbishop. This man usually was the chief officer in one of the large city cathedrals.
  - d. In the East a few of the metropolitans (i.e. like those of Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria) rose above the other bishops in dignity and authority, and were recognized as *Patriarchs*.
  - e. In the West the bishop of Rome exercised even greater authority and was recognized as the chief Bishop. The Roman Catholic Church incorrectly believed that the apostle Peter was the first bishop of Rome and so justified the office of Pope. This was to cause endless strife in the Empire and later between Roman Catholics and Protestants.
2. While the Roman Empire was more and more influenced by Christianity, Rome became the recognized head and center of Christianity. Particularly after the invasion by the Barbarians and the destruction of Rome the Church became the leader of civilization and politics in Rome.
3. Signs of deterioration became evident in the church early. Deterioration could be detected by the writings of the apostles and by the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. By the end of the fifth century A.D. the following unscriptural doctrines and practices had become deeply rooted in the Church.
  - a. exorcism (expelling of evil spirits)
  - b. prayers for the dead
  - c. a belief in purgatory (place in which souls are purified after death before they can enter heaven)
  - d. the view that the Lord's Supper is a sacrifice, and that its administrators are priests

- e. a sharp division of the members of the church into clergy and laity
- f. the veneration of martyrs and saints and above all the adoration of Mary
- g. the burning of tapers or candles in honor of saints
- h. veneration of the relics of martyrs and saints
- i. the ascription of magical powers to these relics
- j. pictures, images and altars in the churches.

#### D. The Development of an Ecclesiastical Culture

1. As the Church acquired a distinct organization of its own, it acquired a distinct culture of its own. This was derived to a large extent from the culture of the empire.
  - a. Its architecture was borrowed from Rome. The early churches were modeled after the Roman basilica (i.e. hall of justice or court house). When the basilica became a Christian Church, however, it acquired a sacred character that distinguished it from secular buildings.
  - b. The language of the Church was the language of the empire. In the eastern provinces the language was Greek (the *koine*) and in the western provinces the language used was the Latin.
  - c. The thought of the Church was influenced by the modes of thinking in different parts of the empire. Because of the speculative bent of the Greek mind., the Greek churches busied themselves in the discussion of questions regarding the nature of Father and the Son and their relations to each other. This was not simply a matter of the Greek mind, however. The first issue that had to be settled in the Church was the exact nature between the Son and the Father. The Western or Latin churches dealt more with questions relating to the government of the Church. They were not uninfluenced, however, by the issues that the Church had to face, in the East. Leo the Great, bishop of Rome wrote one of the most definitive orthodox arguments concerning the relationship of the person and the natures of Christ.
2. The Church gradually acquired an art, a literature, and a philosophy which was distinctly ecclesiastical.
3. The most important writers of the Church are called the Church Fathers.
  - a. The chief Greek Church Fathers were:
    - 1.) Athanasius (A.D. 296 - 373) who was an archdeacon of Alexandria and was one of the foremost spokesmen for the orthodox cause against Arianism.
    - 2.) Chrysostom (A.D. 317-407) was a patriarch of Constantinople who stands out as the most eloquent preacher and defender of right behavior in his age. His opposition to the intrigues of the Byzantine court led to his eventual deposition in A.D. 404.



- b. The chief Latin Church Fathers were:
- 1.) Jerome (c. A.D. 340-420) translated the Scriptures from the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek into the Latin (the Vulgate).
  - 2.) Augustine (A.D. 354-430) became the bishop of Hippo in North Africa. He wrote the City of God. Augustine wrote this work after Alaric had plundered Rome. When earthly government seemed to totter Augustine wrote a great treatise extolling the government of God. Opposed to the governments of this world and superior to them, he pictured an invisible kingdom of God to which all Christian believers belonged. But this invisible kingdom was hardly distinguished by Augustine from the visible organization of the church with its bishops and priests. To the authority of this eternal kingdom all believers must submit without reservation. At this time Theodosius was closing the temples of the gods and, somewhat later Justinian closed the schools at Athens in order to stop the teaching of pagan philosophy. He devoted his wealth to churches. The Church of Saint Sophia stands as the most excellent of early churches of the East because of the generosity of Justinian.

## VI. Conclusions and Significance

- A. Rome is the last of the mighty world-powers of the ancient world. The last part of the image that appeared to Nebuchadnezzar in the dream recorded in Daniel 2:40 were the legs of iron and the feet and toes made of iron and clay. The kingdom of Rome is symbolized by legs of iron. The kingdom of Rome and the kingdoms of this world symbolized by the other metals and the feet and toes of iron and clay shall be destroyed. The stone not made with human hands symbolizing the power of Christ and his eternal kingdom will crush the kingdom of man. Likewise in Daniel 7:7, 19, 23, 24, Rome is represented as the fourth beast which is terrible and, exceedingly strong. This beast had great iron teeth with which it devoured and, brake everything in pieces. It stamped the residue with the feet. It was diverse from all the other beasts (i.e. Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece) because it had ten horns. One is reminded of Revelation 13:1 where the beast that rises out of the sea has seven heads and ten horns and is the symbol of a great political world-power. One is also reminded of the vision of John the apostle on the Island of Patmos in Revelation 17:7-14. From this passage in Revelation one learns that there are eight world-powers in all. Rome is the sixth in a series of world powers which include Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, and Greece. Rome is not the last because the seventh is not yet according to the vision of John who lived during the great power of the Roman Empire. Perhaps we still have not seen the seventh world power. There were certain modern nations that wanted to make themselves world powers. Germany tried to do this in the 1920's and Japan joined this effort. If the world power, which is the seventh, does exist it has not become plainly manifest. The existence of the seventh world-power will be unusual because it shall aim at the unification and combination of all the powers that exist at this time. The seventh power shall lead, to the final league of nations that will realize the kingdom of Antichrist.

- B. Rome was the first nation among the great world powers which successfully organized the entire civilized world on that day into one united empire. This is of utmost significance in the proper interpretation and understanding of history. It was exactly at the time when Christ was to be born (i.e. the fulness of time, cf. Galatians 3) that Rome accomplished this organizational feat under Octavian—Caesar Augustus. Jesus must come into the world at the time when the world is united. The Word by whom all things were made and through whom all things continue to exist must come into the world as the Christ so that the whole world, all mankind will be responsible for His death. (Cf. John 1:1-14; Hebrews 1:1-4) Jesus must be rejected of men.
- C. It is deeply ironic that law and justice were developed to its highest extent by the Romans. They had established certain basic principles of right and wrong. Concerning the Christ the world was able to judge from a purely natural point of view that He was innocent. They could find no fault in the man. Pontius Pilate, who was chosen to represent the Roman government as governor in Judea, was very well aware of right and wrong. Three times he declared the innocence of Jesus. His wife had warned him to have nothing to do with this just man. And yet in the face of all evidence to the contrary Christ is sentenced to die by the world under the influence of the apostate church of that day.
- D. Although the peace of Rome has great significance from a purely formal point of view, this peace was especially important for the church. This period of peace beginning in A.D. 14 and extending until almost A.D. 200 was a period of comparative peace and quiet in the Roman Empire when the Gospel was being preached and churches were being established in the whole Roman Empire. The era of peace was important because there were few civil hindrances to the spread of the gospel during the first two centuries after Christ. It is true that the church suffered periods of persecution but people of God could migrate to distant parts of the empire and the preachers of the word could go out and preach the gospel with comparative ease.
- E. During this period of peace Rome developed a tremendous system of roads. With this system of roads Rome was able to hold its vast empire together. For the church these roads made the task of proclaiming the gospel much easier. In the providence of God the church used these roads, which Rome had built to extend the interests of the empire, in the interest of the Church and in the spread of the Gospel of Peace.
- F. Rome spread the Latin language and civilization throughout the empire much as Greek had been spread during the Hellenistic period. This spread of the Latin language and civilization held the empire together from a political point of view. God intended that this should be, so that the preaching of the Gospel and the gathering of all those ordained unto eternal life might be accomplished.
- G. Rome must fall. The ultimate cause for the fall of Rome is to be found in the sovereign decree and providence of God. God works through and uses the errors and misdeeds of men to cause his sovereign counsel to be realized. The fall of Rome can be traced therefore to such errors as:

1. the exploitation of the lower classes by the upper class.
  2. the dispossession of the independent farmer by slave laborers.
  3. the infiltration of the army by mercenaries and barbarians.
  4. the income of Rome increased from outside sources so that it was no longer necessary to collect taxes and revenues from Roman citizens.
  5. the change of Rome into a welfare state with free grain to the poor.
  6. the bribery of voters by government candidates.
  7. destruction of family life.
  8. the immorality of Rome.
- H. Rome is one of the “Babylons” of this world that must fall. It is one of the states of the world that have received a God-ordained task. As a state, Rome was under the spiritual domination of the Devil who always attempts to destroy the cause of God which is established in Christ. The attempts of the world to destroy the cause of God are futile because God has all things in his power. The true church comes into conflict with the state and this leads to persecution but the apostate church becomes of one mind with this state and this ultimately leads to the union of the church and state pictured and symbolized by the beast and the whore of Revelation 17. One can see the beginnings of this amalgamation in the history of the Roman Empire. When the eighth kingdom comes then the Babylon of Nimrod will once again be briefly restored but the stone cut out of the mountain will destroy all. It is not made with human hands. (cf. Daniel 2; 7:124, 27) It is the new Jerusalem, the kingdom of God established in Christ Jesus who is Lord of lords and King of kings. Christ said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:18b)
- I. The remarkable and promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, occurred about A.D. 30. When the Spirit was poured out in the Church the breach created at Babel between all nations was healed. The attempts of Satan, the Anti-Christ, to heal this breach have always failed. The breach was healed so that all nations could hear the preaching of the gospel and so that those who had been eternally ordained to be saved could be saved. The healing of this breach initiated at Jerusalem occurred in the fulness of time when the breach seems to be healed because of the great accomplishments of the Roman Empire. It is divinely, ironic, however, that God caused the breach to be healed in the way of the pouring out of the Spirit of Christ so that all men may hear the message of the gospel in their own tongue—Elamites, dwellers in Mesopotamia, Cretes, and Arabians hear the wonderful works of God. In this way only Japheth dwells in the tents of Shem. “The kingdoms of this world have really become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15.

With the four and twenty elders, who sat before God and fell on their faces and worshipped God in the vision of John, we fall on our faces and worship God, saying,

“We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and  
wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy  
great power, and hast reigned.”

Revelation 11:17.

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## LIST OF ROMAN EMPERORS

### I. From Augustus to A.D 395

Augustus	27 B.C. – A.D. 14
Tiberius	A.D. 14 – 37
Gaius (Caligula)	A.D. 37 – 41
Claudius	A.D. 41 – 54
Nero	A.D. 54 – 68
Galba	A.D. 68 – 69
Otho	A.D. 69
Vitellius	A.D. 69
Vespasian	A.D. 69 – 79
Titus	A.D. 79 – 81
Domitian	A.D. 81 – 96
Nerva	A.D. 96 – 98
Trajan	A.D. 98 – 117
Hadrian	A.D. 117 – 138
Antonius Pius	A.D. 138 – 161
Marcus Aurelius	A.D. 161 – 180
Lucius Verus	A.D. 161 – 169
Commodus	A.D. 177 – 192
Partinax	A.D. 193
Didus Julianus	A.D. 193
Septimius Severus	A.D. 193 – 211
Caracalla	A.D. 211 – 217
Gata	A.D. 211 – 212
Macrinus	A.D. 217 – 218
Diadumenianus	A.D. 218
Elagabalus	A.D. 218 – 222
Severus Alexander	A.D. 222 – 235
Maximinus	A.D. 235 – 238
Gordian I and Gordian II	A.D. 238
Balbinus and Pubienus	A.D. 238

Gordian III A.D. 238 – 244  
Philip the Arabian A.D. 243 – 249  
Philip Junior A.D. 247 – 249  
Decius A.D. 249 – 251  
Gallus and Volusianus A.D. 251 – 253  
Aemilianus A.D. 253  
Valerian A.D. 253 – 260  
Gallienus A.D. 253 – 268  
Claudius Gothicus A.D. 269 – 270  
Quintillus A.D. 270  
Aurelian A.D. 270 – 275  
Tacitus A.D. 275 – 276  
Florianus A.D. 276  
Probus A.D. 276 – 282  
Carus A.D. 282 – 283  
Carinus and Numerianus A.D. 282 – 284  
Diocletian A.D. 285 – 305  
Maximian A.D. 286 – 305  
Galerius and Constantius I A.D. 305 – 306  
Galerius, Severus, Constantine I A.D. 306 – 307  
Galerius, Licinius, Constantine I A.D. 307 – 310  
Galerius, Licinius, Constantine I, Maximinus Daia A.D. 310 – 311  
Constantine I and Lucinius A.D. 311 – 324  
Constantine I, Sole Emperor A.D. 324 – 337  
Constantine II A.D. 337 – 340  
Constans A.D. 337 – 350  
Constantius II A.D. 337 – 361  
Julian the Apostate A.D. 361 – 363  
Jovian A.D. 363 – 364  
Valentinian I A.D. 364 – 375  
Valens A.D. 364 – 378  
Gretian A.D. 367 – 383  
Valentinian II A.D. 375 – 392

Theodosius I A.D. 378 – 395

Arcadius A.D. 383 – 395

Honorius A.D. 393 – 395

#### Western Empire

Honorius A.D. 395 – 423

Constantius III A.D. 421

Valentinian III A.D. 423 – 455

Petronius Maximus A.D. 455

Avitus A.D. 457 – 461

Majorian A.D. 461 – 465

Libius Severus A.D. 465 – 467

No emperor A.D. 465 – 467

Anthemius A.D. 467 – 472

Olybrius A.D. 472

Olycerius A.D. 473 – 474

Julius Nepos A.D. 474 – 475

Romulus Augustulus A.D. 475 – 476

#### Eastern Empire

Arcadius A.D. 395 – 408

Theodosius II A.D. 408 – 450

Marcian A.D. 450 – 457

Leo I A.D. 457 – 474

Leo II A.D. 474

Zeno A.D. 474 – 491

Anastasius A.D. 491 – 518

Justin A.D. 518 – 527

Justinian A.D. 527 – 565



**OBJECTIVES  
AND  
INTERPRETIVE  
ESSAYS**

## **OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHING HISTORY \***

### **Cognitive**

That the covenant child may interpret all of history as centering in Christ (Colossians 1:17; Romans 11:36).

That the covenant child may illustrate the way in which the history of the world has served the history of the church and the history of the church has influenced the history of the world (cf. Habakkuk).

That the covenant child may understand the biblical principles of God-ordained institutions and may recognize human distortions of these institutions.

That the covenant child may learn how the character and behavior of society result from the response of its members to God.

That the covenant child may trace the organic development of sin in the world (Romans 1:18-32).

That the covenant child may learn the origin and history of the culture in which he lives and thus understand his antithetical relation to his context (John 11:14-17; I John 4:4-6).

That the covenant child, understanding cultural development also in sin, may discern biblical signs of the times before the return of Jesus Christ (Matthew 24; Mark 13).

That the covenant child may come to these biblical insights of history through a learning of the important facts of history.

### **Affective**

That the covenant child may recognize and reject the futility of humanistic endeavor and may consciously place his hope in the new creation (II Timothy 3:1-1; John 16: 32-33; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 2:8; 3:1-2).

That the covenant child may identify with the historic church by realizing that it has given him a religious heritage through continuous struggle and that he is now engaged in a continuance of this same struggle (I Corinthians 1:8-10; Romans 1:5-6; Hebrews 12:1).

That the covenant child may make right decisions for his own behaviour through an understanding and application of biblical principles to current problems (Colossians 3:16-11, 23; Romans 14:23; I John 4:1; II Timothy 3:1-7).

That through his study of history the covenant child may learn to trust God more fully as the God who controls all things to His glory in Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:14-20; Revelation 22:13; Habakkuk 2:4; Ephesians 1:17-23; Joel 2:32).

\* from *Biblical Perspectives in the Social Sciences*.

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

## Outline

- I. The necessity of interpretation in history.
  - A. Interpretation in history is inevitable.
  - B. History without interpretation is useless.
  - C. Interpretation of history is used to answer man's basic questions.
- II. The Evolutionary theory of the origin of man.
- III. Naturalistic theories of history.
  - A. The geographic interpretation.
  - B. The economic interpretation.
  - C. The "great man" interpretation.
- IV. "Spiritual" interpretations of history.
- V. The goal of history.
  - A. The idea of progress.
  - B. Pseudo-Christian ideas of the goal of history.
- VI. Principles of a Christian philosophy of history.
  - A. The counsel of God.
  - B. The providence of God.
  - C. Man—the opponent of God: the effect of the Fall.
  - D. The purpose of history.
  - E. Christ: the center of history.
- VII. Patterns in history.
  - A. The battle between "the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent."
  - B. The "breach of Babel."
  - C. The growth of Christian truth.
  - D. The spread of the gospel and the gathering of the church.
  - E. The development of the culture of the world.
  - F. The fundamental sin of men and nations.
- VIII. Concluding remarks.
  - A. The Bible as the basis of Christian interpretation of history.
  - B. The Law of God as the basis of Christian judgments of history.
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## **PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY**

In the nineteenth century an influential historian, Leopold von Ranke, stated clearly an idea that was prevalent in his time: that the sole duty of the historian is to record as accurately as possible the happenings of the past. If this were true, we would not need to discuss a philosophy of history. Before we begin, then, it is necessary to dispose of this idea, which is also stated in a current textbook, "History is the record of all that men have said or done, up to the present moment."<sup>1</sup>

### **I. THE NECESSITY OF INTERPRETATION IN HISTORY**

In the first place history as simply a record of facts is impossible. The writing of history inevitably involves selection and arrangement, and in the selection and arrangement of materials the historian cannot avoid interpretation. The fact that the historian chooses to include certain materials in his account and to leave out others assumes interpretation of the relative importance of these materials. Also, if the historian is to arrange his materials into some kind of continuity, he is going to make some kind of subjective judgment as to the relative value of the materials that he has. If I include in my writings that the Assyrians produced iron weapons and exclude the fact that they also produced fine pottery, I am making an interpretation as to which of these facts I consider more important. If I should include both of these facts, the way in which I present them will imply some subjective opinion as to which of these facts I consider the more important.

Second, history as a record of facts is useless. Uninterpreted facts are both sterile and meaningless. The fact that the Assyrians produced iron weapons, although very important for Sargon II, is entirely meaningless for me and everyone else living today, unless I can show that these iron weapons were a part of the general warlike structure of the Assyrian civilization. And even this is useless unless I show that the warlike Assyrians brought about the downfall of the Kingdom of Israel because of the wrath of God against their sins.

Interpretation is the legitimate and essential function of the historian. It is not the facts of history but the meaning of the facts that gives value to the study of history and meaning to the present time. Thus an important part of the study of history is the search for cause and effect, the search for pattern and unity, the search for answers to the problems of the world today. Mankind searches history for answers to the basic questions for every person: From whence have we come? What is the reason for the things that happen? Where are we going? History itself gives no answers. The answers to these questions depend on the philosophy of history that each man has: whether it is based on the knowledge of God or on the opinions of man. In this discussion we will first examine some of the answers that men have given to these questions, and then discuss and try to formulate some of the principles of a Christian philosophy of history.

### **II. THE EVOLUTIONARY THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF MAN**

Secular historians are generally agreed on the origins of man: that "history" extends far into the distant past and that "pre-history" extends many times further into the past to the time that the earth was formed from an exploding star or a condensing nebula or some similar natural phenomenon. We need not discuss here the subject of

evolution since the general outline is fairly well known and the details can better be the subject of a separate study. We do want to mention a few of the consequences of belief in this theory since they have a bearing on our present discussion. Evolution, of course, presupposes a development of mankind from some early primitive state to his present highly civilized position. Given the fact of a civilized culture existing about two thousand years before Christ, the evolutionist must assume a period of many thousands of years before this time for man to develop the intelligence and social and mechanical aptitudes to produce such a culture. Since no one can say how long it takes man to develop from a cave-dwelling anthropoid to a civilized human being, this creates problems for the historian who wants to know the exact time that certain events occurred. It is this problem that leads to the many discrepancies in the dates given for ancient history.

Evolution also teaches a progression in the history of the world not only from simple to complex but also from “lower” to “higher.” This teaching involves both an explanation of the origins of the earth and an interpretation of the history of the world. This means that all of the events of the past are simply rungs on the ladder of time upon which man has now ascended part way and will continue to ascend until the world ends in chaos—a chaos created by either man or nature. As we shall see, this results in a variety of different ways of explaining the progress and purpose of history.

The teachings of evolution also imply a particular way of judging the importance of man. The man who crawled out of the primeval slime is a great deal different from the man that was created in the image of God, and who now bears the image of Satan. Evolutionary man lives for a brief time on earth and satisfies his biological drives or maybe even strives for the ideal of social equality, self-expression, or peace on earth and then dissolves into eternal dust.

### III. NATURALISTIC THEORIES OF HISTORY

It is generally on the question of the causes and meaning of events that most secular historians differ. In ancient times people believed that events were caused by their gods. If they wanted rain for their crops they simply had to appeal to the particular god involved and they would be with rain. On the other hand, if they displeased their gods, they could expect prompt disaster to overtake them. The evil in the world was the work of the wicked gods who would sometimes scatter disasters indiscriminately to the good and bad alike. Since ancient times men have adopted a number of “natural” explanations for events. Generally, historians adopt one of three natural explanations or a combination of these: the geographic, the economic, “great men” idea.

A junior high textbook expresses the geographic interpretation of history in this manner: “In a sense one might even say that history is the story of how men have reacted and adjusted themselves to their environment.”<sup>2</sup> The geographic interpretation of history sees the major forces that cause events in the world are operations of mountains and plains, fertile soils and deserts, rivers and oceans. An extreme form of this position is expressed by Lombroso who maintains that revolutions usually occur on limestone formations. Mason has worked out an entire system based on this idea in which he finds that prophets and poets came from mountains, artists from riverbanks, and monotheism from the desert. Treitschke, a German historian, finds a lack of artistic development in the Swiss due to the influence of the overpowering mountains, while the lowest

mountains of his own country are ideal for the production of poets and actors. Grant Allen sums up the geographic position in this way, “the difference between one nation and another ultimately depends simply and solely upon physical circumstances to which they are exposed.”<sup>3</sup>

We recognize, of course, that the geography of a certain area is important to an understanding of its history. It is important that the Phoenicians developed their civilization on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea instead of the Arabian Desert. Nevertheless, to say that the geographic factors are the sole or even the most important factors in the history of a people is entirely wrong. Even when they recognize a human factor, as most of them do, they are still far from the basic factor of history which is *the counsel of God*.

The economic interpretation of history has been described as follows: the key to history is asserted to be man’s economic production and consequent antagonisms. Naturally such a view rests to no small degree upon a geographic view of history. The explanation of social institutions and morality is typically found in the fact that nature apparently is more willing to provide inhabitants than inhabitable areas, hungry mouths than food, and cold and heat than fuel and shade. Relative economic scarcity is therefore the incentive to progress and in the effort to solve the problems which arise from such scarcity history is said to emerge.

The intermediary between the limitations of nature and the development of human civilization is declared to be social antagonism. The disproportion between human wants and the means of satisfying them results in an attempt to subdue and to establish with nature a harmony which did not at first exist. Out of this lack of harmony between man and nature emerges, however, disharmony between man and man. By this principle of antagonism not only is property explained, but the conflict between the individual and the group, out from which morality emerges, as well as the conflict between classes in society from which comes the state.<sup>4</sup>

One of the best-known exponents of the economic interpretation of history is Engels. He summarizes his view in this statement:

That view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into classes against one another.<sup>5</sup>

Engels along with Karl Marx adopted the economic interpretation of history and combined it with the teachings of the German philosopher Hegel to form the doctrine of dialectical materialism. They believed that historical progress occurred by means of an economic thesis that developed in opposition to an economic antithesis. The thesis and the antithesis eventually combine into a synthesis which becomes the thesis for the next cycle. For example, they believed that in the medieval times the landlord (the thesis) was opposed to the merchant (the antithesis) and that these eventually combined to form bourgeois society (the synthesis). The bourgeois society then becomes the *thesis* which is opposed by the proletariat, the *antithesis*, and these combine to produce communism, the *synthesis*.<sup>6</sup>

Although most historians in this country reject the system of Engels and Marx, they do place a great deal of emphasis on an economic interpretation of history. While it

is true that one cannot understand the history of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia without recognizing the struggle between those that had the fertile land and those that did not, or the history of the United States in the last century without recognizing the struggle between the employer and the employee in the rise of the labor unions, this is not and cannot be the only or even the major factor in the understanding of history. The explanation of history as the operation of economic forces is the attempt of unbelieving man to deny the operation of the Providence of God.

A third view of history that is held by some historians is the “great men” theory. This view holds that history is mainly shaped by a few men who have had more influence or ability than the rest of mankind. This view is expressed by Carlyle, “the history of what man has accomplished in this world is at bottom the history of” great men who have worked there.”<sup>7</sup> The study of history, in this view, is primarily the study of the biographies of the most influential men. They are believed to be the makers and shapers of history. France today is the work of men like Rousseau or Napoleon and the history of the United States is shaped by men like Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln.

In recent years this idea has resolved itself into a discussion of whether social situations produce the man who is the embodiment of the situation or whether the man determines the character of the situation. The majority are on the side of those that emphasize the social situation.

From the point of view of a Christian philosophy of history this discussion is entirely meaningless. That men have a part to play in the history of the world, we accept as obvious; that they are ultimate makers and shapers of the history of the world, we deny. We can no more say that men are the makers of history than we can say that the hammer and saw are the designers of the building.

#### IV. “SPIRITUAL” INTERPRETATIONS OF HISTORY

Some philosophers of history, while recognizing that geography, economics, and “great men” are important in history maintain that these are secondary factors and posit some kind of “spiritual” force in history. An example of this kind of idea is that of the philosopher Hegel, whose famous dialectic became the basis for Marxism. While Marx taught that the basis of history is the economic conflict between social classes, Hegel taught that the basic conflict was one of ideas. He believed that the important force in history was something that he called the World Spirit. History, according to him, was the record of the struggle of the absolute idea to impose itself upon the world scene. The struggle of pros and cons would ultimately result in a world that was the embodiment of divine reason. The dominating principle in history becomes an abstract idea, the social mind, the *Weltgeist*.

While the system of Hegel is pretty much ignored today, many historians do teach some kind of “idealism.” “History is... the mass of men and women, like ourselves seeking... to realize in the midst of the process from impersonal to the personal, their own spiritual capacities in the adventure, not always simple or easy, of actual living.”<sup>8</sup> Others may see in history the struggle for democracy, the struggle to realize the importance of the individual, or the struggle for human “rights.” All of these teachings of “idealism” ignore the work of God in history and the principles taught in the Word of God.

Some secular writers profess to find “spiritual” forces in history. To some these “spiritual” forces are the beliefs—any beliefs—that the people of a particular civilization may hold. “I believe that the main factors in the political and economic development of any society are its general view of life and system of values.”<sup>9</sup> To others, these spiritual forces are in the creative human personality.

The spiritual interpretation of history, accordingly, must be found in the discovery of spiritual forces cooperating with geographic and economic to produce a general tendency toward conditions which are truly personal. And, these conditions will not be found in generalizations concerning metaphysical entities such as the older psychologists assumed, but in the activities of worthwhile individuals finding self-expression in social relations for the ever more complete subjection of physical nature to human welfare.<sup>10</sup>

We must recognize that these references to “spiritual” forces in history are humanistic and ungodly. While speaking of a spiritual force in history, these writers explicitly deny the existence of God and the work of God in history.

## V. THE GOAL OF HISTORY

Although history is primarily concerned with the past, most historians like to use history as a means of seeing into the future. They would like to find in the past some kind of goal for the future, or at least to see the direction in which history is moving. There are some who see in history a normative past (usually it is the “golden age” of Greece) which they strive to recreate in the future. Most people today, however, believe in a natural law of inevitable progression. (This is sometimes made conditional: if our civilization does not destroy itself.) The proponents of this idea point to the “progress” of mankind from the caveman to modern civilization and project this “progress” into the future. In the eighteenth century, when the idea of progress was first stated, it was believed that nature would inevitably promote this progress itself. Now it is generally believed that man, society, and government have to work to secure this progress.

The goal of this progress varies with different philosophers and historians. For the Marxist the goal of history is the ultimate triumph of the proletariat that will redeem the world and suppress all other classes. For others the goal of history is the establishment of democratic government in all nations, the establishment of a world-wide government, economic equality among all people, social equality among all people, self-realization of each individual, or peace—or all of these. One current textbook concludes in this way, “The poet Tennyson once wrote of a time when ‘the war drum throbbed no longer and the battle flags were furled, in the Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World.’ Can we make such a vision a reality?”<sup>11</sup>

Some so-called Christian writers are also carried away by this vision of a brighter future. They speak of a universal kingdom based on a common brotherhood of man and a universal fatherhood of God. Others see a time when the whole world will be dominated by the Church. A few even look for a time when all men will serve God and the Kingdom of God will be established upon earth. They feel that the business of the Christian is to extend his influence through all worldly institutions and to strive to bring all men to Christ.



We only need to say one thing about these beliefs concerned with the goal of history: the Word of God does not teach any such thing. In fact, the Word of God teaches quite the opposite. We will speak of the Christian goal of history later.

This, then, is the way that the worldly historians have attempted to answer the basic questions of history. They all agree that the origins of history lie in the dim past when man evolved from some lower form of life. They see the major causes of history in many different factors: economic, geographic, biographical, philosophical, or “spiritual”. Some emphasize one factor to the near exclusion of all others, while others prefer a multiple hypothesis which emphasizes one or the other in different events. Nearly all see the goal of history in an inevitable progression to some future time when the evils of the present will disappear in the arrival of a better world.

## VI. PRINCIPLES OF A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

The Christian philosophy of history is based upon the following principles:

- A. “History is the temporal revelation of the counsel of God with respect to all things beginning with creation and ending with the realization of God’s purpose in the new creation.”<sup>12</sup> God’s counsel is eternal and unchangeable; it is dependent only upon His own sovereign will. It alone determines all the events of history. “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” Isaiah 46:9, 10.<sup>13</sup>

This leads to the following conclusions:

1. History is a unity. Each element in the study of history is understandable only in terms of the whole. There are no random or irrelevant events.
  2. The events of history can be interpreted only in terms of God’s counsel which transcends history. History is not self-explanatory. It can be interpreted only by means of the Word of God, for in His Word God has revealed His counsel.
- B. God controls and directs the affairs of men by His providence. “We believe that the same God, after He had created all things, did not forsake them, or give them up to fortune or chance, so that nothing happens in this world without His appointment...”<sup>14</sup>
1. Geographic, economic, and social factors, as well as men, are the means that God uses, through His Providence, to control and direct the events of history.
  2. This is not to say that the understanding of geographic, economic, and social factors and of the men in history is unimportant. Nor do we intend to say that history is unpredictable. God usually accomplishes His purpose through earthly means. Further, God limits Himself to certain laws in His rule over the earth. For example, the means that God used to bring about the fall of the Roman Empire included economic difficulties, social disintegration, and foolish and wicked policies of its rulers. Also, if a nation today follows unwise fiscal policies, we can reasonably expect that nation to decline.

- C. The history of mankind is the story of active opposition to God. When man fell in the first disobedience, he lost the image of God, i.e. he lost the ability to know God and to serve him in righteousness and holiness. As the image-bearer of God he retains his rational and moral faculties but he uses these faculties in active and implacable opposition to God. Romans 1:18-23.
1. The idea that natural man is searching for God is a delusion that perverts the understanding of history.
  2. The difference between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent begins at the Fall and continues throughout all of history. The difference between them is an absolute difference. As history develops the character of this difference becomes more distinct.
  3. There is a constant development of sin throughout history. This development of sin is closely related to the understanding of the creation and the subjugation of its powers. As man learns to understand the creation and to use its powers, his ability to commit sin increased.
- D. The purpose of God in history is to glorify Himself. God has chosen to glorify Himself in the creation of a chosen people to whom he displays His power, His wisdom, His mercy, His justice, and His glory so that they in turn may praise Him. He does this in displaying the wonder of creation, in demonstrating His absolute control over all the affairs of men, and above all in Christ who bridges the infinite chasm that lies between the perfection of the kingdom of heaven and the evils of mankind in a cursed creation.
1. The peculiar paradox of history lies in the fact that the goal of history is accomplished only when history is finished.
  2. This goal is accomplished by the infinite power of God Who uses man as His instruments.
  3. Clearly the history of the Church is of the greatest importance. The history of the Church includes the gathering of God's people from all nations, the growth of knowledge and understanding of things pertaining to God and the Kingdom of Heaven, and an increased distinction between the Church and the world. All nations, cultures, and events contribute to the development of God's Church.
- But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine... For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west... Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.<sup>15</sup>
- E. God carries out His purpose in history through Christ. The heavens and the earth were created by God through Christ. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." All of ancient history looks forward

to the incarnation of Christ, and all history since His coming looks forward to His return. Throughout all of history God reveals Himself through Christ. Finally, the goal of history is fulfilled in the new creation when the whole earth is renewed in Christ, and the whole Church is glorified with Him.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory...<sup>16</sup>

## VII. PATTERNS IN HISTORY

Now with these principles in mind, let's look at the history of mankind briefly and point out a few of the important patterns that the Christian historian must see in history.

Immediately after the Fall God spoke to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed..." Here the lines of the battle of history are drawn. This is the battle between Israel and the nations, between the Church and the world, between Christ and the Antichrist. The lines are drawn and the battle is joined, which continues without truce or armistice to the end of time. Sometimes it is a physical battle displayed in the attacks of the heathen nations against Israel, in the persecutions of the early church, and in the horrors of the Inquisition. Often it is an ideological battle of the church against idol worship, Arianism, Mariolatry, Deism, skepticism, or modernism. The church and the world are irreconcilably opposed to each other. As history progresses, the struggle becomes greater and the differences stand out more clearly.

The confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel is another event that sets the pattern for history. As a result of this event we find throughout history not only lingual differences but also cultural competition, racial animosity, and political rivalry. These produce division in the forces of the Antichrist. History records the gradual closing of that breach. When this breach is finally healed, the kingdom of the Antichrist can begin, and the final assault upon the Church can also begin. Many events in history point to the healing of the breach of Babel: the Roman Empire, the political-religious unity imposed by the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, the imperialism of the modern national states, and the more recent movement toward political, cultural, and economic amalgamation.

Another pattern that we can see in history is the increase in knowledge about God and about the requirements that He makes of us. In the Old Testament we can see how God gradually revealed more about Himself, about His covenant, and about the Christ whom He had promised. The prophets played a large part in the increase of that knowledge especially in interpreting for the people the meaning of events as they happened. But in the time since the coming of Christ the church continues to grow in knowledge. There is the growth of doctrine in the writings of Christian theologians and in the confessions of the church. There is a growth in knowledge about the world through which we may see more clearly the power and the wisdom of God. An interesting and significant fact about the growth of knowledge and doctrine in the Church is that they always grow as a reaction against heresy and worldly ideologies. For example, we can see that our knowledge of the Trinity was increased as a result of the Arian heresy. The

study of the rise of capitalism results in a better understanding of our position in the world as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.

We can see in history the spread of the preaching of the gospel to all nations. We are told that before the end of time the gospel will be preached to all nations. The increase in scientific knowledge to improve communications contributes to this spread of the gospel. Through this spread of the preaching of the gospel God gathers His people from all nations. We know that by the end of time God will have saved every one of His elect people.

Throughout history there is a continued development of secular culture. Man finds out more and more of the facts about the creation and about the uses of the materials of the creation. He is able gradually to put in subjection the forces of creation. Natural man uses this knowledge to deny God and to glorify man, and he uses the forces of nature to promote evil. The sin of man is in the interpretation and use of the facts that he discovers.

We find from a study of history in the light of the Scriptures that peoples and nations commit a fundamental sin when they begin to claim their own self-sufficiency, when they say that the things that they have accomplished are the works of their own hands; and when they claim themselves to have the key that will solve the problem of man's inhumanity to man. The basic sin of mankind is, in one word, pride.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height; I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness.<sup>17</sup>

These observations are, of course, very general and certainly not exhaustive of all of the patterns of development to be found in history. They are included in order to give a few brief glimpses into a field that needs and deserves a great deal more study than it has received among Christians in the past.

## VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It must be remembered that the study of the Word of God is basic to a proper interpretation of history. The church of the Old Testament had a tremendous feeling for the importance of history. They were constantly admonished to tell their children about the things that God had done in the past. They also had a continuous commentary on events supplied by the prophets. The principles that they proclaimed hold for all of history. Also, we can find in several places previews of the entire New Dispensation. Such previews may be found in the prophecy of Daniel, in the words of Christ in Matthew 24, and in the entire book of Revelation.

In the study of history we are constantly required to make judgments upon men, nations, and civilizations. The basis of these judgments must always be the moral law of God. The law of God is one constant in the change and flux of history.

The moral law, however, with its multiple corollaries, as found throughout the Scriptures, is considered to be universal, not merely Jewish or Christian. Its precepts apply to everyone in all situations and, hence, are a sure basis for judging men, their ideas, and the institutions they create. It supplies the Christian historian with a basis for judging civilizations such as that of the Incas of Peru, which never made contact with the Hebrew-Christian tradition, as well as for judging the political, economic, and religious

practices of Western European civilization, which is generally called Christian, though perhaps dishonoring the name.

When a Christian historian stands on this moral Sinai, he likewise sees beyond the traditions of his own country, of his own racial group, or of what is called the Christian world. He speaks, rather, from the perspective of the Kingdom of God. He recognizes that his moral judgments must fall equally on Augustine's Rome, on Calvin's Geneva, and on his own United States or Canada. He recognizes that even though God seems silent on the particular form of government, of society, or of the economic system He requires, each must be judged by his moral law, and none can be equated with the Kingdom of God.<sup>18</sup>

Note that the perspective of the Christian historian is the perspective of the Kingdom of God. Let us by all means avoid the shallow chauvinism of so many current history textbooks. Our perspective for understanding, for Interpretation, and for judgment must be that of the eternal kingdom of God.

Let us also remember that many things remain to be revealed to us only in the world to come. Sometimes we feel as that wisest of all men did, "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?" Proverbs 20:24

Fred Hanko

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Muzzey, Lloyd, *World History*, Ginn & Co., 1955

<sup>2</sup> Wallbank, *Man's Story*, Scott, Foresman and Co., 1956, p. 8

<sup>3</sup> The persons named and opinions expressed in this paragraph are described by Mathews, *The Spiritual Interpretation of History*, Harvard University Press, 1917, pp. 12-16

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>5</sup> Engles, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, p. 19

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of this point see Brace, *The Making of the Modern World*, Rinehart & Co., 1955, pp. 606-610

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Case, *The Christian Philosophy of History*, University of Chicago Press, 1943, p. 64

<sup>8</sup> Mathews, *op. cit.*, p. 198

<sup>9</sup> Parkes, H.B., *Gods an Men*, Knopf, 1959, Preface p. v

<sup>10</sup> Mathews, *op. cit.*, p. 34

<sup>11</sup> Wallbank, *op. cit.*

<sup>12</sup> Hanko, H., *History*, notes on the principles of teaching history, written and duplicated for the Educational Committee of Hope Prot. Ref. Chr. Chool. Several ideas for this section were derived from this source.

<sup>13</sup> See also Psalm 33:11; Ephesians 1:11; Psalm 115:3

<sup>14</sup> *Confession of Faith*, Art. 13. See also Calvin's *Institutes* I-V-I; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:35; Hebrews 1:3

<sup>15</sup> Isaiah 43:1,3,4,5,7. See also Deuteronomy 32:7-9

<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 1:10-12

<sup>17</sup> Ezekiel 31:10,11. This is a theme that runs through all of Scripture. For a few more references see Isaiah 10; Revelation 18:7&8; Ezekiel 28:6-9; Daniel 5:20

<sup>18</sup> Miller, Dr. Charles, "Interpreting History," *The Banner*, Vol. 97, No. 2, Jan. 12, 1962

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## **THE NATURE OF GOD'S REVELATION IN HISTORY**

- I. The Promise and Its Implications on Subsequent History
- II. Progression of the Promise During the Antediluvian Period
- III. How the Wicked Serve the Promise and Its Revelation

## THE NATURE OF GOD'S REVELATION IN HISTORY

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. II Timothy 3:16-17

To be “throughly furnished unto all good works” the child of God does not turn to the vain philosophies of men, but he looks instead to the infallible Word of God. This must be true of the child of God in his study of history (defined by Prof. H. Hanko on page 2 of *Principles of Education* as “the temporal revelation of the counsel of God with respect to all things beginning with creation and ending with the realization of God’s purpose in the new heavens and earth.”). Repeatedly the child of God must ask himself, “How must I understand this event in the light of God’s word?” The key to the understanding of history, then, is God’s Word.

On this basis we will examine the promise which God announced to Adam and Eve after their fall and the implications of this promise upon all subsequent history. Also, this paper will demonstrate the progression in the revelation of that promise during the antediluvian period. And finally, in this connection I will show how the wicked in their very rebellion against God serve the promise and its revelation.

### I. THE PROMISE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON SUBSEQUENT HISTORY

Adam and Eve, who were made by God perfectly righteous, fell into sin. The fall, however, was not something outside of God’s plan for the human race; but rather, it was the means by which God’s love, grace, and mercy could be revealed through the gift of His Son. That this is the case is seen immediately after the fall when God proclaims in Genesis 3:15 this beautiful prophecy:

and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

In the highest sense the conquering seed of the woman spoken of in this prophecy is Christ. It is the revelation of Christ, who is the focal point of history. Although Christ is the fulfillment, we must not fail to see that every child of God is represented in the seed of the woman; Christ and His people are one. Thus, the prophecy in Gen. 3:15 has tremendous implications for all subsequent history. On page 260 in *Reformed Dogmatics* Rev. Herman Hoeksema writes:

All the rest of the history of God’s people in the world is plainly the realization of this prophecy. This prophecy is called the protevangel. It is called thus because it is the beginning of the gospel of salvation; and all the rest of the revelation of the gospel in Christ may be conceived as only a further unfolding and expansion of this promise.

This means that Gen. 3:15 reveals in a nutshell what all history is—the struggle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

The protevangel, therefore, certainly has something to say to the history teacher about his presentation of historical facts to the class. These facts must be, and can only be, understood correctly if they are interpreted in the light of the protevangel. From this perspective, for example, the history of Israel in Egypt can be understood. We see Israel as the seed of the woman whose heel is bruised while Israel is in bondage, and we observe the bruising of the head of the serpent when Israel is delivered and the Egyptians



are drowned in the Red Sea. The history teacher must also make clear that the outcome of this “Battle of the Ages” between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent is never in question. Although many times it appears that the serpent’s seed is victorious, especially, when God’s people endure persecution at the hands of wicked men, yet the victory is always theirs. Persecution, too, is used by God as a means to that glorious victory. This is a victory which we must credit to the conquering Christ, who crushed the head of the serpent, when He overcame sin and death for His people by His perfect sacrifice on the cross.

We, who live about six thousand years after the pronouncement of the protevangel and acknowledge the finished work of Christ on the cross, have little difficulty seeing Christ as the fulfillment of the protevangel; but could the people of that period in history see what we now see? Could they know and understand the implications of the protevangel as we do? The obvious answer is no. They didn’t have all the Old Testament prophecies, the words of Christ, nor the testimony of the Apostles. Throughout Old Testament history God chose to reveal to His people in a progressive manner the meaning of the protevangel. In this connection Prof. H. Hanko on page three of *Principles of Education* writes that the dispensations before Christ “were all periods of time in which God progressively shed more light on the promise which He had made to our first parents in paradise.” Rev. G.M. Ophoff in Volume one of his *Old Testament History*, p. 66, informs us that, “the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is a progressive revelation of what the triune Jehovah in His sovereign good pleasure purposed to accomplish in His Christ, namely, the salvation of the elect to His everlasting credit and glory.” About this the Heidelberg Catechism has something to say. Lord’s Day VI points out our need for a Mediator that is in one person both God and man. It goes on to say that Christ is that mediator, “who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption” (I Cor. 1:30). Then, question and answer number 19 illustrates the progression of which we are writing:

Q. 19. Whence knowest thou this?

A. From the holy gospel, which God himself first revealed in Paradise; and afterwards published by the patriarchs and prophets, and represented by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law; and lastly, has fulfilled it by His only begotten Son.

## II. PROGRESSION OF THE PROMISE DURING THE ANTEDILUVIAN PERIOD

Evidence for this progressive revelation can be seen throughout the various periods of Old Testament history, but for our purposes let us concentrate our efforts on the time before the flood.

- A. Already only moments after the pronouncement of the protevangel, God made for Adam and Eve coats of skins (Gen. 3:21). God shed innocent blood to cover their physical shame. This certainly typified the shed blood of Christ for their sins. God had determined for His people the way of sin and grace, and already here He begins to reveal it. Of course, Adam and Eve could not see the complete meaning of this covering by God, but certainly the shed blood and covering with skins did not come without instruction which pointed to Christ (I would speculate that they were at this time instructed as to the nature of the sacrifices they were to offer.

- B. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel reveal the antithetical relationship of the seed of the woman to the seed of the serpent which was spoken of in the protevangel.
- C. The murder of Abel by Cain demonstrates the “Battle of the Ages” pointed to in the protevangel. Furthermore, Cain exposes himself as being the seed of the serpent. It is evident therefore that the seed of the protevangel is not a physical seed but a spiritual seed.
- D. Enoch’s walking with God demonstrated the covenant relationship which God had established with His people, and it pointed ahead to the perfect realization of that covenant relationship in Christ.
- E. The translation of Enoch by God revealed that the protevangel’s promise of deliverance meant more than mere physical deliverance. In addition it pointed to a “better country.” This translation, which resulted because of the persecution the “sons of God” were experiencing at that time (Heb. 11:5, Jude 14-15), reaffirmed to an even stronger degree the bruising of the woman’s seed.
- F. The prophecy of Gen. 3:15 speaks of the victory of the seed of the woman, but as time passed it must have become more and more obvious that that victory could never be accomplished by man. The seed of the woman grew smaller as the “sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose” (Gen. 6:2). From a physical point of view the seed of the woman was no match for the seed of the serpent. Was it possible for the seed of the woman to be victorious when they numbered just a few souls in contrast to the millions which constituted the seed of the serpent? It is this state of helplessness and hopelessness that God uses to shed more light on the promise made to Adam and Eve. Their deliverance must come from outside of themselves. God must deliver them. Although the Flood itself provided a temporal deliverance, this temporal bruising of the serpent’s head was at this time the clearest revelation of the Spiritual Deliverer to which the protevangel pointed. That the flood was only a temporary deliverance became clear to Noah shortly after the flood when he saw a duplication of the wickedness which was prevalent before the flood. Certainly Noah could see that this life held no hope for the seed of the woman. The flood must open the eyes of God’s people a little bit more with respect to the protevangel. The victory of which Gen. 3:15 speaks is a *complete* victory, but a victory which in the complete sense this earth cannot afford. The flood and all of the temporal bruising of the serpent’s head point to a final *spiritual* victory.

### III. THE WICKED SERVE THE PROMISE AND ITS REVELATION

These temporal bruising, both of the seed of the serpent and of the woman, must be made clear in our history instruction. In addition, we must be able to demonstrate in this instruction that the seed of the serpent serves the seed of the woman. The serpent in rebellion against God attempts to destroy the church throughout history, yet this very rebellion is God’s means to accomplish the temporal victories which the church experiences and also the final victory at the return of Christ. Think of the events of the antediluvian period used to demonstrate a progressive revelation of the protevangel’s promise. It isn’t difficult to see in these events that even the works of the wicked contributed to the revelation of that promise and the salvation of the church. Cain, for

instance, when he murdered the righteous Abel participated in the “Battle of the Ages” which is prophesied in the protevangel. By this act he was the very means whereby Abel was delivered from this bondage of corruption. Although Cain meant it for evil, God used it for good. Thus, wicked Cain was a tool in God’s hand to reveal to God’s people the meaning of the promise of Gen. 3:15. Think, too, of the rapid development of sin during the time before the flood. It was unquestionably direct rebellion against God and a result of the attempt of the serpent to overthrow the seed of the woman, but this rebellion against God merely serves the protevangel’s promise of victory and is another step in its revelation. The result of this rebellion is the flood which consumes all mankind except for God’s people. Not only did this destruction of the world constitute a temporal victory for the woman’s seed, but it also served to provide the most beautiful typical revelation of the Final Deliverer that God’s people had yet received.

This subjection of the serpent’s seed does not stop at the flood. Throughout history the seed of the serpent must bow before the seed of the woman. Although the subservience of the serpent’s seed to that of the woman’s is sometimes difficult to see, especially for the child of God in the midst of the “battle”; yet the Word of God in Isaiah 45:4 sounds forth comfort to the child of God throughout the ages,

For Jacob my servant’s sake and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee  
(Cyrus) by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

Calvin Kalsbeek

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## CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLE

The goal of this study was to establish a chronology of the events recorded in the Scriptures in order that these events might be coordinated with the historical accounts of the nations of the world that existed at the same time. It was our hope that such a study would result in a greater understanding of the Scripture and a better understanding of the interrelationship of the history of the Church with that of the world.

I must confess at the outset that I have not been as successful as I had hoped. There are problems, which I will point out in this paper, upon which I am not able to take a position with firm conviction. Various texts and interpretations of texts have their own supporters among which it is difficult to make a choice. Some of the greater variations are illustrated in the accompanying charts, and the bases for the major ones are discussed in this paper. By this means you may be able to relate "secular" and "sacred" history more accurately and may gain a clearer picture of the problems that remain.

I should make clear at this point that I assume throughout this paper that the Scriptures are infallible. This is a construction of chronology of the Scriptures from the Scriptures themselves and is related to the histories of other nations on the basis of Biblical statements. In recent years many Biblical historians have tried to interpret or amend the Bible to fit archeological interpretations or the constructions of unbelieving historians. This approach removes all solid basis from chronology and destroys the Bible as the Word of God.

For the purposes of this discussion I would like to divide the time of the Old Testament into five periods and discuss each one in terms of its total length and the problems connected with determining its length.

### I. FROM THE FALL TO THE CALL OF ABRAM

The length of this period is the easiest of all to calculate and leaves no margin for error because the names of the covenant line in succession with their ages at the time of the births of their sons is recorded in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11:10-26. One exception to this is the lack of the age of Noah at the birth of Shem. This is easily calculated, however, since Shem was one hundred years old at the birth of Arphaxad two years after the flood (Gen. 11:10) Since Noah was then six hundred two years old (Gen. 7:6), he must have been five hundred two at the birth of Shem. The other exception is the age of Terah at the birth of Abram (Gen. 11:26). This also is easily calculated from the fact that Abram left Haran after his father had died (Acts 7:4). Terah died at age two hundred five. Since Abram was then seventy-five, Terah must have been one hundred thirty years old when Abram was born (Gen. 11:32 and 12:4). Adding all the totals, then, we find that the period from the creation of Adam to the call of Abram was exactly two thousand eighty-three years.

This period is described in the *Septuagint* as being three thousand two hundred, forty-nine years. The *Septuagint* arrives at this figure by adding years to the lives of the people mentioned, by inserting the name of a second Cainan, for one hundred thirty years, and by adding one hundred years to the age of Terah at the birth of Abram. These figures contradict the Hebrew text and are rejected by most authorities. Hales, however, follows the chronology of the *Septuagint*, basing his argument in part on the fact that the

genealogy found in the third chapter of the Gospel of Luke includes the names of two Cainans, I think we may safely exclude the longer chronology of the *Septuagint* from consideration.

There are some who have suggested that the names given in Genesis are family or clan names and that the ages given should be rejected. This theory should be rejected since it denies the authority of Scripture. It seems to be nothing but a desperate attempt to extend the age of the earth to placate the critics of the Bible.

## II. FROM THE CALL OF ABRAM TO THE EXODUS

Most authorities (including Ussher) agree that this period includes 430 years. This is based upon interpretation of the following texts:

“the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul...” Galatians 3:17

“Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.” Exodus 12:41, 42

God, speaking to Abraham, says, “Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.” Genesis 15:13

Stephen, speaking to the Jewish Council, says, “And God spake on this wise, That his (Abraham’s) seed should sojourn in a strange land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.” Acts 7:6

These authorities argue that the confirmation of the covenant refers to the call of Abram from Haran and that the “sojourning” mentioned in Exodus 12:41 is that of the patriarchs in the land of Canaan as well as that of the children of Israel in Egypt. The “seed” mentioned in Genesis 15:13 and in Acts 7:6 must refer to Isaac and his descendants. In support of this view that the entire period is 430 years long is the fact that Genesis 15:16 says that the children of Israel will come out of Egypt in the fourth generation, and these generations are named in Ex. 6:16-20 and Num. 26:57-59. Four hundred thirty years would be too much time for only four generations.

On the other hand, Ex. 12:41, 42; Gen. 15:13; and Acts 7:6 all appear to say that the period of bondage in Egypt was at least 400 years. Gal. 3:17 can be interpreted to refer to the whole period of the Promise that ends when Jacob went to Egypt. If this is correct, the length of this period is extended to be 645 years. Supporters of this view point out that it would be unusual for the number of Hebrews to increase from 70 souls that entered Egypt to the more than two million that left in the Exodus (see Ex. 12:37; Num. 2:32; 26:51) if this period of bondage is only 214 years.

I think that the weight of the evidence points to a shorter period of 1430 years. To make it longer would require several more generations between Levi and Moses that are never mentioned in Scripture. Further, if Malthus is correct in his famous principle, a population with an abundant food supply can double its size in 15 years. There could, then have been about two million children of Israel in 215 years. But a period of 6145 years is possible.

## III. FROM THE EXODUS TO THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE BY SOLOMON

The length of this period presents one difficulty. I Kings 6:1 seems very definite in setting the length of this period at 480 years.

And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.

The Apostle Paul, in the speech recorded in Acts 13 appears to make the period considerably longer:

And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king; and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years (vss. 18-22).

Anstey takes the periods Paul has listed, adds seven years for the conquest of Canaan, 13 years for the division of the land and "the elders that outlived Joshua," 140 years for the reign of David, four years of Solomon's reign until the beginning of the temple, and arrives at a grand total of 5914 years for the whole period. He explains I Kings 6:1 as the length of the period that Israel was ruled by God. Therefore, he says, the writer excluded those' periods of time when Israel was under the rule of oppressors and usurpers, which amounts to 1114 years.

Ussher and many other authorities insist that 1480 years is the correct length of this period. They explain Paul's statement as referring to a different period of time that goes back through the oppression in Egypt. Others say that the "about 450 years" is misplaced in the translation and should refer to the approximate length of the entire period. Another possibility is that Paul is speaking of the sum of the years of the rule of all the judges without regard to the fact that their times overlap.

It is not possible, either, to determine the length of this period by the sum of its parts. The greatest difficulty is that we know that the times of some of the judges overlap: one man was judge over one part of Israel at the same time that another judge ruled another part. We cannot tell how much overlapping it included; several constructions of this period are possible. Some authorities also include the seven years of the reign of Ishbosheth in the forty years of Saul's reign. This would make the total of the years of the reigns of Saul and David 73 years instead of eighty.

Some writers of more recent years have tried to place the Exodus at about 1290 B.C. during the reign of Rameses II. They have two reasons for this: the children of Israel were forced to build a city called Rameses, which must have occurred during the reign of this ruler; and there is no archeological evidence of the Israelite conquest of Canaan until about 1300 B.C. There are several answers given to this argument. It is said that Raxneses was a common name among the Hyksos people and the name of the city may have been borrowed from them as other names were. Archeological evidence may not be complete enough to establish the time of the conquest, and its dating is open to some doubt. Most conclusive is the fact that the Scriptures set an earlier date. The time of Rameses II is too late for the Bible passages quoted.

The preferred duration of this period seems to be 480 years.

#### IV. FROM THE BUILDING OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE TO THE CAPTIVITY

This is the most complex of the periods of Bible history. The three people listed on the accompanying chart show the range of opinion on the dates of this period. It is worth noting that the older authorities such as Kiel, Clinton, and others, agree almost exactly with Ussher. There are some difficulties in the Bible texts, however, that they have not entirely resolved. Thiele's work is more recent and claims to coordinate the Biblical account with the dates that secular historians have set for the rulers of other nations. Anstey works strictly from the Biblical records and runs into conflict frequently with secular historians.

A discussion of the complexities of this period would require too much space for a paper that is intended only as a survey. Chart IV shows how Thiele has worked out the problems. He assigns a period of co-regency to several of the kings resulting in a smaller total for the number of years in the period. The differences between these men could better be the subject of a separate study.

The total length of this period must lie between 345 and 397 years.

All of the authorities except Anstey are agreed that the final captivity of Judah occurred about 586 B.C. The support for these dates comes from secular history. The reason for Anstey's difference is important and will be discussed in the next section.

#### V. FROM THE CAPTIVITY TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Unless we accept the argument of Anstey, there is no information in the Bible that gives us the length of this period. The historical information that the Bible includes we date by referring to the dates accepted by secular historians for the rulers named in the Bible. There is some difficulty identifying the kings referred to in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. Most authorities now accept the placement shown in Chart VI.

It is in this period that Anstey differs from other Chronologers. He bases his whole construction of this period upon the words of God to Daniel the prophet:

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...  
Daniel 9:25, 26a

On the basis of this text he sets the date of the captivity at 502 B.C. He claims that the secular historians are all in error because they base their dates upon the chronology of the Greek Claudius Ptolemaeus which Anstey claims is wrong because it adds an extra 82 years in the Persian period just before Alexander the Great. He also identifies the Artaxerxes of Ezra and Nehemiah and the Ahasuerus of Esther with Darius Hystaspes which places them at the time of the building of the temple. This position is interesting, but receives little support from Bible scholars. The points he makes are worthy of further study. Many Bible scholars maintain that the numbers used in Daniel 9 are symbolic. Others, who take them literally, would have the period begin with the decree of Artaxerxes given at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Without further support for Anstey's position, we should prefer the 586 B.C. accepted by most scholars.



The exact year of the birth of Christ also presents some problems. It was originally set from the facts that Tiberius Caesar began to reign in the year A.D. 14 and that Luke 3:1 gives the date of the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist as the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius. Two facts make this position doubtful: scholars agree that Herod the Great died in the year we call 4 B.C. and Tiberius was associated with Augustus as ruler before he became sole ruler of the Empire. We can get extremely close to the exact year of Jesus' birth from the fact that we know that He was born before the death of Herod the Great and that John began his ministry in the days of Pontius Pilate, whose rule as procurator began in A.D. 26. Figuring back 30 years from A.D. 26, we arrive at the year 4 B.C. or possibly 5 B.C.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although we cannot set with certainty the exact year of the creation, it is obvious that the idea of a great age of the earth is a figment of man's imagination. We may not agree with all of his dates, but we must agree that the much-maligned Bishop Ussher was an extremely capable Bible scholar and could well be correct. It is clear from Scripture that we live today about 6000 years after the creation. The following table may clarify the position of this paper:

I.	From Creation to the Call of Abram	*2083 years
II.	From the Call of Abram to the Exodus	*430 or 645 years
III.	From the Exodus to the Temple	*480 or 594 years
IV.	From the Temple to the Captivity	*381 to 423 years
V.	From the Captivity to Christ	502 or *586 years
	Total years from Creation to Christ:	3876 to 4331 years

(The dates with the asterisk are the ones that seem to me most reasonable.)

Fred Hanko

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## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF SIN IN THE PREDILUVIAN WORLD**

### **I. Introduction**

#### **A. Why study the development of sin?**

We are assured in Holy Scripture that the people of God are more than conquerors in Christ. This means not simply that we have the victory over sin, the Devil, and all his forces, but also that all these must serve the salvation of Christ's Church. This is because Christ is from eternity the only begotten Son of God. God's people, the Church, are from eternity fellow heirs with Christ in the New Heavens and the New Earth. Therefore God so orders all of history that all things, sin and the Devil included, work together to bring about the salvation of the Church of Christ. All things work together to bring Christ and His people into their inheritance.

It often does not seem this way. It often seems as though the Devil and sin reign supreme with nothing at all to oppose them. During these times the Church seems small and insignificant. The Word of God is laughed at and scorned as foolishness. But however it may seem, God is always supreme in His creation. God always has Christ and His Church first in His eternal counsel. He always holds sin and Satan in subjection to them.

Why then study a part of the world's history from the point of view of the development of sin? There are a couple of good reasons. First, the study of what man has done in God's creation is the study of sin as it is manifested in man's deeds and thoughts. It is important for the child of God to understand how sin manifests itself as natural man develops worldly culture, as he tries to put God out of his mind in order to serve the creature instead of the Creator. Second, it is essential that the child of God understand how sin is used by God to save His people. Sin, as it manifests itself in the world and in God's people themselves, forces the child of God to depend completely on his Heavenly Father. The elect sinner is led to depend on God for his salvation and for his material, physical, and spiritual well-being. Furthermore, sin brings down the just judgment of God on the ungodly. By means of this judgment, the unregenerate world is destroyed and the Church of Christ delivered.

#### **B. Why study the prediluvian world?**

The era that began with the creation of Adam and ended with the flood was the first age of man. In it, the pattern was set for the rest of history. God manifests His covenant faithfulness for His people over against the sinful world that develops its civilization to high levels of knowledge and power in hatred of God and of His Church. The world will develop in sin to the point where the cup of iniquity is full, and God's people cannot survive without deliverance. This deliverance comes in the form of God's righteous judgment which destroys the wicked and brings salvation for the righteous.

### **II. Important characteristics of the development of sin before the flood**

#### **A. Sin developed very rapidly.**

In the first generation from Adam, the line of the serpent manifested itself in Cain who killed his righteous brother Abel. This was not simply a family feud that involved murder, but was the beginning of the war between the seed of Satan and the Seed of the woman. In Cain the line of sin first lifted its proud fist against God and revealed its hatred for the sons of God. This rebellion culminated in only five generations in the brazen and proud Lamech, who praised himself for the greatness of his sin.

The proud and rebellious line of the serpent needed only about 1660 years, seven generations, to develop to the point where God could allow it to sin no more. During that time it reached the depths of lawlessness, violence, pride, and hatred for the Word of God preached by such saints as Enoch and Noah.

A few reasons should be given for this rapid development of sin. The basic reason is reprobation. God decreed in eternity that the wicked should be so. Along with this, God gave the wicked over to a reprobate mind as they rejected the Word of God preached to them. This was true of Cain, of Lamech, a contemporary of righteous Enoch, and of the contemporaries of Noah who refused to heed the preacher of righteousness, and so died in the flood.

There were also several natural causes.

1. The longevity of prediluvian man allowed him over 900 years to develop his talents and the natural bent of his nature.
2. The creativity and productivity that characterized Cain's line allowed men to increase in knowledge and thereby increase their capacity to sin.
3. The rapid increase in population in the later years of this period. (Genesis 6:1) The bent of man's nature to sin seems to vent itself more openly among large numbers.
4. The amalgamation of the nominal church with the world. (Genesis 6:2) The sons of God gave up their witness against the lawlessness of men. They noticed that the daughters of men were carnally beautiful, and so joined the rebellion of the line of Cain. This most certainly brought the prediluvian world to the point at which its cup of iniquity was full.

...the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair: and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. (Genesis 6:2-3)

- B. The seed of the serpent developed organically in the line of Cain. This line was characterized by willing and conscious pride, hatred of God, rebellion, violence, and lawlessness.

Chapters 14 and 5 of Genesis show the lines of Cain and Seth up to the time of the flood. These two lines represented and embodied the thesis and antithesis, the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman, the wicked and the righteous, the war that could only be won on the cross. There could be no

communion between the two lines because they were opposed to each other by the very principles that motivated them.

The sins that characterized Cain's line began with Cain himself. Cain showed his pride in his disdain for the sacrifice that the Lord had taught to Adam and Eve—the sacrifice of the lamb's blood by which atonement was made. He substituted his own sacrifice, an offering of the works of his own hands, and thereby tried to make himself acceptable to God on the basis of his own merit. He revealed his rebellion and lawlessness by refusing to repent of his sin and by killing Abel. Cain hated God because He would not accept him as just on his own merits. He hated Abel because he saw in Abel that righteousness which he could not earn himself.

The wickedness of Cain's line increased steadily and was epitomized in Lamech, who exalted himself because he was able to perform much greater sin than Cain. By the time of the flood the children of men were marrying and giving in marriage in complete disregard of God and His law. They refused to heed God's Word as it was preached by Noah, and it is probable that they violently persecuted the people of God (Hebrews 11:15). Cain and his line did not accidentally slip into sin. They willfully rebelled against God and sought to put Him out of their thoughts.

- C. The line of Cain developed worldly culture. This culture represented the attempt of the world to gain security and peace in this life, to establish a kingdom of this world.

Cain and his line spurned the Kingdom of God and the peace which comes in communion with God in Christ. They sought instead to gain for themselves security, wealth, and the physical comforts of this life, and thereby to escape the curse of God for their sin.

Cain was cursed by God so that the earth would not yield to him its increase. He was to be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth. In defiance of this curse, Cain built a city in the land of Nod. (That is, the land of wandering. Implied in the name was the wandering, the lack of peace for the person who had rebelled against God.) Just as cities today represent the military and economic power of man, so Cain's city represented his attempt to gain security, to increase his power, to establish himself permanently over against God. That this last point is true is seen in the fact that Cain named his city after his son Enoch. Cain wanted to establish the name of his line, the name of his generations, forever.

The creative and productive genius of Cain's line was epitomized in the three sons of Lamech. These were Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-cain. Jabal, as "the father of those who dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle," was the natural and spiritual father of those who seek the riches of this world. As cattle represented wealth in ancient times, Jabal was the father of those who are rich according to the world. Jubal, "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ," was the father of artists, those who express in music, painting, etc. the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Tubal-cain, "the instructor of every artificer of brass and iron, represented man's inventive genius, the ability of man to

develop and subject the powers of nature to his own purpose. Together, the sons of Lamech represent the highest level of achievement for natural man. In Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-cain natural man subjugates and orders creation to make for himself a material heaven on earth. In such an earthly kingdom man hopes to vent the desires of his depraved nature, and thereby achieve happiness and peace outside of Christ.

Genesis 4 and 6 give us a clear picture of the culture that the line of the serpent had developed by the time of the flood. This culture was characterized by a yearning for the material things of this world (Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-cain). It exalted violence, pride, and rebellion against God (Lamach). It glorified carnal sensuality. (The names of Lamech's wives and daughter suggest physical attraction. Adah means "the adorned." Zillah means "the shady" referring to the eyes, or the color of the skin or of the hair. Naamah means "the pleasant" or "lovely.") It encouraged the profligate, carnal existence that takes no thought of God (Genesis 6:5).

The line of Seth was everything that the line of Cain was not. It was characterized by godliness and faith. It included the pilgrims and strangers upon the earth who looked for a heavenly kingdom, the city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The line of Seth did not produce the inventive geniuses that Cain's line did. The saints of God were not stupid, but it was true then as it is now that the great, the powerful, the "giants on the earth" were not found within the Church of Christ. The Church looked for its peace and comfort not in the material things of this life but in the Father of mercies.

- D. Sin developed to the point at which it appeared that it would have the victory. At that point God revealed His faithfulness by sending judgment on the wicked for their sin. By means of this judgment the people of God were delivered.

The prediluvian world reached the point at which its cup of iniquity was full. This means that the world of that era could sin no more. God would no longer strive with that world. That means that He would no longer send His Word to it, demanding repentance. The people of God could not continue in that world. God had so ordered events that, from a natural point of view, the Church had reached impossible straits.

God sent the flood to punish the wicked world for its sin and to deliver His people. God's Church was, then, saved through judgment which reveals God's just wrath with the ungodly but also His covenant faithfulness for His people.

- III. Conclusion—Sin served God's purpose, which He has in Christ, to save His Church and glorify Himself.

Over against the sin of Cain and the seed of the serpent, God revealed Himself as the Holy One. In His Word preached by His saints and in His just judgment, the Lord showed Himself to be a righteous God who could not tolerate iniquity.

God used sin to teach the Church to depend on Him for its deliverance. As sin developed in the prediluvian world, the enticements of the flesh must have

become increasingly strong for the true sons of God. Because of persecution the very lives of the believers were threatened. The people of God had to learn that they depended on God alone for their salvation, for their spiritual deliverance, and even for their continued earthly existence. Sin would have destroyed the Church had not God sent His gracious deliverance in the form of the flood. Sin, then, was used by God to give occasion for the exercise of His just judgment and the manifestation of His covenant faithfulness toward His people.

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## CREATION: NOT EVOLUTION

The theory of evolution has dominated our society for some time. Its noxious influence has pervaded every area of life so that we can consider it a world and life view. Its influence has come about because it purports to be scientific. We live in a scientific age in which anything that can claim to be scientific gets immediate recognition. Evolution is really a godless, unbelieving attempt in the name of science to do away with God. Unbelieving man does not want a Creator who providentially rules over His creation.

The child of God must know what evolution is and how infectious its power has become. He must be taught that the creation account of Genesis is not merely an alternative among a few theories concerning origins, but that it is the only truth concerning creation. Just as evolution produces a world and life view, so too belief in the Genesis account of creation has its affect in the life of the child of God. We covenant teachers have a responsibility in this area.

In this paper I will briefly try to outline what evolution is, give its proofs and implications. Admittedly, this is a mammoth undertaking in so short a paper, especially for one who is a non-scientist, but we will try. Finally, we will look at the creation account of Genesis 1 and 2 as the only explanation of the origin of all things and give its implications. It should be obvious that I could not deal with all the information one gleans on the subject so I chose the information I felt the most important. It is my hope that I have shed some light on this important subject and also that this information will be helpful to the teacher.

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## EVOLUTION

Evolution is concerned with the origin of all things through a naturalistic, mechanistic process. Through this process all living things have descended after a chance creation from one simple cell to the complex animal man.

The theory of evolution owes its popularity to Charles Darwin. Many scientists before him had proposed that life did not just appear, but evolved by the process of gradual transformation. But it was Darwin who proposed the rationale through which this evolving process could take place.

Darwin developed his theory based on his observations in the biological area. Briefly stated, Darwin observed (or at least thought he did) that among existing species there are many varieties. He postulated that as these varieties became more widely diversified in their characteristics those with new and the best characteristics lived on to become a new species, while those with less desirable characteristics died out. The extinction of the intermediate varieties left a new species to repeat the process. Darwin in the *Origin of the Species* stated,

If my theory be true numberless intermediate varieties, linking closely together all species of the same group, must assuredly have existed, but by the very process of natural selection tends as has been so often remarked, to exterminate the parent form and the intermediate link.



The process, as the quote suggests, whereby we get the origin of the species is natural selection. Darwin is the first to postulate this as the natural mechanistic means by which species could evolve. Thomas Huxley after he had read the Origin of the Species is said to have commented, "How extremely stupid not to have thought of that." This is the same Huxley who coined the word agnost and he remained one. Getting back to natural selection, Darwin claimed this process which existed in nature determined the extinction or survival of all organisms. Natural selection weeds out those organisms that fail to adapt to the environment. The weeding out is done through a struggle for existence whereby only the fittest survive. All this presupposes that heredity will pass on those characteristics which allow the fittest to survive in the struggle for existence. With the fittest surviving all life will in fact tend to get better and better.

Darwin and all evolutionists base their theory on a number of presuppositions. First and foremost of those presuppositions is what has become known as uniformitarianism. Briefly stated, the evolutionist supposes that the origin and development of all things can be described in terms of the same natural laws and processes which can be observed today. Another way of saying this is that the present is a key to the past. The attempt, therefore, is made to explain the origin of all things (past) in terms of processes which are still continuing and which, therefore, can still be studied in the present. Uniformitarianism allowed Darwin to postulate his theory about origin on the basis of his present observations. It also allows the evolutionist to explain a good share of his so-called "infallible proof" regarding the age of the earth. Radiological dating, geology, and paleontology are all explained in terms of uniformity.

Another presupposition is that natural selection is a natural law. The whole theory rests pretty much on the fact that Darwin discovered a law of nature and was not simply making an argument for his theory.

Closely associated with the evolutionist's faith in uniformity of law and processes of nature is his presupposition that he can discover them through the use of the scientific method. Once you allow that uniformity is true, then the present observed facts and demonstrated truths of science can be used to determine what has happened in the past. Once you allow for this in your thinking, then reason, sense, and observable data will all indicate that evolution is a possibility.

Assuming now as the evolutionist does that he can prove evolution on the basis of existing evidence, what are some of these "enumerable and incontrovertible evidences?"

The first thing the evolutionist has to do is prove a relationship among the animals so he can prove they descended from a common ancestry. This is done by going to such areas of biology as comparative anatomy which suggests skeletal relationships of animals; embryology, which shows similarities in embryos of animals; genetics which indicates a relationship of the genes of animals and plants.

Evolution, however, cannot exist by simply proving similarities because somehow new species originated. The evolutionist must prove a change took place great enough to produce species through natural selection. This is done by breeding experiments in which man artificially selects in order to produce new varieties. The assumption is that natural selection will work in the same manner choosing characteristics which will produce new species.

Geology is also used by the evolutionist to support the theory that the age of the earth is perhaps five billion years. The age of the earth is very important to him because evolution needs eons of time. Geology studies the physical and chemical structure of the crust of the earth and the forces acting upon the crust. The evolutionist finds evidence of a gradual build-up of the rock strata. By studying these layers of rock, he thinks he can determine that the earth is very old. It should be added that geological proof is most often cited to support the principle of uniformitarianism. Charles Lyell, who was a contemporary of Charles Darwin, and who had much influence on the thinking of Darwin was a geologist who used geology in just such a fashion.

Closely connected with these so-called proofs from geology are the evidences given by the fossil record of former living things which are preserved in the sedimentary rock of the earth's crust. This study of fossils is known as paleontology. It follows that if one can date the rock strata, the fossils found in each layer can also be dated. The importance of this for the evolutionist is that the complexity of fossils supposedly increases with the passage of geologic time. We get, therefore, the gradual development of the organic world from simple organisms to man.

Archaeology is another science to which the evolutionist turns for proof of his theory. By studying the origin of man he hopes to prove a relationship of man and the ape. The evolutionistic archaeologist digs up the remains of past civilization and with radio-active dating tries to place these primitive civilizations back as far as possible so he can show just such a connection.

Another area of study closely connected to archaeology is anthropology. This science tries to show the relationship of man to ape by digging up the remains of pre-historic man. It is from the activity of the men in this discipline that we get the Java man, the Heidelberg man, the Neanderthal man, and the Cro-Magnon man. These all are used to show that man descended from the ape.

These are some of the proofs offered to support evolution. It should be emphasized that these are not all of them, but they are the most used and also the most weighty as far as the evolutionist is concerned. They all are supposed to emphasize either that evolution through natural selection is possible or that the earth is very old; both of which are very necessary for the survival of the theory of evolution.

In dealing with the implications of evolution, it should be made very plain that evolution is much more than just a biological theory. It has become a world and life view with its deadly tenacles reaching into every area of life. One's belief concerning the origin of all things will inevitably influence his attitude toward every other area of life. With this in mind, I would like to show some of the far-reaching implications of evolution.

Evolution is atheistic. When the evolutionist can determine the origin of all things by mere coincidence, and uphold it by natural law, then he needs no God. Sir Julian Huxley says this about evolution's destruction of God:

Darwinism removed the whole idea of God as the creator of organisms from the sphere of rational discussion. Darwin pointed out that no supernatural designer

was needed; since natural selection could account for any known form of life, there was no room for a supernatural agency in its evolution.<sup>1</sup>

When evolution did away with God, it did away with God's revelation of Himself in His Word. Evolution makes a mockery of the Scriptures which reveal God as the creator, sustainer and redeemer of the creation.

When the truth of God's Word is undermined, there is no standard of right or wrong. In the struggle for existence no other morality can exist than "might makes right." The weaker inferior organisms must give way to the superior. There is no moral absolute but what is good for society at any given time. The social mores of any one person or group will dictate right or wrong. So in America, the majority decides what is right, while in Germany during World War II Hitler dictated the morals. With this sort of a moral system, sin does not exist because there is no one to sin against. The criminal, therefore, is said to be sick and in need of reform to fit into society.

With God now out of the picture, man has become the central theme of all history, and science has become his tool. Man can now shape his own destiny. He is free to do as he chooses. Humanism replaced Christianity as the religion of the evolutionist. Julian Huxley defines a humanist after this fashion:

I use the word "Humanist" to mean someone who believes that man is just as much a natural phenomenon as an animal or plant; that his body, mind, and soul were not supernaturally created but are products of evolution, and that he is not under the control or guidance of any supernatural being or beings, but has to rely on himself and his own powers.<sup>2</sup>

Another quote that shows the nature of humanism is one by Dr. George Gaylord Simpson, Professor of Vertebrate Paleontology at Harvard University, as quoted by Duane T. Gish in his book *Evolution, The Fossils Say No!*

Man... stands alone in the universe, a unique product of a long, unconscious, impersonal, material process with unique understanding and potentialities. These he owes to no one but himself, and it is to himself that he is responsible. He is not the creature of uncontrollable and undeterminable forces, but his own master. He can and must decide and manage his own destiny.<sup>3</sup>

Another implication of evolution is that man is nothing more than a descendant of the animals and, therefore, aside from some evolutionary change is an animal. The import of this is that the evolutionist denies man was created in the image of God. This notion concerning the origin of man will lead to some very noteworthy conclusions concerning man.

First of all, man's responsibility to God is denied. Since man has evolved from an ape and is not a creature of God, he is responsible to no one but himself. Sin is also denied because if man is not responsible to a righteous God for his wrong doing, he cannot sin. Besides this, man is not getting worse, but better. Also, it must be kept in

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<sup>1</sup> Morris, Henry M., *A Biblical Manual on Science and Creation*, Institute for Creation Research, San Diego, San Diego, California, p. 9 (1972)

<sup>2</sup> Gish, Duane T., *Evolution, The Fossils Say No!*, ICR Publishing Company, San Diego, California, p. 11 (1973).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

mind that man is a product of his environment and as such can blame others and not himself for his misdeeds.

Secondly, because man is an animal, man can be perfected through experimentation. Just as science is interested in finding the perfect animals, so man can be manipulated to reach perfection. Through experimentation man's mind can be controlled, his genes corrected, and his health perfected until man attains the masterpiece of scientific ingenuity toward which he is striving in the interest of the master race. Science holds the key to perfection. Man, as he experiments with man, in the name of science has not a doubt in his mind that he will arrive at perfection. Man's destiny is in his own hands. The influence of evolution has a devastating effect in all the sciences dealing with man. In psychology there is the psycho-analysis of Sigmund Freud and the conditioning and reconditioning of Pavlov. Scientists are involved in psycho-chemical controls over man's mind. In sociology man's environment is being investigated to produce a better one so that the patterns of human behavior will improve. I read recently in the August 1, 1977, issue of Time magazine about the new "science" Sociobiology which concerns itself with the study of "Why You Do What You Do." Sociobiology very matter-of-factly claims to be "the completion of the Darwinian "revolution." The sociobiologists say their "science"

is the application of classic evolutionary theory and modern studies of genetics to animal behavior (under-scoring H.L.). Darwin's theory, now virtually unchallenged in the world of science, holds that all organisms evolve by natural selection. These that are better adapted to the environment survive and reproduce; the rest die out. Thus, organisms are constantly perfected by the cruel competition to survive. Sociobiologists believe the behavior that promotes survival of winners in the evolutionary game is passed on by genes.

In other words, man is no different than the animals in his instinct to survive. He may be more sophisticated, but it all boils down to reproduction of the good genes. Only good genes must be allowed to reproduce. In order to keep the bad from reproducing we can sterilize, use contraceptives, and even abort babies presumed to be abnormal. In biology, also, a "biological revolution is going on" and its purpose is "nothing less than the control of life." So states a quote used by Rousas John Rushdoony from a series of articles published in Life magazine. The quote continues by saying "maybe we can turn mediocrities into Einsteins."<sup>4</sup>

Finally, just as with the animal, death is the end; to the evolutionist man is not a spiritual being, and hence, there is no life after death. It is no wonder man becomes fatalistic concerning life when he sees the direction in this world is heading. He despairs when he realizes it falls on his shoulders to make something of this world. Death becomes a welcome relief.

As far as history is concerned, evolution also has its implications. All history deals with time, and yet the evolutionist never deals with time as a creature of God. The evolutionist cannot explain the creation of time. He only uses time to explain the framework in which his theory can work. Consequently, the evolutionist uses time in a very haphazard manner. Time is not really necessary because history has no real direction or purpose to it. History is drifting where man wants it to go. History, therefore, does not

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<sup>4</sup> Rushdoony, Rousas John, *The Mythology of Science*, The Craig Press, Hutley, New Jersey, p. 32, (1967).

really need time. Because of this, it is of no concern to the evolutionist whether the world is a million, a billion, or a trillion years old, just as long as there is time to leave God out of the developmental process.

Another reason time is so casually passed over is that it reminds the evolutionist of the Sovereign eternal God who is fulfilling His purpose in time. God created in time, man fell in time, Christ is the fullness of time, and time will end. The evolutionist cannot tolerate the end of time because it will be the end of his becoming.

History will take on this emphasis. First, the world is at least five billion years old. Secondly, with man progressing toward the perfect good, man is the central theme of all history. The glory of man is the end of all history. History will then be the study of those men and events which have contributed most in the march to perfection. So we begin our study with the development of man as he evolves from the primate and ends with the sophisticated homo-sapiens of today.

Darwin's theory has also had its influence in the political and economic area of society. In the economic area, such financial wizards of American history as James J. Hill, Andrew Carnegie and J.D. Rockefeller used the "survival of the fittest" to justify their unethical practices.

In his autobiography, Andrew Carnegie, who made his fortune in steel, describes his conversion to evolution on reading Darwin and Spencer as follows: "I remember that light came as in a flood and all was clear. Not only had I got rid of theology and the supernatural, but I had found the truth of evolution. 'All is well since all grows better,' became my motto, my true source of comfort. Man was not created with an instinct for his own degradation, but from the lower he had risen to the higher forms. Nor is there any conceivable end to his march to perfection. His face is turned to the light; he stands in the sun and looks upward."<sup>5</sup>

In the political area, Darwin's theory served as the foundation on which Karl Marx and Frederick Engels could build their idea of the class struggle.

Again Marx wrote to Engels, January 16, 1861, "Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a basis in natural selection for the class struggle in history... not only is a death blow dealt here for the first time to 'teleology' in the natural sciences but their rational meaning is emphatically explained."<sup>6</sup>

Stalin also liked Darwin's ideas:

E. Yaroslavsky, a friend of Joseph Stalin, wrote a book on the life of Stalin. This book was published in Moscow by the Communists while Stalin was in power. The author says, "At a very early age, 'while still a pupil in the ecclesiastical school, Comrade Stalin developed a critical mind and revolutionary sentiments. He began to read Darwin and became, an atheist."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lammerts, Walter E., editor, *Scientific Studies In Special Creation*, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, p. 338,339, (1971)

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

I have just scratched the surface of what far-reaching effects evolution has had in our world. One must stand in amazement not only at what man will do to get rid of God, but what strange things he can imagine once God is out of the picture.

Because that, when they know God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (Romans 1:21 & 22)

## CREATION

How must we as Christians and particularly as Christian teachers deal with such an ungodly theory? It is my contention that we must be informed about evolution as a theory, not only, but we must be ready to give a defense of what is the truth concerning creation. We deal with God's covenant children who need the tools to fight this insidious theory. We as teachers must be able to give them these tools.

First, it must be understood that the child of God proceeds to defend the truth of creation from the perspective of a true faith. Faith is a gift of God and is given on the basis of God's divine decree of election. Those who have been ingrafted into Christ are those who believe in God as their Creator and believe in creation as recorded in Genesis 1 and 2. Faith, then is a spiritual matter of the heart whereby the child of God says "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth" and what follows of the Apostles Creed. It is on the basis of faith that the child of God proceeds to answer the question of the origin of all things. Faith will lead him to seek his answers in God's infallible revelation of Himself, namely, the Scriptures. Scripture reveals how God, the Creator, created. This does not mean the Bible is a textbook in science, but it does mean the facts as they are recorded in Genesis 1 and 2 regarding creation are accurate and understandable even by a child. A doctor's degree is not necessary to understand Scripture, only a true and living faith is necessary. The ungodly scientist may have all the degrees in the world, yet with all his knowledge, he is a fool because he refuses God's revelation in Scripture.

What does Scripture say about creation? It tells us that God is the Creator. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Every verse of the creation account emphasizes this by beginning with "God made" or "God created." The New Testament confirms this in Hebrews 11:3 "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." God's purpose in creation is the glory of His name. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork" (Psalm 19:1). God upholds and governs all things by His providence. "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee" (Nehemiah 9:6). These truths concerning God are very comforting to the child of God because he sees that all things have a purpose and that his gracious Heavenly Father will so direct all things to that purpose. Nothing happens by chance, but by the will of God.

Scripture tells us that God created time. It is very important for us to know that God caused His will to be carried out in time because it means there is order and purpose to creation. God caused events to happen in a certain divine order. It also means that just

as time had a beginning, it will also end. Time cannot be eternal. “And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer” (Revelation 10:6). Time will cease when God’s purpose of the salvation of all His people has been realized.

We are told in Scripture that creation was a perfect creation. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31a). Creation does not need to develop to perfection as the evolutionist would have us believe. Creation, however, declined from a perfect state to one of sin and death and the curse. God in his eternal counsel decreed that His purpose for creation would be realized through sin and grace. The first creation had to serve through judgment the new creation where righteousness and peace shall dwell.

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (II Peter 3:5-7 & 13)

Scripture also reveals creation to be complete in six days.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. (Genesis 2:1-3)

The point of emphasis is that creation is not a process over billions of years, but that the basic creation was completed in six days. Creation was a mature as well as a complete creation. An evolutionary process was not necessary. Animals, man, the universe were all created fully mature. It had the appearance of age. This is an important fact of the creation account which the evolutionist will not accept.

Another fact of creation according to Scripture is that the plants, animals, and man were all created after their kind. This is stated very plainly in Genesis 1:11, 12, 21, 24, and 25. I Corinthians 15:38 and 39 also makes a very good point of this. “But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of man, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.” This is not the evolvement of species from one to the other in a haphazard fashion. This is the orderly creation of each species by the Word of God and maintained according to the fixed laws of heredity. The fact of the matter is the evolutionist cannot prove by any stretch of the imagination that new species have ever evolved or are still evolving today.

Finally, Scripture reveals that among all the creative acts of God, the creation of man is unique. It is unique because of the manner in which man was created.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon

the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Genesis 1:26 & 27).

First of all we read that God said “Let us make man in our own image.” God spoke within the Trinity regarding the creation of man. We read this only about the creation of man. Secondly, man was formed out of the dust of the ground thus indicating that man’s creation was distinct from and separate from the creation of the animals. Man did not evolve but his creation was a separate act. Thirdly, the creation account reveals to us that God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” By this breathing of God man received a human nature that was distinct from the animals. With the breathing of God man became a spiritual being. Man was thus created so he could respond to God, his Creator. As such he was the friend-servant of God and was king of creation.

The creation of man is unique in that man was created in the image of God. No other creature could bear God’s image in a creaturely way. Man alone was created with abilities to glorify his Creator.

The creation of man is also unique because his help meet was formed out of him. Eve was created from a rib taken from Adam (Genesis 2:21, 22). This Eve was created for man (I Corinthians 11:8, 9). With the creation of woman out of man we get the institution of marriage which in turn gives us the blessed picture of redemption. “The great mystery concerning Christ and the Church” Ephesians 5:32, 33.

Man is put on a very high plane by the Scriptures. He is a far cry from the evolutionists imaginary primitive man. He was king of creation and friend-servant of God. However, upon this high plane man did not long remain, for he fell into sin and the whole creation fell with him. The first Adam, who is of the earth earthy, now gives way to the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven (I Corinthians 15).

Scripture treats creation as an act of God’s divine decree and infallibly reveals to us that creation was a miraculous work of God. Faith believes the Scriptures are true. At no point does Scripture’s truth concerning creation merge with the theory of the evolutionist. What we have is two diametrically opposed ideas each explaining the origin of all things; the one God-centered based on the Word of God and the other man-centered based on unbelief.

The evolutionist denies creation saying “There is no God,” thus throwing out God’s infallible revelation of himself. They then go to the “elegant book of creation” (cf. Belgic Confession, Art. 2) to prove their theory. The irony is that many of these so-called proofs are based on erroneous assumptions which simply make them impossible. The fault, then lies with the unbelieving scientist, not with creation. We owe a great deal to the Creation Research Society which has made it clear that many of the “proofs” of evolution are unfounded or at best groundless speculation.

The evolutionist uses science as he seeks to prove his theory of the origin of all things. Science is limited in its observation and measurement to the study of present phenomena and processes. The ungodly scientist may develop an hypothesis about the origin of all things, but he will never be able to prove it on the basis of his present observation. He has no way of knowing that what he is using as proof has always been true. The fallacy of the evolutionists is that he assumes on the basis of uniformity that



what he observes today has always been true. He blatantly ignores the limits of science to prove his theory. In this connection, we should remember that much of what the evolutionist claims to be science is not science at all. It is more inference and speculation, i.e. scientism.

Another fallacy of the unbelieving evolutionist is that he assumes the uniformity of natural law and processes. This, of course, he can not prove. Scripture teaches that uniformitarianism is a false assumption and that some very fundamental change did take place in creation which would definitely affect the processes of nature. First of all, Scripture reveals to us that God created a mature creation; one which did not have to develop. This, of course, would give the appearance of age, thus leading the unbelieving evolutionist to speculate that the earth is old. Secondly, the evolutionist studies a creation which was radically changed because of sin and the fall. Death now had dominion in creation. The whole creation came under the bondage of the curse. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22.) Thirdly, the universal flood drastically changed the earth's surface and atmosphere. This was a catastrophic flood, the likes of which the world had never seen nor would it see again. It was no ordinary rain storm that caused the flood. Genesis 7:11 tells us that "the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened." II Peter 3:6 indicates that the world after the flood was a drastically different world. "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Some of the more evident changes are: First, it did not rain before the flood (Genesis 2:5, 6). Secondly, the relationship of beast to man changed. "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth" Genesis 9:2a. Thirdly, the life span of man was shortened (cf. Psalm 90). Since these changes in creation were so drastic, it is impossible to determine positively what the processes of nature were like before the flood. The universal flood did not destroy this creation, but it changed it. This is why it is impossible for the evolutionist with his radioactive dating, geology and paleontology to determine what the creation before the flood was really like.

Within the framework of these three events in history (mature creation, fall, flood) the theory of evolution cannot stand. All the so-called evidences of evolution can be more easily understood in terms of these three great events than they can in terms of evolution. The evolutionist is like one of the scoffers of II Peter 3:3 & 4. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." It is their unbelief that allows for uniformitarianism.

Scientifically the theory of evolution can also be criticized because it violates the two laws of thermodynamics. These two laws deal with all the processes that take place in nature. The first of these is that all energy remains constant, implying a completed creation sustained by its Creator.

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The second law states that all processes manifest a tendency toward decay and disintegration (entropy). Everything tends to wear out and ultimately die. The curse of God rests upon creation since the fall. These two scientifically recognized laws the evolutionist completely ignores. He has to ignore them because they prove his theory to be false.

In conclusion, we must emphasize Scriptures are the infallible Word of God. They alone are the key that unlocks the mysteries and the beauty of creation. The child of God must go to them in faith and believe.

Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest...  
Hebrews 1:10-11

Harry Langerak

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