

EXPLANATION OF CENTURIES BC (BCE) AND AD (CE)

BC = BEFORE CHRIST

AD = ANNO DOMINI IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

BC ALWAYS IS WRITTEN AFTER THE DATE WHILE AD IS USUALLY WRITTEN BEFORE THE DATE

BCE = BEFORE COMMON ERA

CE = COMMON ERA

THE TWO SYSTEMS BC AND AD- BCE AND CE ARE NUMERICALLY EQUIVALENT

THERE IS NO YEAR 0.

9 TH	8 TH	7 TH	6 TH	5 TH	4 TH	3 RD	2 ND	1 ST	1 ST	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH	8 TH	9 TH
BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD
900-801	800-701	700-601	600-501	500-401	400-301	300-201	200-101	100-1	100-1	1-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-800	801-900
BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD	AD

"It is commonly thought that B.C. stands for "before Christ" and A.D. stands for "after death." This is only half correct. How could the year 1 B.C. have been "before Christ" and A.D. 1 been "after death"? B.C. does stand for "before Christ." A.D. actually stands for the Latin phrase *anno domini*, which means "in the year of our Lord." The B.C./A.D. dating system is not taught in the Bible. It actually was not fully implemented and accepted until several centuries after Jesus' death. It is interesting to note that the purpose of the B.C./A.D. dating system was to make the birth of Jesus Christ the dividing point of world history. However, when the B.C./A.D. system was being calculated, they actually made a mistake in pinpointing the year of Jesus' birth. Scholars later discovered that Jesus was actually born around 6—4 B.C., not A.D. 1. That is not the crucial issue. The birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ are the "turning points" in world history. It is fitting, therefore, that Jesus Christ is the separation of "old" and "new." B.C. was "before Christ," and since His birth, we have been living "in the year of our Lord." Viewing our era as "the year of our Lord" is appropriate." (<https://www.gotquestions.org/BC-AD.html>)

HISTORY OF BC/AD

"The Hebrew calendar, still in use, is based on a concept known as *Anno Mundi* ("in the year of the world") which dates events from the beginning of the creation of the earth as calculated through scripture. Ancient civilizations such as **Mesopotamia** and **Egypt** based their calendars on the reigns of kings or the cycles of the seasons as set by the gods. In Mesopotamia, for example, one might date an event as "five years from the reign of King Shulgi" and, in Egypt, as "three years after the last Opet Festival of **Ramesses** who was the second of that name" or, otherwise, "In the 10th year of the reign of **Ramesses** who triumphed at **Kadesh**". This method of dating was continued by the Romans who counted their years according to three different systems in different eras: from the founding of **Rome**, by which consuls were in power, and by which emperors ruled at a given time.

Julius Caesar (100-44 BCE) reformed the calendar and renamed the months during his reign (49-44 BCE). This calendar remained in use, with periodic revisions, until 1582 CE when Pope Gregory XIII instituted the Gregorian Calendar still in use in the present day. Christians used the *Anno Mundi* calendar and the **Roman** calendar in the early years of the faith. In c. 525 CE, however, a new concept in dating was introduced by a Christian monk named Dionysius Exiguus (c. 470-544 CE) which provided the groundwork for the later dating system of BC/AD.

Dionysius invented the concept of *Anno Domini* ("in the year of our Lord") in an attempt to stabilize the date of the celebration of **Easter**. At the time he was working on this problem, Christians of the influential church of **Alexandria** were dating events from the beginning of the reign of the **Roman emperor Diocletian** (284 CE) who persecuted members of the new faith. Dionysius was seeking to bring the eastern and western churches into agreement on a single day on which all Christians would celebrate Easter." (<https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1041/the-origin--history-of-the-bcece-dating-system>)

INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

<https://www.knowingthebible.net/topical-studies/the-intertestamental-history>

https://biblehub.com/topical/p/prophecy_of_cyrus.htm

https://biblehub.com/q/what_is_the_intertestamental_period.htm

<https://www.gotquestions.org/intertestamental-period.html>

- I call it “the blank page” between Malachi and Matthew
- Approx.. 400 years of silence (400 BC or 420 BC) SEE CALENDAR BC AD Handout
- Daniel prophesied most of what happened in Daniel 2,7,8,11.
- Persia ruled Israel at the time of the Intertestamental Period. 539–332 BC
 - Cyrus II heard of—Isaiah 44:24-28 & 45:1-13 (written during Babylonian exile more than 100 years before King Cyrus)
 - Fulfillment found in 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 & Ezra 1:1-4 (Jews to return and rebuild Temple)
 - Conquered Babylon in 539 BC- Cyrus II granted freedom, abolished slavery and allowed Jews to return home
- “Pre-exile Israel and Judah were large kingdoms led by kings and prophets. But now the Jews were a small group of cities in the region of Judah under the leadership of governors and a small group of priests. The post-exilic prophets were few and did not have the same political authority they previously had. In addition, the glory of Yahweh had not returned as Ezekiel had prophesied (Ezek. 40–48), showing that though the physical exile had come to an end, their spiritual exile still continued. Though the Jews largely did not worship idols, their lack of devotion to Yahweh and their continued social injustice still existed among the people. Their hearts were still hard and in need of redemption.

The post-exilic prophets taught that the exile would not come to an end until the Jews pursued Yahweh in faithfulness. Yahweh slowly dissolved the office of prophet, making Malachi (432–431 BC) the last prophet. This began what is called the 400 silent years, when Yahweh no longer spoke to His people through the prophets. It would not be until John the Baptist that this silence would be broken. The priests who were concerned with ritual orders sought out a different kind of “wise men” from the prophets. The law was now in the hands and interpretation of educated men known as scribes.”

<https://www.knowingthebible.net/topical-studies/the-intertestamental-history>

- 513 BC Darius I invaded Thrace, Macedonia, Greece (Greek city states).
- The Greek city states rebelled against Persia. Next two centuries they warred amongst themselves. King Philip II of Macedon (359-336 BC) united them into one nation. Believed that only as a united nation could they defeat Persia.
- Only after his death was it made possible through his son, Alexander III later known as Alexander the Great. Merciless & Unrelenting, He conquered region after region.
- Alexander the Great died in 323 BC but left no clear heir. His five main Generals would take control of the empire. “Diadochi Successors”
 - Ptolemy I took Egypt and Syria (Including Judah)
 - Seleucus I took Mesopotamia and Asia
 - Antigonus I took Asia Minor
 - Lysimachus took Thrace
 - Cassander took Macedonia
- Entered into wars against each other from (322-275 BC) --Diadochi Wars
- Antigonus began expanding but the other four Generals united and defeated him in 301 BC—Cassander took control of Asia Minor
- “By 275 BC the most powerful empires were the Ptolemies and the Seleucids.”

- Daniel 11-12 calls them Kings of the south and Kings of the north. The Kings of the Ptolemies were called Ptolemy, and the Kings of the Seleucids were called Seleucus or Antiochus.
<https://www.knowingthebible.net/topical-studies/the-intertestamental-history>
- Hellenization came to the eastern world.
 - Greek world view and culture superior to all others
 - Emphasis on reason, individualism, competition and art
 - Man can accomplish anything he puts his mind to do
- The Seleucid Empire expanded under Antiochus III and in 198BC he took control over land which included Judah. Rome also was seizing control of the Greek City States and Antiochus could not defeat them. He incurred a large war debt to Rome and put a heavy tax burden on Judah to pay the debt.
- Antiochus III was succeeded by his son Seleucus IV and then Antiochus IV called himself Epiphanes (god manifest) (175-163 BC). He imposed heavy taxes to provide money to the Roman's tax.
 - Little Horn of Daniel 7:8-8:9-12, 23-25
- Various disturbances broke out but eventually Antiochus IV prohibited all Jewish practices, circumcisions, daily offerings in the Temple, and burned all copies of the Torah. He banned all festivals. Set up idol of Zeus and Baal Shammen (lord of the heaven). They even sacrificed a pig to their gods in the temple.
 - Punishment of death.
 - Some Jews followed the practices but some did not compromise their belief
- 167 BC Representatives of the Seleucid government tried to persuade the priest Mattathias of the Hasmonean family to sacrifice to other gods. He refused and even killed a Jew who moved in to comply. He killed the government officials and he fled to the mountains and called for a revolt.
 - Mattathias died but his oldest son Judas called Maccabee (the hammer) led the revolt. Known as the Maccabean Revolt
 - Antiochus IV withdrew and Maccabees took back the city and restored the Temple on Dec 14, 164 BC - HANUKKAH
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- "Judas continued to fight the Seleucids and took control of Galilee and Gilead in the north. The small city-state of Judah was being expanded to become the nation of Israel once again. After his death in battle, the youngest brother, Jonathan, succeeded him as leader of the rebel army, and in 157 BC the Seleucids made peace with him. Later in 152 BC he was named high priest in Jerusalem as well as administrator of Judea. Taking the titles of both political governor (akin to a king) and high priest was a violation of the Mosaic Law. But the prophets also looked forward to the day that a messiah ("anointed one" of Yahweh) would come bearing both titles, defeat the enemies of Israel, and establish the New Jerusalem. He was eventually captured by the Seleucids, imprisoned, and executed in 143 BC."
<https://www.knowingthebible.net/topical-studies/the-intertestamental-history>
- Judas, Jonathan now Simon the second son of Mattathias succeeded and Judea gained independent in 142 BC. Simon was named high priest and prince and they decided the priesthood would stay in his family until a faithful prophet would emerge (1 Macc. 14:41 Hasmoneans were no longer concerned with purification of Israel or establishment of Yahweh's New Jerusalem but building their own kingdom. Returned Judah not to orthodoxy but to increased Hellenization.
<https://www.knowingthebible.net/topical-studies/the-intertestamental-history>
- During this time the Pharisee, Sadducees and Essenes show up.
- The Roman Empire
- The Herodians
- Roman Prefects – Roman military men (Zealots show up this timeframe)