

2043

Faithbuilders Fellowship • Special Edition • 2007
Proclaiming the Parousia of Christ and
Coming Millennial Kingdom

The Millennium is at Hand!

*“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth,
as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).*

Dear Friends! We are at the threshold of the most glorious epoch Earth has ever seen. We are on the brink of the establishment of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom! This will indeed be the “Golden Age” mankind has cherished in their hopes and aspirations since the dawn of history. It is coming ... even within one generation. We are living in the climax of God’s Plan of the Ages. The results will be more wonderful, more glorious, more all-encompassing, than even the finest dreams of philosophers, poets and sages. The best which noble men and women have dared imagine, will be surpassed by the wonders God has planned.

- **There will be world peace.** “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:4). “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth” (Psalms 46:9).

- **Handicaps will be cured.** “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing” (Isaiah 35:5, 6).

- **All will know God.** “They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest” (Jeremiah 31:34). “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

- **Moral integrity will be universal.** “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ... and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:33, 34).

- **Sorrow and pain will end.** “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain” (Isaiah 11:9). “There shall be no more ... sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

- **Even death itself will cease.** “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:28). “There shall be no more death” (Revelation 21:4).

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These are not simply pleasant words. They are solemn promises of the Most High, and will be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, just approaching.

The Resurrection of the Dead

But not only the living generations will benefit. The dead of past ages — all of them — will be raised during that Millennium, to learn of God, and share the blessings of that time.

Our Lord Jesus promised this explicitly. In the fifth chapter of John, Jesus said the words of life he spoke during his ministry would enliven those who heard his message. But then he spoke of the coming Millennium, after the close of the present age, when even the dead in their graves would be raised.

“Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth” (John 5:28, 29). As Jesus once commanded, “Lazarus, come forth! and he that was dead, came forth!” — so Jesus will raise every man, woman and child who has ever lived.

Those who live in devotion to God and His principles are raised to everlasting life, either here on earth (the Ancient Worthies of the Old Testament), or in heaven above (the faithful of the present Gospel Age).

But the large remainder of the world is not forgotten. They will all be raised to life again here, on Earth, received by those they knew and loved. They will then be ready for instruction, judgment, and learning about God. Their blessing thereafter will be in proportion to their response and progress then.

“The whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now ... in hope ... because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Romans 8:22, 20, 21).

The Plan Which God Has Cherished!

This is the great Plan of the Ages, which God has cherished in His heart from the very beginning. The Apostle Paul describes it as “God’s merciful purpose for the government of the world, when the times are ripe for it — the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind, of restoring the whole creation, to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in heaven and things on earth, to find their one Head in Him” (Ephesians 1:9, 10, Weymouth Translation).

God has been working out this plan, age by age, for now almost 6000 years of human history. During the hardships of this time, the world has been learning necessary lessons of the consequences of sin. These are long, troublesome, difficult lessons. But they are only the prelude to an age of remarkable blessing.

Through experience with evil and its consequences, the world will better appreciate the age to come. The wonders of the next age will more than compensate for the trials of the present.

God, of course, does not take pleasure in human suffering. “For he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve, the children of men” (Lamentations 3:33). “Though he cause grief [permitting an experience with disobedience for wise purposes], yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies” (verse 32).

The Millennial Kingdom of Christ will bring what God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 4000 years ago, the blessing “of all the families of the earth” (Genesis 28:14). So emphatically does God affirm it, that He swore it with an oath to Abraham, on the occasion of Abraham’s obedience respecting his son Isaac.

“By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah ... because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore ... And in thy seed shall **all the nations of the earth be blessed**” (Genesis 22:6-8).

It was an appropriate time for such a pledge, for the offering of Isaac by Abraham represented that God would offer his son Jesus to redeem us from death, thus assuring the blessing of all people (Romans 6:23).

Justice Condemned ... Grace Redeems

God proposed to our first parents in Eden that obedience would result in everlasting life. But He also warned that disobedience would bring a loss of that privilege. “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat ... for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17).

Adam, so near to perfection, lived 930 years after his transgression, but nevertheless passed away within the 1000 year “day” allotted (compare Psalms 90:4). Since then the accumulated effects of the curse have brought lifespans dramatically lower.

From the beginning, God foresaw the choice Adam and Eve would make. God could have prevented it. He could have disallowed Satan’s temptation of our first parents. But the free moral choice of intelligent beings, to pursue either right or wrong, good or evil, is inherent within any creature with free will.

No, God would not — could not — remove all occasion of temptation from beings endowed with free choice, whether human or angelic. However, God did explain the issues to Adam, and the consequences of good and evil.

Eve was deceived, supposing she could violate the divine command with impunity. Adam knew better, but chose to join his wife, whom he must have dearly loved. These were both poor choices. But God knew that through experience with the consequences, they and all the world yet unborn would more deeply appreciate the value of better moral choices.

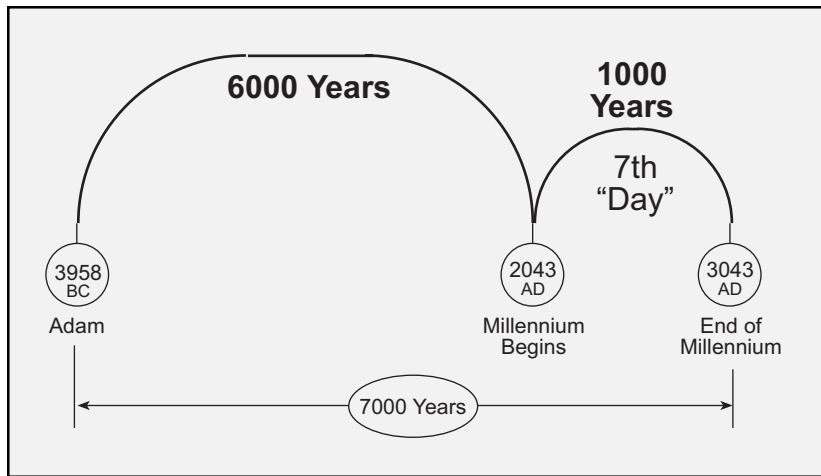
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NOTE TO REGULAR READERS — This Special Edition of Faithbuilders Fellowship is produced specifically for a public exhibition in Southern California, at which they are distributed freely. For our regular subscribers, this also constitutes the July, August 2007 issue, though not so marked in our Special Edition Masthead.

Our regular series in Daniel will resume next issue with Daniel Chapter Nine, and our series on Bible Chronology will resume with a close look at the period of Kings.



The Time Has Come!

The 6000 year night of sorrow draws to a close. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!” (Psalms 30:5). We are on the verge of that morning. The Millennial Reign of Christ, the Seventh Millennium of human history, rapidly approaches.

From the record of scripture, the count of years from the creation of our first parents, until the present time, is just shy of 6000 years. From the present year, 2007, only 36 years more remain. That will bring us to the year 2043 AD, the opening of the Seventh Millennium, scarcely a generation away!

For this cause God permitted the experience, but at the same time planned for the rescue of the human race, so that in a better opportunity at a later time, they could benefit from their experience. As the penalty for sin was justly imposed, it could not be arbitrarily remitted. Justice is the foundation of God’s throne. The necessary relief could only come by a payment of the debt, not an abandonment of it.

Yet only God could arrange such a payment. God provided his Son, whom we know as Jesus, to have his life transferred from above into the womb of Mary, be “made flesh,” grow to manhood, and then willingly accept Adam’s punishment upon himself.

“I lay down my life ... no man takes it from me ... I lay it down of myself” (John 10:17, 18). “My flesh ... I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:51). “The Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom” (Matthew 20:28). “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed ... Jehovah has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:5, 6).

As surely as God was Just to impose the penalty — as surely as God was Wise to allow the necessary experience — as surely as God was Loving to provide a release from the burden and a fresh opportunity for life — so surely has God the power, and the will, to bring the promised blessing to “All the families of the earth” at the appropriate time.

But it is more than an obligation which God has made. It is the plan which God has “cherished” for ages. Meanwhile, as the race multiplies to “fill the earth” as intended, all the while learning through experience, God has also been drawing from among the tender-hearted of the world, those who will fill special places of service during the Millennium.

First, for almost 4000 years, God called the class we term “Ancient Worthies.” They will be the human leaders of the world in the Millennium. Then, during the roughly 2000 years of the Gospel Age, God selects His elect, who will reign with Christ from above.

Then 6000 years of sin and death will come to a close. Then the Morning of the Millennium will break upon a weary world, so ready for it. Then, gradually, the power and influence of that Kingdom will spread to and assimilate all nations.

The kingdom will be established initially through repentant and restored Israel, according to the prophets (Zechariah 12:10, Micah 4:1-4, for example). But thereafter it will spread to all nations. No wonder the regathering of Israel to their ancestral land in modern times — it is part of the preparation for the Millennial Kingdom.

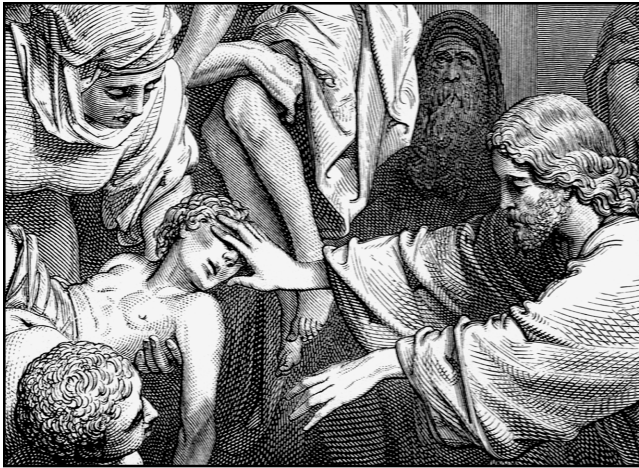
The Last Days

Already we are in the “last days” of the present Gospel Age. This period incorporates a time of trouble unprecedented in human experience — the Great War of 1914, its successor the even more devastating World War II, the Great Depression, the shaking of old empires, the Cold War, continuous local wars, and now the fire of Islamic terrorism. These “birth pangs” of a new order will intensify, but they only hasten the glorious Millennium, and further induce the longing of men for such a blessed intervention.

A Crescendo of the Ages

At a crescendo of the ages 2000 years ago, our savior Jesus was born. As the hymn says of that night, “the hopes, and fears, of all our years, are laid in him tonight.” Jesus grew to manhood and commenced his ministry at the age of 30 years. Through that ministry, and his death as our Ransom, he opened up the present Gospel Age and its unsurpassed Heavenly Call. But of this, Jesus said, “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:14).

So it has been. Relatively few — even among the Christian world — have followed the devoted life stipulated by our master: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). Thousands, perhaps millions, have



Jesus healed many then, but All will be blessed in the Millennium.

taken this opportunity, but these are only a fraction of the billions of humanity. The overcomers will be crowned with glory when raised to life in heaven above, to reign with Christ as God's elect. Others, less zealous, but nevertheless devoted, will receive lesser positions of honorable service above (Revelation 7:14, 15).

But to what end? To what purpose is the calling, training, and development of the elect? To be an honor and glory to God for the ages of eternity, yes. But more — they will be God's agent for the blessing of the world during the Millennium. The call to heaven for Christians during this age is with a purpose in mind, of ruling the world from heaven, to bring to the world all the blessings itemized in the opening of this article.

The end of the present age is upon us. The Gospel Call to Heavenly Glory is near its close. With the close of this age ends the most incredible call ever offered to humankind, the call to live and reign with Christ in his heavenly home.

Deliverance Just at Hand!

But with the close of this unsurpassed opportunity comes the morning of release and blessing for all the remainder of the groaning creation. "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God ... because the creation itself also shall be delivered!" (Romans 8:19, 21).

In the articles which follow, trace with us the scriptural assurance of these hopes. Mark the testimony of inspired writ, on which our confidence is founded. Note the testimony of Old Testament History that 6000 years of sin and death will close with the year 2043, introducing the Seventh Millennium of human experience — the Millennium during which Christ and his elect reign as "priests of God" to recover the world back to Him. "They shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

"The Hopes, and fears, of all our years," approach a wonderful climax!

The Purpose of Christianity

The reason for faith, patience, and discipline

Christians are in training for a glorious future work of bestowing blessings upon the whole world of mankind. It is this blessed, Scriptural fact that gives point to the Christian life. The trials of faith, the discipline, and the hours of patient toil in the Master's service, would lose much of their meaning if when the end of the narrow way of sacrifice is reached there is to be nothing to do — nothing but an eternity of idleness.

The Scriptures admonish us to put down self and selfishness in order that our hearts and minds may be filled and controlled by love. We are to love God and each other as He loves us. God showed His love by the gift of His Son as our Redeemer and the Redeemer of the world. Jesus demonstrated his love by sacrificing his earthly life as a ransom for Adam and his race, condemned to die because of sin. If we are moved by such love, we too will delight in the privilege of serving others.

Unquestionably, one of the sweetest joys of the Christian is experienced in self-sacrificing efforts to help others. But the present life is short. Human frailties are a handicap which limits our feeble service. Almost before we realize it, the eventide of life spreads its darkening shadows around us; and if the Spirit of God and of Christ fills our hearts we will feel that our service has been all too meager, that if possible we would like to continue that service, and increase it to the glory of God.

It is the possibility of doing just this that the Scriptures hold out as the great objective of the Christian life. The Christian church, made up of all true followers of the Master, is identified by the Apostle Paul as the divinely provided channel of blessing for the world. God promised Abraham that his seed would bless all the families of the earth. The apostle says that Christ and his church constitute that promised seed (Galatians 3:16, 27-29).

This great work of blessing is still future. It is the work of the thousand-year age when Christ and His church will reign as the spiritual rulers of the earth. The church participates in the "first resurrection" that she may live and reign with Christ (Revelation 20:4, 5).

The book, *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, says of the world's desire for blessing: "As though by instinct, the whole creation, while it groans and travails in pain, waits for, longs for and hopes for the day, calling it the Golden Age; yet men grope blindly, because not aware of the great Jehovah's gracious purposes."

What a privilege it will be in that new age now near, to share with Christ in the great work of enlightening the world concerning God's loving plan, and giving the people an opportunity to enter into the blessings of life and happiness which He provides through the redemption in Christ!

— Adapted from the "Daily Heavenly Manna"

6000 Years

The Basis for our expectations for the year 2043

It has long been held, even by Jewish Sages in pre-Christian times, that God intended a millennium of blessing for the world following six millennia of sin and death. There is reasonable scriptural evidence for this view on various levels.

One of the types, or illustrations, from the Old Testament respecting this comes from the structure of the week in the Jewish economy. Six days of the week were apportioned for labor, but the seventh was a day of rest from mundane pursuits, in deference to spiritual themes and worship. Israel's sabbath day was a time of rest and a time of "holy convocation" (Leviticus 23:3).

Psalms 90:4 says "a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past." From this St. Peter expressed the thought, "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8).^{*} Applying this key to the Sabbath Day Type suggests that mankind will labor under the curse of sin and death for six thousand years, and receive rest from this burden on the great Seventh Millennium.

The Epistle of Barnabas, an early Christian text, expresses the same thought. "Concerning the Sabbath ... Give heed, children, what this means ... that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end, for the day with Him signifies a thousand years ... When His Son shall come ... then shall he truly rest on the seventh day" (Barnabas 15:1-5).

The Epistle of Barnabas is not an inspired text, of course, but it reflects the opinion, drawn from scripture, which was current among both Jews and Christians, that the Plan of God for Man pertains to thousand year days, and that the Seventh Millennium would be a time of rest and blessing.

Revelation and Ezekiel

With this view in mind, we come to Revelation chapter 20. Here we do have an inspired text, from the hand of John, recording the vision given him by Jesus Christ on the isle of Patmos. John wrote some time late in the reign of the emperor Domitian, who ruled up to 96 AD.

That chapter specifies, four times, that the Kingdom of Christ would operate among men for 1000 years. (Verses 2, 3, 4, 6). Notice, 1000. Not 1260 years, or 1290, or 1335 — all scriptural time periods (as we will see later) — but exactly 1000 years. This fully accords with the intimations of the Old Testament that the seventh "day" would be a thousand years of blessing.

During that age Satan will be "bound ... a thousand years ... that he should deceive the nations no more" (Revelation 20:2, 3), allowing the world to be reclaimed by God through Christ and his elect.

Ezekiel 46:1 introduces a vision of the Millennial Kingdom, and also uses the six days of labor, and the sabbath which follows them, in a symbolic manner. "The gate of the inner court that looks toward the east, shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened." So during 6000 years the world has been estranged from God, but on the Millennial Sabbath the gates of access to God will be wide open.

Long Standing Interest

Because of this view, and these scriptures, it has interested Christians for centuries to estimate when the close of 6000 years may come. Isaac Newton was among those who studied this question, but the records of antiquity in his day were insufficient to resolve the issue. Recent publicity has been given to a cautious note from Newton that about the year 2060 might see a transition into a millennium of peace. This was but one estimate among others, but it reflects Newton's concern with the issue, which was shared by many through the years.

(Newton was a deep Bible scholar. By some estimates his writing on the Scriptures exceeded his writings on mathematics and science. Not only did he follow the essence of the Plan of the Ages we appreciate today, but his comments on such intricate prophecies as Daniel chapter 11 are still of high value.)

The Genesis Record

The count of years begins in Genesis chapter five, where we have a record of years from the creation of Adam forward, through ten generations. For example, Genesis 5:3 says "Adam lived 130 years and begat [generated] a son ... and called his name Seth." Verses 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25 and 28 give the ages of the next people in the lineage, when their son was born, until Noah, who was 600 years old at the Flood (Genesis 8:13). From this we compile the following information.

Adam to the Flood

130	Adam to Seth
105	Seth to Enos
90	Enos to Cainan
70	Cainan to Mahalaleel
65	Mahalaleel to Jared
162	Jared to Enoch
65	Enoch to Methuselah
187	Methuselah to Lamech
182	Lamech to Noah
600	Noah to the Flood
—	
1656	Years from Adam to the Flood

This sum is not new, and not unique. You may find it in a variety of Bible reference works. Notably for Bible Students, it is also in Pastor Charles Russell's work "The Time is at Hand," Volume Two of *Studies in the Scriptures* (page 43).

One could raise questions about some details. For example, would fractional years between generations accumulate to augment the total by five years or so? Do the 600 years of Noah's life take us to the opening, or the close, of the Flood? Should we account for some number of years for Adam in the Garden, before sin entered the world, if we are seeking the number of years since sin and death commenced?

However, there are satisfactory answers to all such questions. (a) A close inspection of the data shows that the ancients cared for the concern of fractional years, by numbering the ages of these patriarchs by calendar years (rather than from birth date to birth date as today), assigning year "one" of a patriarch to the calendar year following his year of birth. The evidence for this is that otherwise Methuselah, who was not on the ark, would have survived the beginning of the Flood by a year.

(b) The close of the 600 years given for Noah takes us to the close of the Flood, according to Genesis 8:13, for year number 601 was then just beginning.

(c) The absence from the record of an explicit number of years spent by Adam in the Garden, before sin, indicates that the period of innocence was relatively brief and did not lap past the year of his creation. Thus it does not affect the count of years. If Adam was created at the time of new life (spring), and condemned at the time of decay and death (autumn), the intervening half year or so would easily suffice for all that transpired in the interim.

From the Flood to Abraham

Genesis chapter 11 picks up the count of years after the flood. Genesis 11:10 says Arphaxad was born two years after the flood, and verses 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 32 give us the remaining links until the death of Terah, the father of Abraham. At this time, as the narrative shows, Abraham left Haran and came into the land of promise. There God appeared to him and made a covenant with Abraham — the famous "Abrahamic Covenant." Abraham was 75 years of age at the time (Genesis 12:4). In the next column is a list of specifics. The sum — 427 years.

This period also is neither new nor unique. One can find these details in "The Time is at Hand" (page 44), and also in other Bible references. This period is well known among students of Bible Chronology.

To The Exodus, Then the Temple

Thereafter, the time from the Abrahamic Covenant to the Exodus and giving of the Law through Moses, was 430 years (Galatians 3:16). From that Exodus to the founding of Solomon's Temple in the spring of year four

The Flood to Abraham

2	End of flood to Arphaxad
35	Arphaxad to Salah
30	Salah to Eber
34	Eber to Peleg
30	Peleg to Reu
32	Reu to Serug
30	Serug to Nahor
29	Nahor to Terah
205	to Terah's death
<hr/>	
427	Years to the Abrahamic Covenant

of Solomon's reign was 479 years (1 Kings 6:1 says year number 480 was then just commencing.)

Those who are experienced in Bible Chronology know that these last two periods, of 430 years and 479 years, provided directly in the texts cited, are nevertheless sometimes questioned. This is because of a comparison with Exodus 12:40 for the first period, and Acts 13:20 for the second period. The disputations on these questions are discussed at length, and resolved, in past issues of "Faithbuilders Fellowship." (Back issues are available on request, and also will be on our website, 2043ad.com).

Results

Thus the scriptures provide a full count of years from Adam until the founding of Solomon's Temple in the spring of year four of his reign. It is now generally agreed, by scholars who accept the integrity of the books of Kings and Chronicles, that their united testimony, supported by the history of contemporary nations, shows year "one" of Solomon's reign commenced in the autumn of 970 BC.

Thus year four commenced in the autumn of 967 BC, and the following spring takes us to 966 BC for the founding of the Temple. (Details abound in "Time and

Summary of Results

1656	Adam to the Flood
427	to the Abrahamic Covenant
430	to the Exodus
479	to Solomon's Temple
966	BC date of the Temple
<hr/>	
3958	BC date for Adam

Prophecy” and “The Stream of Time” available on the internet. See also Edwin Thiele’s well known study, “The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrews Kings.”)

Thus the count of years from Adam to the close of 6000 years of human history, as shown in the Summary of Results, began in 3958 BC.

To calculate 6000 years forward from Adam, simply subtract 3958 from 6000 — this yields 2042 — and add one (to account for the absence of a year “zero” between the BC and AD eras). The result is **2043 AD** — the date closing 6000 years of human history, and initiating the Seventh Millennium.

* The Book of Jubilees, a Jewish composition from the second century BC, notes that Adam’s death at the age of 930 years (Genesis 5:5) means “he lacked seventy years of one thousand years, for one thousand years are as one day in the testimony of the heavens” (chapter four, section 30).

Confirmation

The Jubilee Cycles of Israel confirm the count of years.

The count of years, from the Exodus until the close of the Kingdom of Judah, is confirmed in Israel’s system of Sabbath and Jubilee years. This was covered in detail in an article in the January 2007 issue, but we summarize the subject here for new readers.

The Israelites observed a Sabbath Year every seven years, and a Jubilee Year after each series of seven Sabbath Years. They were to begin the count when they entered the land of promise, after their wandering in the wilderness for four decades. The Exodus was in the year 1445 BC, and the crossing of Jordan into Canaan occurred forty years later in 1405 BC. But several months earlier, Israel had crossed the River Arnon into that part of the promised land which was east of Jordan. They defeated the kings in that area, and settled 2½ tribes in the conquered territory.

Spring Years

At the time, the Israelites numbered their years from spring to spring. We know this because the Hebrews always observed either spring years or autumn years, and for these earliest times we can eliminate the option that the numbered years were autumn years.

This we deduce from comparing Numbers 33:38 and Deuteronomy 1:3. The years involved there were not autumn years, for the year number did not change when they crossed month seven in the fall. Thus those years ran from spring to spring (in commemoration of the Exodus, which occurred in the spring).

Therefore, the numbered year during which the Israelites crossed the River Arnon into the land of promise, ran from spring 1406 BC, to spring 1405 BC.

However, the Sabbath and Jubilee Years of Israel pertained to their agricultural cycle, and counted from autumn to autumn. The month commencing those years was month seven of their calendar, later termed Tishri. It approximately corresponds to September/October on today’s calendars.

The First Sabbath Year

If the spring year in which the Israelites crossed the Arnon was numbered “one,” then year seven would commence in the spring of the year 1400 BC. If, as commanded in the Law of the Sabbath Year, they refrained from reaping the fruits of that spring, then they would have refrained from sowing the previous autumn. In this case, that autumn year — from Tishri 1401 BC, to Tishri 1400 BC — would constitute the first Sabbath of rest for the land. The seventh Sabbath would commence 42 years later with Tishri of 1359 BC, and the first Jubilee would commence the following Tishri, 1358 BC.

That Jubilee, numbered year 50, would also be year “one” of the next cycle, so that Sabbath years were regularly spaced seven years apart continuously (just as Sabbath days are spaced seven days apart continuously). Thus from the beginning of one Jubilee to the beginning of another would be 49 years. In this case the 16th Jubilee would commence with Tishri of 623 BC, and the 17th Jubilee would commence with Tishri of 574 BC.

Now the Test

So now the test. Do these calculations actually produce Jubilees in accord with fact? Do they point to Jubilee years on record?

Tishri of 623 BC began the 18th year of King Josiah, who ruled the Kingdom of Judah from Jerusalem. According to 2 Kings chapters 22 and 23, and 2 Chronicles chapters 34 and 35, this was the year Josiah’s men found the book of the Law during Temple renovations, which stimulated a reformation. It was a year of note in the history of Israel.

The Jewish Talmud records that that year coincided with the 16th Jubilee of Israel — exactly confirming the count explained above.



Moses, the Lawgiver. The Jubilee was a feature of the Law.

Tishri of 574 BC was the time of Ezekiel's famous "Temple Vision," recorded in the last nine chapters of his book, and dated in Ezekiel 40:1. The Jewish Talmud records that that year coincided with the 17th Jubilee of Israel — again, an exact confirmation.

Compare Ezekiel 1:1,2, with Ezekiel 40:1, to see that 40:1 is "year 50." The month is Tishri, which even today is the month which marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year. The day number was 10. Thus this vision occurred on Year 50, Month 7, Day 10 — exactly the day specified in the Law for sounding the Jubilee Trumpet. This is consistent with the record of the Talmud, that this vision was given on the opening of a Jubilee Year, in this case Jubilee number 17.

Highly Satisfactory

This is a highly satisfactory confirmation that we are counting correctly the years from the Exodus forward. The record of these Jubilee years, preserved in the Talmud, are identified in the Jewish Encyclopedia, under "Jubilee." They reflect the cultural memory of the last Jubilees in that system.

Solomon and Hezekiah

Our count of Sabbath and Jubilee Years may synchronize with records of kings Solomon and Hezekiah, also. If the first Jubilee began in 1358 BC, then the 9th Jubilee began in 966 BC, and the Sabbath just preceding began in Tishri 967 BC. In this case Solomon's Temple was founded in a Sabbatic year which was immediately followed by a Jubilee year. In other words, Solomon commenced his building project at an appropriate time — when two rest years occurred one after another — which meant available labor was at hand, due to the cessation of normal farming.

The 14th Jubilee would have commenced in Tishri 721 BC, which means a Sabbath Year began in 722 BC. Which in turn means that Sabbath years also commenced in years 715, 708, and 701 BC. The last of these is especially significant, for it was the year of the famous invasion of Judea by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, in the 14th year of Hezekiah and 4th year of Sennacherib.

God spared Jerusalem (Isaiah 37:30-37), and at this time there is an apparent reference to a Sabbath year. "And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself [for the Assyrian army had devastated the harvest for that year], and the second year that which springeth of the same [for they would not sow that autumn, it being a Sabbath year], and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof [the year following the Sabbath]."

This suggests a Sabbath year began with Tishri of 701 BC, which exactly conforms to the deductions mentioned above.

Thus at four broadly separated points in the history of Israel's Sabbatic System, we find agreement with the

years of history. (1) At the time of Solomon's Temple, (2) at the invasion in the days of Hezekiah, (3) at the reformation in the days of Josiah, (4) at Ezekiel's closing vision, following the end of the Kingdom of Judah. This is very encouraging evidence that we have discerned this portion of Bible Chronology correctly.

Confirming Jubilee and Sabbath Years

Jubilee 1 — Tishri 1358 BC

Jubilee 9 — Tishri 966 BC, Solomon's Temple

Sabbath Year — Tishri 701 BC, Invasion of Judea

Jubilee 16 — Tishri 623 BC, Josiah's Reformation

Jubilee 17 — Tishri 574 BC, Ezek's Closing Vision

Time Prophecy

"The man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river ... held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever ... it shall be for a time, times, and an half" (Daniel 12:7).

The Bible is full of prophecy. On occasion, those prophecies include specific time periods, which give a remarkable specificity and precision to the forecasts. This yields a stamp of authority to the predictions which is unparalleled in the writings of any other reputed holy books of the heathen, for only God can truly know the future. "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9, 10).

There are several relatively short-span time prophecies, covering periods from a few days to 70 years. Here are 12 instances as examples: Numbers 14:33, 2 Kings 7:1, 8:1, 20:6, 1 Chronicles 21:12, Isaiah 7:8, 8:4, 16:14, 21:16, 23:15, Jeremiah 25:11, 29:10.

But those which take in centuries within their prophetic scope are the ones of special interest.

The key to prophecies on this scale is the day-for-a-year principle. For example, in Daniel 9:24 is a prophecy of 70 "weeks," which would be 490 days. It takes us from the days of Ezra, who restored Jerusalem beginning in 458 BC, to the crucifixion of Christ who died on April 3, 33 AD — a span of 490 years.

This "key" appears explicitly in Numbers 14:34, "each day for a year," and Ezekiel 4:6, "I have appointed thee each day for a year." It is so evidently the key to the prophecy of the 70 weeks, that it is universally recog-

nized in this case. This in turn provides the key for the remainder. Here are some of the students of prophecy who recognized and applied this key, over the last seven centuries. Walter Brute, Martin Luther, Napier, Fleming, William Whiston, Isaac Newton, Hales, John Aquila Brown, William Miller, H Grattan Guinness, E B Elliott, and Charles Russell. Countless others could be added.

1260 Years

The most pronounced of these prophecies is the one about 1260 years. It appears seven times in Scripture — twice in Daniel and five times in Revelation (Daniel 7:25, 12:7, Revelation 12:14, 11:2, 13:5, 11:3, 12:6). It is termed variously 3½ years (times), 42 months, and 1260 days. They are all the same period — 1260 years.

This is the foundation for understanding time prophecy in our day. It speaks of an apostate Christian religious system that would rule from Rome and dominate Europe for centuries. Only one system fits this description, namely the Roman Catholic Church.

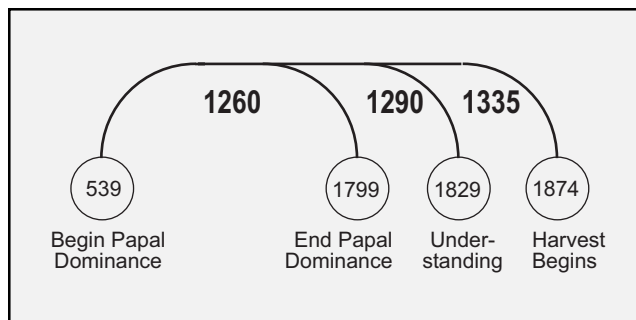
Isaac Newton supposed these years would close perhaps a century after his time, and a contemporary of his, Robert Fleming, deduced, from the prophecies, that Papacy's authority would be broken through a disturbance in France, in the 1790s. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, these conclusions were found correct, and formed one of the foundations for the Adventist movement which swept through Protestant Christianity in the first half of the 1800s.

William Miller, the leader of the Adventist Movement, fixed upon the dates 538 to 1798 for this span. These dates are still maintained by the largest fragment of that movement, namely the Seventh Day Adventists. The resolution has been adjusted a little more precisely by one year, from 539 to 1799, held by Bible Students today.

The year 539 saw the rise of the Pope to political influence when his Gothic enemies were defeated at the fall of their capital Ravenna, and 1799 saw the shaking of Papacy through the death of the pope as a captive of Napoleon, who refused to allow the election of a successor. Papacy was broken. Even they recognize 1799 as the nadir of Papal fortunes in modern times. She would recover somewhat, then by degrees suffer other setbacks, but never again rule the nations of Christendom. The 1260 years of her power closed in 1799.

1290, 1335 Years

But this was only the beginning. Daniel 12:11 adds a prophecy of 1290 years, and verse 12 one of 1335 years — which closed 30 and 75 years respectively, beyond 1799. The first takes us to 1829, when the “wise” would understand the unfolding time prophecies of Daniel, and 1874, the time of Christ's *parousia*, and beginning of the Harvest — or closing period — of the present Gospel Age.



For the significance of these dates, please see the article “1874” in the November-December 2003 issue of “The Herald” (www.HeraldMag.org). Bible Students for more than a hundred years have been intimately familiar with these prophecies, and their fulfillment at 1799, 1829, and 1874, respectively.

2520 Years

Also in the early 1800s, perhaps first introduced by John Aquila Brown in his work “Eventide,” was the recognition that the “seven times” of Nebuchadnezzar’s madness recorded in Daniel chapter four, have a deeper prophetic meaning. They represent seven prophetic “years” during which the Gentile nations would rage as the beastly governments depicted in Daniel chapter seven. They would rule the world, and in particular, Daniel’s people Israel, for 2520 years. For if 3½ “times” are 1260 years, than 7 “times” would be 2520 years.

This would be the same time suggested in Leviticus 26, where Moses warned that if Israel disobeyed God, she would endure a national affliction of “seven” times, strokes, or periods.

The time when Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (with her fragments) would rule for “seven times,” would be the same period that Israel would be punished, subordinated, for seven times. In Daniel and Leviticus, the predicted seven times are repeated four times in each case, perhaps to suggest the four empires that would rule during this period. (Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32, Leviticus 26:18, 21, 24, 28).

Many more connections we could make between the two passages, Daniel 4 and Leviticus 26. Suffice it to say the 2520 years, there predicted, run from the Babylonian conquest of Palestine, to the release of the land from the Ottoman oppression in the Great War of 1914. The Babylonian conquest took four years, from 607 BC to 603 BC, and the Great War which liberated Israel also took four years, from 1914 to 1918 — just 2520 years later.

As a consequence, England assumed a protectorate of the holy Land, and announced publicly their intent to make of Palestine a national homeland for the Jewish people — the Balfour Declaration. By fits and starts, some backtracking and some relenting, at last Israel became an independent nation. The mandate by the United Nations came late in 1947, effective the following

spring. The year itself was just 2520 years from the date of Ezekiel's vision of restored Israel, in Ezekiel chapters 40 through 48.

2300 Years

Daniel 8:14 tells us that the "sanctuary" class — the Church class (1 Corinthians 3:16) — would be cleansed from doctrinal defilements after 2300 years. The last two issues of Faithbuilders Fellowship considered this prophecy in detail. The years apparently commence at the same time as the 490 years of the next chapter, namely 458 BC, with the work of Ezra. Therefore they conclude in the year 1843.

This was the year of expectation for the Adventist Movement. In the crescendo of years leading to this, the activity and study stimulated by their expectations were incredible. Through this focussed attention to the Scriptures, old defiling doctrines lingering from Papacy were recognized, giving rise to better views: That the dead do not suffer intolerable tortures, but sleep peacefully until the resurrection. That Jesus became flesh and died to redeem us, suggesting a "greater hope" for the world. That belief in Christ needs to be attended with a corresponding renovation in character and conduct.

The truths inherent in these cleansings would later congeal into the harmony of the Divine Plan of the Ages which we have today, during the Harvest of the age, due at the end of the 1335 years. But the cleansing recognition of the various errors came to a head in 1843.

Seven Points Marked in Prophecy

33	The death of Christ (490 years)
1799	The end of Papal power (1260 years)
1829	Opening of Daniel's prophecies (1290 yrs)
1843	Cleansing of old errors (2300 years)
1874	Harvest of the Gospel Age (1335 years)
1914	End Jewish national punishment (2520 yrs)
2043	Beginning of Millennium (6000 years)

God's Leading Through Time Prophecy

Thus step by step, through his Plan of the Ages, God supplies prophetic time markers, progressing toward the Millennium.

The list above includes seven dates, which close the various time prophecies contained in Scripture. Our resume of these dates has been brief, specially compared with the volumes of material written in recent centuries on these subjects. They gleaned light as best they were able on the divinely intended meaning and focus of these prophecies. But we have the accumulated light of all

these studies, and the leading of the Spirit of God through those devoted labors. And we have the further passage of years, by which the "path of the just" is promised to grow brighter "unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18). To all of this we attribute the clearer appreciation of these subjects now available.

Another Date

But another date should be added to the list. When the thousand year Millennium is appended to the previous 6000 years, the sum is 7000 years, from Paradise Lost in Eden, to Paradise Restored by the end of the Millennium. These 7000 years constitute another and even larger "day" — the seventh creative day — the day on which God "rested" from the creation of things mundane.

As with all the other epoch creative days, the seventh day too was to have an "evening" followed by a "morning." The "morning" is the second half of this 7000 year "day," and thus commences 3500 years after Adam. The date for Adam is 3958 BC, so the date beginning the "morning" of this day, 3500 years later, is **458 BC**.

But notice! That is precisely the date commencing the 70 week prophecy, which leads to the redemption provided at Calvary. This remarkable observation suggests design and structure such as only God could weave into the fabric of human history. Precisely with the advent of the "morning" of the last creative day, begins the count of years to the central feature of God's Plan, namely the Redemption provided at Calvary. "O Jehovah, revive thy work in the **midst of the years** ... in wrath remember mercy" (Habakkuk 3:2).

Notice the result. We have a block of time — 2500 years in length — punctuated with eight specific dates, each explicitly marked in scripture, which build and crescendo to the establishment of the Millennium. They commence precisely at the midpoint of God's grand Seventh Day of Creation, and reach 2500 years later to the beginning of the Millennial Reign of Christ.

Another Remarkable Congruence

Space here allows but a mention of another remarkable congruence, recently observed. The entire block of 2500 years, containing the eight prophetic date points mentioned above, begins, as we noted, exactly with the "morning" of this 7000 year, seventh day of creation.

Another, previous, "new beginning" commenced 1845 years earlier, when the Flood of Noah's day began, which swept away the old world. The human race started afresh with the eight souls saved aboard the ark.

If one marks off a parallel block of 2500 years commencing with the Flood, which began in the year 2303 BC, and marks eight date points in that span, corresponding to the eight date points of prophecy above, the following dates would be identified — 2303 BC, 1813 BC, 47 BC, 17 BC, 3 BC, 29, 69, 198.

Incredibly, each and every one of these dates marks a specific, dateable event, which stands in direct parallel to the event occurring 1845 years later, at the respective counterpart date marked in prophecy.

It is as though the entire network of prophetic dates pointed to in Scripture, was patterned long before by a parallel network of events which foreshadowed, step by step, the later prophetic milestones by which God would mark the progressive development of his Plan of the Ages.

In succeeding issues of Faithbuilders Fellowship, we will comment on each example. Some of these parallels have been observed, partially, for some time, but only recently has the entire compendium come into sharp focus as a parallel block of 2500 years, commencing, as the other, with a point of “new beginning.”

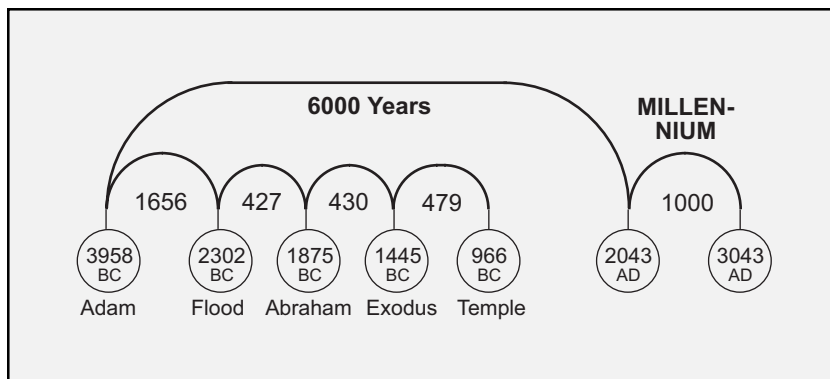
All of this harmony, all of this beauty, all of this testimony, suggests we are fathoming properly the thoughts of God. All of this springs readily from the proper count of years, which was hidden in the Divine Word until the due time ... and the due time has come, because the Kingdom indeed approaches.

Only a Generation Away

But one generation remains, to close the work of the present Gospel Age, and welcome the incoming Kingdom of Christ. It is timely for the Lord’s people to appreciate the specifics, to the extent that their interest and desire motivates them to do so.

Do we long for every ray of light from above? Have we prayed, from the heart, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”? (Matthew 6:10). Then we “must feel the liveliest interest” in this request, and feel “an absorbing interest in the fact, **the time**, and the manner of its establishment” (“Thy Kingdom Come,” page 19).

Let us attend to the prophecies, to the unfolding events of our day, and welcome the impending blessing of “All the families of the Earth,” so near at hand!



The dates are assigned beginning with 966 BC, for the founding of Solomon’s Temple, in the fourth year of King Solomon. Then one counts back through the four time periods shown, yielding the date 3958 BC for Adam. 6000 years forward gives the date 2043 for the beginning of the Seventh Millennium of human history.

Who Are the Bible Students?

A Brief Overview of our Fellowship

The Bible Student Fellowship is nationwide, and even international in scope. However, we do not constitute a formal denomination, and there is no central headquarters. The various classes, or ecclesias as they are often called, are independent, though allied through a common faith. Our leaders, elders and deacons, are elected from the congregation. (They serve willingly, without monetary compensation.) All are welcome to attend and study with us. Eligible to participate in elections are all who profess consecration to God, and accept the fundamental persuasions of Christian faith — namely,

- That God is the creator of all
- That we are sinners by nature,
- An inheritance from our first parents.
- As a consequence, our only hope is that ...
- Jesus, the son of God, was made flesh and ...
- Died for our sins.
- Therefore we repent of sin,
- Embrace Jesus as our redeemer, and ...
- Live according to Christian principles.

We customarily observe water baptism for the consecrated after the manner of the early Church, we commemorate our Lord’s death annually, we meet weekly on Sundays and often in midweek, we fellowship in conventions frequently, endeavor to live holy lives, cultivate prayer, and live peaceably with all men.

We hold that belief should be accompanied by a decision to consecrate our lives to God, and commit ourselves to following our pattern and master, Jesus, as he taught. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). Thus we sacrifice earthly interests for spiritual interests, and yield ourselves, “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

The incredible privilege which this brings to followers of Christ is the “High calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). “Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne” (Revelation 3:21). “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown a life” (Revelation 2:10).

Two Ages of Redemption

The present is the first age of redemption. There will be a second, distinct in purpose and kind. That will be the Millennium. Then the entire world will be called to God.

Everyone will learn the Truth. God's law will be written in each willing heart. To each person, God will offer everlasting life, as offered to Adam and Eve at the first.

Behind will lie a 6000 year lesson in the fruits of sin, that by comparison, they may appreciate the blessings then open, and gain eternal life in a perfect world.

The Ancient Worthies

When Jesus died for our sins on Calvary's cross, he opened up the present Gospel Age. Before that time, God developed a class we term "Ancient Worthies." They did not have a heavenly hope, for that came only with Christ Jesus. They will be raised on Earth, as perfect human beings. They will be earthly representatives of the kingdom of Christ ruled from above.

Satan will be bound "so that he can deceive the nations no more" (Revelation 20:2). Everything will be conducive to reclaiming the hearts and minds of the world.

First the living generations will appreciate the kingdom, but then the dead of past ages will be brought back also. It will be done orderly and systematically. Everyone will have ample time to hear, learn, repent, and cleanse their hearts, minds, and characters.

At the end of the Millennium God will permit Satan's tests again, to try the hearts of mankind, as he tried our first parents in Eden. The results this time will be much different than before. The experience with sin and death, compared to the blessings of the kingdom, will induce the vast majority to follow Godly principle, rather than Satanic allurements.

Then they will know how much God loves them, and how much God has done for them. "It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is Jehovah, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation!" (Isaiah 25:9).

A History of the Bible Student Movement

For an engaging and expansive history of the Bible Student Movement, from the Reformation to modern times, please see the special "History Edition" of the "The Herald" Magazine, at www.HeraldMag.org

Speakers Available

A Free Service

Would you like a speaker for your Bible Study Group or Church? Our goal is to encourage Christians to appreciate the richness of the Scriptures, God's Plan of the Ages, and to consecrate their lives to the service of God. To this end, we offer speakers for your Group or Church, freely, for the love of the Truth. Do not hesitate to call upon us. Contact us at FFellowship@AOL.com

For a Moment ...

A Vision of the Future

"Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act.

"There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay — not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. Inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance.

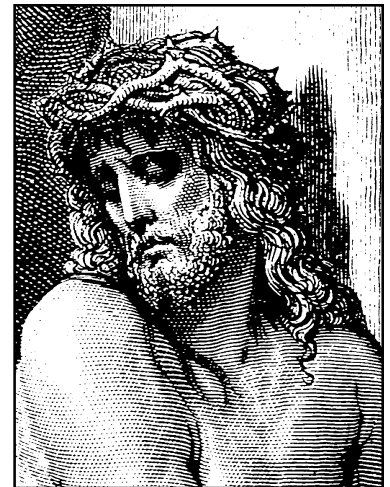
"Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete (Revelation 21:4)."

— "The Divine Plan of the Ages," pages 191, 192

For This Cause

View this remarkable video presentation

There is no cause greater than the one for which Jesus came into the world. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth ... and give [my] life a ransom ... for the life of the world" (John 18:37, Matthew 20:28, John 6:51).



The video "For This Cause" captures the spirit and essence of that great cause. It is a stirring presentation. Do not miss the opportunity to see it. You can view this video on the internet at the following address, and we warmly encourage you to do so.

And then ... contact us. Tell us if you appreciate the video, and if you appreciate the lessons of this folder. Scriptural questions are also welcome at any time.

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