

BIBLE SURVEY



SECTION 1: THE PATRIARCHS

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CLASS SCHEDULE FOR BIBLE SURVEY: SECTION I: THE PATRIARCHS

#	Title	Text	Date
1	Creation	Gen. 1-3	
2	Cain, Abel, & Seth	Gen. 4-5	
3	Noah & the Flood	Gen. 6-10	
4	Babel & Abraham	Gen. 11-13; 15	
5	Lot & Melchizedek	Gen. 13-14; 18-19	
6	Isaac & Ishmael	Gen. 15-18; 20-25	
7	Jacob & Esau	Gen. 25-28	
8	Jacob's Family	Gen. 28-36	
9	Joseph & His Brothers	Gen. 37-38	
10	Joseph Goes to Egypt	Gen. 39-41	
11	Joseph's Family Goes to Egypt	Gen. 41-46	
12	God's Purpose	Gen. 45-50	
13	Section 1 Review		

In the Beginning

God created the universe and all life on Earth. He gave the first people a law. Satan tempted them to sin (break God's law), and they did. God promised that one (later called the Messiah) would overcome Satan and sin. God promised Abraham that his descendants would grow into a great nation, receive the land of Canaan, and produce one who would bless all the families (nations) of the earth. The nation and land promises were fulfilled over the next four centuries through Abraham's grandson, Jacob, who was nicknamed Israel. The Israelites were enslaved in Egypt but delivered by God through many miracles. God gave them a law through Moses, the leader God had chosen for them.

The Rise and Fall of Israel

Under the leadership of Joshua, the Israelites conquered the land but afterward failed to fully follow God's instructions. They adopted the sins of the former inhabitants and were punished by God. For about three-hundred fifty years, they repeated a cycle of superficial repentance, salvation by judges, return to sin, punishment, and brief repentance again. During this period, Israel was fragmented and plagued by internal and external conflict.

God granted Israel a king. Kings Saul and David overcame the enemies that had oppressed Israel, setting up King Solomon's reign to be the pinnacle of Israel's power and prosperity. Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem. Later, Solomon turned to sin, and, after his death, the kingdom was divided into Israel (north) and Judah (south). Both kingdoms fell into sin. Israel declined faster, and God used Assyria to conquer it in 721 BC. Judah enjoyed a few brief restorations but ultimately followed Israel's path. God used Babylon to conquer it in 586 BC. Its people were exiled to Babylon, and its temple was destroyed. Throughout the time of the kings, prophets urged repentance and continued to speak about the Messiah.

Rebuilding Judah

Unlike the northern kingdom, God promised Judah that its people would return and rebuild after seventy years in exile. When the Persians conquered Babylon, King Cyrus granted the people of Judah (the Jews) permission to return and rebuild. The first group returned about 536 BC and, after some initial setbacks, rebuilt the temple in 516 BC.

Many Jews remained in Babylon, Persia, and other lands. A second group returned with Ezra in 457 BC. A third returned with Nehemiah in 444 BC. Nehemiah found Jerusalem's walls in ruins and its people in a state of spiritual neglect. He preached and motivated them to rebuild the city's walls and correct their ways.

Four Centuries of Silence

After Nehemiah's time, the Bible skips a little over four centuries. During this time, the Persian Empire was conquered by the Greeks, and the Jews came under Greek rule. Shortly after, the Greek Empire split into smaller competing empires. The Jews revolted against a particularly cruel Greek king from 164 to 141 BC and gained independence, which lasted for about a century. Then, the Roman Republic conquered Judah and soon after became the Roman Empire. Judah became Judea. The greater area (Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Idumea) was later the province of Syria Palestina (136 AD), so the name Palestine is used today to describe the whole land. The Romans appointed Herod to rule Palestine, and several members of his family ruled various parts of it for over a century.

Between the return from exile and Roman rule, Greek language and culture spread throughout the world (Hellenization). Israel's Scriptures were translated into Greek (called the Septuagint or LXX). A collection of Jewish myths, histories, and other writings from this time (the Apocrypha) were bound with the Septuagint. Jewish factions emerged with differing views on religion and politics. The Pharisees adopted oral traditions and opposed Hellenism. Zealots violently opposed foreign rule. Synagogues emerged in Judah and around the world for Jews to study, sing, and pray locally. The Sanhedrin Council– the Jewish high court– was formed. The early Roman Empire established a time of relative peace called *Pax Romana* and connected its lands with roads.

The Messiah Comes

God's long "silence" was broken when he revealed that the Messiah had been born. Although born in Bethlehem, Judea, Jesus grew up in Nazareth, Galilee. His cousin, John, began to announce that the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies was at hand. Jesus taught and performed many miracles in Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. He chose twelve men to train to be his apostles (people sent out on a mission). He exposed the corruption and religious error of the Jewish leadership, so they plotted to kill him. His claims to be God further fueled their resolve.

After some three years of teaching, Jesus went to Jerusalem to die. He was arrested by a mob, was subjected to illegal "trials" of the Jewish leadership, and was handed over to the Roman governor for crucifixion. He was executed on a cross but rose from the dead on the third day and spent time with his disciples over a period of forty days. Then, he ascended to heaven. His birth, life, death, and resurrection fulfilled all the hundreds of Messianic prophecies precisely.

The Apostles Preach the Good News to the Jews

Ten days after Jesus' ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles. They preached to a huge crowd of Jews in Jerusalem during the festival of Pentecost. Thousands were persuaded that Jesus had really been the Messiah (called Christ in Greek). They asked the apostles how to be saved. "Repent and be baptized," the apostles answered, and three thousand obeyed that day. More followed. This message of salvation, provided by Jesus' sacrifice and received by baptism, was called the good news (or "gospel," to use the older English word). The followers of Jesus were called his disciples and, later, Christians.

The saved comprised the church (kingdom) Jesus had promised to build. The unbelieving Jews violently persecuted Jesus' disciples. The disciples fled Jerusalem and spread the good news elsewhere. Jesus appeared to a zealous persecutor, Saul of Tarsus. Saul was baptized and chosen to be an apostle. He became better known by his Roman name, Paul.

The Good News Spreads to the Gentiles

Meanwhile, the good news had spread into Samaria. Peter, one of the apostles, was sent to preach the good news to the first Gentiles (non-Jews). Gentiles joining the church fulfilled the promise that the Messiah would bless all the nations.

Paul went on three great journeys around the empire to preach, resulting in the formation of local churches in many cities. Jewish unbelievers persecuted Paul and the Christians in many places, but the kingdom of Christ continued to grow.

The Holy Spirit used the pen of Paul to write many of the New Testament letters to churches and individuals. Until the New Testament was completed, God provided his word through the apostles and other prophets within the churches, granting them miraculous abilities to confirm that they were true prophets. Issues addressed in these letters included unity between Jewish and Gentile Christians, enduring persecution, watching out for and correcting false teaching, correcting sin, encouragement, and instructions for worship and the work of the local church.

Paul was imprisoned once, due to the efforts of unbelieving Jews, but he was eventually released. He was later imprisoned again and ultimately executed. His letters imply that he made a fourth preaching journey between his imprisonments. Peter and some of the other apostles were executed as well. Some of their deaths were recorded or prophesied in Scripture but most are only passed on through traditional stories.

The Fall of Jerusalem

For rejecting the Christ, God punished the Jews. The Jews launched a full-scale rebellion against Rome in 66 AD. It seemed to be working at first, but the Roman army besieged Jerusalem and, in 70 AD, destroyed the city and leveled the temple. To this day, the temple has not been rebuilt. Consequently, it has been impossible to practice the Law of Moses ever since. With this event, Jewish persecution waned.

A few decades later, the Roman emperor began to persecute Christians. In 313 AD, Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity, officially ending the persecution, but other threats had arisen.

After the First Century

Originally, each church was overseen by its own group of elders (bishops). Over the next several centuries, that design changed until one man claimed the title of universal bishop (pope). This and other errors were foretold by the apostles. The Catholic Church was born.

The Greek translation of the Old Testament, which was widely used in the early church, and the New Testament were translated into Latin (prevalent in the western Roman empire) by Jerome around 400 AD. The product was called the Latin Vulgate Bible.

In the early Middle Ages, Mohammed, a self-proclaimed prophet, founded Islam and composed its religious text, the Koran. His teaching spread throughout the Middle East. Other self-proclaimed prophets have started their own religions and churches in recent centuries.

In the Middle Ages, Jews called the Masoretes produced a restored Hebrew Old Testament. The Masoretic Text is the basis for all English translations of the Old Testament.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some of Catholicism's own began to protest its corruption. The Protestant movement produced a variety of new kinds of churches. Each developed its own creeds and continued to evolve. Many of today's denominations grew out of that movement. The printing press, invented while the movement was in its infancy, made the Bible more available to the people.

Through all the persecutions and errors, the kingdom of the Messiah and the good news of salvation through him have endured and will endure to the end. (Dan. 2:44)

DATE (BC)	EVENT
4000*	Creation
2300*	Flood
2200*	Tower of Babel
1950	Birth of Abram
1875	Three promises to Abram
1660	Jacob's family moves to Egypt
1590	Death of Joseph
1446	Exodus from Egypt
1445	Law of Moses given at Sinai
1406-1399	Conquest of Canaan
1375-1050	Period of the Judges
1050-1010	Saul's reign
1010-970	David's reign
970-930	Solomon's reign
967-960	Temple built
930	Kingdom divided (Israel & Judah)
721	Assyria conquers Samaria
605	Babylon's first attack on Judah
597	Babylon's second attack on Judah
586	Babylon destroys Jerusalem and temple
536	First group of Jews return from exile (Zerubbabel)
516	Temple rebuilt
473	Esther saves the Jews
458	Second group of Jews return from exile (Ezra)
444	Third group of Jews return from exile (Nehemiah)
444	Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt
<i>* dates before Abraham are estimated</i>	

DATE (BC)	EVENT
333	Rise of the Greek Empire
167	Antiochus IV desecrated the temple
164-141	Jews gain independence
63	Romans rule Jews
4	John the Baptist and Jesus born

DATE (AD)	EVENT
26-30	John the Baptist & Jesus preached
30	Jesus crucified, resurrected, ascended
30	Church established
46-48	Paul's first journey
49-52	Paul's second journey
53-57	Paul's third journey
58-62	Paul detained at Caesarea & Rome
63*	Paul's fourth journey
67	Paul executed
68	Peter executed
70	Romans destroy Jerusalem & temple
85-95	John's letters
<i>* Paul's fourth journey is not recorded in Acts but is implied by his later letters</i>	

A detailed timeline of Genesis, with an introduction and notes, is on page 44.

DATE	EMPIRE
911-609 BC	Assyrian Empire
609-539 BC	Babylonian Empire (West)
609-549 BC	Median Empire (East)
539-330 BC	Persian Empire
336-323 BC	Greek Empire
323-27 BC	Greek Kingdoms
27 BC-395 AD	Roman Empire
395-476 AD	West Roman Empire
395-1453 AD	Byzantine Empire (East Roman)

DATES	PERIOD
1445-960 BC	Tabernacle
967-586 BC	First Temple
586-516 BC	(No Temple)
516 BC-70 AD	Second Temple
20 BC-70 AD	Herod's Temple
70 AD-Present	(No Temple)

DATE	GOVERNMENT
1375-1050 BC	Tribal - Independence/subjection (no king)
1050-930 BC	United - Independence (kings)
930-721 BC	Israel - Independence
930-586 BC	Judah - Independence
721 BC	Israel – Assyrian rule
586-536 BC	Judah - Babylonian rule
536-330 BC	Judah - Persian rule
330-198 BC	Judah - Greek rule (Ptolemaic)
198-141 BC	Judah - Greek rule (Seleucid)
141-63 BC	Judah – Independence (priests and kings)
63 BC-395 AD	Judea - Roman rule
1948 AD-Present	Israel - Independence

- I. Creation
 - A. Chronological overview of first week (1:1-2:3)
 - B. Detailed record of day six (2:4-24)
- II. Sin
 - A. Adam and Eve kicked out of Eden (3:1-24)
 - B. Cain murders Abel (4:1-16)
 - C. Genealogies
 - 1. Cain's descendants (4:17-24)
 - 2. Seth to Noah's sons (4:25-5:32)
 - D. Global corruption (6:1-7)
- III. Salvation
 - A. Noah builds the ark (6:8-7:5)
 - B. The flood (7:6-8:19)
 - C. Noah's family (8:20-9:29)
- IV. Nations
 - A. Noah's sons' descendants become the nations (10:1-32)
 - B. Tower of Babel (11:1-9)
 - C. Genealogy: Shem to Abram (11:10-32)
- V. Abraham
 - A. Calling and three promises (12:1-20)
 - B. Lot moved to the Jordan River valley (13:1-18)
 - C. War and Abram rescues Lot (14:1-24)
 - D. Promised son and birth of Ishmael (15:1-18:15)
 - E. God destroys the cities of the Jordan River valley (18:16-19:29)
 - F. Moab and Ammon born (19:30-38)
 - G. Abraham is told to sacrifice Isaac (20:1-22:24)
 - H. Sarah dies (23:1-20)

VI. Isaac

- A. Isaac married Rebekah (24:1-67)
- B. Abraham's death and family (25:1-18)

VII. Jacob and Esau

- A. Jacob gets Esau's birthright and blessing (25:19-28:22)
- B. Jacob's family (29:1-35:29)
- C. Esau's family becomes the nation of Edom (36:1-35)

VIII. Joseph in Egypt

- A. Joseph is taken to Egypt as a slave (Gen. 37:1-36)
- B. Judah and Tamar (38:1-30)
- C. Joseph the servant and prisoner (Gen. 39:1-40:23)
- D. Joseph rises to power in Egypt (Gen. 41:1-57)
- E. Joseph's brothers and father go to Egypt (Gen. 42:1-47:31)
 - 1. Ephraim and Manasseh included in Jacob's blessings (48:1-27)
- F. Jacob dies and is buried in Canaan (Gen. 49:28-50:21)
- G. Joseph dies and is buried (Gen. 50:22-26)

Summary of Genesis

Genesis was written by Moses around 1445 BC for the Israelites. It is a historical narrative and should be interpreted literally. It forms the foundation for the rest of the Bible.

In the beginning, God created everything. He gave the first people a law, but Satan tempted them to break it, and they did. People's sins created a need for salvation, and God prophesied that salvation in his curse on Satan. The righteous were gradually influenced by the unrighteous, leading to a global punishment in which only Noah's family was saved. They repopulated after the flood, but people disobeyed God's command to fill the earth. God confused their languages, forcing them to spread out over the earth.

God called Abram to move to Canaan and gave him three promises: Nation, land, and seed. These promises were repeated to his son, Isaac, and grandson, Jacob (Israel). Jacob had twelve sons. One of them, Joseph, was sold by his jealous brothers and became a servant in Egypt. After being imprisoned on false charges, Joseph was brought to Pharaoh to interpret a dream. Pharaoh promoted Joseph to governor over all Egypt. They stored up food for the coming famine. When the famine struck, Joseph's family went to Egypt for food. Joseph forgave his brothers and provided for his family.

Origins in Genesis

Genesis records the historical background of Israel as well as the other nations.

Nations related to Israel:

Moab and **Ammon** – descended from Abraham's nephew, Lot

Edom – descended from Jacob's brother, Esau

Arabs – descended from Isaac's brother, Ishmael

Two lists of the twelve tribes of Israel:

Sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin

Land allotments: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin

Peoples descended from Noah's sons:

Japheth (European): Medes, Scythians, Greeks

Ham (African): Hittites, Egyptians, Babylonians, Philistines, Amorites, Canaanites

Shem (Semitic): Arabians, Syrians, Persians, Lydians, Israelites, Assyrians

Tracing the promised Messiah through Genesis

The seed (offspring) who would “bruise Satan’s head”, “bless all the families of the earth”, and rule the nations was promised to Eve (3:15), Seth (4:25), Abraham (22:18), Isaac (26:4), Jacob (28:14), and Judah (49:8-12).

Nicknames

Abram (exalted father) was renamed **Abraham** (father of a multitude).

Sarai was renamed **Sarah**. Both names meant “princess.”

Joseph received the Egyptian name, **Zaphenath-paneah**. A precise translation is difficult, but it probably referred to Joseph’s provision during the famine.

Jacob (heel-grabber) was renamed **Israel** (strives with God/God’s prince), after wrestling an angel.

Biblical vs. atheistic views

The days of creation were literal 24-hour periods. (1) Each one had a morning and evening. (2) Genesis is historical narrative, which is a literal style, and there is no reason from the context to interpret the days figuratively. (3) The references to the Genesis account elsewhere in Scripture never indicate that it was figurative. (4) The six-day creation is the basis of the six-day work week and Sabbath law (Exo. 20:8-11).

	Bible	Atheistic theories
Universe	6,000 years	13.7 billion years
Earth	6,000 years	4.5 billion years
Humans (homo sapiens)	6,000 years	300,000 years
Human civilization	6,000 years	6,000 years

Young Earth Creationist (YEC) – Genesis creation is literal. Earth is about 6,000 years old.

Old Earth Creationist (OEC) – Genesis creation is figurative. Earth is 4.5 billion years old.

Theistic Evolutionist – God used evolution to create life. Genesis creation is myth.

Day-Age Theory – Days of creation represent eras of time in which God used evolution.

Gap Theory – People, animals, and plants lived in an era between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 but were destroyed, leaving old fossils. Genesis 1 is a record of a “re-creation.”

Genealogical gaps – Many believe the genealogies in Genesis skip generations, allowing an older Earth.

Questions

1. List the things God created on each day.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

2. Give some reasons to believe that the days of creation were literal 24-hour days.

3. How could there be day/light and dark/night before God made the Sun and Moon?

4. God said, “Let us...” To whom did “us” refer? (Gen. 1:26)

5. In what way are we made in God’s image? (compare Gen. 5:3)

6. Many people claim that there are two different creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2. They cite this as proof that the creation is mythological/allegorical. How do you respond?

7. What law did God give Adam and Eve? What kind of death would occur if they disobeyed?
8. In Genesis 3, the one who tempted Eve came in the form of a serpent. Provide one Scripture which calls that serpent Satan or the devil.
9. Briefly summarize the curses:
 - 1) Satan _____
 - 2) Eve _____
 - 3) Adam _____
10. What Messianic ancestor is revealed in Genesis 3:15?
11. Were the loincloths sufficient clothing? (Gen. 3:7, 21)
12. Find a reference in the New Testament to “the beginning” in Genesis 1-3.
13. What did Eve mean in Genesis 4:25 by another “offspring”? (See Gen. 3:15)

Questions

1. How many children did Adam and Eve have?
2. What was wrong with Cain's offering?
3. What two curses were placed on Cain for murdering his brother?
4. What was Cain afraid of, and how did God solve this problem?
5. What kind of traits are Cain's descendants noted for? What about Seth's descendants?
6. "People began to call upon the name of the Lord." What does that mean? (Gen. 4:26)
7. How does the identical wording in Genesis 1:26 and 5:3 help us understand being made in God's image?
8. What does Abel say to us? (Heb. 11:4; 12:24)

9. How do the legacies of Cain and Abel differ? (Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11)

10. Who is the oldest person whose age is mentioned in the Bible?

11. What was special about Enoch?

12. What did Jude write about Enoch that is not recorded in Genesis?

13. From what son of Adam is Jesus descended?

Additional resources

This article and graphic show the overlapping generations between Adam and Noah, revealing some very interesting facts:

<https://apologeticspress.org/genesis-5-a-timeline-5667/>

Supplement: Are There Gaps in the Genealogies?

It is commonly assumed that the Genesis genealogies contain gaps. Old Earth Creationists need huge gaps to accommodate the atheistic timeline. Even Young Earth Creationists are sometimes swayed to believe in at least some gaps.

Some of the genealogies in Scripture do contain gaps. For example, Matthew abbreviates Jesus' genealogy slightly so that the three sections mention fourteen generations each. However, [1] the organizational motive in Matthew's list is clear, and [2] the unabridged genealogy is found elsewhere (1 Chron. 3). Neither of these conditions is true for Genesis.

Some point to the discrepancy between Gen. 11:12 and Luke 3:36, which involves an additional person, Cainan, between Arphaxad and Shelah. There is a significant debate over the authenticity of this entry. Both sides point to an error at different points in the transmission process. Those who favor its exclusion believe it was a scribal error in early copies of Luke, later copies of the Septuagint, or both. Those who favor its inclusion believe it was accidentally omitted in a few copies of Luke and most non-Greek versions of the Old Testament. Either way, it's very unlikely that both Genesis and Chronicles abridged their genealogies by one generation and that, later, Luke would fill in the gap.

Against the gaps is the following evidence. [1] Cain, Abel, and Seth were obviously Adam's children, since their births and naming are attributed to Eve (Gen. 4:1-2; 25). Enoch, who is listed as the seventh generation in Genesis, is confirmed to be the "seventh from Adam" in Jude 1:14. We know there's no gap between Lamech and Noah, because Lamech named his son Noah. We know there's no gap between Noah and his sons, because those two generations of Noah's family and their wives were the sole survivors of the flood. We know there's no gap between Shem and Arpachshad in Genesis 11, because Shem fathered him just two years after the flood. That leaves only about half of the spots available for these alleged gaps. There are eleven generations listed in Genesis 5, and the only place you

could insert extra generations is between Enoch, Methusaleh, and Lamech. Does it make sense that nine of the eleven generations in Genesis 5 are consecutive and two could contain gaps? [2] The genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1 and Luke 3 agree with the ones in Genesis without any indication of gaps. As noted above, the Cainan is a scribal error, and Matthew's omissions are for obvious reasons. [3] The motive for inserting the gaps is to accommodate the Old Earth view. Evolution proposes that humans (*homo sapiens*) emerged about 300,000 years ago. These hundreds of thousands of years must be inserted between Enoch and Lamech in Genesis 5 or Arpachshad and Terah in Genesis 11. That's nine spots total (two in Genesis 5 and seven in Genesis 11). Consider the average years which must be inserted into each available spot to fit the evolutionary timeline: About 33,000 years each! (It's much more if go beyond the human species in evolution theory). What would be the purpose of a genealogy skipping 33,000 years between some generations? And why would it skip so many generations between some and none between others?

The genealogies in Genesis do not contain gaps. They are consecutive and yield an Earth age of roughly 6,000 years. The atheists' timeline is wrong. The methods they use to date things contains serious flaws.

Other resources on this subject:

<https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/genealogy/are-there-gaps-in-the-genesis-genealogies/>

<https://christiancourier.com/articles/what-is-the-purpose-of-bible-genealogies>

<https://apologeticspress.org/was-cainan-the-son-of-arphaxad-668/>

Questions

GENESIS 6

1. What did the 120 years refer to?
2. How evil had the world become? Provide some descriptions from the text.
3. In modern measurements, about how big was Noah's ark?

GENESIS 7 & 8

4. How many of each animal did God command Noah to bring onto the ark? Why were there more of some than others? (6:19; 7:2; 8:20)
5. How old was Noah when the flood came?
6. How many days and nights did it rain?
7. How long did the earth stay flooded?

GENESIS 9

8. What universal decree was based on the fact that God made man in his image?
9. What do rainbows remind us of?
10. What curse was placed on Canaan?

GENESIS 10

11. Through which of Noah's sons is the Christ descended?

Additional resources

Brief explanation of the nations descended from each of Noah's sons:

<https://apologeticspress.org/ham-in-turkey-3174/>

Map and explanation of the nations descended from each of Noah's sons:

<https://www.thebiblejourney.org/biblejourney2/23-the-journeys-of-adam-enoch-noah-abraham/the-colonisation-of-the-ancient-world/>

** There is some debate about the precise identity of some of the names in Genesis 10. You may find slightly different lists.*

Article on ancient flood legends from around the world:

<https://apologeticspress.org/legends-of-the-flood-64/>

Descendants of Noah:

- by Japheth (Indo-European peoples) e.g. Shinar
- by Ham (African peoples) e.g. CUSH
- by Shem (Semitic peoples) e.g. Aram

attributed to both Ham and Shem e.g. SHEBA

www.thebiblejourney.com

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by Japheth (Indo-European peoples) e.g. Shinar
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Questions

TOWER OF BABEL

1. In whose kingdom was the tower begun? What other great city did this man build later?
2. Is the Tower of Babel a myth about the origin of languages or a historically accurate record? How do you know?
3. Why did the people build the tower? What was wrong with it? (Gen. 9:7; 1:28)
4. What does “Babel” mean?
5. What do we learn about God’s will and power from this?

ABRAM – THE PROMISES

6. Use a Bible map for the following questions.
 - 1) Which direction did Abram travel from Ur to Haran? _____
 - 2) Which direction did Abram travel from Haran to Canaan? _____

7. Stephen stated that Terah died in Haran before Abram left there and moved to Canaan (Acts 7:4). Terah died at age 205 (Gen. 11:32), and Abram left Haran at age 75 (Gen. 12:4). How old was Terah when Abram was born, and how do you explain Genesis 11:26?

8. Who were the Chaldeans?

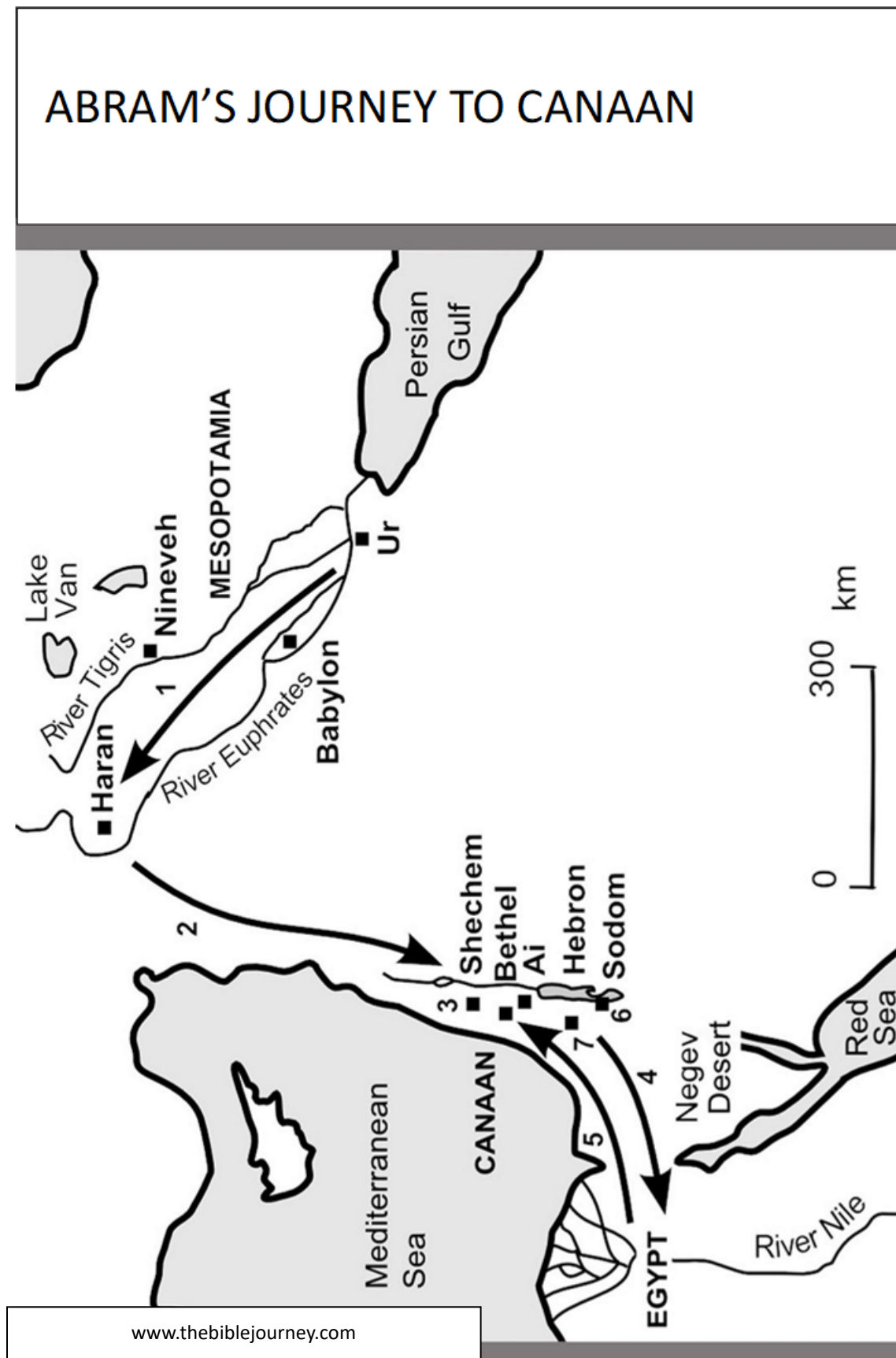
9. Did Abram's ancestors serve God in Ur? (Josh. 24:2-3)

10. List the three promises made to Abram and provide at least one Scripture recording its fulfillment.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

Additional resources

Great maps for the book of Genesis:

<https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/bj-maps-ed-en-egypt/>



Supplement: 400 Years of Sojourning & Affliction

*Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for **four hundred years**.”* (Gen. 15:13)

From Jacob’s move to Egypt to the Exodus was 215 years (see notes on the timeline). The actual enslavement of the Israelites lasted between 80 and 145 years¹. Therefore, the 400-year period must include more than the Egyptian slavery. This 400-year period applied to Abraham’s “offspring,” so Abraham’s sojourning is not included.

The prophecy about the 400 years was given not long after Abraham’s arrival in Canaan at age 75 (Gen. 12:4). Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 (Gen. 21:5). When Isaac was a young boy, Abraham held a feast (Gen. 21:8-9). Ishmael, who was half-Egyptian, laughed at Isaac (Gen. 16:1). This was the beginning of the “affliction” of Abraham’s offspring (Gal. 4:21-31). It continued in the various troubles with the natives of Canaan and reached its peak in the harsh slavery in Egypt. The sojourn began when Abraham moved to Canaan, 430 years before the exodus (Heb. 11:9). The affliction of his offspring began when Ishmael mocked Isaac, 400 years before the exodus.

Footnotes:

¹ Joseph lived about 70 years after his family moved to Egypt, and there was no slavery while he and the Pharaoh that knew him were alive (Exo. 1:6-14; see timeline). Taking 70 years from the 215 total years in Egypt leaves 145 years as the maximum possible length of the slavery. Pharaoh’s order to kill the Hebrew male babies was already in effect when Moses was born, and Moses was 80 at the exodus (Exo. 1:15-2:10; 7:7; Acts 7:23, 30, 36). Therefore, the enslavement lasted between 80 and 145 years. Between the family’s move to Egypt and their enslavement, they multiplied from 70 people to a multitude great enough to concern Pharaoh.

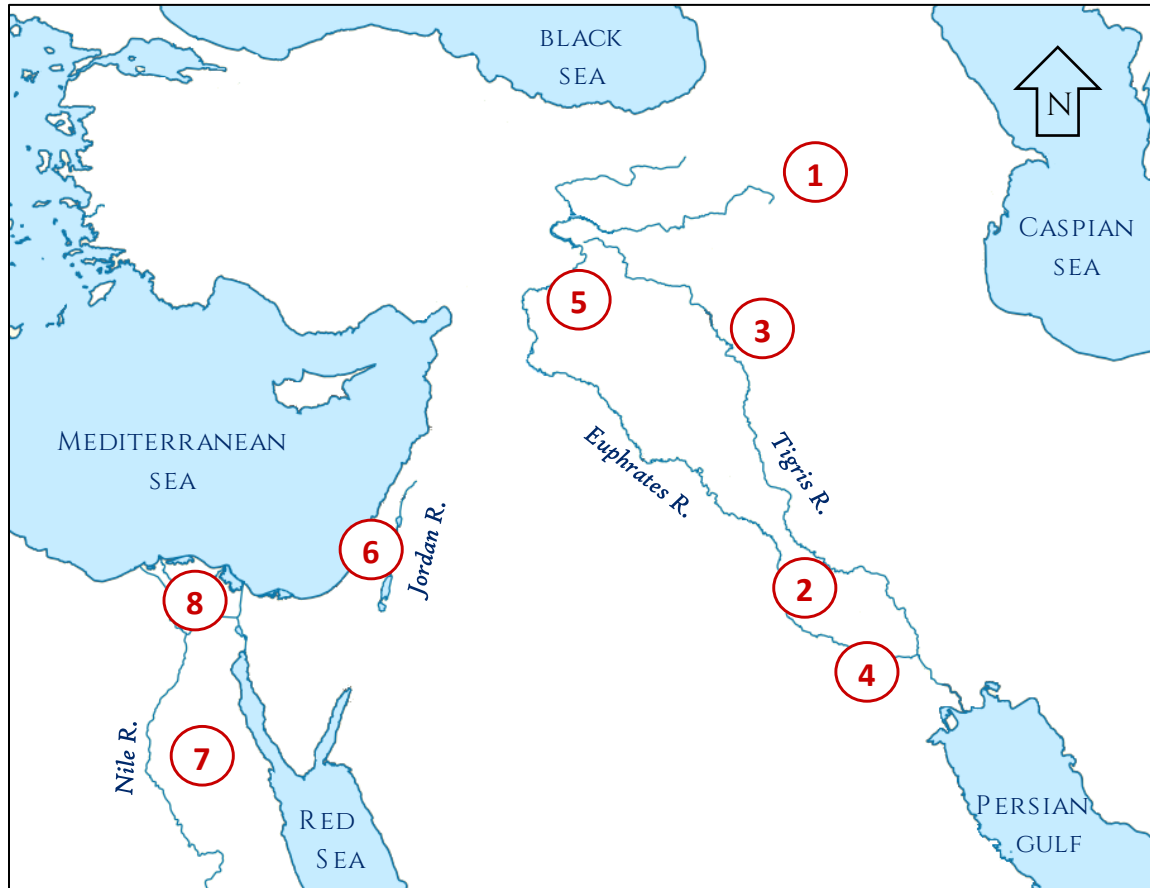
Questions

1. How was Lot related to Abraham?
2. Lot chose the cities of the Jordan River Valley. What did he base that decision on?
3. Was Lot righteous? How did living in Sodom affect him? (2 Peter 2:7-8)
4. What led to Lot being captured, and who rescued him?
5. Who was Melchizedek? In what other book(s) of the Bible is he mentioned?
6. Abraham pleaded for God to spare the cities for the sake of the righteous people living in them. In the end, how many righteous people were found?
7. It is popular today to argue that Sodom's sin was not homosexuality but inhospitality. Can you find a verse which specifically cites homosexuality as the reason for Sodom's destruction?

8. Why was Lot's wife punished?
9. Who ultimately escaped the destruction? How many cities, if any, were spared?
10. What happened when Lot got drunk? Do you think Lot would've done this if he'd been sober?
11. What two nations were descended from Lot?
12. Make a list of Lot's poor decisions.

MAP ACTIVITY: KEY LOCATIONS IN EARLY BIBLICAL HISTORY

Identify the numbered locations on the map by putting the correct numbers in the boxes below.



Canaan

Nineveh

Ur

Egypt

Babel (Babylon)

Mt. Ararat

Haran

Goshen

Questions

1. Why did Abraham have a child with Hagar?
2. What was God's prophecy concerning Hagar's son?
3. What does "Ishmael" mean, and why was he named this?
4. What do "Abram" and "Abraham" mean?
5. What is a covenant?
6. Although Abraham and Sarah believed God and had the promised son, why did they struggle with doubt at times?
7. How old were Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was born?
8. What's the meaning and story behind Isaac's name?

9. Which son do Muslims believe Abraham took to be sacrificed? Does the Koran name this son?

10. Read Hebrews 6:13-18. What are the “two unchangeable things”?

11. According to Hebrews 11:19, what did Abraham consider when he prepared to offer Isaac?

Additional resources

An article detailing Ishmael’s descendants:

<https://www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/cms/what-happened-to-ishmaels-descendants/>

Questions

1. What did God reveal to Rebekah about the twin boys before they were born?
2. List a few differences between Esau and Jacob.
3. Why did Esau trade his birthright? How is this decision described in Heb. 12:14-17?
4. What nation descended from Esau?
5. What was Edom's interaction with Israel throughout history? (Num. 20:14-21; 1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:13; 2 Kings 14:7; Oba. 1:10-12)
6. What lie did Isaac tell in Gerar? Who else had done this? (Gen. 12:10-20; 20:1-18)
7. Describe Isaac's relationship with the Philistines.

8. When Abimelech returned with his adviser and commander, what did he want from Isaac?
9. How did Rebekah and Jacob deceive Isaac?
10. What did Jacob see in his dream?
11. What did Bethel mean?
12. List the names and nationalities of Esau's wives.

Questions

1. How was Jacob related to Rachel and Leah?
2. Why did Laban give away Leah first? What did Jacob have to do to get Rachel?
3. List Jacob's children by their mother.
 - 1) Leah – _____, _____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____
 - 2) Bilhah – _____, _____
 - 3) Zilpah – _____, _____
 - 4) Rachel – _____, _____
4. What are some factors that contributed to the tension between Jacob and Laban?
5. Did Laban seem to believe in God? Did he believe in other gods?
6. What did Jacob pray about before meeting Esau?

7. How did Esau react upon seeing Jacob and his family?

8. What does Israel mean?

9. What happened to Dinah? How did Simeon and Levi avenge her?

Questions

1. Give three reasons Joseph's brothers hated him.
2. What did Joseph's brothers call him? (Gen. 37:19)
3. Most of Joseph's brothers wanted to kill him. Which ones did not? What did they propose to do instead?
4. How did Joseph's brothers explain his disappearance to their father?
5. Who was Joseph sold to?
6. What happened to Judah's sons, Er and Onan?
7. What wicked thing did Judah do after his wife died?
8. Judah was quick to call for Tamar's execution. What made him change his mind?
9. What son of Judah was an ancestor of Jesus?

Questions

1. Why did Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his house?
2. Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph persistently. How did Joseph respond?
3. What men were in prison with Joseph, and what happened to them?
4. What favor did Joseph ask of the cupbearer? Did the cupbearer do it?
5. Briefly describe Pharaoh's dreams.
6. What did Pharaoh's dreams mean?
7. To whom did Joseph give credit for the interpretations?
8. What did Pharaoh do to Joseph for interpreting the dreams?

9. About how many years passed from the time Joseph's brothers sold him to his rise to power in Egypt? (Gen. 37:2; 41:46)

10. Who did Joseph marry?

11. What were Joseph's sons' names, and what did they mean?

Questions

1. How widespread was the famine?
2. Why did Egypt have grain?
3. What prophecy was fulfilled in Genesis 42:6 and 43:28? (Gen. 37:5-11)
4. Why do you think Jacob was so protective of Benjamin?
5. What trick did Joseph pull on his brothers twice? Why did he do it?
6. Joseph’s brothers had sold him to get rid of him. What was the greater purpose for Joseph ending up in Egypt?
7. When Joseph’s brothers learned his identity, what do you think they expected him to do to them?
8. What did God promise Jacob in the night visions at Beersheba?

9. How many of Jacob’s people went to Egypt?

10. Stephen gave a different number in Acts 7:14. Why might his number have been different?

11. Where is Goshen? Why did the Israelites settle there? How long did they live there?
(Exo. 8:22; 9:26)

12. Challenge question: Which of Jacob’s grandchildren did not go to Egypt? Why?

Questions

1. What kind of “tax” did Joseph create for Egypt?
2. How old was Jacob when he died? How many years did he live in Egypt?
3. Why did Reuben lose his birthright? (1 Chron. 5:1-2; Gen 35:22)
4. Who had been killed by Simeon and Levi? Why?
5. What kind of special treatment did Joseph’s sons get from Jacob?
6. What was significant about Jacob’s blessing for Judah?
7. Where was Jacob buried? Who else was buried there?
8. How old was Joseph when he died? About how many years had he lived in Egypt?
9. Who carried Joseph’s bones out of Egypt? Where was he finally buried? (Exo. 13:19; Josh. 24:32)

Questions

1. Name the prophesied Messianic ancestor in each verse.

- 1) Gen. 3:15 _____
- 2) Gen. 4:25 _____
- 3) Gen. 22:18 _____
- 4) Gen. 26:4 _____
- 5) Gen. 28:14 _____
- 6) Gen. 49:8-12 _____

2. How many people were saved in the ark when God flooded the earth?

3. Briefly explain the origin of nations and languages.

4. Give at least one reason that the creation, flood, and Tower of Babel should be interpreted literally.

5. Explain the genealogical relationship between Israel each of the following nations.

- 1) Ammon and Moab (Gen. 19:36-38; 12:5) _____
- 2) Edom (Gen. 36:1; 25:25-26) _____
- 3) Arabic tribes (Gen. 25:12-18; 16:11-12) _____

6. List the three promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
7. What two similes did God use to describe the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? (Gen. 22:17)
8. Who was Melchizedek?
9. What was the consequence of not being circumcised? (Gen. 17:14)
10. We read of many fathers blessing their sons. Were these blessings merely the desires of the fathers or something more?
11. What does “profane” mean? In what way was Esau “profane”? (Heb. 12:16, ASV, KJV, NKJV)
12. Describe faith in your own words.

13. Read Hebrews 11:21-22. Explain how each action required faith.

1) Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph (Gen. 48:1-20) _____

2) Jacob leaned on the top of his staff and worshiped (this refers to him putting Joseph under oath to have him buried in Canaan with Abraham and Isaac – Gen. 47:29-31) _____

3) Joseph mentioned the exodus and gave instructions for burying his bones (Gen. 50:24-26) _____

14. Why did Jacob and Joseph want to be buried in Canaan?

15. What other people from Genesis are mentioned in Hebrews 11? What did each one do by faith?

16. Name at least one Messianic prophecy in Genesis which Jesus fulfilled.

17. List the twelve tribes of Israel by both ways they may be counted. (Josh 13:14; 16:4)

1) Sons of Jacob: _____

2) Land allotments: _____

18. Describe Joseph's dreams, their meanings, and when they were fulfilled.

19. Describe Pharaoh's dreams and their meanings.

20. Did you learn anything new in this study? Did you remember anything you'd learned before but forgotten?

21. Do you have any questions about Genesis? Do you have any recommended study resources?

A Detailed Timeline of Genesis: Introduction & Notes

Have you ever wondered why many Bible timelines differ? Isn't it a simple task of addition? For the most part, yes, but there are a few complications that result in most of the minor differences you see. A few debated points of divergence are discussed below.

There are reasonably firm, widely accepted dates: Solomon built the temple from 966 to 960 BC and the Exodus occurred in 1446 BC. These come from both secular and Biblical history. There are also a few anchor points in the Bible which help us skip over some of the complications and provide a reliable framework. Solomon began to build the temple 480 years after the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1). The Law, given in the same year as the Exodus, came 430 years after God's promise to Abraham (Gal. 3:16-18).

In 1650 AD, James Ussher produced a monumental chronicle of history, including a detailed timeline based on the Bible. Most timelines today are still based on his work.

Terah was 130 when he had Abram. Genesis 11:26 says that Terah was 70, but that refers to his age when his first son was born. The sons are not listed in birth order. (The same is true for Noah's sons in Genesis 5:32). Acts 7:4 states that Abram left Haran after Terah died, and Genesis 12:4 states that Abram departed Haran when he was 75. Terah died at age 205 (Gen. 11:32). Simple math ($205-75=130$) provides Terah's age when Abram was born. This interpretation is widely accepted.

Only 215 years passed between Jacob's move to Egypt and the Exodus. Exodus 12:40 reads: *The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years* (ESV). But Paul put the whole period from Abram's move to the Exodus at 430 years (Gal. 3:16-18). The different texts of the Old Testament reveal the solution. All English Bibles are based on the Masoretic Text, a Jewish restoration of the Hebrew Scriptures produced in the Middle Ages. Generally, it's considered the most accurate version. Two other important versions are the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch. The Septuagint (or LXX) refers to the Greek translation of the Old Testament produced a few centuries before Jesus. The Samaritan Pentateuch is a version of Genesis through Deuteronomy produced and used by the Samaritans. Both predate the Masoretic Text by many centuries.

In Exodus 12:40, the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch have identical readings that include information missing from the Masoretic: *Now the sojourning of the children of Israel **and of their fathers**, which they sojourned **in the land of Canaan and** in the land of Egypt was 430 years.*

The Masoretic begins at Jacob's move to Egypt. The Septuagint and Samaritan begin with Abram's move to Canaan, which agrees with Paul (and other Scriptures). The words supplied in these versions were lost in the Masoretic Text and, therefore, in our English translations. Some Bibles have footnotes on the verse, but most do a poor job of illuminating the matter. From Abram's move to Canaan to Jacob's move to Egypt was 215 years, and from that to the Exodus was another 215 years. Nearly all Bible chronologists and commentators accept this view, called the "Short Sojourn" (in contrast to the "Long Sojourn"). This view also has the support of Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian.

The Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch differ a lot from the Masoretic, especially with numbers. You can find charts comparing the genealogical ages in these texts online¹. The Masoretic is almost universally held to be correct. The Septuagint puts creation at about 5554 BC, where the Masoretic puts it at about 3958 BC.

You may encounter some strange date systems (BCE, CE, AM) instead of BC and AD. BC means "Before Christ" and AD means "Anno Domini" (Year of the Lord). BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era) are simply secular alternatives (BCE is BC and CE is AD). Anno Mundi (AM) counts years from creation. There are Jewish (Masoretic) and Byzantine Christian (Septuagint) versions of this system. I used "AC" (After Creation) for my own timeline to distinguish it from the AM chronologies.

Building a Biblical timeline is not quite as straightforward as it seems, but the goal of getting a rough idea of history is accomplished, despite some minor complications.

Footnote:

¹ <https://www.bible.ca/manuscripts/Bible-chronology-charts-age-of-earth-date-Genesis-5-11-Septuagint-text-LXX-original-autograph-corrupted-Masoretic-MT-primeval-5554BC.htm>
(Note that the author favors the Septuagint and the Long Sojourn.)

YEAR (BC)	EVENT	TEXT	YEAR (AC)
3958	Creation	1:1	0
3828	Seth born	5:3	130
3723	Enosh born	5:6	235
3633	Kenan born	5:9	325
3563	Mahalalel born	5:12	395
3498	Jared born	5:15	460
3336	Enoch born	5:18	622
3271	Methuselah born	5:21	687
3084	Lamech born	5:25	874
3028	Adam died	5:5	930
2971	Enoch taken	5:23	987
2916	Seth died	5:8	1042
2902	Noah born	5:28-29	1056
2818	Enosh died	5:11	1140
2723	Kenan died	5:14	1235
2668	Mahalalel died	5:17	1290
2422	Judgment decreed	6:3	1536
2400	Shem born	11:10	1558
2307	Lamech died	5:31	1651
2302	Methuselah died	5:27	1656
2302	Flood began	7:6	1656
2300	Arpachshad born	11:10	1658
2265	Shelah born	11:12	1693
2235	Eber born	11:14	1723
2201	Peleg born	11:16	1757
2171	Reu born	11:18	1787
2139	Serug born	11:20	1819
2109	Nahor born	11:22	1849
2080	Terah born	11:24	1878
1962	Peleg died	11:18-19	1996
1961	Nahor died	11:24-25	1997
1952	Noah died	9:29	2006
1950	Abram born	11:26	2008
1940	Sarai born	17:17	2018

YEAR (BC)	EVENT	TEXT	YEAR (AC)
1932	Reu died	11:20-21	2026
1909	Serug died	11:22-23	2049
1875	Terah died	11:32	2083
1875	Abram called, left Haran	12:4	2083
1864	Ishmael born	16:16	2094
1862	Arpachshad died	11:12-13	2096
1851	Abram & Sarai renamed; circumcision	17:1-21	2107
1851	Destruction of Sodom, etc.	18:10	2107
1850	Isaac born	21:5	2108
1832	Shelah died	11:14-15	2126
1813	Sarah died	23:1	2145
1810	Isaac married Rebekah	25:20	2148
1800	Shem died	11:10-11	2158
1790	Jacob & Esau born	25:26	2168
1775	Abraham died	25:7	2183
1771	Eber died	11:16-17	2187
1750	Esau married Judith & Basemath	26:34	2208
1727	Ishmael died	25:17	2231
1720	Jacob began working for Laban	29:20	2238
1713	Jacob married Leah and Rachel	29:15-30	2245
1700	Jacob completed labor for Laban	31:41	2258
1700	Joseph born	30:22-24	2258
1683	Joseph's brothers sold him	37:2, 28	2275
1670	Isaac died	35:28	2288
1670	Joseph promoted in Egypt	41:46	2288
1663	Famine begins	41:53-54	2295
1661	Jacob & family move to Egypt	47:9	2297
1643	Jacob died	47:28	2315
1590	Joseph died	50:26	2368
1526	Moses born	Exo. 2:1-10	2432
1446	Exodus	Exo. 12:40	2512



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