

Chronology.

^A It is difficult for one who is accustomed to a modern invention to realize that people once lived comfortably without it. Electric lights, telephones, clocks, railroad trains, postal systems, etc., are so much a part of our daily lives, that it is hard for us to realize how life would be without them. The same is true of certain mental concepts. ~~which have become~~ We are so accustomed to ~~the~~ dating ~~everything by a fixed~~ every year by a fixed number in a continuous system that we assume that the clear idea of chronology which such a system permits was in the minds of ancient writers. As a matter of fact our system of dating by A.D. and B.C. is comparatively recent. It was introduced into Italy in 533 A.D. and ~~to~~ did not attain general use in western Europe until ~~several~~^{some} centuries later. During the previous centuries a number of eras, or systems of numbering all years forward from a fixed point had been used in ~~various~~^{different} regions, but the very idea of ~~the~~ such a system seems to have been unknown a few centuries before the time of Christ. It is hard to compare these various systems because they begin the year at different times, and some of them have years of varying lengths.

As a result the study of ancient chronology is one of the most difficult phases of ancient history, and the present paper can not undertake to examine this phase to any great extent. The Bible makes no attempt to give us a complete chronology, although it contains many chronological data, ^{many of} which require careful study before we can be sure of their entire significance. The incompleteness of the data is made obvious by the varying results secured by those who have attempted to set the date of creation from the Bible. Thus Usher places it at 4004 B.C., the era of Constantinople places it at 5508 B.C.,