

A. INTRODUCTION:

Culture is not a static entity; instead, it is dynamic and ever changing. Every culture has common elements: 1) a life cycle, 2) a world view, and 3) an identity. These elements develop and adapt over time; and taken together these elements make a culture unique and identifiable. Anthropologists study the development and evolution of people-groups and their culture through the evidence they have left behind. This evidence includes the historical written record and the durable material artifacts. People-groups and their cultures develop over time as they collaborate and cross-pollenate with other known groups. This process is called cultural diffusion or cultural evolution. Wikipedia the Online Encyclopedia makes the following observations about Culture – (with some minor editing made by AD for clarity):

1. Culture is an umbrella term which encompasses the social behavior and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities and habits of the individuals in these groups. Humans acquire their culture through the learning processes of enculturation and socialization, which is shown by the diversity of cultures across social groups through history.
2. A cultural norm codifies acceptable conduct in society; it serves as guideline for behavior, dress, language, and demeanor in a situation, which serves as a template for expectations in a social group. [Some groups have been known for their ridged demands for conformity, however] accepting only a uniform or monoculture in a social group can bear risks. Just as a single species can wither in the face of environmental change, societies can wither for lack of functional responses to change. Thus, in military culture, valor is counted an ideal behavior for an individual, as are duty, honor, and loyalty to the social group are counted as virtues, or functional responses in the continuum of conflict. In the practice of religion, analogous virtues can be identified in a social group.
3. Culture is considered a central concept in anthropology, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human societies. Cultural universals are found in all human societies; these include expressive forms like art, music, dance, ritual, religion, and technologies [including] tool usage, cooking, shelter, [pottery, weaponry] and clothing. The concept of material culture covers the physical expressions of culture, such as technology, architecture and art, whereas the immaterial aspects of culture such as principles of social organization (including practices of political organization and social institutions), mythology, religion and philosophy, literature (both written and oral), and science comprise the intangible cultural heritage of a society.
4. Culture is the set of customs, traditions, and values of a society or community, such as an ethnic group or nation. Culture is the set of knowledge acquired and passed on over time. In this sense, multiculturalism values the peaceful coexistence and mutual respect between different cultures inhabiting the same planet. Sometimes "culture" is also used to describe specific practices within a subgroup of a society, a subculture (e.g. a counterculture). Within cultural anthropology, the ideology and analytical stance of cultural relativism holds that cultures cannot easily be objectively ranked or evaluated because any evaluation is necessarily situated within the value system of a given culture.

5. **“Ethnocentricity”** is a term used to express this point of cultural identity. It means that every culture to one degree or another views the world and others through the lens of their own cultural values... what they know to be “right”... which makes objective evaluation by those outside the culture challenging. Furthermore, when a culture is viable and thriving, all these various cultural components are effectively aligned and integrated. When a culture is dynamic, it is also incorporating new elements at a manageable rate which brings renewed vigor and opportunity to the culture. When the rate of change exceeds the capacity for effective integration and a new normative environment fails to emerge, conflict and even chaos often results. Failure to digest change is not good, nor is change for merely for change sake. However, compelling forces for change and the repression to change is unhealthy. History has demonstrated that organizations and cultures that manage and integrate change well clearly have a survival advantage.

There are three components that are fundamental for the survival of the culture. These are 1) Ideology-Religion; 2) Socio-Political Organization; and 3) Technology-Science. Ideology-Religion is critical for establishing and passing on cultural identity. To this end, myth magic and ritual are key aspects. See the AD link provided below for more on the topic of the components of culture.

<http://authenticdiscipleship.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/LD-5.0-CA-Introduction-to-Christian-Anthropology.pdf>

In this article we will explore how Ideology-Religion operate with the culture.

- B. PAGANISM, PANTHEISM, AND POLYTHEISM – THE IDEOLOGICAL WORLD OF MYTH, MAGIC AND RITUAL:** Paganism, Pantheism and Polytheism make up the majority of the religious expressions of the world and differ markedly from Monotheism especially of the Judea-Christian cultures. We’ll first look on how these three religious systems are defined.
1. **Paganism Defined – from an article in Encyclopedia Britannica Online:** The religious environment of the Gentile [Greco-Roman] mission was a tolerant, syncretistic blend of many cults and myths. Paganism was concerned with success, and the gods were believed to give victory in war, good harvests, success in love and marriage, and sons and daughters. Defeat, famine, civil disorder, and infertility were recognized as signs of cultic pollution and disfavor. People looked to religion for help in mastering the forces of nature rather than to achieve moral improvement. Individual gods cared either for specific human needs or for specific places and groups. [These gods were locally affiliated; therefore, it was believed that when people moved into or through a region, that they pay homage to the local god.] The transcendent God of Biblical religion was, therefore, very different from the numerous gods of limited power and local significance. In Asia Minor Paul and his coworker Barnabas were taken to be gods in mortal form because of their [ability to perform] miracles. To offer sacrifice on an altar [of a local god] seemed a natural expression of gratitude to any dead, or even living, benefactor. Popular enthusiasm could bestow divine honors on such heroes as dead pugilists and athletes. In the Roman Empire it seemed natural to offer sacrifice and burn incense to the divine emperor as a symbol of loyalty, much like standing for a national anthem today.

2. **Pantheism Defined – from an article in Encyclopedia Britannica Online:** The doctrine that the universe conceived of as a whole is God and, conversely, that there is no God but the combined substance, forces, and laws that are manifested in the existing universe. The cognate doctrine of panentheism asserts that God includes the universe as a part though not the whole of his being. Both “pantheism” and “panentheism” are terms of recent origin, coined to describe certain views of the relationship between God and the world that are different from that of traditional theism [the view that all limited or finite things are dependent in some way on one supreme or ultimate reality of which one may also speak in personal terms.] As reflected in the prefix “pan-” (Greek *pas*, meaning “all”), both of the terms stress the all-embracing inclusiveness of God, as compared with his separateness as emphasized in many versions of theism. On the other hand, pantheism and panentheism, since they stress the theme of immanence—i.e., of the indwelling presence of God [inhabits plants, animals, creation itself, and of course humanity]—are themselves versions of theism conceived in its broadest meaning. Pantheism stresses the identity between God and the world, panentheism (Greek *en*, “in”) that the world is included in God, but that God is more than the world.
3. **Polytheism Defined – from an article in Encyclopedia Britannica Online:** The belief in many gods. Polytheism characterizes virtually all religions other than Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which share a common tradition of monotheism [the belief in one God]. Sometimes above the many gods a polytheistic religion will have a [most powerful god or] supreme creator and focus of devotion. In certain phases of Hinduism (there is also the tendency to identify the many gods as so many aspects of the Supreme Being); sometimes the gods are considered as less important than some higher goal, state, or savior, as in Buddhism; sometimes one god will prove more dominant than the others without attaining overall supremacy, as Zeus in Greek religion. Typically, polytheistic cultures include belief in many demonic and ghostly forces in addition to the gods, and some supernatural beings will be malevolent; even in monotheistic religions there can be belief in many demons, as in New Testament Christianity.
4. **Myth, Magic and Ritual – are a primary means that a culture’s ideology-religion employs to cope with the supernatural especially in ancient times. In our individual and corporate life, we have to contend not only with normal every-day change, but also with cataclysmic change and the myriad levels of unpredictability in life’s conditions and events. Sometimes things go well, sometimes they don’t; sometimes the plan works, sometimes it fails. Sometimes good things happen to bad people; sometime bad things happen to good people. Illness and health are additional variables to cope with especially in early cultures. If the head of a family got sick or died, the family or community suffered. When the vulnerabilities of life meet the complexities of random chance and change, many things can happen. The complexity of an agrarian society dependent upon regular rains for crops was another major problem. Pagan gods were thought to be in control of the fickle life events of rain, health, prosperity and happiness. Finding a way to keep the gods responsible for sending the rain positively attentive to an individual or community was the accepted and prudent thing to do. Ba’al was the god of rain and his consort Asherah was the goddess of fertility typically worshipped in the Ancient Near East including**

Canaan. However, Pagan gods were known to be fickle and capricious, as well as violent and petty. Homer's *Iliad and the Odyssey* accurately captures these aspects of the Pagan gods which was prevalent in the Ancient Near East. It was widely believed that these gods needed to be satisfied with the right sacrifice or magic spell; that they could be influenced and possibly controlled as an asset to the community. Virtually everyone in the Ancient Near East believed in the supernatural and spiritual world of mysticism where Myth, Magic and Ritual held sway. Diviners and mystics were the spiritually sensitive individuals who were connected to the supernatural world and who could help people... for a fee. This was the world where witches and witch doctors, priests and priestesses, herbalists and apothecaries held influence and authority mediating between the natural and the supernatural.

a. Myth Defined – from Encyclopedia Britannica Online with minor editing by AD for clarity:

Myth is a symbolic narrative, usually of unknown origin and at least partly traditional, that ostensibly relates [primeval] events and that is especially associated with religious belief. It is distinguished from symbolic behavior (cult, ritual) and symbolic places or objects (temples, icons). Myths are specific accounts of gods or superhuman beings involved in extraordinary events or circumstances in a time that is unspecified, but which is understood as existing apart from ordinary human experience. The term *mythology* denotes both the study of a particular myth and the body of myths belonging to a particular religious genre and tradition.

There is typically no attempt to justify mythic narratives or even to render them plausible. Every myth presents itself as an authoritative account, no matter how much the narrated events are at variance with natural law or ordinary experience. By extension from this primary supernatural meaning, the word *myth* may also be used more loosely to refer to an ideological belief when that belief is the object of a quasi-religious philosophy or faith; an example would be the Marxist eschatological myth of the withering away of the state.

While the outline of myths from a past period or from a society other than one's own can usually be seen quite clearly, to recognize the myths that are dominant in one's own time and society is more difficult. This is hardly surprising, because a myth has its validity not by proving itself but by presenting itself. In this sense the validity or authority of a myth "goes without saying," and the myth can be outlined in detail only when its authority is no longer unquestioned but has been rejected or overcome in some manner by another, more comprehensive myth.

The word *myth* derives from the Greek *mythos*, which has a range of meanings from "word," through "saying and story," to "fiction." Myths typically occur in some distant pre-historical past. The unquestioned validity of *mythos* can be contrasted with *logos*, where the word whose validity or truth can be argued and demonstrated. Because myths narrate fantastic events with no attempt at proof, it is sometimes assumed that they are simply stories with no factual basis, and the word has become a synonym for falsehood or, at best, misconception. In the study of religion, however, it is important to distinguish between myths and stories that are merely untrue.

Myth has existed in every society. Indeed, it would seem to be a basic constituent of human culture. Because the variety is so great, it is difficult to generalize about the nature of myths. *It is clear that in their general characteristics and in their details a people's myths reflect, express, and explore the people's [i.e. culture's] self-image.* The study of myth is thus of central importance in the study both of individual societies and of human culture as a whole.

b. Magic Defined - from Encyclopedia Britannica Online with minor editing by AD for clarity:

Practices classified as *magic* include divination, astrology, incantations, spells, alchemy, sorcery, spirit mediation, and necromancy [speaking with or for the dead]. The term magic is also used colloquially in Western popular culture to refer to acts of conjuring and sleight of hand for entertainment. The purpose of magic is to [influence the supernatural powers to] acquire knowledge, power, love, or wealth; to heal or ward off illness or danger; to guarantee productivity or success in an endeavor; to cause harm to an enemy to reveal information; to induce spiritual transformation; and in terms of entertainment to trick; or to entertain. The effectiveness of magic is often determined by the condition and performance of the magician, who is thought to have access to unseen forces and special knowledge of the appropriate words and actions necessary to manipulate those forces.

Phenomena associated or confused with magic include forms of mysticism, medicine, heresy, witchcraft, shamanism, Voodoo, and superstition. Magic is sometimes divided into the "high" magic of the intellectual elite, bordering on science; and the "low" magic of common folk practices. A distinction is also made between "black" magic used for nefarious purposes, and "white" magic ostensibly used for beneficial purposes. Although these boundaries are often unclear, magical practices have a sense of "otherness" because of the supernatural power that is believed to be channeled through the practitioner, who is a marginalized or stigmatized figure in some societies and a central one in others. [It is important to note that this description doesn't mean there is no supernatural realm from which the practitioner draws their power or influence; only that it cannot be ostensibly proven empirically (see Acts 16:16-18)]. Magic in the supernatural sense is a means of affecting or controlling the material world with the supernatural.

c. Ritual Defined - from Encyclopedia Britannica Online with minor editing by AD for clarity:

The performance of ceremonial acts prescribed by tradition or by sacerdotal decree. Ritual is a specific, observable mode of behavior exhibited by all known societies. Ritual behavior, established or fixed by traditional rules, has been observed the world over and throughout history. In the study of this behavior, the terms sacred (the transcendent realm; or the supernatural realm) and profane (the material realm of time, space, and cause and effect; or the natural realm) have remained useful in distinguishing ritual behavior from other types of action. Although there is no consensus on a definition of the sacred and the profane, there is common agreement on the characteristics of these two realms by those who use the terms to describe religions, myth, and ritual. For scholars and others who use these terms, ritual is a determined mode of action. Belief systems, myths, and the like, are viewed as expressions of the nature of the sacred realm in which ritual becomes the determined conduct of the individual in a society expressing a relation to the

sacred and the profane. The sacred is that aspect of a community's beliefs, myths, and sacred objects that is set apart [from the mundane] and forbidden [except by specially trained practitioners]. The function of ritual in the community is that of providing the proper rules for action in the realm of the sacred as well as supplying a bridge for [power and influence] passing into the realm of the profane.

Rituals [or rites] are a patterned expression or behavior that is taught and learned [and passed on] by a master to an apprentice. It has significance only when performed properly, such as in the context of a religious service. Ritual may also be described [in a non-supernatural sense] as a regular functional routine typically followed by an individual and as such is a common way of defining or describing [normative] human behavior. Human beings are sometimes described or defined as a basically rational, economic, political, or recreational species. They may, however, also be viewed as ritual beings who exhibit a striking parallel between their ritual patterned and verbal behavior. Just as language is a system of symbols that is based upon stylistic or arbitrary rules, ritual may be viewed as a system of symbolic acts that is based upon more nuanced or ordered rules. The intricate yet complex relation between ritual and language can be seen in the history of various attempts to explain ritual behavior. In most explanations, language becomes a necessary factor in the theory concerning the nature of ritual, and the specific form of language that is tied to explanations of the ritual is the language of myth. [Rituals may include special attire, symbolic movements, chanting or theatrical language or intonation, etc.] Thus, both myth and ritual remain fundamental to any analysis of religions.

- 5. Summary Thoughts – myth, magic and ritual entail more than mere superstition; they are the means by which many cultures identified themselves and secured their place in the world in the context of the natural and supernatural.**
- a. Mythos is typically predicated on a time outside of history... the rationale for this is to reinforce the notion that it has always been this way. Myths typically make no effort to be historical. Such are many creation myths where one primordial god kills another primordial god, then cuts it up and creates the earth and cosmos with the carcass. Myth is not trying to solve a problem within the context of history; it's trying to fashion an identity.**
 - b. Magic gives practitioners within their culture an opportunity to positively or negatively influence the society and its local environment. It also served as a stabilizing component for the culture in an otherwise unpredictable and often hostile world.**
 - c. Ritual for both practitioners and adherents offered a direct means to engage the supernatural as a society. It establishes guidance and continuity of thought and identity as a community.**
 - d. A modern portrayal of a Pantheistic blend of myth, magic and ritual may be observed in the Star Wars saga. The Force is an example of a Pantheistic god; each installment begins with the mythic statement "A long time ago; in a galaxy far, far away." History is not the point of the story. The magic empowers the Jedi practitioners to engage and direct the force which contains both good and evil. Cultic rituals and training occur for the young apprentices within the Jedi temple.**
 - e. We will now look at the development of Judea-Christian monotheism and its difference from Paganism, Polytheism and Pantheism.**

C. JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN MONOTHEISM – THE LOGOS IN REDEMPTIVE HISTORY:

1. When God made His Self-revelation to humanity, He did so through agents prepared for this task.

Historical people such as Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, the Prophets, Messiah Jesus and His Apostles carried this revelation to humanity within the context of their historical period. This Revelation was carefully preserved through the ages to preserve the integrity of God’s Judea-Christian Self-revelation as the Creator God of Heaven and earth in the Biblical Scriptures. This God was totally different from the Paganist, Pantheist and Polytheist religious traditions in a number of ways including:

- a. This God did not require people to search Him out. Instead, God revealed Himself. This God communicated through history through real people who actually lived, who then recorded and passed on God’s messages for posterity. Instead of requiring people to figure out a way to take care of themselves, this God stepped into history to reveal and solve humanities problems Himself. Instead of demanding to be fed and placated, this God wanted a relationship with the world and people He created and was more than happy to serve them.
- a. The Old and New Testament events and writings occurred within an historical context, knowing the date and historical context of these writings allows us a peak what God was saying to His people at that particular time and how to interpret it for our own historical context. This interpretative process is called “Biblical Hermeneutics.” Additionally, the amount of Direct Biblical sources and the indirect historical sources from historians provides an ample validation of the Historicity of Scripture. Even the preamble of Genesis 1-11, which occurs in a schematic timetable, describes known areas of the Fertile Crescent that the writer and audience knew. In discussing this preamble, Zondervan’s Archaeological Study Bible states “The pre-flood and post flood genealogies seem to be schematic and incomplete. In general, the time period from Adam to Abraham appears to have been extensive, and the genealogical lists in Genesis hardly serve as a timetable.” Thus, this preamble though not accurately historical, traces the cultural development of a people. The preamble steps into history in Genesis 11:27 when Abram’s family leave their home in the known geographical locations of “Ur of the Chaldeans” in the Fertile Crescent just north of the Persian Gulf, and then they travel North to “Haran of the Hittite Empire.” In chapter 12 the story picks up with Abram [Abraham] leaving his home with his family on their way to Canaan. In other words, the earlier parts of the story were shortened to bring the reader to the heart of the redemptive historical saga with the relational calling of Abram, and Abram’s obedience by faith to this call. Humanities problem was clearly demonstrated in these early chapters in Genesis... humanity was shown as being corrupted and sinful and in need of redemption. The solution involved a relationship and obedience to this Self-revealing God.
- b. The problem in establishing a relationship with this God Who is Characterized as Holy, Just and Good; is humanity’s Fallen [corrupted] nature. Humanity needed a plan of redemption to remain in God’s Holy God’s Presence. The remainder of Scripture is the playing out of God’s redemptive plan in human history to restore relationship. The Bible is in fact a love story rather than a scientific manual for humanity. God solved the problem with something people of every era could understand... blood sacrifice; animal blood in the Old Testament, which was the harbinger of Jesus the Messiah [God/man] who would shed His own blood on the Cross in the New

Testament. This sacrifice was long foretold, and through it God accomplished what humanity couldn't do. Therefore, God did for us what we couldn't do on our own.

- c. This plan was definitely revealed throughout redemptive history as recorded in the Bible, and when accomplished it radiated out both into the past and future to provide the opportunity for all of humanity to have an ongoing friendship with God. What we desperately needed for the security of eternal life; God provided at His own expense. This is Grace! God's free gift of love that we receive by faith. God didn't need to be placated or bought off. Instead God wanted to be trusted and obeyed. This human action of faith and obedience courses throughout Scripture, which consistently demonstrates it is for our own good as it prepares humanity for the gift of eternal life. Humanity could not find God on our own, so this God of Love revealed Himself in the Bible. This is the basic message of the Christian Gospel revealed by Messiah Jesus. Paul goes on to contrast the wisdom of God versus the wisdom of the world:
- i. **1 Corinthians 1:18-24** – For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.
 - ii. **2 Corinthians 2:15-17** – For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? For we are not like many, peddling the word of God [for personal gain], but as from sincerity, and as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.
- d. It is not accidental that one of the oldest books of the Bible is Job... an ancient poem about wrestling with why a Good and all powerful God allows bad things happen to good people. This is the theological problem of Theodicy (Theo=God, and dike'=justice). According to The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, "Theodicy refers to attempts to [understand and] justify the ways of God to humanity. A successful theodicy resolves the problem of evil and demonstrates that God is all-powerful, all-loving, and just... despite the existence of evil." Zondervan's Archaeological Study Bible compares the speeches of God found in Job chapter 38-41 to the mythic stories of ancient Hittite polytheism to demonstrate the unmatched greatness of the monotheistic YAHWEH:
- i. The speeches of God in Job 38-41 present God [YAWEH] as absolute and unrivaled in His power over nature. The stars, storms, seasons, and wild animals all submit to and depend upon Him. God even controls *Leviathan*, the dragon that symbolizes chaos and evil. In polytheism, on the other hand, gods are often depicted as weak and dependent.

- ii. Hittite texts of myth and ritual illustrate this. For example, the Telepinu myth recounts an incident in which the storm god Telepinu was reported to have become angry and deserted his post [in moderating the weather]. In his absence the crops ceased to grow and the livestock [failed] to calve. Even the other gods began to panic at the prospect of starvation. Although the gods were unable to locate Telepinu, a bee found him asleep under a tree and wakened him with a sting. A goddess of magic and a human priest then performed expiatory rituals that assuaged Telepinu's anger.
- iii. Other Hittite myths tell of the storm god's conflict with the dragon Illuyanka. Unlike YAHWEH's domination of Leviathan in Job 41 however, the storm god can scarcely handle Illuyanka. In one version the storm god is first defeated by the dragon, but the tables turn after the goddess Inara enlists the aid of a mortal, Hupashiya, by sleeping with him. She then hosts a feast; after Illuyanka gorges himself on food Hupashiya binds the dragon with ropes so that the storm god can slay him. In another version the storm god loses his heart and eyes to the dragon in their first battle, but the god's son marries Illuyanka's daughter and persuades Illuyanka to return his father's eyes and heart. The storm god resumes the battle, slaying both the dragon and his son.
- iv. The profound [nature] of the moral and theological debate of Job could not have arisen from such Pagan myths. The gods depicted in these tales, were simply too weak to control events in a meaningful way, they needed the assistance of other gods and even that of humans and animals [to prevail]. There would also be no problem of evil if God were too weak to control the world; such a theological dilemma can only exist in a setting in which God is understood to be omniscient [all knowing] and omnipotent [all powerful].

Whereas the problem of Theodicy in Pagan, Polytheism and Pantheism doesn't arise because their god's are weak, capricious, and self-serving; Theodicy has a logical place and resolution in Christianity. Humanity individually are "free-will" moral and ethical agents and are responsible for their choices and actions before God. Were it otherwise, humanity would be relegated to the position of "automatons" meaning beings acting out a scripted play they have no choice but complying with. This would make God the Author of both Good and evil, which is a theological conundrum. Free will also makes sense because humanity's ultimate Home is an eternal one, and God reserves the right to work things out there.

- e. **While the Bible is an integrated Book of God's Self-revelation, Biblical Scripture was not necessarily written in the order they are presented in the Bible. The following "Schedule A" presents the generally accepted Dates of the known historical events around and writing of the Old and New Testament Writings. These dates are validated from a variety of sources including historical records of other nations, findings dated in the archaeological record, and cross reference with the Bible itself. Though some historical observers have complained of the delay of some of these writings especially the Gospels after Jesus ministry and death, it is understood there were source documents written by eye-witnesses and shared (like the "Q" Documents) that were in circulation and were the common source for the Synoptic Gospels. Another factor for the delay was the general expectation that Jesus' Apocalyptic Return would be immediate**

rather than delayed. Finally, the authors didn't write in a vacuum, there were eyewitnesses that were interviewed and the Holy Spirit Supernaturally enabled all writers of Scripture to recall and present God's intended message to His people. The internal and external evidence accompanied by the transformative response of believers through the ages bear out the validity of the Old and New Testament Canon.

(See Schedule A below for known historical dates of Biblical people and events, including a context within the historical record)

SCHEDULE A – KEY DATES AND WRITINGS OF OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT – These dates are derived from a number of scholarly sources including Dr. Bill Creasy – Logos Ministry, Dr. Gary Tuck – Western Seminary, Zondervan’s Archaeological Study Bible, Zondervan’s International Dictionary of the Christian Church.

OLD TESTAMENT:

- 1) 5,500 BC Copper Age Begins
- 2) 3,500 BC Bronze Age Begins
- 3) 3,050-2,181 BC Old Kingdom of Egypt
- 4) 2,686-2,566 BC Egyptian Pyramids Built
- 5) 2,166-1,901 BC Abraham
- 6) 1,914-1,805 BC Joseph
- 7) 1,792-1,750 BC Hammurabi
- 8) 1,526-1,406 BC Moses – Pentateuch
- 9) 1,446 BC 1st Passover in Egypt
- 10) 1,200 BC Iron Age Begins
- 11) 1,114-1076 BC Tiglath-Pileser rules Assyria
- 12) 1,000 BC Ruth – Book of
- 13) 1,060-1,020 BC Prophet Samuel
- 14) 1050-1010 BC King Saul
- 15) 1,010-970 BC King David – Psalms
- 16) 1,000 BC Mayan’s Rule Meso America
- 17) 970-930 BC King Solomon – Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs
- 18) 870-845 BC Elijah
- 19) 760-763 BC Isaiah
- 20) 753 BC Rome is Founded
- 21) 650-582 BC Jeremiah
- 22) 620-540 BC Daniel
- 23) 620-570 BC Ezekiel
- 24) 520 BC Haggai
- 25) 520-516 BC Jerusalem Temple Rebuilt
- 26) 522-509 BC Zechariah
- 27) 478 BC Esther – Book of
- 28) 465 BC Malachi – Book of
- 29) 450 BC Joel – Book of
- 30) 457-430 BC Ezra & Nehemiah – Book of
- 31) 360 BC Plato writes The Republic
- 32) 399 BC Socrates writes The Apology
- 33) 336-323 BC Alexander the Great

NEW TESTAMENT:

- 1) BC 6-4 Jesus is Born
- 2) AD 27-28 Jesus public ministry
- 3) AD 30-32 Jesus Crucified, Buried and Resurrected
- 4) AD 48-49 James Epistle
- 5) AD 48-49 Council at Jerusalem – Paul
- 6) AD 49 Galatians Epistle
- 7) AD 51 1st Thessalonians Epistle
- 8) AD 51-52 2nd Thessalonians Epistle
- 9) AD 55 Gospel of Mark
- 10) AD 55-56 First Corinthians Epistle
- 11) AD 56 Second Corinthians Epistle
- 12) AD 56-57 Romans Epistle
- 13) AD 58-62 Gospel of Matthew
- 14) AD 59-62 Gospel of Luke
- 15) AD 60-62 Acts of the Apostles
- 16) AD 61 Ephesians Epistle
- 17) AD 61 Philemon Epistle
- 18) AD 62 Philippians Epistle
- 19) AD 62 Colossians Epistle
- 20) AD 63-64 First Peter Epistle
- 21) AD 63-66 First Timothy Epistle
- 22) AD 63-67 Titus Epistle
- 23) AD 66-67 Second Peter Epistle
- 24) AD 67-69 Second Timothy Epistle
- 25) AD 67-69 Jude Epistle
- 26) AD 67-69 Hebrews Epistle
- 27) AD 70 Fall of Jerusalem, and Destruction of the 2nd Temple
- 28) AD 75-85 Gospel of John
- 29) AD 90-95 First John Epistle
- 30) AD 90-95 Second John Epistle
- 31) AD 90-95 Third John Epistle
- 32) AD 90-95 Revelation