

From Eden to Patmos
An Overview of Biblical History



TIMOTHY W. BERREY

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DEDICATION



This book was originally written for my students in Bible History & Geography class at Bob Jones Memorial Bible College, Quezon City, Philippines, to whom I dedicate this volume.

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INTRODUCTION

Every now and then in our Bible college in the Philippines, I teach a class on Bible History and Geography. I have quite a few pictures from Holy Land trips and various other resources, so the Geography part of the class is not a problem. But for years I have felt like the history part of the class lacked something, and I was not sure how to meet the need.

In-depth volumes on biblical history abound, but I needed something more simple, something more like an overview, that would help my students piece together the flow of events and people in the Bible. I wanted a resource that dealt with Bible chronology, but without overwhelming the reader or getting so bogged down in details that one loses sight of the biblical storyline. It needed to be conservative in its viewpoint—something that takes the numbers in the Bible at face value. It must cover the whole Bible, not just one of the Testaments. It should focus on the actual history of the Bible and not, as so many other excellent resources do, on the messages of the individual books of the Bible. It ought to escort the reader through the biblical story in such a way that it demonstrates how events, people, and even books interrelate to each other. For example, where does the prophecy of Habakkuk fit into the overall “story” of the Old Testament? Or how does one connect the lives of Eli and Samuel to the twelve judges featured in the book of Judges? In the New Testament, how do Paul’s travels in Acts fit with the “itinerary information” that he gives in some of his epistles?

Eventually, I decided to write my own overview of biblical history. The project grew until it morphed into what you hold in your hand. Believe me, I wish it were better. But I am still optimistic enough to think it will accomplish at least some of the purposes I have stated above. I hope that it will help you follow the chronological track of the biblical storyline and better “peg” the timeframe of the

people and events of the Bible. Hopefully, it will ease you into biblical chronology without scaring you away or drowning you with detail.

To be sure, the Bible was not primarily written to provide a detailed chronology, but it includes enough chronological information to make it obvious that God wants us to note the passing of time in biblical history and even synchronize it to the events of the outside world. He wants us to know that the grand events of redemption and the men and women who were His instruments in them are historical facts. These people really lived, really heard from God, really walked with Him, really made a difference in their generation, and really died. In the case of One, Jesus, He really died and rose again.

In the pages that follow, I will discuss matters of chronology and set forth the dates commonly advocated by conservatives. I make no apology for the fact that I hold firmly to the inerrancy of Scripture and to the integrity of its numbers. As mentioned above, one purpose of this book is to alert the believing reader to dates that are not really conservative, even though they are set forth by professing evangelicals.

I also want to admit the tenuousness of some of our fixed or absolute dates. There are grave challenges to integrating our modern system of calculating time with the various ancient ways of doing so.¹ Inevitably, there are assumptions one has to make or interpretations of the data which will alter slightly (or even significantly) the results.² For those interested in further discussion of chronology and how scholars arrive at fixed dates for biblical events, see Appendix A.

The dates I have chosen to follow for this overview of biblical history are reflected in the chart below. Those acquainted with chronology will be able to see quickly where I stand on certain issues and the “sides” that I have taken. Deciding some fixed dates has not been easy. Sometimes I have had to choose between competing options that were almost equally attractive or compelling. Time and further discovery will no doubt prove me wrong on a few of the choices I have made, but I hope the reader will still walk away with a better feel for the chronological track of the biblical storyline as it unfolds from beginning to end.

Reading this book is like embarking on a journey through time. I believe that the journey is a very important one and worth embarking on for the first time, for those who have never traveled this story before, or even trekking through again, for those with a fair acquaintance of it.

Let the journey begin!

**CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW
OF BIBLE HISTORY**

Approximate Dates	Designation	Brief Synopsis
Creation-2091	BEGINNINGS	From Creation until the death of Terah, the father of Abraham
2091-1876	THE “FATHERS”	Abraham’s arrival in the land of Canaan until Jacob’s migration into Egypt
1876-1446	SOJOURN IN EGYPT	The family of Jacob sojourns in Egypt and grows into a mighty multitude
1446-1406	FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS	Israel exits Egypt en route to the Promised Land but, because of rebellion at Kadesh, ends up wandering in the wilderness for forty years
1406-1051	CONQUEST AND JUDGES	Israel conquers the Promised Land under Joshua and then is ruled by judges
1051-586	HEBREW MONARCHY	The start of the United Monarchy (1051-931) under King Saul, the Divided Monarchy (931-722), and the sole Kingdom of Judah (722-586) until the Fall of Jerusalem
586-424	EXILE AND RESTORATION	The Fall of Jerusalem until the last recorded Biblical events of the Restoration Period
424-6 BC	BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS	So-called Silent Years—the four hundred years between the Old and the New Testaments
6 BC-AD 33	INCARNATION & MINISTRY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH	From the time that the angel appeared to Zechariah in the Temple until Jesus’ ascension from the Mount of Olives
AD 33-62	CHURCH’S FIRST 30 YEARS	From the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost until the end of Paul’s two-year imprisonment in Rome
AD 62-98	END OF THE APOSTOLIC ERA	From the end of Paul’s two-year imprisonment in Rome until the death of the Apostle John

CHAPTER ONE



BEGINNINGS

Date It! (All dates BC)

- Ussher's Date for Creation 4004
- Creation (if gaps in genealogies) *ca.* 8000-7000
- Flood *ca.* 6000-5000
- Tower of Babel *ca.* 5000-4000
- Birth of Terah (Abraham's father) 2296

Can You Believe It?

- John Lightfoot and Archbishop Ussher both calculated the date of Creation as October 23, 4004 BC. Lightfoot even added a starting time: 9:00 am!
- Secular experts regularly point to Mesopotamia as the “cradle of civilization,” the place where human history begins. This agrees with the Bible's description of where Eden was located.
- Jericho is the only city below sea level and is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world.
- Multiple ancient cultures had Flood stories (e.g., Sumerian King List, Gilgamesh Epic). Some of these go back to the third millennium BC. One such story (Sumerian King List) even records the radical drop in life span between those living before the Flood and those living after the Flood.
- The oldest written records go back to at least 3000 BC. Sumerian history speaks of a golden age of peace when all spoke only one language.³

BIBLICAL HISTORY BEGINS WITH A MIRACLE: God’s creation of the world *ex nihilo* (“out of nothing”). The author of Hebrews is clear that God spoke the world into existence (11:3). By “world,” we do not mean our planet only, but the universe in its entirety, everything ever created. “God created the heavens and the earth” is the Bible’s opening line and the logical starting point of all that follows. The last book of the Bible reminds us that God created everything and that everything exists because He wants it to; and, therefore, He—and He alone—deserves all glory, honor, and power (Rev. 4:11).

CREATION—THE WORLD’S FIRST WEEK

God completed His work of Creation, an incredible display of His infinite power, in only six days. Whereas moderns reject the six days as impossibly too short, earlier theologians struggled over them for the opposite reason: why would an omnipotent God need six days to speak the world into existence? Genesis 1, however, clearly describes them as six literal days with an evening and morning. Only by opting for the least plausible contextual meaning of *yom* can one interpret them any other way.⁴ Furthermore, to inject eons of time into the week of Creation seems completely foreign to the language of Genesis 1, and is frankly a capitulation to the theory of evolution.⁵

In the first three days, God formed the earth. In the last three days, He filled that which He had formed. On the seventh day, He rested. Everything He made was good, and the sum total of it all (even at the end of the week of Creation) was still very good. That alone suggests that no sin, death, Tempter, or curse had yet blemished His perfect Creation.⁶

By the end of Genesis 1, we have already learned much about God: He is uncreated, eternal, sovereign, powerful, wise, creative, communicative (and therefore personal), a plural One, and good. Genesis 2 further identifies this God as Yahweh, traditionally pronounced as Jehovah (2:4ff). This name of God is related to the Hebrew verb of being and reminds us that God exists in a way entirely unique from all the rest of His Creation.

Yet, the Creation account in Genesis 1-2 only begins God’s self-portrait: the rest of biblical history, as it unfolds on the canvas of Scripture, continues to paint His picture. But even when the canonical witness is complete, it has sketched only the edges of His ways.

CREATION WEEK

Formed the Universe		Filled the Universe	
Day 1	Light (separated from darkness)	Day 4	Lights
Day 2	Firmament (separating waters above from waters below)	Day 5	Fish & birds
Day 3	Dry land (separated from oceans)	Day 6	Animals & humans
Day 7 God rested from all that He had made			

The pinnacle of God’s creative work was the Creation of mankind in His own image on Day 6. Human history thus began with the special and direct formation of the first man, Adam (2:7), and then his wife, Eve (2:21-22). From the beginning, mankind was a curious mixture of the mortal (“dust”) and the immortal (“breath of life”). God placed mankind in a beautiful Garden in Eden. Eden was the name of a larger area of which the Garden was only a part. The four rivers named in Genesis 2:11-14 provide the only clue to its location. The two that are known, the Tigris (“Hiddekel,” Gen. 2:14) and the Euphrates, are the basis for the name Mesopotamia (“between the rivers”). The Pishon may have been to the southwest (of the Euphrates) and the Gihon to the east. This suggests that the Garden, where human history begins, was somewhere in southern or northern Mesopotamia.⁷ The Garden provided everything that humankind needed: food, water, work, responsibility, a source of enduring life, and an opportunity to choose obedience to their Creator. Unfortunately, they chose disobedience and lost the Garden. When Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, they apparently remained in Eden, but east of the Garden (which is why God placed the cherubim guard on that side, 3:24). When Cain left to build his own city, he journeyed east out of Eden (4:16).

MAN’S FALL INTO SIN

We do not know how long it was after Creation that Adam and Eve fell into sin. Since the restriction to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a test, God (the thought is) would not have continued the restriction forever. Once man had sufficiently proven his choice to obey his Creator, God would have confirmed them in a state of holiness and ended the test. This is admittedly conjecture. What is more

clear is that once Adam and Eve disobeyed, God cast them out of the Garden in order to keep them from eating of the Tree of Life and continuing in their unredeemed state. In an ironic way, it was an act of God's grace—God has much more planned for man than for him to live in eternal death.

Adam and Eve's Fall into sin resulted in a three-part curse. First, the curse on the serpent lay, in part, in the enmity that would exist between him and the woman (3:15). This is not a reference to women's native dislike for snakes but to a spiritual dimension: Satan may have triumphed over the woman in the Garden, but he did not win her or her descendants to himself as his permanent devotees. Instead, two lines of people would emerge in human history between which there would be constant enmity, and eventually the Seed of the woman would rise to crush him.

This marvelous prophecy is called the *protevangelium* because it is the first preaching of the Gospel. Thousands of years later, the Apostle Paul referred back to this promise when he assured the believers in Rome that God would shortly crush Satan under their feet (Rom. 16:20). The victory Christ purchased on the cross assures a triumph for all those descendants of Eve who are heirs of her faith.

Second, Eve was cursed in relation to her role in the family. Childbearing would no longer be easy, and her relationship to her husband would be a constant battleground. Last, Adam was cursed in the field; the challenge of work in a fallen world would prove a source of constant sorrow and frustration (Gen. 3:16-17).

The effects of the Fall are immediately visible. Eve gives birth and hopes her son is the promised Deliverer (4:1). Instead, he (Cain) and his brother Abel personify the enmity that God promised would exist between the women's descendants and the serpent's. Cain's enmity of his righteous brother incites him to the first act of murder (4:5-10). His line of descendants continues his ungodly ways and carries them even further. The seventh from Adam through Cain, Lamech, takes two wives and boasts of revengeful murder (4:19, 23-24).

The seed of the serpent had certainly reared up its ugly head in Lamech, but what about the seed of the woman, those who would battle against the serpent's descendants? Her seed will emerge through Seth, whose descendants will call upon the name of the Lord (4:26). Whereas the seventh from Adam through Cain was Lamech, the seventh from Adam through Seth was Enoch, whose walk with God so pleased Him that he never died. The contrast is sharp and deliberate: the seventh through Cain embodies all that is wicked; the seventh through Seth all that is godly.

We should make one more observation from Genesis 4 before we press onward in the story of man's earliest generations. Genesis 4 reveals that man was civilized

from the beginning. Cain himself built a city (v. 17). Some of his earliest descendants keep domesticated livestock, make and play musical instruments, and forge tools of iron and bronze (vv. 20-22). The belief that modern man evolved from ignorant stone-age cave dwellers distorts the biblical picture. Man *fell* into such ignorance from much loftier beginnings.

GENESIS 5—FIRST OF TWO IMPORTANT GENEALOGIES

Two very important genealogies (Genesis 5 and 11) trace key people in earth’s earliest generations from Adam to Abraham. The two genealogies share a certain symmetry⁸ (see chart below). The first (Genesis 5) leads us to Noah who, because of his righteousness, experienced God’s deliverance of his family from worldwide judgment. The second (Genesis 11) escorts us to Abraham who, by his faith, becomes the father of the Messianic race.

COMPARISON OF TWO GENEALOGIES

Genesis 5		Genesis 11	
Adam	930 years	Shem	600 years
Seth	912 years	Arpaxad (Arpachsad)	438 years
Enosh	905 years	[Cainan (see Luke 3:36)]	[360 years?]
Kenan	910 years	Shelah	433 years
Mahalalel	895 years	Eber	464 years
Jared	962 years	Peleg	239 years
Enoch	365 years	Reu	239 years
Methuselah	969 years	Serug	230 years
Lamech	777 years	Nahor	148 years
Noah	950 years	Terah	205 years
Shem, Ham, and Japheth		Abraham, Nahor, and Haran	

The Genesis 5 genealogy covers about 1,556 years of human history—from Adam to the birth of Noah’s three sons. If this genealogy is without a gap, then about

1,656 years elapsed between Creation and the Flood (in Noah's 600th year) and Methuselah died right before the Flood (in fact, the same year as the Flood).

THE FLOOD

A major event of early biblical history is the Flood. It is the next great summit of revelation after the Creation and Fall of Man, and out of it comes God's first clearly recorded covenant with an individual (6:18; 9:9, 11-13, 15). The wickedness of man had so escalated that only a worldwide catastrophe that would sweep away all human offenders could satisfy the offended justice of God. God's regret over man's sinfulness (Gen. 6:6) does not imply a change in God or that He wished He had done things differently. It simply communicates that God feels in time, when it occurs, what He knows in advance will happen. That the Flood was worldwide seems clear from a straightforward reading of the text (e.g., 7:18-23), even though a growing number of evangelicals are not willing to be dogmatic about it.⁹

CHRONOLOGY OF THE FLOOD¹⁰

Specific Event of Flood	Date (with reference to Noah)	Day of Flood
Rains begin	2.17.600 (Gen. 7:11)	1 st day
40 days of rain end	3.26.600 (7:12)	40 th day
Waters prevail 150 days	7.16.600 (7:24; 8:3)	150 th day ¹¹
Ark rests on Mt. Ararat	7.17.600 (8:4)	151 st day
Mountain tops become visible	10.1.600 (8:5)	225 th day
Raven sent forth	11.10.600 (8:6-7) ¹²	264 th day
Dove sent out returns	11.17.600 (8:8-9) ¹³	271 st day
Dove returns with leaf	11.24.600 (8:10-11)	278 th day
Dove does not return	12.1.600 (8:12)	285 th day
Face of the ground is dry	1.1.601 (8:13)	315 th day
Noah leaves the Ark	2.27.601 (8:14-16)	371 st day

Numerous arguments support a global-in-scope flood. The book of Genesis records the passing of days during the Flood with a painstaking detail almost unparalleled

anywhere else in Scripture (e.g., 7:11, 17, 24; 8:4-6, 10, 12-13). We know the exact day of Noah's life when he entered the Ark (7:11), and the exact day when he exited it (8:14-16). Why? God evidently wanted it well documented that Noah and his family spent an astonishing 371 days in the Ark. Noah's Flood was no ordinary flood! In addition, cultures around the world have passed down memories of a massive flood. For example, the Chinese character for *large boat* is a boat with eight mouths. The fact of the Ark itself, not to mention its size,¹⁴ argues for a universal Flood. (Why an Ark if Noah could have escaped safely by land?)

When the Flood waters receded, the Ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat, north of Mesopotamia. Perhaps somewhere near there Noah took up life as a farmer with his three sons and their wives. Ararat (in modern-day Armenia) forms the northern boundary of the Old Testament.

Noah's first action after escaping from his one-year-plus imprisonment in the Ark was to build an altar and offer burnt offerings to the Lord (8:20). His act of worship elicited a response from the Lord in the form of a covenant. God promised never again to destroy the earth with water because of man's sinfulness. Man, in spite of his sinfulness, would be allowed to continue existing. Why? Explicit in the context is the delight God received from Noah's worship. God covenanted to tolerate mankind, as repulsive as their sin is to Him, in order to enjoy the worship that they offer Him (8:21-22).

The story of Noah ends with an incident that reveals the moral character of his three sons and reflects unfavorably upon Ham. The curse that follows Ham's action falls specifically upon his son Canaan, who particularly reflected all that was evil in his father (9:22, 25). (The wickedness of Canaan's descendants will ultimately lead to expulsion from their land and virtual extermination.) Shem and Japheth respond more honorably and are both blessed by Noah (9:23, 26-27). Shem's blessing lies in his connection with Yahweh, a clear anticipation of Messiah. From the *protevangeliium* (Gen. 3:15), we learned that Messiah would be human. Now we learn that He will be a Semite. (*Semite* comes from the word *Shem*.) Japheth's blessing will be geographical and numerical; in addition, his "dwelling in the tents of Shem" may allude to his participation in the latter's Messianic blessing, a kind of precursor of God's promise to Abraham that in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3).

TABLE OF NATIONS

After the Flood, the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth repopulated the world.

Shem seems to have been the oldest (10:21, NASB), and Ham the youngest (9:24). The Table of Nations¹⁵ in Genesis 10 gives us an idea of where the various descendants of Shem, Japheth, and Ham settled. Essentially, Japheth is the father of Europe; Ham, of Africa; and Shem, of the Middle East.

Japheth (vv. 1-5) settled north of the Fertile Crescent, in the area roughly equivalent to modern Europe, stretching from southern Russia (“Ashkenaz,” v. 3) on the east to Spain (“Tarshish,” v. 4) on the west; and, ultimately, to the outer reaches of the known world. *Madai* (v. 2) is the ancestor from which comes the Medes. From *Javan* comes the word for the Ionians or Greeks. *Isles* (v. 5) in the OT refer to the islands in the Mediterranean Sea. *Ashkenaz* (v. 3) is perhaps the father of the Scythians, Iranian nomads who migrated into the area of southern Russia. Of the three sons of Noah, the least is said about the descendants of Japheth. They are the peoples farthest removed from the Old Testament’s principal storyline.

Ham (vv. 6-20) settled in Africa and the strip of land northeast named after Canaan. *Nimrod*¹⁶ (v. 8) was one notable exception who did *not* settle in Africa. He founded a kingdom headquartered at Babylon (v. 10). Not content with Shinar, he exerted his powers northward into Asshur and its environs (see 10:11, NASB). *Mizraim* (v. 6) was the founder of Egypt (see Psa. 105:23). The Philistines descend from the *Casluhim* (v. 14). The descendants of *Canaan* are listed in detail, as are the boundaries of their territory (vv. 15-19), in anticipation of Israel’s later conquest of the land of Canaan.

Shem (vv. 21-31) settled in a kind of arc from modern Turkey (“Lud,” v. 22) through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, including the area of the Arabian Desert to the west. The line of Shem splits with the two sons born to Eber: Peleg and Joktan. *Joktan* and his descendants are not the “Messianic line” of Shem; they settled in the area of Mesha near Shephar in southern Arabia (v. 30). The “important” line of Shem, found in Genesis 11:10-32, is the line through Peleg.

The Table of Nations is helpful for another reason: it records the approximate time the Tower of Babel occurred when it states that the “earth was divided” in Peleg’s day (v. 25). This apparently refers to the Tower of Babel incident. As it stands in the Masoretic text of Genesis, Peleg was the fourth generation after Shem. If we include the witness of the Septuagint and the New Testament (Luke 3:36) to Cainan, Peleg was the fifth generation (see “Comparison of Two Genealogies” chart above on p. 9). However, the rather marked drop in lifespan of Peleg from that of his forefathers may indicate some gaps in the genealogy. We will discuss that in more detail at the end of this chapter. Suffice it to say at this point that conservative estimates place the Tower of Babel one thousand years after the Flood.

TOWER OF BABEL

The Babel story explains how and why the one language that originally united mankind was replaced with the many languages alluded to in Genesis 10 (vv. 5, 20, 31). We normally focus on the tower, but the Babel builders were actually building a city *and* a tower. The tower was simply to be the most remarkable thing about their city and a way for them to gain lasting recognition. Their acquired fame, they hoped, would keep them together and avoid their being scattered over the earth.

Virtually all modern commentators hold that the Tower they were constructing was a *ziggurat*, a pyramid-shaped Temple tower very popular in ancient Mesopotamia, and was therefore primarily religious in its purpose.¹⁷ No idolatry, however, is insinuated in the text. If anything, the idol of the Babel builders was their pride, quest for autonomy, or desire for security.

The description of the tower with its top “unto heaven” is similar to later descriptions of the Canaanites’ cities, which were fortified “up to heaven” (Deut. 1:28; 9:1). The word *migdal* (“tower”) is normally associated with fortifications for security purposes (Judg. 8:9; 9:51; II Kings 9:17). God, responding to the danger when humanity unites for proud and rebellious purposes, disabled effective communication, broke up their building effort, and scattered them over the face of the earth (11:7-8). It was really a divine mercy. To achieve a great name and the sense of security it brings feeds sinful man’s pride and deters him from seeking after God (Acts 17:26-27). God would later single out Abraham and make his name great (Gen. 12:2). But he would live in tents and look for a city whose builder and maker was God (Heb. 11:10).

GENESIS 11 GENEALOGY

The Genesis 11 genealogy lists nine individuals (vv. 10-32). (Ten, if we include the name *Cainan* found in Luke 3:36 and the Septuagint of Genesis 11:13.) The last, Terah, had three recorded sons (v. 26). Genesis 11 reveals the downward trend in life expectancy as the effects of the Fall tighten their grip on mankind.¹⁸

It is when we move into the time of Terah, Abraham’s father, that we arrive at the first clear fixed date in biblical history, and that is Terah’s birth in 2296 BC. This is calculable because of the relative precision with which the Old Testament records events in the life of his son Abraham and in the lives of Abraham’s descendants. Interestingly, Terah lived during the glory days of the city of Ur, with its estimated population of 100,000 and relative sophistication and culture.

The genealogy in Genesis 11 is often used for early biblical chronology. Based on biblical data, we know that Abraham's birth year was 2166 or 2167 BC. If we follow the numbers in Genesis 11 strictly, we come up with a date for Babel of about 2300 (during the lifetime of Peleg) and for the Flood of about 2500 BC. If we add the 1,656 years of recorded human history in Genesis 5, we arrive at a date of about 4000 BC for Creation. This is exactly what Archbishop Ussher did in the mid-17th century when he followed a strict chronology of the numbers recorded in Genesis and calculated 4004 BC as the date of Creation.

We should exercise restraint, however, in using the genealogies to obtain absolute dates of Creation, the Flood, or the Tower of Babel.¹⁹ Genealogies were sometimes abbreviated (Matthew 1:8 "skips" three generations when it says that Jehoram "begot" Uzziah). Luke 3:36 inserts an additional name (Cainan) that is not found in Genesis 11.²⁰ Also, Peleg's lifespan seems significantly shorter than that of his father (suggesting some gaps in the genealogy).²¹ Further, if Genesis 11 is followed rigidly, then Noah was still alive when Abraham was born; and Shem, when Abraham died. Could mankind have so forgotten their spiritual roots if their original ancestors were still alive? Anything is possible given man's propensity to evil, but it hardly seems tenable.

Thus, even a staunch conservative like Eugene Merrill is comfortable with the Tower of Babel occurring about 7000-6000 BC and the Flood about 8000-7000 BC.²² Creation would then have transpired about 10,000-9000 BC. A surprising consensus exists even among secular historians that human civilization began about 10,000-7000 BC.²³ Allowing for some adjustment due to their evolutionary presuppositions (of man's alleged prehistoric development), this number might approximate the biblical timeline since mankind was civilized from the very beginning. My personal preference is to go with the minimum numbers cited above, resulting in Creation, the Flood, and Babel in 7000, 5000, and 4000 BC, respectively. These are admittedly estimates.

The following quote should serve as a fitting final caution and guide:

No such gaps can be proven in the detailed genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. But even allowing for some possible gaps, it's inconceivable that the date for Adam's creation could be much more than ten thousand years ago. As Henry Morris has written, "At the outside, it would seem impossible to insert gaps totaling more than about five thousand years in these chapters without rendering the record irrelevant and absurd. Consequently, the Bible will not support a date for the creation of man earlier than about 10,000 B.C."²⁴

Review It

1. With what does biblical history begin?
2. Where probably was the Garden of Eden?
3. What are some proofs that the Flood was worldwide in its scope?
4. What is the “Table of Nations”?
5. Explain what the Tower of Babel might have been.
6. What do we mean when we say there might be “gaps” in the genealogies in Genesis?
7. What are some evidences that the genealogy in Genesis 11 might have some gaps?
8. What was the date of Creation calculated by Archbishop Ussher?
9. What is the oldest date of Creation accepted by conservatives?