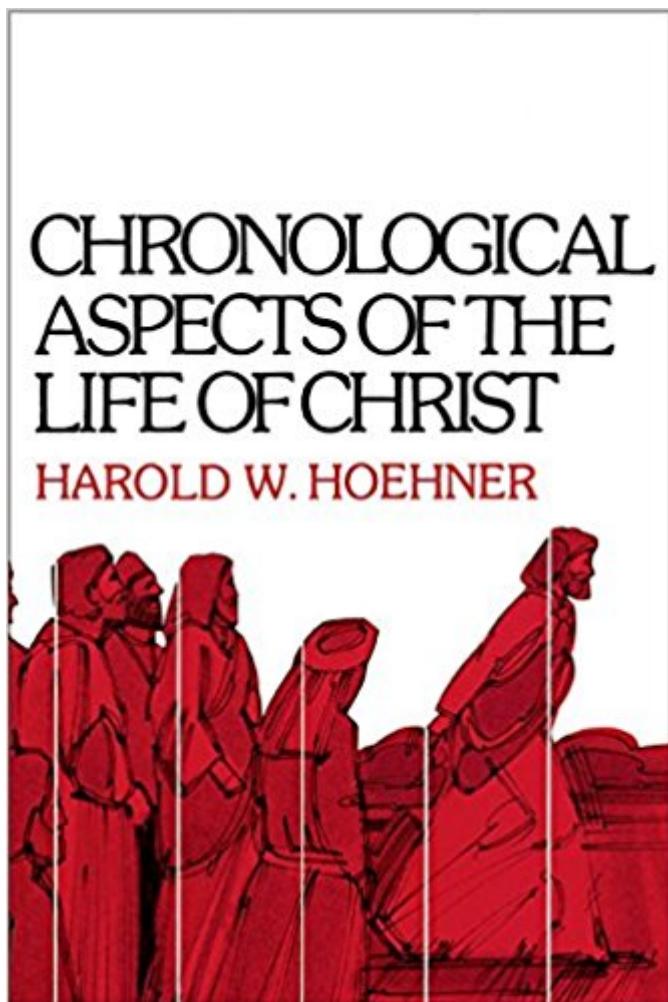


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Chronological Aspects Of The Life Of Christ



Synopsis

"Jesus Christ entered into the history of our world. Christianity, therefore, has historical basis. The backbone of history is chronology. Whereas history is a systematic account of events in relation to a nation, institution, science, or art; chronology is a science of time. It seeks to establish and arrange the dates of past events in their proper sequence. Thus chronology serves as a necessary framework upon which the events of history must be fitted. In this book (the author) attempts to establish certain fixed dates in our Lord's life." - Dr. Harold W. Hoehner. Dr. Hoehner has gathered a vast amount of data, both from Scripture and extrabiblical sources, to support his conclusions concerning key dates in the life of our Lord, among them: - The Date of Christ's Birth - The Commencement of Christ's Ministry - The Duration of Christ's Ministry - The Year of Christ's Crucifixion He carefully documents his position and compares the date available--including a study of Greek words, Roman law, and Jewish customs and prophecy.

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Harold W. Hoehner received his ThM and Th.D. at Dallas Theological Seminary and his PhD. at Cambridge University. He is Chairman of the Department of New Testament Literature and Exegesis at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Dr Hoehner makes several serious mistakes, I believe. One is his careless claim, along with most other OT Chronologers, that the OT dates are Julian. I would seek to prove to anyone, otherwise --- but this is not the place for it. Anyone interested please contact for discussion. There are several others also, such as his coming out with a date for our Lord's birth at 5 BC, which has several weaknesses. (1) If Herod's death date was actually in 4 BC, as was commonly claimed, which Dr. Jack Finegan shows is probably wrong by a few years, because of its being based on a misinterpretation of Josephus, as he convincingly claims. Stranger yet is the fact that Dr. Hoehner had to have seen it, and been aware of it, yet ignored it in his arguments for 5 BC birthdate. (2) 5 BC obviously does not allow for the time for the flight into Egypt, according to the Matthew account. Herod was clearly still alive 2 years after the date of the Star (Matthew 2:9, etc); and there surely had to be more time yet involved. However, all of Dr. Hoehner's faults are thrillingly eclipsed with his masterful, and now accepted by every good scholar IMO, study of the Seventy Weeks and the resulting Crucifixion date of Friday, Nisan 14, April 3, AD 33. And the "Triumphal Entry" date of Monday, March 30, Nisan 10, perfectly agreeing with Exodus 12:3,6 and every other detail. BobChrist Died to Save YouBob

Dr. Hoehner approaches his subject by addressing seven specific issues in understanding the chronology and dating in the life of Christ. He begins with the date of the birth of Christ, coming to the conclusion that 4BC is the only date possible. Through this section, he deals with the record of Herod's death, including the eclipse most often used in the dating process, and various problems (such as Luke's statement that Jesus was about 30 years old when he began his ministry). The author's second chapter deals with the year in which Christ began his ministry, and the third chapter with the duration of the ministry of Christ. The length of ministry is primarily limited by the Feasts listed in the Gospel of John; two Passovers are mentioned explicitly, and one Passover is implied.

After some consideration of the other available options, Dr. Hoehner concludes that three years is the best option available. The day on which Christ was crucified is the next subject at hand; Dr. Hoehner concludes that Friday is the correct day, though he does propose that Thursday appears to be possible. He spends some time considering the problem of Jesus eating the Passover with the Apostles, and then the Pharisees not wanting to enter Herod's house because they had not yet eaten the Passover themselves. To resolve this problem, he argues that the Passover was eaten on two successive days because of two different traditions among Jews from different areas of the country. Chapter five considers the year in which Christ was crucified. The primary evidence here is the timing of the Passover in each year, along with any external evidence. He concludes that the year must have been 33, making Jesus around 37 years old when he was crucified. Finally, Dr. Hoehner considers the prophecy of Daniel 9, and the beginning and termination points of the 70 weeks. Overall, this is a good resource for those who want to go beyond the basics and dive into the thinking and research required to build a solid chronology of the life of Christ. Well worth reading for those who are at all interested in studying the three and a half years of Christ's ministry.

A thorough investigation of events in the life of Christ, Palestine, and Rome. Sources of information are biblical, historical, and astronomical. Author is not dogmatic where there are legitimate alternative arguments to explain uncertainties about some events. An extensive bibliography is provided for further reading on the subject.

This was my first encounter with the works of Dr. Hoehner and I have to admit that I am very impressed with the level of research that he has done on the chronology of the Life of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament. He is certainly knowledgeable on the subject and has proven himself by earning a Ph.D at Cambridge. This work is an excellent resource and here are a few of the reasons that I think this book is well worth the investment. Dr. Hoehner is very logical in his approach. His style is bland and clinical so you won't find any quotables. He considers various possibilities for every date that he sets forth. He starts with the birth of Christ and eliminates various years proposed for his birth by using a very systematic format. He proceeds on to show the date for the beginning of his ministry. He moves from date-to-date very even-handed and at no time does he try to force an interpretation to his favor. He often deals with problems that face his own postulations and try to work out a viable answer which he usually does very well. He goes through the crucifixion and the resurrection giving a very convincing reason as to why he accepts 33 A.D. as year of the Lord's Passion. He even demonstrates the likelihood that Christ was actually crucified on a Friday.

After, he then compares notes with Daniel's 70 weeks and shows how that all the evidence falls in favor of the date he has established. I am no expert on the chronology of Jesus' life although I am not ignorant of it either. However, I do have a degree in history from the University of Illinois at Springfield and I do know that his method for coming to these conclusions is excellent. Many writings on this subject will often require a lot of guesswork and assumption which is not the case here. The historical data that he presents about Pilate and Herod shed a great deal of light in explaining why Pilate and Herod gave into the mob that wanted Jesus to be crucified. He shows how that there is a way to reconcile the caricatures of Tacitus and Josephus with those of the gospel writers about these two men. This book is accessible and can be followed by anyone with or without a background in this field. One thing I wish he would have done is to give a better rational as to why he thought Jesus may have been born in December and I wish he had give more charts to look at. But these are minor criticisms and do not in any way detract from the work. If you are doing a study of the gospels or the life of Christ you will do yourself a favor to pick up a copy of this book.

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