

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php

JOURNAL OF
THE TRANSACTIONS
OF
The Victoria Institute,
OR
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

VOL. LXVI.



LONDON:

Published by the Institute, 1, Central Buildings, Westminster, S.W.1.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

1934

781ST ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, MAY 28TH, 1934,

AT 4.30 P.M.

LIEUT.-COLONEL ARTHUR KENNEY-HERBERT IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the election of Robert J. Nairn, Esq., B.Sc., Ph.C., as an Associate.

The CHAIRMAN then called on the Rev. John Stewart, Ph.D., to read his paper on "The Dates of Our Lord's Life and Ministry."

*THE DATES OF OUR LORD'S LIFE AND
MINISTRY.*

By THE REV. JOHN STEWART, Ph.D.

THERE are only three dates in our Lord's Life regarding which the Scriptures give any definite information, but these are quite sufficient for our purpose. They are (1) The date of the Nativity; (2) The date when He began His public ministry; and (3) The date of the Crucifixion. As regards the first of these the information given enables us to determine the year with practical certainty, the month and the day can be arrived at only approximately. The second is closely related to the time when John the Baptist began his work as forerunner, a year which is definitely known. How soon after John's appearance our Lord began His ministry is somewhat uncertain. It may have been a year or eighteen months later. The date of the Crucifixion can, however, be determined with practical certainty, both as to the day and the year. With these three dates as the basis we are able to complete the superstructure by means of which the chief events in the Life of Our Lord can each be fitted in to its proper place in the completed whole.

1. *The Nativity*.—The traditional view that 4 B.C. was the year in which our Lord was born has for long held the field although in some quarters, the possibility that it may have been 6 B.C. instead of 4 B.C. has been suggested. St. Luke ii, 1-7, furnishes the first authentic information as to when the event referred to took place, *i.e.* that it coincided with the taking of a census that had been ordered by Cæsar Augustus. If, therefore, we can ascertain when the decree ordering this particular census was issued we shall be able to determine the approximate date when it was given effect to. It so happens that in Ancyra, Turkey, there is an old temple dedicated to Augustus and Rome on a tablet in the walls of which there is inscribed a copy of a document prepared by Augustus shortly before his death in A.D. 14, in which he gives a résumé of the principal events of his reign. In this, *inter alia*, it is stated that he ordered a census to be taken on three separate occasions, *i.e.* 28 B.C., 8 B.C., and A.D. 14. It is evident that neither the first nor the last of these could be the census referred to by Luke, which must have been the one taken, or ordered to be taken, in 8 B.C. The year in which our Lord was born could therefore be no other than that year. This is confirmed by the additional information given by Luke, that when this particular census was taken, Quirinius was governor of Syria, and that as this same Quirinius was twice governor of Syria this census was the one taken during his first governorship. It has also recently been discovered that a fourteen year census was instituted in Syria and Palestine, which continued to be observed for several hundred years and that this was the first of the Syrian series of censuses, the second being held in A.D. 7. For many years the reference to Quirinius proved a stumbling block in the elucidation of the date of the birth of our Lord, but comparatively recently, it has been found that Quirinius was military governor of Syria in the years 10-7 B.C., being at the time engaged in the subjugation of the Galatian tribe of Homonades. The expedition had its base in Syria, and Quirinius, as military governor, was superior to the civil governor, Saturninus, whose term of office extended from 9 to 6 B.C. Tertullian says Christ was born at the time of the census and during the governorship of Saturninus. Luke says he was born during the governorship of Quirinius, so that both are right. Justin Martyr also writes of our Lord having been born during the governorship of Quirinius.

The most probable time of the year for the census to be taken was between August and October, so that we may assume that the birth of our Lord took place about that time of the year. The flight into Egypt may have taken place early in 6 B.C., and the return from there immediately after the death of Herod in 4 B.C. This question has been exhaustively discussed by more than one writer so that it is unnecessary to deal further with it here.

[*Note.*—With reference to the statement in Luke ii, 42, that when He was twelve years old they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast (Passover). Our Lord completed his twelfth year in the autumn of A.D. 6. The Passover following took place therefore in March, A.D. 7. Quirinius was at that time Governor of Syria for the second time and Coponius was Procurator of Judea but subordinate to Quirinius. It was quite in accordance with Jewish practice that one who had attained the age of twelve should be present at the observance of the Passover and this was what happened.]

2. The second important date in the life of our Lord is that connected with the fifteenth year of Tiberius when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. The question then is, what was the fifteenth year of Tiberius? The Authorized Version says it was in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar that John came preaching in the wilderness, but the Greek word used in Luke iii, 1 (*hegemonias*), means not so much reign as rule or government. It is equal to *Legatus Cæsaris*; an officer administrating a province. Tiberius was the stepson of Augustus. He was born about 42 B.C. and after being engaged in military operations in Gaul for a number of years, returned to Rome in 7 B.C. He then became consul, an office that he had already held once, and was given the title "tribunitia potestas." Family troubles caused his retiral to Rhodes immediately his year of office as consul was over and he did not return to Rome until A.D. 2. In that year Lucius Cæsar, and in A.D. 4 Gaius Cæsar, the adopted sons of the emperor, died, and Augustus in the latter year adopted Agrippa Postumus and Tiberius as his heirs. Agrippa proved incompetent and later died, and Augustus with the intention of openly devolving upon Tiberius a share in the government, insisted that he should accept the powers

of the tribunate for a second term. In addition to the "tribunitia potestas" Augustus conferred upon him also the *proconsulare imperium*. These two things were the essential ingredients of imperial authority. Tiberius was also given the title of *Imperator*. This formal investiture with the insignia of office was universally regarded as his virtual introduction to the first place in the empire. "I do it," said Augustus, "for the public weal." A.D. 4-5 being the year when Tiberius was adopted into the Julian family, associated with Augustus in the government of the empire, and recognized as the heir to the throne, his fifteenth year was therefore A.D. 18-19, which was the year when John the Baptist came preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. The evidence as to this is absolutely conclusive. The only other year from which the rule or government of Tiberius could possibly count would be A.D. 14, the year when he became sole emperor. That would make A.D. 28-29 the date when John began his ministry. Our Lord would in that case have been about 36 years of age when He began His. If, as seems practically certain, He began His ministry about A.D. 20, the Crucifixion, as will be shown, would take place in A.D. 24.

3. *The year of the Crucifixion.*—The first thing that requires to be done to determine the exact year is to ascertain the day of the week on which the Crucifixion took place. It has for long been assumed that the day of the week was Friday, although here and there objection has sometimes been raised to it as the actual day. That this objection is well founded will be shown in what follows.

It is admitted that the Crucifixion was followed by a day spoken of as the Sabbath. That particular Sabbath was, it is also admitted, the Sabbath of the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, which invariably fell on the day of the full moon, viz., on the fifteenth Nisan, unless on those rare occasions when the Sabbath of the first day of the feast coincided with the weekly Sabbath. In other words, because of the fact that the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread was observed as a Sabbath, there were always two Sabbaths in Passover week. When the Sabbath of the first day of Unleavened Bread and the weekly Sabbath coincided, special arrangements had to be made.

According to Wieseler's "Chronological Synopsis," the only years in which the fifteenth Nisan fell on a Saturday, *i.e.* on

the weekly Sabbath, were A.D. 29 and A.D. 32. If the Crucifixion took place on a Friday, it must therefore have been in one or other of these two years. Dr. Christie, of Haifa, however, points out that there is a Jewish regulation which hinders the Passover day from falling on a Friday. For other reasons also it will be shown that neither of the two years mentioned could have been the year in which the Crucifixion took place.

If Friday is ruled out, and with it the only two years in which the Passover could have fallen on that day, the question then arises on what other day and consequently in what other year did the Crucifixion take place.

An examination of the record as given in the gospels indicates quite clearly that there was one day, and only one, between the two Sabbaths in that particular Passover week. From this we infer that the day of the week on which the Crucifixion took place was not Friday but Wednesday and that the Great Sabbath of the feast of Unleavened Bread fell on a Thursday, the day of the full moon. It was followed by one free day, the Friday, which in turn was succeeded by the weekly Sabbath, our Saturday.

That being so the question is: In what years did the fifteenth Nisan fall on a Thursday? Turning to Wieseler once again we find that the only years about that time when the fifteenth Nisan fell on Thursday were A.D. 24 and A.D. 33. With A.D. 29 and A.D. 32 ruled out, it follows as a matter of course that the only year in which the Crucifixion could have taken place must have been one or other of those two years, *i.e.* either A.D. 24 or A.D. 33. There are, however, other considerations which definitely exclude A.D. 33 also, and there remains only A.D. 24 as the year of the greatest event in the world's history. Incidentally, it is to be noted that in addition to other objections, A.D. 33 is definitely ruled out as the 1900th anniversary of Pentecost by the fact that those sponsoring this hold that the Crucifixion took place on a Friday, while the fifteenth Nisan, A.D. 33, fell, not on a Saturday as it would have done if Passover day had taken place on Friday, but, as already stated, on Thursday. Then as regards those who claim A.D. 30 as the year, in A.D. 30 the fifteenth Nisan fell on a Wednesday which would have necessitated the Crucifixion taking place on a Tuesday—a day that has never at any time been suggested as

the day when it took place. (In Passover week A.D. 31 the fifteenth Nisan was a Tuesday.)

That the Crucifixion took place on a Wednesday and not on a Friday, is confirmed by such passages as Luke xxiii, 52-55, and parallel passages in the other gospels. It is not disputed that the Crucifixion took place on the day spoken of as the "Preparation," which in turn, immediately preceded the day of which it is said "that Sabbath was a high day" (John xix, 31). It was with reference to it, that the Jews besought Pilate that the legs of those crucified might be broken so that they would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath day.

When Joseph of Arimathea came and laid the body of Jesus in the new tomb it must have been almost exactly six o'clock, as we read that "It was the day of the Preparation and the Sabbath drew on."

Nothing more could be done that evening nor could anything be done on the Sabbath itself, but as soon thereafter as possible, viz., on the day immediately succeeding the great Sabbath, the women, as we are told in one place, bought spices (Mark xvi, 1) and, as we are told in another place, prepared them (Luke xxiii, 56) and then rested the Sabbath day (*i.e.* the weekly Sabbath), according to commandment, so that there was evidently one clear day, and only one, between the two Sabbaths. In like manner, as the Jews could not have known where he was buried until after the Sabbath had begun, they also could do nothing more until that particular Sabbath (called great) was past, but as soon as ever they could act in keeping with their own law, they went to Pilate and begged that the sepulchre might be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples should come and steal Him away, and then, having sealed the stone in presence of their own temple guard, they too rested the Sabbath day according to commandment (again the weekly Sabbath). They too required one free day that was not a Sabbath to attend to these matters. The Crucifixion must therefore have taken place on the Wednesday. Jesus died at 3 p.m., on that day, hung on the cross until nearly 6 p.m., was then taken down and laid in the tomb, where he remained until 6 p.m. on the Saturday, when he rose from the dead.

This is confirmed by Matt. xxviii, 1, which reads: "In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn (or draw) towards the first day of the week (the very same word used in Luke xxiii, 54),

came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." The angel, who appeared unto them informed them that Jesus which was crucified had risen, even as he said. That these same women went away and apparently became convinced, or accepted the assurance of others, that the whole thing was an hallucination, and came back the next morning bearing the spices which they had prepared, does not alter the fact that their first coming to the sepulchre was just at the end of the Sabbath, and that Jesus must accordingly have risen at 6 p.m. on our Saturday, exactly three days and three nights after He was placed in the tomb, as He Himself had definitely foretold.

Further confirmation of what has just been stated is found in Mark viii, 31, where our Lord tells His disciples that He would be killed and after three days rise again, and in Matt. xxvii, 63, where his enemies use the very same words "after three days."

To claim that the expression "three days" means only part of one day, then the whole of the second, and a part of the third, and that it might, as a matter of fact, mean only twenty-six hours, has led to serious error in the past and may do so again. The error that crept in was that our Lord did not really die, but only fainted or fell into a trance out of which he awakened twenty-six hours after He had been laid in the grave, and was spirited away by His disciples.

The Jews believed that the spirit did not actually leave the body until after three days, and three days and three nights were therefore necessary to bring definite conviction to all, whether friend or foe.

The three days implied in the words "the third day" and the three days spoken of as "three days" are not synonymous. The third day is the third legal day, the Sabbath being a *dies non*. The first day in that case began at 6 p.m. on Tuesday night and ended at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, during which the arrest, trial, and Crucifixion, all took place. The second day began at 6 p.m. on Thursday and ended at 6 p.m. on Friday, during which the women bought and prepared the spices, and the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, and having obtained his permission, placed a temple guard over the tomb and sealed it in their presence. The third day began at 6 p.m. on Saturday and ended at 6 p.m. on Sunday. At the beginning of that day (*i.e.* at the end of the weekly Sabbath) the two Marys came to the tomb and found that Christ had risen. They returned the

next morning with the other women and again met angels; Peter and John came running, and saw, and believed; Christ met Mary, and later, Peter. Two disciples went to Emmaus, meeting and conversing with our Lord by the way and recognizing Him later in the breaking of bread.

The three days began at 6 p.m. on Wednesday and ended at 6 p.m. on Saturday. They included the great Sabbath, the Friday that followed, and the weekly Sabbath which the Friday preceded, but as no action was involved while our Lord lay passive in the grave there was no violation of the Sabbath law. Matt. xxvii, 62-64, illustrates both usages. The term, third day, occurs thirteen times in this connection and in each case means the third legal day.

Three days and three nights in the heart of the earth were necessary: (1) That there might be no room for Jewish incredulity; (2) To preclude all doubt that death had actually taken place; (3) To shut out all suggestion that it might have been a trance or a mere case of resuscitation. Three days may be a recognized Hebrew idiom for any part of three days and three nights, but when the number of nights is stated as well as the number of days, it ceases to be an idiom and becomes a literal statement of fact.

Incidentally it may be noted that with 8 B.C. as the date of the Nativity, and say, A.D. 33 as that of the Crucifixion, the latter would conflict with the statement in Luke iii, 23, that Jesus Himself when He began was about thirty years of age. He would in that case have been about 36 when He began His public ministry, and 40 at its close. Space does not permit of a detailed reference to the fact that Sabbath was invariably a *dies non* whether it were the weekly, or one of the special Sabbaths.

The fifteenth year of Tiberius, and the day of the week on which the Crucifixion took place, are pivotal points in the consideration of the whole subject, but there are other events which, while not so essential, are definitely confirmatory of the position here taken up. There is, for example, the date when the rebuilding of Herod's temple began, of which it was said that it had then been going on for 46 years. Josephus in his "Wars of the Jews" says Herod began to build the temple in the fifteenth year of his reign, but in "Jewish Antiquities," he says it was in Herod's eighteenth year. The forty and six years must therefore date from one or other of these years.

There is no dispute as to the year when Herod began his reign. He was made Tetrarch of Galilee by Anthony in 41 B.C. and elected king of Judea by the Senate of Rome on the joint recommendation of Anthony and Octavius in 40 B.C. His reign must therefore of necessity count from one or other of those two years. The eighteenth year from 40 B.C. brings us to 23 B.C. The fifteenth year from the same year, leads to 26 B.C. Forty-six years from 26 B.C. brings us to A.D. 21, while the same period from 23 B.C. leads to A.D. 24, either of which falls definitely within the period of our Lord's public ministry. As the rebuilding of the temple was not finally completed until about A.D. 62-65 it would not have been correct to speak of it as having been under construction for only 46 years if the remark were made in A.D. 28 or 29 or any subsequent year.

One question that has been raised is whether there were two cleansings of the temple—one at the beginning and the other at the end of our Lord's ministry—or only one, and that at the end. If the rebuilding began in Herod's fifteenth year, and assuming that there were two cleansings, it is conceivable that the first of these—that referred to in John when the remark about the forty-six years was made—might have taken place in A.D. 21, *i.e.* in the early part of our Lord's ministry, and the second—that referred to in all the three Synoptics—just a few days prior to the Crucifixion. The account as given in the Synoptics is evidently in chronological order. That is not necessarily the case as regards the first half of John's gospel.

In favour of the theory that there was only one cleansing, and that it took place on the occasion of our Lord's last visit to Jerusalem just before His death, is the fact that the false witnesses, in their testimony, professed to be repeating the statement made by Him as to His rising again on the third day, even if it were in a distorted form, and the chief priests said the very same thing in their interview with Pilate. It would not be at all surprising that they should do this if the incident occurred only a few days previously. Were they, especially the false witnesses and other passers by, equally likely to refer to a definite statement such as this if it were made, not a few days merely, but three years prior to the time when it was quoted? If the cleansing of the temple took place only once, it would indicate that the rebuilding began in the eighteenth

year of Herod's reign, counting from 40 B.C. and not the fifteenth. In either case, A.D. 24 is indicated as the year of the Crucifixion.

Omitting any detailed reference to other confirmatory incidents such as the date of the marriage of Herod and Herodias, the period of office of Pontius Pilate, etc., we shall note very briefly the confirmation supplied by incidents in the life of Paul and in the prophecy of the 69 weeks in Daniel, and conclude with a brief summary of the whole.

The dates of Paul's Conversion and of his First and Second Visits to Jerusalem.

The dates of Paul's conversion and of his first and second visits to Jerusalem, as well as the date of the first epistle to the Galatians, are all so many additional confirmations of A.D. 24 as the date of the Crucifixion, but space forbids more than a chronological summary of these different points. It is as follows :

Date of Crucifixion A.D. 24.

Date of Paul's conversion A.D. 27.

His first visit to Jerusalem A.D. 30.

His second visit A.D. 44.

First Missionary journey began about A.D. 45.

The stoning at Lystra, probably about A.D. 46.

The return to Antioch in Syria about A.D. 47-48.

The defection of the Galatian churches A.D. 48-49.

Peter's visit to Antioch about the same time.

The epistle to the Galatians written from Antioch A.D. 49-50.

The Council at Jerusalem and Paul's third visit A.D. 51 or 52.

All of which fit in perfectly with the claim that the Crucifixion took place in A.D. 24.

Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks.

Turning from the New Testament to the Old, we find still further confirmation as to A.D. 24 being the date, in the prophecy of Daniel ix., 26, on the one hand, and the record of its primary fulfilment as given in the Book of Ezra on the other.

The weeks referred to in the prophecy are admittedly weeks of years and total altogether 483 years. That length of time after an event still future, the Messiah, who will then have appeared on the scene, will be cut off. The command or permission to Ezra to return and rebuild the city and temple, was evidently given about the month of April, in the sixth year of Artaxerxes, which was 460 B.C., Artaxerxes having succeeded to the throne when his father was assassinated in May, 465 B.C., although his proclamation did not take place until December 7th of that year. On the first day of the first month of the seventh year, *i.e.* September-October of 460 B.C., Ezra and those who were journeying with him, set out. 483 years from April of that year bring us to A.D. 24, the very year in which the Crucifixion took place.

Confirmation from China.

Still further confirmation comes from China, to the effect that the story of the Crucifixion, etc., reached there sometime in the years A.D. 25-28. In conclusion it may be well to summarize the different points which have been proved, but regarding which it has only been possible to give the briefest outline.

Summary.

As regards the Nativity. It has been shown that the date of it coincides with the census referred to by Luke, and that that particular census was the second of the three ordered by Augustus. That it took place in 8 B.C. is confirmed, as has been shown: (1) By the inscription on the temple to Augustus in Angora; (2) By the fact that Quirinius is now known to have been Legate of Syria, and in charge of the punitive expedition against the Homonades about 10 B.C.-7 B.C. and that he was governor in Syria for the second time, A.D. 6-7, but that the census took place during his first governorship, the civil governor at that time being Saturninus; (3) By the discovery recently made that 8 B.C. was the first of a fourteen yearly census which continued till A.D. 329.

Further, the star which brought the wise men to Jerusalem and Bethlehem finds a possible explanation in the triple conjunction of the planets, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, which took

place in March of 6 B.C., although the death of Herod did not occur till two years later in 4 B.C.

Then as regards the Crucifixion. There are no less than nine converging lines, all of which point to A.D. 24 as the date of that event—the only date that satisfies all the conditions involved.

1. The fact that A.D. 19 was the fifteenth year, not of the reign but of the rule or hegemony of Tiberius Cæsar, A.D. 4–5 being the year when he was adopted into the Julian family, associated with Augustus in the government of the empire, and recognized as the heir to the throne. A.D. 18–19 was therefore the year when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness, thus indicating A.D. 20 or 21 at the latest, as the year of our Lord's baptism and A.D. 24 as that of the Crucifixion.

2. The fact that the Crucifixion took place on Wednesday the fourteenth Nisan in a year in which the fifteenth Nisan fell on a Thursday; a coincidence which occurred in A.D. 24, but did not recur until A.D. 33. One or other of those two years must therefore have been the year of the Crucifixion, being the only years in which it could have taken place on a Wednesday. A.D. 33 is, however, ruled out on other grounds leaving A.D. 24 as the one possible year.

3. Luke's statement that when our Lord began (His mediatorial or high-priestly work) He was about thirty years of age.

4. The usage of the terms "the third day" and "after three days," and the fact that Sabbath was a *dies non*.

5. The date when Herod began the rebuilding of the temple *i.e.* 26 or 23 B.C., and the probable date of the marriage of Herod and Herodias.

6. The period of office of Pontius Pilate and the date when he was deposed by Vitellius as confirmed (a) by incidents in the war between Parthia and Rome (b) by the war between Herod and Aretas, and (c) by the career of Asineus and Anileus.

7. The dates of Paul's conversion and of his first and second visits to Jerusalem, including also the date of his epistle to the Galatians.

8. The period of 483 years, which, according to Daniel, was to elapse between the issuing of a command to rebuild Jerusalem, which was given in 460 B.C., and the cutting off of the Anointed One, the Prince, a period which was exactly fulfilled in A.D. 24.

9. The report from China that the story of the Crucifixion, etc., reached there sometime between A.D. 25-28, a maximum period of less than four years.

The only possible alternative to A.D. 24, as already indicated, is A.D. 33 in which equally with A.D. 24, the fifteenth Nisan fell on a Thursday. A.D. 33 can also be made to meet the requirements implied by the phrase "the fifteenth year of Tiberius" by counting, not from the time when Tiberius became associated with Augustus in the government of the empire and was adopted into the Julian house but from the time when he became sole emperor. The fifteenth year in that case would be A.D. 29 instead of A.D. 19. In every other respect, however, A.D. 33 fails to meet the requirements of the case while A.D. 24 does.

A three-fold cord, we are told, is not easily broken. Much more is this the case when the number of strands is not three only, but three times three. And when there is nothing that can be adduced to the contrary, the conclusion arrived at is placed beyond dispute.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN (Colonel Arthur Kenney-Herbert), said: This is the third paper dealing with the Chronology of the Lord's Life which has been read before this Institute in the last five years. These three papers have approached the question from three different points of view.

The first paper was a simple Bible study, based on the theory that if God has meant us to know the exact date of the Crucifixion we may be confident that He has supplied us in the Bible with sufficient data to solve the problem, and that this data has been expressed in language intended to be understood in the simplest possible way. The conclusion arrived at was that the Lord was crucified at 3 p.m. on Friday, the 3rd April, A.D. 33 (Julian date).

In the second paper (January 5th, 1931) Col. Shortt said: "It is very remarkable that after nineteen hundred years, with all our modern methods of criticism and inquiry, the datings of Our Lord's Life and Ministry have not been definitely determined. The reason of course is simple, and lies in an unfortunate clash between the statement in Josephus' "Antiquities of the Jews" that Herod reigned 34 years, and St. Luke's precise dating of the beginning of

the Ministry of John the Baptist as occurring in the fifteenth year of Tiberius," etc. The paper critically examined the facts of the Gospel story, and also the statements of Josephus. Col. Shortt made out a case worthy of careful consideration, and concluded that our Lord was crucified in A.D. 33.

But modern methods of criticism and inquiry are not always so loyal to the veracity of the Bible record. The student who wants to collect all the information he can will naturally consult some recognised authority such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. I quote from the article on "the Chronology of the Gospels," 11th Edition, Vol. 3, page 887, etc., *re* the census: "The notice in the Gospel, it is suggested, grew out of a confused recollection of the later (and only historical) census, and is devoid of any value whatever." Again, *re* the 15th year of Tiberius "or St. Luke has made a second error in chronology." Those who cannot accept the Divine veracity of the gospel of Luke have no solid foundation for their conclusions. They must decide between the conflicting evidence of two principal and many minor witnesses. Some will incline to one, some to another. There must be compromise; some will compromise here and some there. Therefore the solution of the problem becomes a matter of personal opinion, rendering a common agreement as to a "determined" date quite out of the question. Incidentally, I may add that the writer of the article quoted concludes: "Thus A.D. 29 is the year, the 18th of March the day, to which Christian Tradition (whatever value, whether much or little, be ascribed to it) appears to point."

Anstey, following Andrew's Life of our Lord, accepts the year A.D. 30. Therefore whether the purely Biblical method or the modern critical method be adopted, it has generally been held that our Lord was crucified either in A.D. 29, 30 or 33.

Now the paper which has been read to us this afternoon tries to show that in reality the Lord died in the year A.D. 24. This date is so unusual that we may well ask ourselves why the writer has adopted it, for there must have been some cogent reason in his mind which has justified his re-adjustment of the dating of the well-known historical facts.

I think the reason can be found in the interpretation which Dr. Stewart places on Matt. xii, 40—the traditional interpretation, that

our Lord there announced that He would lie in the grave three complete days and nights. This interpretation postulates, as Dr. Stewart says "that Jesus must accordingly have risen at 6 p.m. on our Saturday, exactly three days and three nights after He was placed in the tomb," *i.e.* at about 6 p.m. on the Wednesday. Many accept this interpretation without working out the consequences. We owe Dr. Stewart a debt of gratitude for having done so for us in this paper. There is only one year in which the 14th Nisan fell on a Wednesday, and that year was A.D. 24, which Dr. Stewart has accordingly adopted. If we hold this interpretation to be correct, I do not see how we can logically escape Dr. Stewart's date and the necessary readjustment of all the historical facts. If we question his facts, we question also the interpretation on which they are built. Logically, we must accept his paper as a whole or reject it.

Some people make a difficulty about the visibility of new moon. The new moon is generally visible about 18 hours after astronomical new moon, but there is no need to see every new moon. Those who were responsible for the correct observance of the offerings appointed for the day of new moon would soon recognize the fact that if one month had 30 days the next would have only 29. This sequence holds good for some months in succession, occasionally, two months of 30 days might come together. The new moon of great importance was the 1st of Tishri, the day appointed for the Feast of Trumpets. I have made a list of the dates of all the new moons from August A.D. 28 to May A.D. 33, using Grattan Guinness' Tables of New Moons, allowing at least about 18 hours for visibility. It is wonderful how seldom it would have been necessary actually to see the new moon, in order to maintain the correct sequence of 30 and 29 days. If the harvest moon of September A.D. 31 had been properly observed, and the sequence maintained up to March A.D. 33, the correct date for this New Moon could have been determined either by actual observation or by dead reckoning. In either case the 14th Nisan in that year would have fallen on a Friday.

Incidentally I would question some of Dr. Stewart's statements as to the days on which the 14th and 15th Nisan fell in 32 and 33. The next crucial point is the 15th Tiberius.

I read in the article "Augustus," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, Vol. 2, page 914: "Yet in A.D. 13 he consented, reluctantly

we are told, to yet one more renewal of his *imperium* for ten years, stipulating that his stepson Tiberius, himself now over fifty, should be associated with himself on equal terms in the administration of the Empire." If this statement is true, I do not see how the era of Tiberius can count from any earlier date than A.D. 13.

There is one more point I would raise, hoping that it will meet with adequate consideration in the discussion. A friend tells me that the word *paraskeue* in modern Greek means Friday, and *Sabbaton* means Saturday. This is no modern development of meaning, for Browne in his *Ordo Sæclorum*, page 54, quotes a decree of Augustus, where the word *paraskeuê* is used in this sense. If words are used in their ordinary meaning, I do not see how *paraskeuê* can be made to mean Wednesday.

There are other points which demand careful consideration and justification before they can be accepted as proved. I trust that they also will be dealt with in the discussion.

It is my duty to propose a vote of thanks to Dr. Stewart for the paper; I trust you will show your appreciation of the labour which he has undertaken on our behalf, in a hearty acceptance of this proposal.

Lieut.-Colonel HOPE BIDDULPH said: The date of the Nativity is placed 8 B.C. and that of the Crucifixion A.D. 24. As the first is said to have been in the autumn and the latter in the spring, a period of thirty and a half years only is allowed for the duration of our Lord's life on earth. As He is stated to have been "about thirty years old" at His baptism this restricts His ministry to less than one year, which is irreconcilable with the number of Passovers mentioned in the records.

Brig.-General G. B. MACKENZIE said: Sarah is the only woman whose age at death is recorded in the Bible; she died aged 127. As Isaac was born when she was 90, he was 37 when she died and Rebecca was brought into Sarah's tent. Now if, as I think, Isaac is a type of Christ, Rebekah, Isaac's bride, a type of the Church, and Sarah a type of Israel, Jehovah's bride, should we not expect to find that the period of 37 years after the birth of our Lord the nation of Israel was replaced by the Church as the organism in which God's working was displayed? This condition would be

satisfied if the late Colonel Mackinlay's dates for the birth and crucifixion of our Lord, viz., 8 B.C., and A.D. 29, are accepted; or if the dates 4 B.C. and A.D. 33, referred to in Dr. Stewart's paper, are accepted, but not if the dates 8 B.C. and A.D. 24 are correct.

Dr. NORMAN S. DENHAM said: It would have been gratifying had the dates given us satisfied known historical data; but they bristle with contradictions. I refer to the lecturer's points *seriatim* :—

The Nativity.—The fact that Luke wrote "This enrolment first came to pass," conveys that the actual enrolling of Joseph fell later than Cyrenius' *hegemony*. The Romans and Herod, anxious to conciliate the refractory Jews, would leave it to the one slack period among an agricultural people, namely, October.

The Star.—The most plausible suggestion is that of Kepler, who recorded the temporary appearance of a new star after the conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars in A.D. 1605, and surmised that a similar phenomenon followed the conjunction of 7-6 B.C.

Herod died some months after an eclipse identified as the lunar eclipse of March 13th, 4 B.C., and it is further shown by Josephus that his death occurred some weeks before a Passover. His death occurred on 2nd of Sebat, by January 20th. As it is manifestly impossible for the events narrated by Josephus to fall between that eclipse and the Passover of 4 B.C., it is incontrovertible that Herod died in January, 3 B.C. The birth of our Lord, falling in October, 5 B.C. would allow the time computed by Matthew "two years old and under" (Matt. ii, 16).

(1) Velleius records that authority equal to that of Augustus was granted to Tiberius in respect of the armies and provinces before the triumph celebrated on January 16th, A.D. 12. The Decree, late in A.D. 11, as Sir William Ramsay shows, is therefore that from which Luke reckons his "fifteenth year." The reign of Titus was similarly reckoned from the date he became colleague with his father Vespasian. Tiberius' fifteenth year would thus fall in A.D. 26.

(2) It is becoming increasingly evident that the Resurrection fell on Wednesday, the 14th Nisan; but it does not therefore follow that A.D. 24 was the year. The Jews had calendars wherein were noted all fasts and feasts; these tables are sometimes referred to

in the Talmud: Eusebius, Epiphanius, Cyril and Prosper all mention this calendar. Fynes Clinton admits its existence, and refuses to be bound by astronomical calculations or theories of observation for the new moon's disc whereby to establish the Jewish new year's day.

(3) "Thirty Years of Age." Ramsay, Gresswell, Mackinlay and others show that the Jews, in referring to time, abhorred the use of precise terms, though certain of the date mentioned. Hence we may not depart from Luke's definite "thirty years."

(4) Would the lecturer specify the authorities to which he refers for reckoning the Sabbath as a *dies non*—a reckoning which happily reconciles the apparently conflicting evidence of Luke xxiv, 21 ?

(5) Herod's Temple.—By the literary figure of *enallage* the verb is put, not for the doing of a thing, but as beginning to do it. As Herod began to prepare for the building of the Temple in 19 B.C. (Dionysius lix, 7, and Josephus Wars I, xx, 4), the 46 years of John, ii, 20, would reach exactly to the first Passover of the Ministry, A.D. 27.

(6) It is more than doubtful if Pontius Pilate was Procurator of Judea in A.D. 18. He is generally held to have succeeded Gratus in A.D. 26, as noted by Josephus (Ant. XVIII, iv, 2).

(7) The dates of the Acts are subjective and indeterminate.

(8) The only Decree that answered Daniel's prayer, and resulted forthwith in the building of both Temple and City, was that of Cyrus's first year (Is. xlv, 13, and Josephus Ant. II, i, 3). Ample proof can be given that Ptolemy's dating of the Persian era was wrong by an excess of 79 years. Consequently, 483 years inclusive from 457 B.C. (Cyrus I) bring us to A.D. 26 precisely, *i.e.* the Baptism. In A.D. 30, in the midst of the remaining 70th Sabbatic week of years, the Messiah was cut off. A.D. 18 was definitely not Sabbatic, whereas A.D. 26 was a Sabbatic and Jubilee year. The "acceptable year" of Luke iv, 19, was the Jubilee year of national restoration prophesied to arrive by the advent of the Messiah by the prophet Isaiah (xi, 2). The 70 weeks were Sabbatic weeks !

Israel's national existence was inaugurated by 40 years' probation in the wilderness ; it closed with a final 40 years' probation from the Crucifixion, A.D. 30, to the Dispersion, A.D. 70. While

appreciating the care and thought expended on the paper one has to confess that the lecturer has "torpedoed" the best findings on this vexed subject.

Mr. GEORGE BREWER said: Our thanks are due to Dr. Stewart for his instructive paper, and the trouble taken to fix as far as possible the dates of the birth, public ministry and crucifixion of our Lord, and especially his showing that in whatever year the Crucifixion took place it must be one in which the 14th Nisan fell on Wednesday.

While it would appear to be difficult to fix with certainty the year of the crucifixion there is abundant evidence that the day was the fourth day of the week, from sunset, Tuesday, to sunset, Wednesday, and not Friday.

It is generally agreed that the Crucifixion took place on the Day of Preparation, when the sacrificial lambs were slain; that the day following was a special Sabbath or High Day, during which no work could be done; that our Lord expired shortly after the ninth hour (about 3 p.m.); that to Pilate's inquiry of the centurion if Jesus had been a long while dead, he replied in the affirmative; there could therefore have remained but a very short time, probably less than two hours for the body to be taken down from the Cross, embalmed by Joseph and Nicodemus, and laid in the tomb before 6 p.m., when the Sabbath commenced. Mark tells us that Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James beheld how the body was laid, and upon the supposition of Friday being the day there would have been little time left, possibly but a few minutes, for them to buy and prepare the spices and ointment for the anointing of the body.

The 14th Nisan, falling on the Wednesday, they had sufficient time and opportunity to carry out their devoted services on the only day left to them between the two sabbaths—sunset, Thursday, to sunset, Friday, and so be ready for their intended visit to the sepulchre when the weekly Sabbath was passed.

Our Lord's own words recorded in Matt. xii, 40, should, however, settle the matter: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

The explaining away of this passage in order to support the tradition of Friday by reference to the Hebrew idiom of speaking of part of a day as a whole day, and even comparing it with our loose phrase "week-end," which may mean anything from one to five days, seems to be trifling with a very serious subject.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said : I join with those who thank the lecturer for his paper ; and incidentally I may say that I have long believed what he has endeavoured to prove, that Wednesday was actually the day on which our Lord was crucified. My object in rising, however, is to call attention to the suggestion that the star which guided the wise men to the infant Saviour was the triple conjunction of the planets Jupiter, Saturn and Mars. I am aware that similar suggestions have been made from time to time by astronomers and others, but is any such strained explanation called for ? A moment's reflection should be sufficient to show that the suggestion is unnecessary. The Scripture statement is that the star which they (the wise men) saw in the East went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. Seeing that the planets named are some hundreds of millions of miles distant from the earth, how is it possible to accept such language ? Why not discern in this star the creation of a new luminary, quite near to the earth, and made to move before the wise men, leading them along the seven miles journey from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and finally indicating the very house where the Saviour lay ? When its specific purpose was accomplished the star might vanish as suddenly as it had first appeared. I suggest that many such problems may be readily solved if in reading the Scriptures we are prepared to recognize the miraculous statements found therein.

Mr. G. WILSON HEATH said : Dr. Stewart confirms the views of many, including my own, that Wednesday of that " Week of Weeks " was the 14th Nisan, the day of " preparation " and the day of the crucifixion of our Lord. The following day, commencing at 6 p.m. on the Wednesday, was Thursday, the 15th Nisan, the day of the feast, a " high day," a " holy convocation," a Levitical " sabbath."

Further we agree with Dr. Stewart that the " three days and three nights " in the tomb, commenced at (say) 6 p.m. on the Wednesday

at the opening of the 15th Nisan, and came to a close on the following Saturday, the weekly sabbath, at 6 p.m. (Three complete days and nights.) Thus our Lord arose on the Saturday evening, the first hour of "the first of the Weeks" (John xx, 1).

This is about as far as I can go with the paper. The year dates as stated I must I fear refuse. I have for years past sought out all the authorities available, and have found them to be in almost hopeless confusion and conflict.

I suggest that clarity is better reached by following carefully the itinerary of our Lord, day by day, as given in the Gospels, for, say, a fortnight or more before the passover period.

It is comparatively easy to determine that on the evening of Tuesday, the 13th Nisan, our Lord sat down to supper, the last supper, their evening meal (during which He instituted what we call the Lord's supper) with the disciples; and that from that supper He went to the judgment seats of Herod and Pilate, and from thence to the cross and the tomb. This was at the opening of the passover period.

For the chronology of this period I have used for the sake of simplicity the Roman "Anno Urbis" dates. These dates run consecutively, without of course any B.C. or A.D. breaks, and this for many hundred years before and after the events we are considering. All agree that a sure datum to start the period on is the date of the *Battle of Actium* in anno urbis 722 or its equivalent, 31 B.C.

The nativity of our Lord was in anno urbis 749 or 4 B.C.

The Christian era (arranged by Dionysius Exigous in A.D. 532) began when our Lord was 4 years old, in anno urbis 753.

The 1st year of Tiberius Cæsar (in association with Augustus) was in anno urbis 765, or in A.D. 12.

Augustus Cæsar died in anno urbis 767 or A.D. 14 (as stated on page 3 of the paper).

The 15th year of Tiberius was anno urbis 779 or A.D. 26, when St. Luke tells us our Lord was "about 30 years old" (See St. Luke iii, 23).

The 18th year of Tiberius was anno urbis 782 or A.D. 29, the year our Lord was crucified.

I need not say that the overlapping of the B.C. and A.D. dates by 4 years has caused continual confusion. By working on the

Roman dates confusion I think is avoided, and I suggest A.D. 26 and A.D. 29 are thus definitely fixed as the dates of the opening of our Lord's ministry and of His death.

The "Magi" from the East (not the shepherds of Bethlehem) doubtless saw some miraculous light, like a star, a kind of Shekina glory such as abode in the Tabernacle of old for instance, and this they followed to Jerusalem and then (not to Bethlehem) to Nazareth, the house (not stable) (Matt. ii, 11 and Luke ii, 39) of Joseph and Mary and Jesus, possibly a year or more after the incident with the shepherds. (Read Matt. ii, between verses 39 and 40 of Luke ii.) This was why Herod ordered the babes up to two years old to be slain. He mistook Bethlehem for Nazareth.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Sir AMBROSE FLEMING (President) wrote : I am much interested in this paper by Dr. John Stewart, especially in his discussion of the day of the week on which the Crucifixion of our Lord took place. Although for ages past it has been the custom to celebrate it on a Friday, that custom does not prove its truth, because it has also been the custom to keep December 25th as the day of the Birth, whereas it is as certain as anything can be that the Birth took place in the autumn at about the date of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Everything seems to turn on the mode of reckoning "three days and three nights" (see Jonah, i, 17).

In the Gospel of St. Matthew, xii, 40, our Lord is reported to have said, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." If, then, our Lord hung on the Cross for six hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on a certain day, and was taken down and laid in the grave before 6 p.m. on that day, and rose again early on the first day of the next week he could only have lain in the grave at most about 26 to 30 or 31 hours if the day of crucifixion was a Friday.

As the Jewish day was reckoned from 6 p.m., it is common to reckon the "three days and nights" as comprising the single hour or two on Friday before 6 p.m. and the whole of Saturday up to 6 p.m., and the few hours after 6 p.m. on Saturday before the Resurrection as the "three days and three nights." If, however,

this last expression is to be taken literally as comprising a period of 72 hours, half daylight and half darkness, then it is impossible that Friday could be the day of Crucifixion, and the Crucifixion must be put back to Wednesday, as the author suggests.

It then seems to be merely an astronomical problem to settle in what years the 15th of Nisan or feast of unleavened bread fell on a Thursday at or near the only possible dates A.D. 24 to A.D. 33. As regards the year of the Crucifixion that again seems to be determined by the date of the "15th year of Tiberius Cæsar" (Luke iii, 1).

In a paper by Lieut.-Colonel A. G. Shortt we had read to us on January 5th, 1931, it was claimed that this year was definitely fixed by certain coins which had been found, double dated with the regnal year of Tiberius Cæsar and the years from the battle of Actium, which was fought on September 2nd, 31 B.C. But here again the question is whether the regnal years of Tiberius are to be reckoned from his joint authority with Augustus or his sole authority at the death of Augustus, and the author adopts the view that it is "absolutely certain" the fifteenth year of Tiberius was A.D. 19. He has, however, against him the opinions of many authorities, who assert that the fifteenth year of Tiberius could not have dated except from August 19th, A.D. 14, the date of the death of Augustus Cæsar, and that would seem to fix the year of the Crucifixion as A.D. 33.

Lt.-Col. L. M. DAVIES wrote : I find this a most interesting paper, although it differs widely from some long-standing opinions of my own. One can only raise a few points, so I would ask :—

1. If our Lord was born in 8 B.C., would He not have been 13 years old in A.D. 6 ? We do not drop *two* years in passing from B.C. to A.D.

2. What independent evidence have we that the years of Tiberius were ever reckoned from A.D. 4 ? Luke was writing to a Roman, and would not use a reckoning unfamiliar to the latter ; and Col. Shortt has shown how universally the Romans reckoned the years of Tiberius from A.D. 14 (*Trans. Vict. Inst.*, vol. 63, 1931, pp. 38-54). Remember also that Josephus, who wrote at much the same time as Luke, invariably reckons the reign of Tiberius from A.D. 14 (cf. *Antiq.* 18, 2, 2 ; 18, 6, 5 & 10 ; *Wars* 2, 9, 1 & 5, etc.).

3. Luke iii, 1 shows that Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea in this 15th year of Tiberius. That suits A.D. 29 all right, for we know that Pilate became Governor in A.D. 26 (cf. *Enc. Brit.*, 1929, vol. 17, p. 925); but how can we square it with A.D. 19? And how date the Crucifixion itself in A.D. 24?

4. Josephus twice (*Antiq.* 17, 8, 1; *Wars* 1, 33, 8) states that Herod reigned 34 years "since he had procured Antigonus to be slain," and 37 years "since he had been declared king by the Romans." These two events can be shown to have taken place in 37 B.C. and 40 B.C. respectively. So it is clear that Josephus recognized those two dates, three years apart, as alternative—*de facto* and *de jure*—commencing points of Herod's reign. Why therefore should his two dates, also three years apart, for commencement of work on the Temple, not both refer to the year 22 B.C.? For that would have been 18 years after 40 B.C., and 15 after 37 B.C. But 46 years from 22 B.C. brings us to A.D. 25—the year after the Crucifixion, according to Dr. Stewart. In any case, since Josephus nowhere indicates 41 B.C. as the commencement of Herod's reign, we have no right to reckon any year of that reign, *quoted by him* from 41 B.C.

5. Where can we find the evidence regarding (a) the tablet recording the dates when Augustus ordered a census to be taken; and (b) the report from China, that the story of the Crucifixion reached there between A.D. 25-28? These two discoveries would appear to be cardinal points in Dr. Stewart's case, and certainly represent serious facts if well founded. They must, however, be as critically examined as other facts have been, if they are to be justly assimilated with earlier known data.

It would also be interesting to know what reliance can be placed upon calculations regarding the days of the week when the 15th Nisan fell, during the years A.D. 24-33. It seems that the slightest slip here might be fatal to Dr. Stewart's whole argument, so far as it concerns the year of the Crucifixion.

His presentation, however, of his grounds for believing that our Lord was Crucified on a Wednesday seems to me to afford a definite contribution to the study of this subject, and for that I welcome Dr. Stewart's paper, even while I doubt that the corresponding year was A.D. 24.

LECTURER'S REPLY.

Replying to the points raised in the discussion, Dr. STEWART wrote: I am indebted to the members of the Institute for the favourable reception accorded to my paper.

It is interesting to notice that the majority of those taking part in the discussion agree with the contention that the day of the week on which the crucifixion took place was Wednesday rather than Friday. If that is admitted it becomes, as Sir Ambrose Fleming writes: "merely an astronomical problem to settle in what years the 15th Nisan fell on a Thursday, at or near the only possible dates, A.D. 24 to A.D. 33." The contention of the paper is that the 15th Nisan fell on a Thursday in those two terminal years, and in those two years only, in the whole of that decade. If Wieseler and others who have furnished data to that effect are wrong it ought to be comparatively easy to show in what respect and with reference to what years they are wrong. Until that is done we must assume that the data given are correct.

Further, if the crucifixion took place on a Wednesday, and if the only years when the 14th Nisan fell on a Wednesday (or the 15th on a Thursday) were A.D. 24 and A.D. 33, the years A.D. 29 and A.D. 32 when the 14th fell on a Friday are (equally with A.D. 30, A.D. 31 and all other years between A.D. 24 and A.D. 33 in which it fell neither on a Wednesday nor on a Friday) obviously ruled out on chronological as well as other grounds.

Not only, however, must the conclusions arrived at be in harmony with such astronomical or chronological data as may be available, but they must at the same time either agree with accepted secular history, or reasons be given why the traditional view has been departed from in any particular case. This principle has been strictly adhered to throughout and the fact that all the different lines of inquiry followed fit in with A.D. 24, as the year of the crucifixion, with such perfect precision, just as if they were pieces of delicate clockwork machinery, tends to confirm the correctness of the claim made.

So far as I am aware, there is not the slightest contradiction between the statements made in the paper and proved historical data, although it has not been possible in the limited space available to state so fully as one might have wished, the evidence on which

the conclusions arrived at are based. The date from which the 15th year of the hegemony of Tiberius counts is a case in point. I need mention only one out of many authorities with reference to it, *i.e.*, *Ency. Brit.*, 14th edition, vol. 2, p. 688. Another is the period during which Pontius Pilate was Procurator of Judea. Reasons, that are very difficult to gainsay, can be given in favour of the claim that Pilate succeeded Valerius Gratus in A.D. 18-19 and that this term of office extended to either A.D. 29 or A.D. 30 when he was deposed by Vitellius.

With reference to A.D. 33 as the probable year of the crucifixion: not only does A.D. 33 conflict with Paul's statement in Galatians that when he visited Jerusalem in A.D. 44, the year of Herod Agrippa's death, it was fourteen years after his first visit which in turn was three years subsequent to his conversion which latter is usually supposed to have taken place three years after the crucifixion, it conflicts also with Luke's statement that when our Lord began (whether His ministry or His mediatorial work) he was about thirty years of age. Had the crucifixion taken place in A.D. 33 he would have been 37 years of age when he began His ministry and 40 when the crucifixion took place. A.D. 24, on the other hand, fits in perfectly not only with Paul's fourteen years, *plus three, plus three*, but with the thirty years mentioned by Luke.

The other points raised during the discussion may be replied to very briefly: It is admitted that the duration of our Lord's earthly life was only thirty and a half years. His public ministry, however, extended over at least three and a half years. His baptism must therefore have taken place about A.D. 20.

Sabbath a *dies non*. In support of the claim that Sabbath was a *dies non* see Schurer: *The Jewish People*, Div. 2, vol. 2, pp. 102, 105; Exodus xx, 8-10; Lev. xxiii, 3; Numbers xv, 32-36; and Luke vi, 1-7.

Herod's 18th year, counting 40 B.C., the year when he was made king of Judea by the Roman Senate, as his first, was 23 B.C. His 15th year counting from 37 B.C., the year when he captured Jerusalem from Antigonus, was also 23 B.C. From 23 B.C. to A.D. 24 inclusive is 46 years.

The prophecy of Daniel is confirmatory only and does not affect the argument. It, however, furnishes an interesting coinci-

dence, to say the least, assuming that the traditional dates are correct.

If our Lord were born in 8 B.C. he would complete his 12th year in the autumn of A.D. 6. The following Passover would fall in the spring of A.D. 7, when he would be $12\frac{1}{2}$ years old.

A translation of the inscription on the tablet in Angora, giving the years of the different censuses, is to be found in Shuckburgh's Augustus, p. 294. Fuller details regarding the story of the crucifixion having reached China in A.D. 25-28 are to be found in "Nestorian Missionary Enterprise," p. 169 (T. and T. Clark).

It is admitted that the conclusions arrived at 'torpedo' many of the findings hitherto accepted on this subject. That, however, is inevitable. The evidence is cumulative and conclusive.