

Chronology. [A non-Biblical word derived from the Greek words *chronos*, "time," and *logos*, "word," "speech," "reason."] The study of time relationships between periods and events in the Bible record requires a discussion of methods of reckoning as well as a survey of the different historical periods and the data on which the chronological pattern is based. The subject will be discussed under various heads and summarized in tables of dated or approximately dated events of Bible times.

I. Basis of Ancient Chronology. The ancients did not record dates according to the system we use, nor did the different nations reckon time by one calendar, as practically the whole world does today. Therefore, our success at dating ancient events—that is, at assigning them dates in our own B.C.-A.D. scale of years—depends on our understanding of ancient methods and on the amount of information we have about the events. That is why there is sometimes uncertainty or difference of opinion on Biblical dating.

CHRONOLOGY, OLD TESTAMENT. The chronology of the Old Testament presents many complex and difficult problems. The data are not always adequate or clear, and at times are almost completely lacking. Because of insufficient data many of the problems are at present beyond solution. Even where the data are abundant the exact meaning is often not immediately apparent, leaving scope for considerable difference of opinion and giving rise to many variant chronological reconstructions. The chronological problem is thus one of the availability of evidence, of the correct evaluation and interpretation of that evidence, and of its proper application. Only the most careful study of all the data, both Biblical and extra-Biblical, can hope to provide a satisfactory solution.

▪ The Christian Era, which numbers years from the supposed year of the birth of Christ, was devised so long after that event that its starting point was placed erroneously—approximately 4 years late. It has two disadvantages: (1) It requires a reverse numbering for all the events preceding the time of Christ. (2) Since A.D. 1 is preceded in the scale by 1 B.C., with no zero year between, the computa-