

A close-up, blurred photograph of a clock face. The clock is white with black Roman numerals and hands. The hands are yellow and black. The background is dark and out of focus.

# *Why Chronology?*

by  
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This booklet is written for those who believe in Jesus and call themselves Christians. It is not intended for those who do not believe and have never read a Bible. Such people are unlikely to make much sense of the references, but they are also unlikely to have been led astray by the populist, but false, doctrines now in circulation in Christendom. They are however warmly encouraged to contact the author for further information about Jesus who is called Christ. Contact may be made by letter to the above address, but will probably achieve a faster response online at the author's website at [www.thain.com](http://www.thain.com).

Why study the Chronology of the Bible?

## **1. The entire Christian faith is based upon solid events in recorded history.**

Unless God created everything, He has no claim upon us and we owe Him nothing.

Unless He created Adam and Eve, we should have no idea where we came from and should have to invent such creation myths as evolution.

Unless we know that Adam sinned (and we in him), we should have no understanding of why we all now incline to disobey God's laws.

Unless God gave Israel His testimonies, we could have no knowledge at all of how to please God who made us (instead of sinning against Him).

Unless Jesus came down from heaven and was born of a virgin, His sacrifice could only ever have been for his own sins and not for ours.

Unless Jesus had lived a life wholly without sin, we might even foolishly imagine ourselves to be good enough for God.

Unless Jesus genuinely died on the cross and was buried, we might imagine that He didn't really die at all (as indeed some do).

Unless Jesus rose from the dead, we who believe in Him are still dead in our sins and will never rise from the dead to everlasting life.

Unless Jesus is seated at the right hand of God, He does not now rule the world and we have no hope of overcoming evil in it.

Therefore unless we know and are entirely confident that we have a complete and accurate chronological record of the historical events upon which the Christian faith depends in its entirety for its validity, we can have little confidence even in our own salvation, still less the confidence from which to preach the gospel to others. We get this confidence by faith in the absolute truth of the inspired Biblical record, so that we can say with the Lord Jesus, **"IT IS WRITTEN....."**.

By the authority which His Word carries within itself and gives to us, we can silence and overcome all opposition.

## **2. Without an accurate chronology our eschatology (knowledge of the last days) will be seriously wrong.**

If we insert an imaginary gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel's great prophecy concerning Jerusalem, we shall wander into many serious errors; errors about other Biblical prophecies, about Israel, global politics, antichrist, and the second coming. Lacking an understanding of what the seventieth week refers to has led some to invent extraordinary myths about the last days, and many more who should have known better have believed them. The demonstration that no such gap exists depends entirely upon an accurate chronology of Biblical history, and in particular the identification and dates of the last Persian kings. As the direct result of introducing uninspired, inaccurate, and secular chronologies into the inspired historical record, so many Christians have gone astray here that some gross errors of doctrine are now in common circulation amongst us and need to be killed off before they can do any more damage. It is a sobering fact that in the early twentieth century more than seven hundred doctorates were awarded on the basis of theses written on the so-called "Piltdown Man" - an elaborate anthropological hoax which for forty years deceived the entire higher education establishment. Was any one of those doctorates revoked when the Piltdown fraud was exposed in 1953? No, not one of them. So likewise there are many Christians now whose education was blown off-course by inaccurate eschatological teaching early in life, and who need to dump the rubbish they were taught and learn the truth. This is never a comfortable process for anybody but, like the Way of the Cross, it's essential for any servant of God who wishes to be an overcomer. You cannot and will not be able to stand against the evil one if you yourself have believed a pack of lies which had their origin in satan; your position will be fatally compromised. And because you will be unable to overcome the enemy, the Lord Jesus will not allow you anywhere near the conflict. You may go through all your life thinking everything is well with you, whereas in reality you have simply been withheld from any situation which would have exposed you to danger.

A raw recruit to the army who has somehow got through his basic training may consider himself fit to face the enemy, but he will be deceiving only himself. Likewise in spiritual warfare only face-to-face armed conflict with the forces of evil can sort out those who can from those who can't, and because the Lord Jesus is the greatest battle commander there ever was, those who aren't up to the fighting will never normally be exposed to it. In battle they would be a danger not only to themselves but to everybody else, with consequent loss to the Lord's cause. This He cannot allow.

### Some common chronological errors

**1. Mis-counting the empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.** There were only **four** empires, not five, spoken of in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image (Daniel 3). Never mind the feet and the toes; a careful reading of the subsequent text simply will not support more than four empires, and the last of these was clearly Rome. Read it for yourself. Neither is there any scriptural support for any latter-day resurrection of the Roman empire. Western Rome collapsed and fell in AD 410 when Alaric's Visigoths over-ran the city and the legions were permanently withdrawn from Britain. The eastern half of the empire fell in AD 1453 when Byzantium was sacked by the Saracens. Neither has ever regained its former power, nor ever will.

**2. Mis-dating the decree to re-build Jerusalem.** The commandment to rebuild Jerusalem was given by **Cyrus** as the scripture plainly says, not by any of the Persian kings who followed him and certainly not by Artaxerxes. There are some compelling reasons to know why this decree is the one from which we should start the countdown given to Daniel, and they are summarised here:-

**(i) The decree of Cyrus ended the seventy-year captivity which God had promised He would accomplish in the desolations of Jerusalem.** (Jer 25:12, Jer 29:10, Dan 9:1) Those seventy years of desolation began when Nebuchadnezzar, as co-regent with his father Nabopolassar, besieged Jerusalem and took captives in BC 521. They ended with the decree of Cyrus in his first year BC 452, the whole interval between the two events being one of seventy years (by the inclusive reckoning of the Chaldeans, which was used at this period of scripture). So, if the seventy sevens of Daniel had begun with the decree of any king later than Cyrus, the captivity and the desolations of Jerusalem would have extended far beyond the seventy-year limit which God had set for them. The seventy sevens of Daniel 9 must therefore have begun with the decree of Cyrus and of none other. This point alone is sufficient to prove beyond all question that the decree to rebuild Jerusalem originated with Cyrus. However the following additional points are added for completeness.

**(ii) By his use of the words "that it might be fulfilled"** The Holy Spirit here draws our attention to the unique significance of the decree of Cyrus, just as he did so frequently with prophecies about Jesus in the gospel of Matthew.

*"... that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled ..." (Ezra 1:1)*

**(iii) The decree of Cyrus was given by the direct inspiration of God.**

*"... the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia..." (Ezra 1:1)*

**(iv) Isaiah clearly described Cyrus as the originator of the all-important decree, not Artaxerxes.**

*Thus saith the LORD,..... that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built .... that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. (Isaiah 44:24-28)*

Isaiah here clearly and specifically extended the decree of Cyrus concerning the rebuilding of the temple to the rebuilding of the whole of Jerusalem, for obviously they were one and the same decree. It is futile, as some have done in attempting to justify their faulty chronologies, to try to separate the temple from the city.

So there can be no doubt about who it was of whom Gabriel spoke to Daniel as issuing the decree which initiated the countdown of seventy sevens. It was Cyrus, and he made that decree in his first year as sole king of Babylon. As it was this very prophecy - delivered by no less an authority than Gabriel - which determined the timing of Messiah's Crucifixion, its importance to chronology can hardly be overstated. It is because so many commentators have based their chronologies on the pagan Ptolemy's flaky canon rather than upon the true scriptural record that they have floundered about looking for a king who fitted their inevitably faulty reckoning, with dreadful

consequences for the eschatologies based upon such shifting foundations. It does not seem to have occurred to them to throw out the pagan and inaccurate dating upon which their chronologies are based.

The plain fact is that the first year of Cyrus ruling as sole king, and the first year of the return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, was the year BC 452; so Gabriel's "seventy sevens" began here and ended in AD 70. (There was no year zero for historians, the year 1 BC being followed of course by AD 1.)

1 <sup>st</sup> (7 x 7)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (7 x 7)	3 <sup>rd</sup> (7 x 7)	4 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7)	5 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7)	6 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7)	7 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7)	8 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7)	9 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7)
49 years	49 years	49 years	49 years	49 years	49 years	49 years	49 years	49 years
452 BC to 404 BC	403 BC to 355 BC	354 BC to 306 BC	305 BC to 257 BC	256 BC to 208 BC	207 BC to 159 BC	158 BC to 110 BC	109 BC to 61 BC	60 BC to 12 BC
10 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7) Countdown to Judgment			Messiah in Israel Judgment suspended			10 <sup>th</sup> (7 x 7) Countdown to Judgment		
11 years			32 years			38 years		
11 BC to 1 BC			AD 1 to AD 32			AD 33 to AD 70		

However the last of the "seven sevens" was interrupted by the earthly life of Jesus, it being impossible that judgment should be imputed to the land of Israel while her sinless King was in residence. This explains the arithmetic of the years which the unbelieving Jews found so difficult to understand (and still do).

**From the decree to Messiah's being cut off: 452 BC to AD 32 = (7 x 7) + (62 x 7) = 483 years**  
**From the decree to the destruction of the city: 452 BC to AD 70 = 522 years**  
**Less the period that Messiah was in Israel and the judgment was suspended = 32 years**  
**So total extent of judgment determined upon Jerusalem = (522 - 32) yrs = (70 x 7) = 490 years**

NB: Moses did not reckon a man's age from his birthday (which was - and incidentally still is - a Babylonish astrological practice). There is no mention of any true Israelite's "birthday" anywhere at all in scripture. Rather, all Israelites incremented their ages simultaneously at the New Year two weeks before Passover<sup>1</sup>. So at the Passover of His crucifixion, judgment upon the city had been suspended for a total of thirty-two years and Jesus had just turned thirty-three. By crucifying their Messiah the Jews re-commenced the divine countdown to destruction and sealed their own fate.

**3. There was no gap** between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel's prophecy. The seventieth week ended with the destruction of Jerusalem by the army of Titus in AD 70. Nothing has been pushed, pulled or bent in order to make this statement fit; the dates fall out with perfect precision once the Biblical record of history is accepted instead of the inaccurate canon of Ptolemy. Because the seventieth week of Daniel is now long past, there is nowhere in the scheme of things for any long imaginary gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. Such ramblings are not exegesis and they are certainly not chronology; they are fiction, as are all the alarmist teachings about a coming antichrist and the leagues and covenants he is supposed to be about to make and break with Israel. Yet in Christian bookshops there are shelves of books full of this unscriptural nonsense. It seems not to matter to their many authors that John said clearly that antichrist had come into the world two thousand years ago and is therefore already here. Clearly those many authors have never encountered him in real life (probably for the reasons outlined above) never mind overcoming him as per Rev.15:2. They are still confidently awaiting the appearance of one who actually arrived two thousand years ago! Of course antichrist doesn't look like the man they are expecting, but that's their problem, not the scripture's. That "learned, Godly and good" (and inspired) Bible translator William Tyndale knew so much better.<sup>2</sup>

### Some consequences of adopting a false chronology

The protestant Irishman John Nelson Darby (1800 - 1882) correctly identified and rejected some of the unscriptural beliefs and practices of the Church of England, but sadly he devised an equally unscriptural doctrine of Dispensationalism to replace them. Essentially, Darby taught that Biblical history was divided into discreet "dispensations" characterised by sequential and irreversable changes in the manner in which God has dealt with mankind. This doctrine plainly runs counter to such clear scriptural statements as,

***I am the LORD, I change not; (Malachi 3:6)***

***My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. (Psalm 89:34)***

***Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. (Hebrews 13:8)***

<sup>1</sup> The testimony of Caleb as to his age demonstrates this, the practice ensuring that a person's age is thereby God-centred and not man-centred. For details see *A Short History of the World* by the present author.

<sup>2</sup> In *The Wicked Mammon* Tyndale wrote, "Antichrist is not an outward thing, that is to say, a man that should suddenly appear with wonders, as your forefathers talked of him, but antichrist is a spiritual thing." (Quoted by Prof. David Daniell in his informative and moving work "William Tyndale - A Biography" published Yale 1994, ISBN 0-300-06132-3.)

However Darby influenced, and was followed by, some prominent transatlantic preachers who should have known better, such as Moody and Scofield, to such an extent that in many American theological colleges Darby's profoundly mistaken view of history has become the new orthodoxy, notably in Dallas, and has now even re-crossed the Atlantic again. Many of those who have espoused it would be genuinely startled to learn that this aspect of what they sincerely believe to be "the faith once delivered to the saints" two thousand years ago was in fact delivered to the itching ears of just some of the saints barely two hundred years ago.

Uriah Smith (1832 - 1903) was another American whose influence is strong in the USA even today, either directly through his book *Daniel and Revelation* which is still in print, or indirectly through those religious organisations which have been influenced by his peculiar brand of egocentric nationalism posing as Christianity. Nevertheless his whole imaginary edifice is fatally flawed at the outset by an inaccurate chronology. As so many others have done and still do, he took Ptolemy as his guide instead of scripture. Neither the present day Great Britain nor the United States of America is anywhere mentioned or even hinted at in the Bible. The prophecies of Daniel in chapters ten and eleven were fulfilled in minute detail by historical events which occurred between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New. Only a complete ignorance of ancient Middle Eastern history can excuse the wild excesses of imagination which have been indulged in by self-centred expositors who cannot bear the thought that their own nations and organisations may not really be the fulcrum of world events which they foolishly imagine them to be.

Some people maintain that after one of the several "second comings" of Christ predicted by their scheme of things, the modern state of Israel will rule the physical world while the resurrected "church" (they don't say *which* church of course, but doubtless they assume it will be their own) will occupy the New Jerusalem somewhere in heaven. How much more arrogantly self-centred can one possibly get? What Jesus actually said was,

***"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."***  
(John 10:16)

As was talking here to Jews, the "other sheep" are plainly gentile believers. Jesus did not say "there will be two folds, one in heaven and one on earth; the one for gentiles and the other for Jews". He said,

**"there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."**

## **A heresy very much too far**

But very much more deadly to modern Christianity is the false doctrine that we are still waiting for the kingdom of God to get here! Never mind that Jesus Himself taught that the time was fulfilled and the kingdom of God had arrived. Never mind that Peter was astonished to discover that God had granted an entrance to His kingdom to gentiles as well as Jews. Never mind that after Pentecost the apostles travelled all over Europe and the East to preach the message which Jesus Himself had taught, which He commanded His apostles to teach after Him, and which The Lord God Himself confirmed from heaven with signs following, namely,

***"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."*** (Mark 1: 14,15)

He did **not** say to them "Cheer up. Only another two thousand years to go, and then the time will have been fulfilled". He said "The time **is** fulfilled".

Likewise, His instructions to the apostles were that they should preach saying,

***"The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."*** (Matt. 10: 7,8)

"But," our modern heretics say, "if the kingdom of God has already come, where is it?"

Fools! Blind! How long will you refuse to believe all that the Lord Himself has said? Because the kingdom doesn't look the way you think it should look, will you call the Lord Jesus a liar? Get down on your knees and repent! If Jesus said the kingdom has come, it has come, whether you think you can see it or not. Open the eyes of your heart instead of the eyes on your face and understand this thou Pharisee:-

***"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."*** (Luke 17: 20)

That means *you can't see it!* The kingdom of God is invisible - for now!

It **will** of course become very visible indeed **when** the Lord Jesus returns, and not before. Until then the kingdom is seen and entered **by faith**, and not by sight.

"But.. but.. but.. but.." you say, "I haven't seen the sick healed, lepers cleansed, the dead raised, or any devils cast out by anybody."

Possibly not, but that doesn't mean it hasn't happened. You simply haven't been in the right place at the right time when God was at work. The late Smith Wigglesworth (who was still alive and ministering in power when the writer was born) healed uncounted thousands of people in several continents of every disease imaginable, as well as casting out devils and, yes, raising the dead. There are no less than fourteen thoroughly well documented cases on record (documented by qualified medical men) of Wigglesworth's raising the dead to life in the Name of Jesus, and that's not counting the many who were not documented at all. What answer do you think Wigglesworth would have given to your objection that we are still waiting for the kingdom of God to appear? I can tell you what he would have said. He would have told you in his blunt Yorkshire manner to go away and read your Bible properly.

But Christians are now taught that Jesus was a liar. They are taught that the kingdom of God has never come and that we are really now waiting for the coming of an evil deceiver instead! Is it any wonder that the gospel of Christ makes so little progress where you live? Jews, Muslims, and even some of the unbelieving gentiles who don't believe much else all know that the great day of the Lord is near.....

**But you, O Christian, are confidently waiting for the day of antichrist!**

Oh, how the Lord must groan over your sinful unbelief! How can you possibly imagine yourself fulfilling The Great Commission while you believe such rubbish?

Now get your act together and get real. The stone cut out without hands arrived two thousand years ago. Nebuchadnezzar's image fell into dust in the fifth century. The kingdom of God has been growing ever since Jesus brought it to earth and has become a great mountain which has overthrown every one of the world empires which went before it. The Romans themselves testified that the gospel of Christ had penetrated lands where even they themselves had been unable to go..., but you just can't see it can you! Your eyes are tightly shut. You refuse to believe what Jesus Himself taught, and then taught His apostles to teach.

But John the Baptist *could* see it, and he will go into the kingdom before you.

*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matt. 3: 1,2)*

And when John had been executed for preaching righteousness,

*Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matt. 4: 17)*

And when Jesus sent out His apostles, what did He send them to do?

*... preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matt. 10: 7)*

"At hand" means "physically nearby". It seems that they preached in vain for all that some of you have learned!

The greatest truth ever to have come into the world has been stood on its head and denied - not by satanists and new-agers, not by ecclesiastics of the "wrong" denomination, not by worldly and self-seeking politicians, **but by those very Christians who should have been proclaiming it from the roof tops!**

All this has come about because faulty chronologies have given rise to faulty doctrines, and the faulty doctrines have been given room to grow by lazy so-called Christians who have refused to study and believe what the Bible plainly teaches. Do you imagine that you're going to see the dead raised to life on television? Don't be a fool. The broadcasters would suppress it and ignore any such thing because it directly challenges their own life style. Devout Jews and Muslims study their books better than you do. You want it all fed to you on a short video clip on YouTube because anything more exacting drags you away from El Seedy, your household god, and makes your brain hurt. This base heresy has permeated most of Christendom and has duped millions into a passive inactivity just when they should be looking up and being most on fire for the gospel.

Shame be upon you!

So throw into the rubbish bin all that pulp fiction on your shelf masquerading as Bible teaching and let us hear the truth of the matter.

The last two thousand years are called in scripture "the last time" because after the Incarnation, the Cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Jesus....,

**There is nothing left on God's agenda except His coming again in Judgment!**

The kingdom is here, the Holy Spirit has been poured out (perhaps not upon you), antichrist is here, the true church has been growing for two thousand years, and there is only one thing left to happen:- The Lord Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead. The children of His kingdom will enter the home He has prepared for them in glory, and the rest will be thrown into the fire and burnt up.

That's all there is ... in this age anyway.

The world's clock is in Jerusalem,  
and that clock is now ticking down to

**The End.**

An accurate chronology of world events, the dates of which are taken from scripture - and only from scripture - may be seen at, and freely downloaded from, the author's website at

[www.thain.com](http://www.thain.com)

which includes an online form by means of which the author may be contacted if need be.