

# Faithbuilders Fellowship

Proclaiming Christ's Parousia  
and the coming Millennial Kingdom  
December 2005

## ***The Book of Daniel***

*"O Daniel ... thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision" (Daniel 9:22, 23).*

To this devoted worshipper of Jehovah were granted prophecies and visions of a unique kind. They span the history of the world from his day, during the Babylonian empire ruled by Nebuchadnezzar, until the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, mentioned in Daniel 12:2.

### ***Remarkable Prophecies***

The prophecies of Daniel are remarkable for at least three reasons: (1) they are uncommonly precise and specific, (2) they predict exact time periods in God's Plan, (3) Several of the symbols in Revelation are drawn from the symbols used in Daniel. Thus the study of Daniel is necessary in order to understand the book of Revelation.

Let us examine these three features.

#### ***(1) Precision***

Daniel was a young man when Babylon became an empire, and an old man when Persia replaced it as an empire. Yet Daniel recorded in advance the name of the country which would later succeed Persia as an empire, namely Greece (Daniel 8:21). This itself is remarkable, because when Daniel wrote, Greece was a disunited gathering of city states. Before it could ever mount a threat to become an empire it would first need to be united, and this did not happen until the days of King Philip, who was the father of Alexander the Great. Philip reigned from 360 to 336 BC. Thus his reign ended, and Alexander's reign began, about two centuries after Daniel passed away. In other words, Daniel saw two centuries into the future to identify Greece as the next world empire.

But there is more to this prediction. Daniel said the king which made Greece into an empire — that was Alexander the Great — was represented by a great "horn" on the head of a goat which represented Greece. In Daniel's vision that horn was broken and in its place four horns rose up. Here is Daniel's comment:

"The rough goat is ... Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king [of Greece as an empire]. Now that being broken, whereas four [horns] stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" (Daniel 8:21, 22). In other words, the prophecy accurately predicted that after Alexander the empire would not endure whole, but would split into four parts.

A succeeding prophecy specified that Alexander's son would not rule any of those new kingdoms. "When he [Alexander] shall stand up [become king], his kingdom shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity" (Daniel 11:4).

To understand the uniqueness of such a prediction, one must look at the history of the two empires preceding Greece, namely Babylon and Medo-Persia. Here are the successive rulers of Babylon, and the years they reigned over the kingdom.

Nabopolassar	21 years
Nebuchadnezzar	43 years
Amel-Marduk	2 years
Neriglissar	4 years
Labashi-Marduk	a few months
Nabonidus	17 years

The Belshazzar of Daniel 5:1 was the son of Nabonidus. He was not emperor in his own right, but was made co-regent in Babylon during the third year of Nabonidus and ruled Babylon for his father while Nabonidus was away from the city on extensive leaves. It was Belshazzar who lost the throne when the Medes and Persians, ruled by Cyrus, took Babylon in 539 BC (Daniel 5:30). Then followed these rulers of the Medo-Persian empire.

Cyrus	9 years	Darius II	19 years
Cambyses	8 years	Artax. II	46 years
Bardiya	(months)	Ochus	21 years
Darius	36 years	Arogos	2 years
Xerxes	21 years	Darius III	4 years
Artaxerxes	41 years		

The forces of Darius III were conquered by Alexander who then took the empire. Notice that throughout these two empires, Babylon and Medo-Persia, the kingdom always passed unified from one ruler to the next. In most cases the successor was a son of the previous king. Yet Daniel predicted, two centuries in advance, that after its first ruler, the Grecian empire would not pass unified to a successor. Instead it would break into four distinct kingdoms,\* none of them governed by Alexander's posterity.

These unexpected twists in the affairs of history could not be "guessed" at by Daniel. It was God who foreknew these things, and God who caused his angelic ministers to communicate these visions to Daniel. This type of prophecy sets the Bible apart from all other writings. These unique prophecies are an evidence of divine inspiration. "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" (Isaiah 46:9, 10).

## (2) *Exact Time Periods*

Daniel's prophecies contain precise time prophecies. We will note several as we examine this book in future issues. Here we note but one. It is the prophecy from Daniel chapter nine of the coming and death of Messiah, fulfilled by Jesus.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city [Jerusalem], to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity ... from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem. ... Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself" (Daniel 9:24, 25).

Christians have long recognized this to be a time prophecy pointing to our Lord Jesus and his death as our atonement for sin. The "seventy weeks" are acknowledged by both Christians and Jews to refer to weeks of years, which would be  $70 \times 7 = 490$  years. But there have been a variety of theories about the specific dates marked by this prophecy.

Today the evidence is clear that Jesus died on Calvary's cross in the spring of 33 AD. The precise Julian date was April 3, 33 AD. The Gospel narratives record that Jesus died on Friday, the day before the Jewish Sabbath. That Friday was also the "preparation of the passover," the day the Israelites killed their passover lambs at the temple in Jerusalem (John 19:14). This was Nisan 14 on the Jewish calendar. It was not common for Nisan 14 to fall on a Friday, but this did occur on April 3, 33 AD.

Counting 490 years earlier brings us to 458 BC as the commencement of the prophecy. (490 minus 33 AD yields 457, plus 1 to account for the absence of a year "zero" between BC and AD years, yields 458 BC in the spring of the year.) At this time Persia ruled the world, and in particular Artaxerxes was king of that empire. Today, the history of those times is known with clarity from a network of ancient records. The uncertainty of past years is

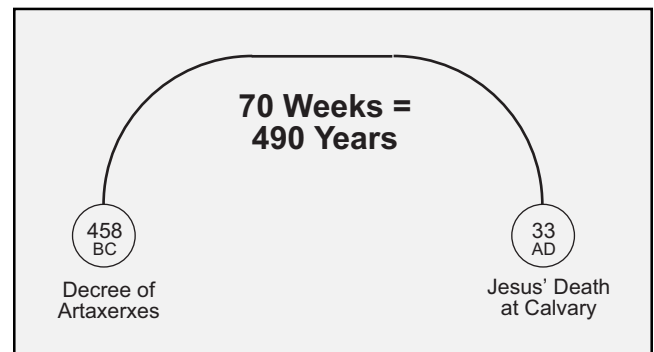


*Daniel, the Prophet (Michelangelo)*

no more. The spring of the year 458 BC commenced the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes. This date can be verified from any number of current reference works.

This is the year which the scriptures explicitly identify with a decree from this king, given to Ezra the scribe, to return to Jerusalem to "enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (Ezra 7:14). The decree is cited at length in Ezra 7:11-26, and dated in verse seven to the "seventh year of Artaxerxes the king."

Here, then, is not only a prophecy predicting the advent of Christ as Messiah, and his death for our redemption, but a precise time prophecy marking the very year of his sacrifice. The time from the decree given to Ezra to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until the death of Jesus on the cross, was predicted to the very year — 490 years exactly. How could Daniel know this? How could he span the chasm of more than five centuries from his day, and identify the very year of Jesus' death?



Only the Spirit of God could do this. It is another firm evidence for our faith that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God. They are a trustworthy and reliable guide to the Plan of God, because they were written through the Spirit of God. "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).

### (3) Basis for Revelation

The visions of Daniel are the basis for several of the symbols used in Revelation. Notably, in the seventh chapter Daniel records a dream of four beasts, representing four empires which ruled Israel — Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome (Daniel 7:17). The four beasts were a Lion, Bear, Leopard (with four heads for the four divisions of that empire), and lastly one described as "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," which describes the Roman Empire (Daniel 7:7). That beast had ten horns, representing the countries of Europe which sprouted from the Roman Empire.\*\* Among those horns rose another little horn which grew in stature. It dominated the others and persecuted the Lord's people for centuries (Daniel 7:8, 21, 22).

#### Four Empires of Daniel Seven

Empire	Years	Symbol
Babylon	610-539 BC	Lion
Medo-Persia	539-332 BC	Bear
Greece	332-31 BC	Leopard
Rome	31-476 AD	Dreadful

That "stout" horn (verse 20) is easy to identify in history. After the demise of the Roman Empire, the Roman Church dominated the kings of Europe and persecuted the Lord's people until their persecuting power was broken in the late 18th century. The "time, times, and half a time" of their power (Daniel 7:26) has long been identified as 3½ "times" of 360 years each, thus 1260 years total. These years began in 539 AD and ended in 1799 AD. We will speak more of this in later articles. The reader can find details of this application in Volume Three of "Studies in the Scriptures," titled *The Kingdom of God*, chapter three, "Days of Waiting for the Kingdom."

These very symbols, and this very time prophecy, appear again in Revelation chapter 13. There a dreadful beast rises from the sea, its various parts described as the four beasts of Daniel chapter seven. This beast in Revelation "made war with the saints" for "42 months," which is 3½ "times" of 12 months each.

Revelation mentions this prophetic period five times, terming it variously 1260 days, 42 months, 3½ times. In each case it refers to the same period. The key to the

prophecy is that each day represents a year in fulfillment, as with the prophecy of 70 weeks just examined. (See this prophetic key also in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6.) Thus Revelation builds upon the symbols of Daniel. This remarkable book, Daniel, is a prophetic primer for Revelation.

### Two Parts

The Book of Daniel is divided in our common version into 12 chapters. The first six describe events which occurred to Daniel from the time he went captive to Babylon as a young man in his teen years, at the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, until Daniel's old age when the Medes and Persians under the rule of Cyrus conquered Babylon and established the Medo-Persian Empire. Each chapter discusses a separate incident which occurred to Daniel through these years.

The next six chapters, chapters seven through 12 inclusive, record the prophecies given to Daniel himself. Daniel had earlier interpreted two dreams of Nebuchadnezzar (chapter two and chapter four), but not until the reign of Belshazzar, last acting regent of the empire, did Daniel himself receive original dreams, visions, or angelic visitations.

There were four of these. Chapters 7, 8, 9 each record one. Chapters 10, 11, 12 are together one narrative containing the fourth.

In each of these sections — the first six historical chapters, and the second six prophetic chapters — the episodes are recorded sequentially, as one would suppose. However, there is an overlap between the two sections. Thus the dream given Daniel in chapter seven, in the first year of Belshazzar (553 BC), appeared 14 years before Daniel's den of lions experience recorded in chapter six, in the year Cyrus ascended the throne of the Medo-Persian Empire (539 BC).\*\*\*

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## Twelve Chapters of Daniel

### Part One Narrative

- Captivity
- Image of Metals
- Three Hebrews
- Nebu. Insanity
- Fall of Babylon
- Den of Lions

### Part Two Revelations to Daniel

- Four Beasts
- Ram and Goat
- 70 Weeks
- 10, 11, 12, One vision
  - Xerxes, Alexander
  - Syria, Egypt
  - Antiochus, Rome, Papacy

### *Part One*

The six historical chapters cover the following episodes. (1) The captivity of Daniel in his youth, together with his companions. (2) The interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of world governments, represented by a great image made of various metals. This resulted in the rise of Daniel and his companions to positions of authority over the province of Babylon, in the third year of their captivity. (3) The peril to Daniel's three Hebrew companions, Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego, for not bowing to a large idol set up by Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was evidently away on matters of state at the time. (4) Daniel's interpretation of another dream of Nebuchadnezzar late in that king's life. (5) The fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians. (6) Daniel's old age experience in the lion's den, from a jealous conspiracy against him.

### *Part Two*

We mentioned earlier the contents of chapters seven, eight and nine. Chapters 10, 11, 12 are one unit, and comprise the most detailed and extensive prophecy of the book. This prophecy was given in the third year of Cyrus (536 BC), and is the last dated portion of Daniel's record. By this time Daniel would have been in his mid 80s, and likely his long life ended not long after. The final verse of the last chapter refers to his anticipated passing — "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest [in the sleep of death], and stand in thy lot [in the resurrection] in the end of the days" (Daniel 12:13).

The prophecy refers to four generations of Persian kings following Cyrus, which takes us to Xerxes, who unsuccessfully invaded Greece (Daniel 11:2). It then jumps to Alexander the Great, who a century and a half later would successfully invade Persia (verse 3). Verse 4 refers to the death of Alexander and the four-way split of his kingdom. Verses 5 through 31 then take us through six generations of the two parts of that empire which bordered Israel on the north (Syria) and the south (Egypt), for their wars, which were frequent, continually affected the Israelites who are God's people.

Verse 31 is a pivotal verse of the prophecy. It refers literally to the persecutions against the Jews by the Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes, which were legendary for their cruelty. However, our Lord Jesus, referring explicitly to this text in Matthew 24:15, shows that a deeper application of Daniel 11:31 was still future from his day. This applied to the destruction of the Jewish temple by the Romans in 70 AD.

But there is a third and yet deeper application of the prophecy to the persecution of Christians by Papal Rome. This gets very deep into the prophecy, and we will discuss the details in coming issues. For now, the interested reader can compare 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, with Daniel 11:31, 36. This comparison shows that Paul was referring to Daniel 11 when he predicted the coming of the "Man of Sin," namely the Roman Catholic Church. The reason Paul calls him the "Man of Sin" is that he is applying Daniel 11:36 to Papacy. This verse speaks of Papacy as a "king" because the text refers literally to "king" Antiochus Epiphanes, secondly to Rome which would burn the temple at Jerusalem, and thirdly to Papacy which would persecute the spiritual temple of God, namely the elect "Church" class, during the dark ages.

### *Daniel as an Overall Picture*

Daniel was taken captive to a foreign land at an early age, but soon was exalted to a position of rulership. Against him nothing derogatory is recorded. He was conscientious in his worship of Jehovah, even at the peril of his death. He interpreted dreams of the king through the Spirit of God, and also himself had dreams and revelations of grand things to come.

In these things he reminds us of Joseph, son of Jacob. Against Joseph nothing derogatory is recorded. He was cast into prison because of his integrity. He had important dreams, and he interpreted dreams. Joseph was exalted to second in command of Egypt (Genesis 41:39-42), and Daniel to the third position in Babylon (Daniel 5:7).

The parallels between the lives of these devoted servants is more than a coincidence. Joseph represents our Lord Jesus, and Daniel represents the followers of Christ. Joseph was sold by his brothers, just as Jesus was sold to the Romans. Joseph was imprisoned, just as Jesus was placed in the "prison house" of death. Joseph was raised out of prison to a high station next to Pharaoh himself, and Jesus was raised from death to a high station next to God himself.

Daniel was exalted to third place in the Kingdom, as the overcoming Church will be exalted to third place in the Heavenly Kingdom, next to Jesus and God.

### *Something Deeper for Future Issues*

The first three chapters of Daniel focus on three enemies of the Church through the Gospel Age — the Dragon, Beast and False Prophet of Revelation. These refer to the Pagan Roman persecution of the Church

early in the age (Dragon), the Papal Roman persecution of the Church following that (Beast), and the persecutions of the English Church which followed that (False Prophet). But this gets much deeper into Revelation, and we will hold the details for a later time.

In our next issue we will look at some historical details in chapter one, and touch on the deeper meaning in that chapter. Meanwhile, the interested reader can take up their Bible, and night by night read the book of Daniel to become familiar with its contents. This familiarity will prove very helpful as we proceed through the book.

For now, try to summarize, in your mind, the two basic parts of Daniel — the historical (first six chapters) and prophetic (second six chapters). Try to remember the subject of each chapter in the first part, and each of the four visions in the second part. Having this kind of brief outline of Daniel in your mind will help you greatly when you seek out the deep things which God has placed there for your understanding.

Remember, we are in the “time of the end” when the prophecies of Daniel were promised to yield their blessings to “the wise” who value spiritual things. Even to Daniel himself the prophecies he penned were “shut up” and sealed (Daniel 12:4). But now they are open. You can understand them. They are spiritual meat, intended for those who wish to know the things of the Spirit.

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\* The four kingdoms which fragmented from Alexander’s empire were Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. These four were originally ruled by Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy, respectively. Cassander subsequently ordered the death of Olympias (mother of Alexander), Roxana (widow of Alexander), and Alexander IV (son of Alexander the Great).

\*\* The original ten may have been those listed below, following the observation of Bro. James Parkinson that coins from these tribes all display the diadem which was emblematic of their right to rule by authority of the Roman Emperor who then governed from Constantinople: Heruli, Ostrogoths, Lombards, Vandals, Visigoths, Suevi, Franks, Burgundians, Allemans, Anglo-Saxons.

\*\*\* Both the Babylonian empire and the Medo-Persian empire counted their years from spring to spring. Babylon fell to Cyrus in October of 539 bc. That year, which began in the spring of 539 bc and continued to the spring of 538 bc, was officially termed the year of Cyrus’ accession to the throne of the empire. His formal year “one” began in the spring of 538 bc. If chapter six occurred following December of 539 bc, then our date 538 bc would apply.

## ***Close Your Eyes for a Moment***

The coming Kingdom of God will be established among men in all lands of the earth. It will be the most glorious epoch the world has ever seen. Philosophers of all ages have yearned for a “golden age,” but their hopes pale in comparison to that which God affirms will be the future of our planet and of the human race.

None of those philosophers could suppose a time when all cause for pain, suffering, death, and heartache would be removed. When undiminished health would be the lot of every creature, and everlasting life their assurance. When Earth would yield her bounties, and every proper convenience and comfort of home and culture would be available to all inhabitants, who by pleasant, productive, and creative industry will increase the common wealth for the benefit of all.

But such are the blessed promises of God, who has planned the very best for his human family. Wars will be no more, for “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth” (Psalm 46:9). The causes of human suffering will cease. “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:4). The moral integrity of the race will be ensured by planting the principles of Godliness in each heart individually. “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts” (Jeremiah 31:33).

The world longs for such a time, even though mostly ignorant of God’s purpose to accomplish it. The Millennium which will bring in these blessings will arrive in but a few short decades, just following the completion of the elect “Bride of Christ” now being called from among men to share Christ’s heavenly glory.

Paul expresses it this way, adapted from J B Phillips. “The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own ... [because] in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which ... belongs to the children of God” (Romans 8:19-21).

In the opening verses of Ephesians, Paul again expresses the sum of God’s plan in elegant language, which we cite from Weymouth’s translation. He says of Chris-



*Representing the River of Life from the Throne of God*

tians, God has “made known to us the secret of His will ... God’s merciful purpose for the government of the world when the times are ripe for it — the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in heaven and things on earth, to find their one Head in Him” (Ephesians 1:9, 10).

By the time the Kingdom of Christ comes to the world, the saints will be in glory, gathered to their heavenly home with Jesus. Their’s will be the privilege of supervising the restoration of humanity to perfection, and bringing all the blessings described above.

### ***A Classic Description***

One of the classic descriptions of this Kingdom is extracted below, from Volume 1 of “Studies in the Scriptures,” titled *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. (If any do not have a copy of this book, and wish one, you may have one free. Simply request it by mail or email.) Its rich, descriptive language, helps one grasp a little more firmly the wonder of the blessings at hand.

“The human race are God’s children by creation — the work of his hands — and his plan with reference to them is clearly revealed in his Word. Paul says that the first man (who was a sample of what the race will be when perfect) was of the earth, earthy; and his posterity, with the exception of the Gospel Church, will in the resurrection still be earthy, human, adapted to the earth (1 Corinthians 15:38, 44).

“David declares that man was made only a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory, honor, dominion, etc. (Psalms 8:4-8). And Peter, our Lord, and all the prophets since the world began, declare that the human race is to be restored to that glorious perfection, and is again to have dominion over Earth, as its representative, Adam, had (Acts 3:19-21).

“Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay, not even the fear of such things.

“Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth’s society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.” (Pastor Charles Russell, *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, pages 191-192)

## ***Planes and Pyramids***

Our previous issue’s article on the Chart of the Ages discussed the time periods of the Divine Plan. There are three Dispensations, sometimes called three Worlds — the world before the flood, the present evil world, and the “world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” We are still in the second dispensation, but very near its close, within 38 years according to the time line presented in the Old Testament.

Within the present dispensation there are three ages — the Patriarchal Age, the Jewish Age, and the Gospel Age. Both the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age close in a period called a Harvest of the age. In each case this endures for many years, though the Gospel Age Harvest period is longer than the Jewish Age Harvest period was.

We are now in the closing part of the Harvest of the Gospel Age. Christ returned in 1874, vested with kingly authority, and in this sense the Messianic Age has already begun. About 38 years still ahead, the Millennial Reign of Christ will be introduced to the world and begin operating through the nucleus of the Jewish nation who turn to Messiah in their national crisis still impending. (See Ezekiel 38, 39, and Zechariah 12:10).

### ***There is More***

But there is more to the chart. The various planes describe levels of existence during God’s Plan, and the various pyramids represent people — either individuals (small pyramids) or classes (larger pyramids).

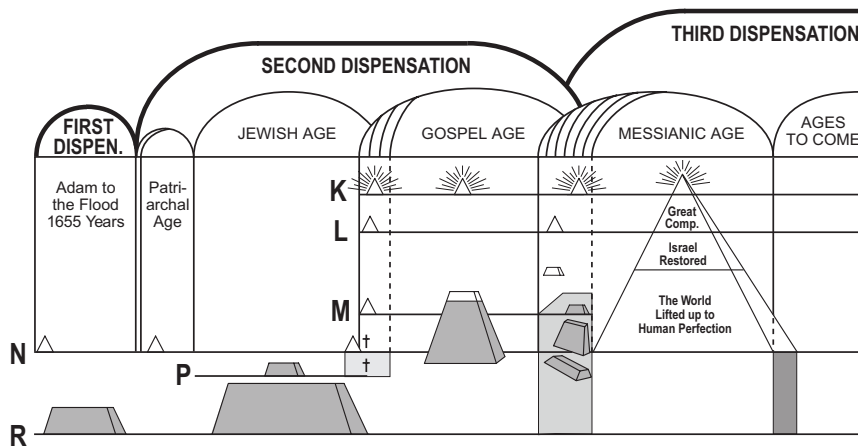
The planes have been assigned capital letters on the chart, to identify them for easy reference. They are the same letters used on the Chart in Volume One, *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. (This explains why the letters on our chart do not begin with A and go forward, for some of those early letters were used for other labels on the original chart.)

The first small pyramid, during the First Dispensation, represents Adam. The line on which that pyramid rests represents the plane of Human Perfection. (We will modify this only a little as we proceed, to include on it those who have been justified before God through their faith.) This is Plane **N** on the Chart.

The name Adam, in the Hebrew language, is listed in Strong’s Concordance as word number 120. Strong defines the word as follows. “Adam, from 119; ruddy, i.e. a human being.” The meaning of word number 119 is “to show blood (in the face), i.e. flush or turn rosy.” In other words the word Adam means reddish, referring to the reddish hue caused by the flow of blood. As blood is the means of maintaining our life, by circulating oxygen to all parts of our bodies, so blood, in the scriptures, is used to represent the essence of life.

“Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood ...” (Genesis 9:4). “The blood ... is the life of all flesh”





(Leviticus 17:13, 14). “The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Leviticus 17:11).

Thus the meaning of Adam’s name is appropriate to designate this father of our human race. The apostle Paul refers to our Lord Jesus as the “second Adam,” because he is the second life-giver to the human race (1 Corinthians 15:45). Jesus became human by the transfer of his life from heaven above, where he existed with God before the beginning of the universe, into the womb of Mary through the power of God. He grew to manhood, and as he was never a transgressor of Divine Law, his life was uncondemned. But he sacrificed his human life in order to redeem the life of Adam. Thus his life became a “ransom” for the life of Adam (1 Corinthians 15:21, 22).

Since Adam’s life was passed on to all the world through procreation, the redemption of that life enables the redemption of all those who were condemned in Adam. Thus, though the ransom is strictly one life (Jesus) for one life (Adam), through the wisdom of God, the benefits of this ransom accrue to us all (Matthew 20:28, 1 Timothy 2:6).

### ***The First Woman***

Adam was created a perfect human being. God allowed him to experience solitude in the Garden for a time. Adam soon recognized that though all the animals had others of their kind, for friends and mates, he was alone. He only had no suitable companion of his own kind, on his mental level, with whom to enjoy the wonders of creation and the bounties of God. After Adam was allowed to appreciate his need, soon God brought forth a woman to be a companion for Adam. As each was a creation from God, they were both perfect in form, feature, mind, and of high intellect. How deeply they must have cherished each other!

But that very love, so strong, was to be the basis for a severe test upon Adam. After Eve was tempted of the adversary to eat the forbidden fruit, what would Adam do? He knew God’s command. And he knew what his

wife had done. Would he join her in her plight, or would he have faith sufficient in God to withstand even a test of this degree?

We know the answer. Adam followed his wife. Ever since then, the world has experienced the consequences of his choice. But since Christ died for him, Adam will have a resurrection from the dead during the Millennium.

Evidently God considered Adam and Eve as a unit, for Eve came from Adam, her life was drawn from him. In fact, Genesis 5:2 says God “called

their name Adam.” By this means, God is able to graciously reckon Eve as of Adam with respect to the redemption, so that she will be raised from the dead during the Millennium, just as Adam.

The experiences of their lives after their disobedience probably taught them valuable lessons about the wisdom of obedience to God’s commands. The centuries to come in the Millennium, experiencing the rewards of obedience, will further deepen the lesson of obedience to God. By these preparations of their character, Adam and Eve will readily be able to pass the test of the Little Season, and accept that renewed opportunity for everlasting life.

### ***Jesus, the Second Adam***

Jesus, the second Adam, will also have a bride, namely the elect Church gathered during this Gospel Age (Revelation 19:7). Those who compose this bride are the first to benefit from the redemption in Christ, the first to benefit from his sufferings and wounds and death. After Jesus had died, but remained on the cross though in the deep sleep of death, “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34). The blood represents our redemption, and the water the holy Spirit of truth. By these two the Bride of Christ is produced.

The parallel of all this was with Adam and Eve in the Garden. After Adam fell into a deep sleep, God opened up his side, and produced a bride from his rib, his own bone. Bones in scripture represent one’s hope for the future. Thus when Jesus hung on the cross, though he suffered greatly, no “bone of him” was broken (John 19:36). This represents that none of his hopes for spiritual glory were in the slightest damaged. Those same hopes are the hopes of the Church. They are “bone of [his] bone” (Genesis 2:23), as Eve was of Adam.

Eve was called “woman” because that word means “she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:23). Her given name was Eve, “life-giver” (Strong’s Concordance), “because she was the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20). In both of these respects Eve is a picture of the Church, the bride of Jesus. The Church comes from Christ, and dur-

ing the Millennium the Church will serve as a “mother” to the world of mankind.

### ***The First Large Pyramid***

When Adam and Eve sinned, they fell from perfection, were expelled from the Garden, and suffered the curse of God. They descended to Plane **R** on the chart, the Plane of Sin and Death. Before their 1000-year day was up Adam had died, and presumably Eve also. Adam died at the age of 930 years, seventy years shy of that 1000 year day. “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8). Even Methuselah, the oldest man on record, did not reach the limit of 1000 years when he died at the age of 969 years.

Adam and Eve had a large family, and the human race multiplied rapidly. The first large pyramid on Plane **R** represents the world of mankind during the First Dispensation. Notice that this pyramid has no top to it, it is truncated on the top. This is a graphic way of showing that the world was incomplete, imperfect, unjustified, not whole. This convention applies to all of the pyramids on the chart that are incomplete on the top.

The next large pyramid to the right, also on Plane **R**, represents the condemned world during the Second Dispensation. But notice, to the far right, that there is no such truncated pyramid on Plane **R** during the Third Dispensation. That is because then the world will be redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are thereafter represented on Plane **N**, being justified, and finally regaining the perfection which Adam lost in the Garden.

Of course regaining perfection will not be instantaneous. It will be a gradual work. But the curse will be lifted by applying the blood of Jesus for the world of mankind, and as each one sees the blessings available through obedience, they will begin walking back to Godliness, and back to perfection. By the end of the Millennium, the entire race of mankind will have been restored to perfection, and all the dead of past ages, resurrected during the Millennium, will have joined them.

### ***Israel***

Notice again the large truncated pyramid during the Second Dispensation. Above it is Plane **P**, with a small pyramid resting on that plane. That small pyramid represents the nation of Israel, who were heirs of the promises God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They became God’s covenant people when Moses brought them into the bond of the Law Covenant at Mount Sinai, following their Exodus from Egypt.

By this means Israel became “an holy people unto Jehovah, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth” (Deuteronomy 14:2). Thus they had a status above the rest of the world, and this is shown by their position on the chart, elevated above the rest of the world. Plane **P** is often termed “Typical Justification,”

because Israel was a type of the blessings to come to the world through the redemption in the following ages.

### ***The Ancient Worthies***

The men and women who were devoted to God before the time of Christ are termed “Ancient Worthies” because they were ancient (they lived long ago), and they were worthy (because of their faith in God). It is not expressly a scriptural term, but it is part of the nomenclature of the Bible Student Fellowship, and at one time was used even more broadly. However, though the expression is not directly from Scripture, the description of this class is from Scripture. Paul discusses this class in Hebrews chapter 11, as we explained in our previous issue.

That class is represented in the small pyramid on Plane **N** during the Patriarchal Age. The pyramid is located there in memory of Abraham, whom Paul termed the “father of all them that believe” (Romans 4:11). His son Isaac, and his son Jacob, also faithful to God, are included in this pyramid, and as they all lived during the Patriarchal Age, it is located there.

Rather than replicate small pyramids in abundance, this one pyramid during the Patriarchal Age also stands for all the men and women of faith from righteous Abel onward, including John the Baptist who introduced to Israel the ministry of our Lord Jesus. These people are considered on Plane **N** because of their faith. They were justified by their faith in the sight of God, to friendship with God. Since they lived before the time of Christ they were not able to become part of the Christian Church, who become sons of God, and have heavenly hopes. “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:23).

Though the scriptures use the term “justification” for them, and use the same word for the Christian Church, there is a difference in their standing. Paul says of us, “We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement” (Romans 5:11). This atonement through the shed life of our Lord Jesus was not available in Old Testament times. Thus Romans 5:9 says we are “now justified by his blood.” The same could not be said for the Ancient Worthies who lived before the atonement was given.

Nevertheless, in the resurrection they will have a glorious reward, being “princes in all the earth” (Psalms 45:16). They will be the human leaders of the world in the next age. They will be raised from death to life perfect, at the opening of the Millennium, to direct Israel, and through them the world, during the Millennium.

### ***Jesus***

At the end of the Jewish Age is a period of time which overlaps with the Gospel Age. This overlapping period is the Harvest of the Jewish Age, during which our Lord Jesus came to “reap” the ripe wheat of the Jewish Age



(John 4:35). We will speak more of this, and of its parallel Gospel Age Harvest, in the next issue.

The four small pyramids on the chart just before, and during, that Jewish Age Harvest all represent Jesus at one time or another. The first one, on Plane **N**, represents Jesus born as a perfect child, until he reached the age of 30, the age of full maturity for religious service under the Law Covenant (Numbers 4:3).

The next pyramid, a little higher on Plane **M**, represents Jesus when he was baptized at Jordan by John and began his ministry of 3½ years, ending at his death. During this time he was begotten of the holy Spirit to a new life, to the spiritual life he would attain at his resurrection, which was loftier, grander, higher, than even the life he had in glory before he came to Earth. To prepare Jesus for this lofty elevation, his character would be matured, expanded and crystallized by the things he would suffer in the cause of righteousness. Thus Paul says of Jesus, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect [complete, mature, developed], he became the author of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:8, 9).

When he began this spirit begettal to a new life, the emblem of a dove, representing the Spirit of God, lighted upon him (Matthew 3:16). The same Spirit operates within the saints even to this day, fitting and developing and preparing them to be joint-heirs with Jesus, co-recipients of the high exaltation into the divine family of God in heaven.

After Jesus died he was raised to life as a spirit being, no longer human at all. As the angels in Old Testament times sometimes materialized bodies of flesh in order to appear to people, so Jesus appeared several times to the disciples by materializing a body as suited the need. At one time he appeared as a gardener, another time as a stranger on the way to Emmaus, another time as a stranger on the shore of Galilee, and sometimes in a body resembling the one he had before he died. But Jesus was no longer a flesh and blood being. He was a spirit being of the highest order. "Christ ... once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust ... being put to death ... flesh, but quickened ... Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18).

Jesus was present for forty days with his disciples following his resurrection. Most of this time he was invisible, as spirit beings are, but frequently he appeared to them in order to teach them "things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). On the chart, he is represented during those forty days as the pyramid on Plane **L**, the plane of spiritual life.

Then Jesus ascended from the mount of Olives, to illustrate to his disciples that he would not appear again, but was going to his Father. Thereafter he is pictured on the Chart on Plane **K**, the plane of divine glory, where he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3). There he abode as our glorious high priest until his return.

## ***The Gospel Age***

During the Gospel Age the professing Church is shown by a large pyramid in four parts. The portion below Plane **N** represents those who are Christians in name only, but do not have the spirit of Christ in their heart. These are the "tares" of the parable of the wheat and tares of Matthew chapter 13.

Above that is the portion on Plane **N**. These are Christian people who have faith in Jesus as the redeemer of the world, and realize this means they should live according to the precepts taught by Jesus. They are good Christian people. However, they have not proceeded to do what Paul advises in Romans 12:1, namely, "present your bodies a living sacrifice." For this reason they have not been actually adopted into the body of Christ. That is, they do not have a heavenly hope. Perhaps they suppose they will someday go to heaven, but unless they commit their lives to Jesus, they will be raised to life on earth during the Millennium, rather than in heaven.

However, it is from this class of persons that Jesus calls people onward, through the experiences of life and the messages from scripture, to become sharers in the body of Christ and participators of the "High Calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

Plane **M** represents the plane of spirit begettal. The part of the pyramid above this plane represents those who consecrate their life to God and run for the prize of the high calling. These are the ones Paul addresses as "brethren" and "saints" and "joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). These are willing to sacrifice with Christ. "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:11, 12. See also Romans 6:1-3).

Among those who have been baptized into Christ, some will prove faithful and zealous, and some will tend to slip back. God loves them all, and has grand blessings for them all. But the latter class will need special experiences from God to bring them along. They will become the Great Company class. They do receive life in heaven and serve God in His Temple (Revelation 7:9-15, 1 Corinthians 3:15). But they miss the chief prize.

The faithful ones will receive the higher station and become part of the Bride of Christ beyond the veil, in heaven. Not a bride in a literal sense, but as a body they are symbolized in Revelation as the "bride, the Lamb's wife" (Revelation 21:9). They will reign with Christ a thousand years as kings and priests of the world from their unseen spiritual glory, exalted with Christ. During the Gospel Age, this class is represented as the highest part of that truncated pyramid, which is lighter than the rest.

Meanwhile, our Lord Jesus, in heavenly glory all during the Gospel Age, is represented on the plane of divine glory, Plane **K**. In our next issue we will discuss the two Harvest periods, and the Millennium.

# Bible Chronology

Our last issue carried an article titled “When Comes the Kingdom?”, pointing to the scriptural evidence that the Kingdom is near, not quite four decades ahead. In one sense, of course, the Kingdom is already beginning, in that our Lord’s return as a divine invisible spirit being, with regal authority, has already commenced. According to the prophecy of the 1335 years of Daniel 12:12, our Lord’s Parousia commenced during the year 1874. There began the Harvest of the present Gospel Age. There commenced the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15, which brings the announcement that the “Kingdom of this world has become the Kingdom of our Lord [Jehovah] and of his Christ [his anointed son, Jesus Christ]; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

The verses following this announcement speak of the judgments of God which stir the anger of the nations, as they are buffeted and riven with wars and uprisings. The effect of these have been evident in two world wars and the subsequent conflicts within and between nations world wide. World War I began in 1914, forty years after our Lord’s second advent. Thus for forty years the judgments were held in abeyance, just as following our Lord’s first advent in 29 AD, the judgments against the nation of Israel were in abeyance for forty years.

Jesus is now a conquering king. But when we speak of the Kingdom near at hand, we mean the time when Christ’s Kingdom is established on the earth as a governing force among men. This awaits the end of the present Gospel Age Harvest. Then, when the Church is complete and the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus” is completed, that Kingdom will begin to operate in Israel under the resurrected Ancient Worthies of old. Gradually its influence and authority will spread worldwide. That will be the long anticipated Millennium. During that time the saints “shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6).

As explained in last issue’s article, that Millennium will be the seventh millennium since Adam. According to the record of years given in the Old Testament, 6000 years from Adam will close with the year 2043 AD, just 38 years ahead. If this understanding be correct, we are very near to the climax of our hopes.

## ***“Thy Kingdom Come”***

As most of our readers know, Pastor Charles Russell authored a series of six volumes collectively titled “Studies in the Scriptures,” which contain the essence of “Present Truth” for the establishment of the faith of the saints. We highly recommend this series of studies for all who have a thirst for the deep things of God.

The third volume of this series was titled *Thy Kingdom Come*. Its opening chapter explains in reverent tones, but with a lofty, exhilarating spirit, the grandeur of

our day at the very threshold of the glorious Kingdom so near. Here is the opening page of that volume.

“The most momentous event of earth’s history is the establishment of God’s Kingdom among men, in the hands of our Lord Jesus and his selected joint-heirs, the overcomers of the Gospel Church. This great event, toward which, as shown in previous volumes of Scripture Studies, all of God’s promises and types point, we now see to be not only at hand, but just upon us. None of those awake to these facts, and who properly or even partially realize them, and whose hearts are in full sympathy with God’s great plan of the ages, and who see that God’s panacea for the sin and misery and dying of the groaning creation is to be applied by this Kingdom, can possibly feel other than an absorbing interest in the fact, ***the time*** and the manner of its establishment.

“All who trust implicitly for the fulfillment of the prayer our Lord himself taught us to offer, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven” — must feel the liveliest interest in the fulfillment of their request, if they prayed from the heart — in spirit and in truth.

“We can see that even the world, if it could but realize the true character of this Kingdom, would hail it at once, as they finally will, as the long sought blessing, bringing with it the precious favors of the golden Millennial age, so long desired.”

## ***Our Sentiments***

This expresses our sentiments, exactly. The time has been delayed since these words were penned. But all the while we have been advancing to the time of the promised Kingdom. The light now shining on the Divine Word shows that the words our Lord spoke to the Jews of his day can be used again — “This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matthew 24:34).

The count of years from Adam was explained in our last issue. We now propose to examine each portion of time in depth. Those who wish to know something of “the time” of that kingdom will surely be interested in how the Scriptures shed light on our way toward that blessed time.

## ***Adam to the Flood***

From Adam until the end of the Flood was a period of 1656 years. The source of this information is Genesis, beginning with chapter five. There we have the age of Adam when his son Seth was born, namely 130 years, and the age of Seth when his son Enos was born, namely 105 years, and so on, generation by generation, until Noah. At the bottom of page 11 is a list of these generations, with each text of scripture supplied. (You can find the same list in “Studies in the Scriptures,” Volume 2, titled *The Time is at Hand*, page 43).

Only the scriptures give us this reliable and unbroken testimony of the earliest times. By this means our Heav-

only Father has supplied information without which we could not know the “times and seasons” which are in His power.

To guard against possible slips — for example transcription errors which are possible in any record of digits and numbers — we have an internal check on the integrity of each value. For example, for Adam, Genesis 5:3-5 says, “And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth; And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the time that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.”

Thus the passage gives us the years until the birth of Seth, the years following the birth of Seth, and the sum of these years. By this means any error in the record would become immediately apparent, and a correction could immediately be made, thus ensuring the preservation of the information. The same formula is given for the other patriarchs as well.

### ***The End of the Flood***

Sometimes there is confusion about exactly how to reckon the closing 600 years listed below. The flood episode lasted just over a year from beginning to end. The rains began “in the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month” (Genesis 7:11), and the band of eight survivors left the ark the following year “in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month” (Genesis 8:14).

The 600th year referred to means 600 complete years had not yet passed. The conclusion of that year came later, and in fact the very first day of the next year — year numbered 601 — is explicitly mentioned in the Genesis account. “And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth”

(Genesis 8:13). Thus we conclude that the 600 years closed near the end of their flood experience. In other words, there were 1655 years until the flood, and 1656 years until the flood end.

### ***Calendar Years***

The method of dating experiences in the flood is by year, month, and day, each numbered and reported. The flood began on the 17th day of the second month of year 600. The years mentioned are the years of Noah’s life. But how were they reckoned?

They seem to be calendar years, because of the mention of numbered months and days. They do not seem to count from Noah’s birthday, as we reckon ages of people today for example. Presumably all of the years mentioned in the genealogy are of the same kind of reckoning, that is, calendar years.

This is consistent with the way reigns of kings of nations such as ancient Israel, Babylon and Assyria were reckoned. Calendar years were used, so that the number of the years of a king’s reign was incremented on the first day of a new year. It was not counted from the day he came to the throne, which could be any time during the year when the previous king died.

Possibly some “era” of years counted from the beginning and ran consecutively until the flood. But if this was so, there is no record of it in Genesis. The absence of such an “era” in the text suggests it was not the common practice, for if it were, such a convenient and widely used system would probably have been noted when dating the events in the flood narrative.

But with such long-lived patriarchs as lived before the flood, there was a ready made method for accounting long periods of time in any given family, by numbering years according to the years of the patriarchs — not just for the line from Adam to Noah, but for any family line. In this case, to avoid a duplicate number assigned to any

given year, thus confusing the count over several generations, an easy custom could be used. When a child was born, simply count that year as the year of his birth. His year numbered “one” would commence on the following new year day.

By this method, when the record says of Lamech, the father of Noah, that he lived 182 years to the birth of his son Noah, the year of that birth would be counted as 182 of Lamech. The year following would be num-

#### **From Adam to the Flood**

“Adam lived 130 years and begat ... Seth”	Genesis 5:3	130 years
“Seth lived 105 years and begat Enos”	Genesis 5:6	105 years
“Enos lived 90 years and begat Cainan”	Genesis 5:9	90 years
“Cainan lived 70 years and begat Mahalaleel”	Genesis 5:12	70 years
“Mahalaleel lived 65 years and begat Jared”	Genesis 5:15	65 years
“Jared lived 162 years and begat Enoch”	Genesis 5:18	162 years
“Enoch lived 65 years and begat Methuselah”	Genesis 5:21	65 years
“Methuselah lived 187 years and begat Lamech”	Genesis 5:25	187 years
“Lamech lived 182 years and begat ... Noah”	Genesis 5:28	182 years
“Noah was 600 years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth”	Genesis 7:6	600 years
Creation of Adam to the End of the Flood	Genesis 8:13	<b>1656 years</b>

bered 183 Lamech and 1 Noah, the next 184 Lamech and 2 Noah, etc. Over several generations, one could compute an accurate sum of years by merely adding the years reported in the genealogy as we have them in Genesis chapter 5 — or any genealogy various families may have kept before the flood.

But, *was* it so? The inference that it *was* is supported by examining the record of Methuselah, who incidentally was the longest living man in the record. Methuselah lived 187 years to the birth of Lamech, Lamech 182 years to the birth of Noah, and Noah 600 years until the end of the flood. The sum of these is 969 — the same as the lifespan of Methuselah. But this sum of years takes us to the *end* of the flood. How could Methuselah live to the *end* of the flood, since he was not on the ark?

Using the calendar system above, it does work. The year 969 of Methuselah would be the year in which he died. That would be the same calendar year which began a month and seventeen days before the flood. Evidently Methuselah died, very old even by the standards of that day, in the opening weeks of the year the flood came.

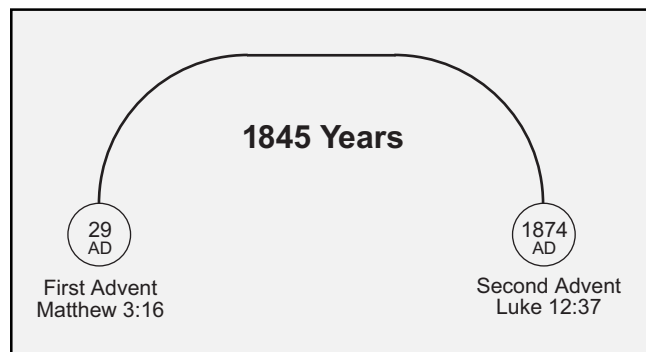
On the other hand, if ages were counted in ancient times the way we count ages today — that is, from one birthday to another, the years of one's age incrementing only after that complete number of years had passed — then Methuselah would necessarily have died in year 601 of Noah. This would be impossible, since it would mean he survived the flood, which no one did except the eight occupants of the ark.

What is the point of this? It is that the sum of years listed above, from Adam to the close of the flood, yields an accurate span of years from Creation to the Flood.

### ***An Engaging Observation***

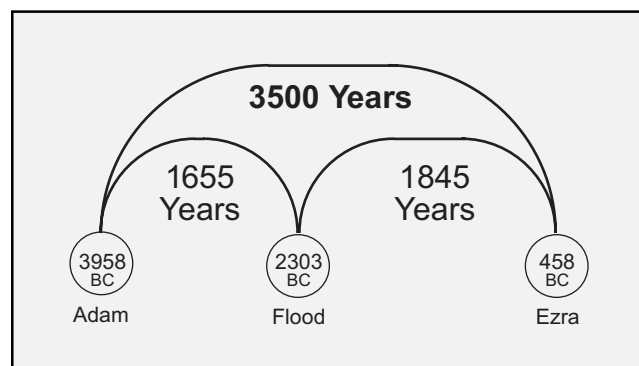
Brethren of the Bible Student fellowship are familiar with the period of 1845 years, which spans the distance between the first advent of our Lord Jesus, when he was baptized by John at Jordan in 29 AD, and the second advent of Jesus, at the end of the 1335 years of Daniel 12:12 in 1874. This period of time has been discussed by generations of Bible Students.

Notice that from Adam until the Old World passed away at the opening of the Flood was a period of 1655 years. The sum of these two numbers — 1655 and 1845



— is exactly 3500. In other words, from the end of the Old World, 1845 years forward bring us exactly to the year which is the mid-point of God's plan of 7000 years.

It is generally supposed that this 7000 year period is the seventh of the seven creative days mentioned in Genesis chapter one. Each of those days was termed an "evening and morning." True to this reckoning, even the Jewish days counted by Israel commenced in the evening, and half way through the 24 hours of any given day appeared the morning.



Is it then a coincidence that from the passing of the Old World, this well known prophetic time span of 1845 years bring us exactly to the opening of a new beginning in God's plan of the Ages, the "morning" of God's rest day, during which all the blessings God intends for His human creation will come to fruition?

As observed in our previous issue, that mid-point marks the very year commencing the seventy week prophecy of Daniel's ninth chapter, leading to the redemption, and all the blessings which flow from it.

This is an example of the kind of symmetry and order we encounter time and again when the count of years is established from Scripture. This is an evidence for our faith that we are discerning the mind of God in these issues. It is lovely to behold.

In the next issue we will consider the next link in the chain of Bible Chronology, namely, the 427 years from the end of the Flood to God's Covenant with father Abraham.

\*The word "begat" is used repeatedly in the common version of our English translation. Modern translations clarify the meaning, such as the New American Standard Version, which says "became the father of." The Hebrew word is *yalad*, which according to Strong's Concordance means "to bear young: causative, to beget." Thus it can refer either to birth or begetting, but it seems clear in the context, and is generally conceded, that in these genealogies the time of birth is referred to, rather than the begetting nine months earlier.

### ***In the Next Issue ...***

- *Soul and Spirit*
- *Chart of the Ages, concluded*
- *Daniel, Chapter One*