

The World Week of 7000 Years

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The Scriptures divide time into seven Periods as follows:-

1. From Creation to the Flood.
2. From the Flood to Abraham.
3. From Abraham to David.
4. From David to the Babylonian Captivity.
5. From the Captivity to Christ.
6. From the Time of Christ to His Return.
7. The Millennium.

These periods are clearly set out in God's infallible Word. Furthermore, great prominence is given to the beginning and the ending of each of these periods.

1. The first period is set out in Genesis 5:3-29. Here ten generation of man reach from the creation of Adam and Eve to Noah and the flood. This is a period of 1656 years from Eden to the world wide flood.
2. Genesis 11:10-26. Here again in ten generations, the history of mankind is covered from the Flood to Abraham.
3. "From Abraham to David are fourteen generations." This is clearly stated in Matthew 1:17.
4. From David to the Babylonian captivity is again fourteen generations. Matthew 1:17.
5. From the Captivity to Christ are fourteen generations. Matthew 1:17.
6. The sixth period stretches from the coming of the Messiah to His return in glory. This period is divided into seven periods as in the Seven Churches, the Seven Seals and the Seven Trumpets of Revelation.
7. The Millennium, or the Day of the Lord, is the seventh and final period when the earth keeps its Sabbath. This 1,000 years is mentioned seven times in the New Testament. 2 Peter 3:8, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years." In Revelation 20, the "thousand years," is found six times in the first seven verses. Here the Sabbath millennium is not for the wicked, but only for the people of God. The ungodly are as Sabbath-less as Satan. They rise not until the thousand years are finished. Revelation 20:5. On a wilderness earth, "here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. For six thousand years Satan's work of rebellion has made the-earth to tremble." (1)

These seven periods cover the span of time that stretches from God's two eternities. "From eternity in the past, to eternity of the future," "From everlasting to everlasting." (2)

1 Corinthians 4:3, (Margin). "Man's Day." The word translated "judgment" in this verse is translated "day" in all other places in the New Testament, and thus the margin here is correct. It matters little how we are judged or considered in "man's day," or in "man's judgment."

Man's day will end at "The End of The World." or "End of the Age."

This "age" or world will last for a definite and limited period of time. This is Man's day "the Day of Salvation."

Revelation 22:11. This solemn verse begins in "Man's day," but it finishes in "the Day of the Lord." The "Day of the Lord" is also called the "Day of Christ," the "Day of Judgment," the "Day of Vengeance."

Ephesians 2:7. "In the Ages to Come." When Eternity is restored. "Man's day" of darkness will then be but a dark speck on the horizon of eternity. The lesson will have been learned and so "affliction will not rise up the second time." The Bible is the only Book in the world that gives us a view of human history from the lost Paradise of Eden to the restored "Paradise" of Revelation. It alone spans "from Everlasting to Everlasting." In it alone can we find the secret, the "Mystery," of the span of history. As the Scriptures show clearly that the history of this world will be about 7,000 years, Seventh day Adventists have always believed that we are some 6,000 years from Creation. Note these clear statements:

"The figure 6-000 is undoubtedly a rough approximation of the time from Creation, as based on the Hebrew patriarchal chronology, to the present century." (3)

"Seventh-day Adventists believe that the earth was created approximately 6,000 years ago." (4)

Hence we as Adventists have been more correct than we realized in focusing on what is a truly relevant religious question - the question of the meaning of the Genesis record of Creation week. We hold that it is a literal, historical record as to events and days, and that the events took place about 6,000 years ago. And this is the heart of our controversy with evolutionists. Perhaps the prime point in our view is that Creation week occurred about 6,000 years ago. The reason for our thus believing, some onlooker might remark, is that seventeenth-century Archbishop Ussher devised a chronology of the Old Testament and that unthinkingly we have accepted the date he computed for Creation, 4004 BC. The real reason why we hold that Creation week occurred about 6,000 years ago is because (1) we believe that the Bible record is a historical record, and hence the patriarchs and the antediluvians were not mythical, legendary creatures, as modernists declare, but literal, living human beings; (2) we believe that because the Bible provides us a historical record the life spans given for those who lived, from Adam to Christ are to be taken literally. "Now, have we been unique in our chronological views? No! Christendom rather generally held this view until at least mid-nineteenth century." (5)

Not only have men of all ages been convinced that this world would last for about 7,000 years, but they saw this truth illustrated in the six day of Creation, followed by the Sabbath. They believed that following the 6,000 years of man's days of toil, there would be the 1,000 years when the earth will keep its Sabbath.

It is a most striking fact that God's people of every age have believed that each day of Creation equated a thousand years of the world's history. Six thousand years of labor and toil would be followed by the millennium of rest. This would take place before the gates of eternity will swing open. This world-week would last for 7,000 years. Only the Spirit of God could so indelibly have engraved this conviction into the minds of Jews, Pagan and Christians. The Rabbis of Josephus day strongly believed this truth. (6) They believed in a 6,000 year duration of the earth, which would be followed by the 1,000 years of rest.

BARNABAS In his epistle chapter 15 Pages 283-284 wrote:

"Of the Sabbath He speaks in the beginning of the creation. And God made the works of His hands in six days and He ended on the seventh day, and rested on it and He hallowed it. Give heed, children, what this means: He ended in six days. He means this, that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end; for the day with Him signifies a thousand years: And this He Himself bears witness, saying: Behold the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years. Therefore children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, everything shall come to an end. And He rested on the seventh day. This He means:

when His Son shall come, and shall abolish the time of the Lawless One, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the Moon and the stars, then shall He truly rest on the seventh day."

Irenaeus who wrote during the latter part of the same century, held to the old Jewish tradition that the first six days of creation week were typical of the first six thousand years of human history, with Antichrist manifesting himself in the sixth period. And he expected the millennial kingdom to begin with the Second Coming of Christ to destroy the wicked and inaugurate, for the righteous, the reign of the kingdom of God during the seventh thousand years, the millennial Sabbath, as signified by the Sabbath of creation week."

Irenaeus calls those "heretics" who maintain the glorification of the saints immediately after death, before their resurrection. He affirms that the millennial kingdom and the resurrection are actualities, not allegories, the first resurrection introducing this promised kingdom in which the risen saints are described.

Hippolytus, writing about AD 236, believed in the 7,000 years of the world's duration. He said that inasmuch as God made all things in six days, these days symbolize a thousand years each and therefore in 6,000 years from Creation, the end will come." (11) Not only was this conviction held by both Jewish and Christian leaders, but can be traced as well in Paganism. The Etruscans of Italy and the Zoroastrian Persians believed the human race was to last 7,000 years. (12)

Lactantius, AD 250-330, the great champion of Christian truth through the crowning days of pagan persecution and who influenced Constantine's acceptance of Christianity, believed in the six days of Creation week as symbolical of the world's history and he closes them with the seventh thousand years of rest after the 6,000 years of wickedness. He strongly denied the Graeco-Babylonian theory of hundreds of thousands of years for earth's history and declared that the Scriptures alone reveal the world's age. (13)

Ambrose, AD 340-397, bishop of Milan, likewise assigned to the duration of the world, the 7,000 years as - Prefigured in the seven days of Creation.

Jerome, AD 340-420, also held to the 6,000 year duration of the world, which would be followed by the seventh thousand, during which "true Sabbath keeping" would be, restored. (14)

The Venerable Bede likewise held to "the six ages of the world." He drew a parallel between the six days of Creation and the ages of the world. He also wrote of the number seven as the foundation structure of the Revelation. (15)

In 1545, Martin Luther wrote that the world was in its sixth and last thousand years, before the Sabbath rest which was typified by the six days of Creation week. (16)

Melanchthon likewise declared that the great day of God will soon come. This conviction was based largely on the fact that Christ would return at the close of the 6,000 years from Creation. He claimed there were 2,000 years without law, 2,000 years under law and 2,000 years under the Messiah. He wrote "It is settled that Christ was, born about the close of the fourth millennium and now 1,545 years have passed. Therefore we are not far from the end." (17)

Latimer, who was burned for his faith in 1555 likewise held strongly to the belief that this world would last but 6,000 years, "as did many of his contemporaries." (18)

Lord Napier, companion of John Knox and the first great Scottish Expositor of Revelation also held strongly to the 6,000 years duration of this world.

Thomas Burnet, 1635 – 1715, likewise preached and wrote his conviction that the world would last but 6,000 years. This belief he shows was strongly held by the Christian Fathers and he cited a score of them as evidence. (19)

The historian. Gibbon, states "As the works of Creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to tradition which was attributed to the prophet Elijah was fixed to 6,000 years." (20)

Another significant fact should be carefully noted, namely, that God's times are marked off in sevens. The Period of "sevens" runs through nature and especially through the Holy Scriptures, for in the birth and growth, health and disease, decay and death of birds and beasts, fish and insects and even man himself is to be seen the law of sevens.

As stated by Dr. Grattan Guinness:

"As to man his very pulse keeps time to the seven-day period. Dr. Stratton states (as the result of several series of observations) that in health, human pulse is more frequent in the morning than in the evening, for six days out of seven; and that on the seventh day it is slower. And man's life as a whole is a week a week of decades. 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten' and that by Divine appointment. Combining the testimony of all these facts, we are bound to admit that there prevails in nature a law of septiform periods. In organic nature a law of completion in weeks." (21)

It is a fact worthy of note that the law of sevens, a system of weeks, is found all through the Scriptures. In fact the Hebrew word translated "week," means seven. So the words "week" and "seven" can be used interchangeably. In the following will be seen the various weeks set by our Lord in His Scriptures.

1. The Week of Days.

"Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.... for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it," Exodus 20:9-11.

This week of seven days which was established in Eden spans all time and covers all history. It is only the seventh day Sabbath that marks off the week. It is deeply engraved in the history of God's saints. Over three hundred thousand Sabbaths line the road of the people of God, each as it were pointing with outstretched hand, like so many guide-posts, each in the same direction to the eternal city. Each proclaiming in overwhelming testimony, "It is therefore the duty of the people of God to keep the Sabbath." Hebrews 4:9, Syriac.

2. The Week of Weeks.

Next we have a week of weeks. This period is found between the first two great annual gatherings of Israel's Sacred Year, the Passover and Pentecost. The tremendous significance of these two ordinances is seen in the fact that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7, and when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost, the latter being, the memorial of the giving of the Ten Commandments on Sinai. These two mighty ordinances were an instance of the week of weeks, and clearly stated. "And you shall count unto you, from the morrow after the Sabbath. From the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath." Leviticus 23:15. Thus not only-did the Sabbath mark off each week, but a week of weeks led to Pentecost.

3. The Week of Months.

The entire circle of feasts of Israel's religious year prefigured the history of redemption. This occupied a week of months. This period comprised the first seven months of the year. They began with the Passover; this was kept on the "fourteenth day of the first month." Leviticus 23:5. The last feast was held in the seventh month and at its conclusion the sacred year was closed. Leviticus 23:27, 34. Thus the period of holy annual gatherings was again seven in character, they were a week of months.

4. The Week of Years.

In the plan of God the land as well as the people were to keep the Sabbath. The Lord said in Leviticus 25:14, "When you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord." The servant was likewise to serve six years and go free on the seventh. "Six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free." Exodus 21:2.

As the weekly Sabbath followed six days of work, so the week here is on the scale of years. It is worthy of note that these Sabbath years were possible only by the blessing of God, Who said, "I will command My blessings upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years." Leviticus 25:21,22. As the gift of manna was doubled on the sixth day, so that the people could keep the Sabbath, likewise this blessing was on the scale of years, on the week of years.

5. The Week of Weeks of Years.

"Thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years." Leviticus 25:8. This larger week was similar in character to the others, for at its close, bondage, debt and poverty passed away. It was the Jubilee of rest, joy and liberty.

6. The Week of Decades of Years.

In Psalms 90:10, we find the law of weeks embraces all, both Jew and Gentile. "The days of our years are three score and ten." Human life is a week - a week of decades of years.

7. The Week of Weeks of Decades.

Daniel 9:24 states "Seventy weeks" or as the Septuagint Version "Seventy weeks of years" or 490 years were allotted off to the Jewish nation, so even in this scale of the centuries God has again adhered to the law of sevens. It is a week of weeks of decades.

8. The Week of Millenniums.

In Revelation chapter 20, we have "the thousand years" mentioned. In fact it is mentioned six times in this chapter. It follows the six thousand years of sin. It will be the Sabbath millennium when the saints "live and reign with Christ a thousand years." Meanwhile, on earth without a Sabbath, Satan is on a desolated earth. Then the earth will keep its Sabbath and Satan will keep an enforced Sabbath - a thousand year Sabbath. God sent Israel into captivity because they "transgressed very much." "They mocked the messengers of God and despised His words and misused His prophets." 2 Chronicles 36:14,16. They had brushed aside God's Sabbath so God removed them. This was "to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath." 2 Chronicles 36:21.

Commenting on this verse E.G. White writes, "The Jewish nation is before us as an example of the termination of God's long forbearance. In the destruction of Jerusalem the destruction of the world is typified." (22)

For six thousand years our Lord's holy day has been trampled underfoot. For the seventh thousand year period it lies desolate, "for as long as she lay desolate she kept the Sabbath."

Miss Mary Walsh in her Bible notes states:-"EARTH TO KEEP SABBATH."

2 Chronicles 36:21. "The Sabbath has been violated down through the ages by the influence of Satan. The Lord is now going to permit this earth to remain desolate to make up for the number of Sabbaths that have been transgressed, and Satan will be obliged to rest, as it

were, until the land has "enjoyed her Sabbaths." The Lord will ultimately have His purposes carried out, despite the hindrance that Satan has caused.

"Thus we have three reasons why God permits the thousand years to intervene between His second coming and His third coming:

1. That Satan may have time to reflect over his evil deeds.
2. That the judicial phase of the judgment may be carried out.
3. That the land may rest and enjoy her Sabbaths." (23)

The Spirit of Prophecy adds its conclusive testimony and leaves no doubt to this truth.

1. 1864. 3 Spiritual Gifts, page 92. "Many who profess to believe the Bible record are at a loss to account or wonderful things which are found in the earth, with the view that creation week was only seven literal days, and that the world is now only about six thousand years old. Signs Times, March 20, 1870.
2. 1868. 2 Testimonies, page 172. "During his experience of nearly six thousand years he (Satan) has lost none of his skill and shrewdness. All this time he has been a close observer of all that concerns our race."
3. 1872. 3 Testimonies, page 138. "God endowed man with so great vital force that he has withstood the accumulation of disease brought upon the race in consequence of perverted habits, and has continued for six thousand years."
4. 1872. 3 Testimonies, page 492. "The continual transgression of man for six thousand years has brought sickness, pain, and death as its fruits. And as we near the close of time, Satan's temptation to indulge appetite will be more powerful and more difficult to overcome."
5. 1877. 2 Spirit of Prophecy, page 93. "Six thousand years has this arch enemy been warring against the government of God, and continued practice has increased his skill to deceive and allure."
6. 1844. 4 Spirit of Prophecy, page 371, (Story of Redemption, page 394). "Thus under a new disguise the great rebel still carries forward his warfare against God, begun in heaven and for nearly six thousand years continued upon the earth." Great Controversy, page 552-553).
7. 1888. Great Controversy. (Author's Introduction). "For six thousand years that master-mind that once was highest among the angels of God, has been wholly bent to the work of deception and ruin." (Intro. Page X).
8. 1888. Great Controversy, page 518. "The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried forward for nearly six thousand years, is soon to close; and the wicked one redoubles his efforts to defeat the work of Christ in man's behalf, and to fasten souls in his snares."
9. 1888. Great Controversy, page 552-553. "Thus under a new disguise the great rebel still carries on his warfare against God, begun in heaven, and for nearly six thousand years continued upon the earth."
10. 1888. Great Controversy, page 656. "For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; The Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men."
11. 1888. Great Controversy, page 659. "For six thousand years, Satan's work of rebellion has "made the earth to tremble." He has made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof."
12. 1888. Great Controversy, page 659. "And 'he opened not the house of his prisoners.' For six thousand years his prison-house has received God's people, and he would have held them forever, but Christ has broken his bonds, and set the prisoners free."
13. 1888. Great Controversy, page 673. "Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe, and causing grief throughout the universe."
14. 1890. Patriarchs and Prophets, page 51. "The laws and operations of nature, which have engaged men's study for six thousand years, were opened to their minds by the infinite Framer and Upholder of all."
15. 1890. Patriarchs and Prophets, page 342. "For six thousand years, Satan has struggled to maintain possession of the earth."

16. 1890. Councils on Health, page 19. (CTBH. 7) "Man came from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization and beautiful in form. The fact that he has for six thousand years withstood the ever increasing weight of disease and crime is conclusive of the power of endurance with which he first endowed."

17. 1898. Desire of Ages, page 413. For six thousand years, faith has built upon Christ."

18. 1898. Desire of Ages, page 413. "For six thousand years, the floods and tempests of Satanic wrath have beaten upon the Rock of our Salvation; but it stands unmoved."

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1888. Great Controversy, page 455. "Against this argument it was shown that the Sabbath and its observance were more ancient and widespread, even as old as the world itself, and bearing the sanction both of angels and of God. When the foundation of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, there was laid the foundation of the Sabbath."

1890. Patriarch and Prophets, page 336. "The Sabbath institution, which originated in Eden, is as old as the world itself." The holy Sabbath, memorial of the Creation, has spanned all time and all ages, and "the redeemed saints. . . will observe it in honor of the great Creator to all eternity."

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14. "Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers," Leroy E. Froom, Volume 1, page 448.
15. "Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers," Leroy E. Froom, Volume 1, pages 611, 615.
16. "Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers," Leroy E. Froom, Volume 2, page 279.
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18. "Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers," Leroy E. Froom, Volume 2, page 372.
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22. "S.D.A. Bible Commentary," Volume 3, page 1133.
23. "Doctrinal Studies for the Layman," Mary Walsh, page 37.

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