

# 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 *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

## A SECOND FIXED POINT IN THE PAULINE CHRONOLOGY.<sup>1</sup>

### I. IN DEFENCE OF ENGLISH SCHOLARSHIP.

PROF. BACON'S article, with its splendidly comprehensive title, seems to need little answer from me, as it raises several new questions with which I am not concerned, and in most of which I rejoice to be in agreement with him.

Especially in regard to "the use of German authorities" we are, apparently, perfectly harmonious.

His title puts my name in undeserved prominence. As has been stated in my previous article,<sup>2</sup> "my share may be left out of this case as quite unimportant": nothing that is characteristic of my views depends on the point in dispute. In fact, my own personal bias is towards the final result which Prof. Bacon claims to have reached, the justifying of Eusebius's chronology, if it can be reconciled with Josephus and with Acts. So far as persons are concerned, the point in regard to which I ventured to dissent from him was the scholarship and character of Mr. Lewin's book, *Fasti Sacri*. I thought Prof. Bacon had been unfair to it; and I think he is still more unfair to it in his reply. He seems to me to have no conception of the vast amount of independent, original judgment and investigation that are embodied in the book. Had *Fasti Sacri* been written

<sup>1</sup> In the following article only the first part was written in reply to Prof. Bacon's article; the rest has been in type for some time and corrected in first proof, being intended for the May number of the *EXPOSITOR*. Prof. Bacon complains (see *EXPOSITOR*, July, 1900, p. 13) that the editor kept back his articles under pressure of mine. To make the balance even, mine has now been kept back by the same power to follow his.

<sup>2</sup> *EXPOSITOR*, December, 1899, p. 431.

in the French or the German language, it would have attained great fame. But it is an English book, and has little chance of recognition. It is the character of good English work to conceal the labour involved in it, to seem as simple as possible, to make small parade of learning, and to appeal direct to the general reader. That feature—which I do not remember to have seen adequately stated anywhere—has been strongly brought before me while taking some interest in the adapting<sup>1</sup> of a foreign book on some New Testament questions to the English language. The book was a useful and able one, but it was made to look as learned as possible, and a great amount of unnecessary lumber was strewn over its pages which should have been left in the study. Mr. Lewin's *Fasti* has gone to the opposite extreme, and Prof. Bacon has evidently not even attempted to estimate the work on which it is built, and talks contemptuously of it, as if Lewin, for his system of dating, had depended solely on the nearest page in a German book. He seems not to admit the possibility that an English scholar works up the subject for himself, and states his own opinion formed on his own weighing of the evidence. He actually thinks that a passage of Eusebius's History, quoted by Mr. Turner, has been "borrowed from Lewin, who in turn borrowed it from Wieseler" (see p. 11). He may assume that both those Oxford scholars had read Eusebius for themselves, before they began to prepare their views for the public. He thinks too that Browne owes all his chronological theory to Wieseler. Wieseler published in 1843, Browne in 1844. Could a long book, involving much detail, have been even printed, much less conceived and worked into form, in that interval? So far as I know his book (which is not much), Browne is entirely pre-Wieselerian.

<sup>1</sup> This task was a friend's, but the proofs came before me, and elicited some small suggestions.

I should like to give a single example of the judgment and labour which lie behind the brief statements in the *Fasti*<sup>1</sup> (as those best know that have worked out the subject as a whole, and compared the book with others, point by point). Examples might be quoted from every page.

Unfortunately, Lewin's sane, unprejudiced, and wide view on most points is counteracted by a theory of Pauline chronology; and, while the book is far superior in practical usefulness to anything else that I know on the general chronology of the time, it is in Pauline questions often distorted by the idea—an idea almost universal, but strongest among the so-called "critical" school—that the ordinary principles of historical reasoning are suspended in all early Christian subjects.

I have no special right to speak on behalf of Mr. Lewin—only that of a careful reader, who differs from his Pauline chronology, but has learned much from his books, and is therefore not prejudiced in favour of his opinions, though grateful for instruction in method.

In the main subject of his paper Prof. Bacon seems to me, if I may without discourtesy say so, to wander from the point. He proves abundantly that the pure Jewish tradition in the later Roman period<sup>2</sup> refused to admit that any influence had ever been exerted by the astronomical science of the extra-Judaic world on the Jewish practice in the fixing of the Passover. According to the Jewish authorities the purely empirical, old Jewish method had always been the supreme and sole rule guiding the action of the Sanhedrin, and no extraneous knowledge or skill had ever been allowed to affect the procedure.

<sup>1</sup> An illustration, comparing the brief certainty of Lewin's handling of a date in 69-70 with the long, fumbling erroneous treatment in recent foreign works, has to be suppressed or postponed owing to the length of this article.

<sup>2</sup> For brevity's sake I use rough expressions. More exact ideas are already conveyed by Prof. Bacon, and may be assumed.

I did not dispute this, or raise any question on the point. I have no knowledge, except second-hand, of the Jewish view; but it appears to me that the question is merely darkened by taking it as the one authority.

But Prof. Bacon does not go so far as the Jewish authorities. He quite admits that before A.D. 70 astronomical considerations were allowed to influence the procedure of the Sanhedrin to a certain extent, and says that, "so far as he knows, it is not denied by any one that the decision of the Sanhedrin was influenced . . . by astronomical calculation."<sup>1</sup> He refers, of course, to modern scholars; the old Jewish tradition denies it, but all modern scholars see that that tradition conceals and ignores the influence exerted by astronomy on the Jews. Mr. Lewin and Prof. Bacon agree, in spite of the Jewish tradition, that some such influence was exerted, but they disagree as to the amount.

According to Prof. Bacon, the amount was not sufficient to enable Jews in the Roman provinces to know, independently of the official decision in Jerusalem, whether any year would be intercalary or not.

In this the whole point lies in the phrase "official decision." If it means that no official decision by the Sanhedrin was needed in the matter, I know of no person who has maintained that. The power remained with the Sanhedrin, and was exercised by it. We say, as emphatically as Prof. Bacon, "that the Sanhedrin reserved the right to decide." But the Sanhedrin did not abandon a right if it enabled Jews in Rome to know beforehand in what month they should come to Jerusalem for the Passover, or celebrate it in their own homes if unable to come. Prof. Bacon sees that before A.D. 70 the Sanhedrin must have made it possible, and did make it possible, for the Jews of

<sup>1</sup> See the full expression on p. 2.

Rome and the provinces to come to Jerusalem with full knowledge beforehand that at the full moon of such and such a month, and no other, the Passover would be held. To do that, it had to go beyond the empirical procedure, which had been sufficient previously, when almost all Jews were within two or three days' journey from Jerusalem. Yet the Jewish tradition pretends that the Sanhedrin had never gone beyond that procedure.

So far as the fixing of the month is concerned, we are all saying the same thing; and my distinguished friend on the other side errs only in insisting that we are differing from one another.<sup>1</sup> Only, when he has once admitted that the Jewish tradition is wrong in this point, he is hardly reasonable in insisting that we ought to consider it the one final authority in all other points, as he himself does.

For the reasons already stated,<sup>2</sup> I think (and believe that Mr. Lewin thought) that the Jews abroad who wished to attend the Feast in Jerusalem knew beforehand—*on the authority of the Sanhedrin*, doubtless—that the Passover would be fixed on the proper day of the proper month. Life in the Roman Empire was far more orderly and businesslike, travelling was more certain, engagements could be fixed, and were fixed, beforehand with far more confidence than the "Pre-Mommsenians"<sup>3</sup> have ever realized. I find it absolutely forced on me that

1. The author of *Acts* xx. 5 believed that the Passover in Philippi coincided with the Passover in Jerusalem, and that Paul in Philippi knew exactly on what day Pentecost would fall.

<sup>1</sup> Unless Prof. Bacon would maintain that the Sanhedrin would knowingly fix the astronomically wrong moon. He has, however, not maintained that, though he chooses a vague form of words, thereby concealing the essential agreement between us.

<sup>2</sup> *Expositor*, Dec., 1899, p. 434f.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Bacon misapprehends the phrase, taking it, apparently, in a chronological sense. I mean it in the sense of method and point of view. Many scholars are still distinctly "pre-Mommsenian."

2. He had full ground for knowing that he was right in this belief.

3. This implies an official system, fixed beforehand on astronomical grounds by the Sanhedrin; but it does not imply that the old empirical ceremonies were disused; these were, doubtless, still maintained (as I already said), but the issue of them was already known.

It would be returning to the dark ages of history, if one should insist that things were so vague and happy-go-lucky as pure Jewish tradition implies in the first century. But this is a large subject, and cannot here be treated.

I would venture to refer Prof. Bacon again to the same writer whom I quoted at the end of my former article on the point—a writer who expresses the finest spirit of Judaism<sup>1</sup>—Mr. I. Abrahams in his *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*. It is not the Jewish character to isolate itself from the thought and knowledge of surrounding society. Had that been so, the Jews would never have exerted that beneficial influence on the world which they have in fact exerted. Jewish nature is everywhere marvellously sensitive of and responsive to the influence of extra-Judaic forces. It was so in the first century as much as it ever has been since. The bad character and bad influence of various high priests and other “great” men among them at that time should not blind us to the fact that neither the Jewish nor any other nation is like its criminals, whether in high places or in humble rank.

But the orderly development of Judaism in the Empire was disturbed, first by calamitous wars and their far-reaching effects, and secondly by that unfair and hostile attitude towards the Jews which has often been the shame of Christianity. By these causes Jewish tradition was thrown in on itself, and became more resolved to maintain its

<sup>1</sup> Not that I have the slightest reason to think he would agree with what I am now maintaining.

isolation from outer influence, and to claim perfect self-sufficiency in its development. All persecution is calamitous in checking the natural growth of civilization, knowledge, and good manners. It may strengthen the fibre of the persecuted people; but it hardens them, and greatly diminishes, sometimes even destroys, the beneficial influence which they might exert on the progress of the world.

While Jewish tradition thus resolutely ignored every trace of its former ability to learn,<sup>1</sup> the Roman Empire also degenerated. The first century was, in mental vigour and in power of applying knowledge to life, superior to the third or fourth.

I have to retract and apologise for the argument in my previous article on p. 433, lines 18-25. Even had it been right, it was hypercritical, and did not advance my purpose. But, as Prof. Bacon proves at great length, it was wrong and unjust to him.

The decision on the question will come through the progress of discovery, if scholars will only concentrate their energy on the furthering of research in Palestine and Asia Minor, instead of permitting almost every scheme of work in those lands to languish or to die. But the most heart-rending feature in English scholarship is the waste and misdirection of work. The English rule in scholarship, as in politics, seems always to be: find out what a man can do well, and then set him to do something else: this will educate and enlarge his mind.

A recent paper by Dr. Erbes (quoted below) suggested various chronological studies, one of which follows as Part II., though it was written<sup>2</sup> when I had no thought that Prof. Bacon wished to continue his polemic. If it is correct, the Pauline chronology is fixed by a series of argu-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Abrahams, *op. cit.* p. 121, lines 20-22, for a later example of similar character.

<sup>2</sup> See the first footnote to this article.

ments, independent of each other and unaffected by the Jewish tradition, but all leading to the result which I have previously advocated, and which Prof. Bacon disputes. My argument from the Passover fixed 57 as the year in which St. Paul travelled to Jerusalem and was made prisoner. The following arguments fix 59 as the year in which Festus came to Cæsareia, and brought St. Paul's two years' captivity to an end by sending him to Rome.

## II. THE COMING OF FESTUS IN A.D. 59.

In a former number of the *EXPOSITOR*,<sup>1</sup> in an article entitled "A Fixed Point in Pauline Chronology," I tried to show (1) that the commonly accepted year 58 A.D. could not be the year in which the voyage described in *Acts* xx., xxi., took place; (2) that within the period left open for that voyage by other considerations only 57 suited the conditions prescribed by the narrative in *Acts*. Hence that fixed point has been taken in all my subsequent work as a pivot for the dating of the life of Paul; the imprisonment in Cæsareia lasted from 57 to 59, and Festus succeeded Felix in the summer of 59; but I have never ventured to make it a basis on which to rest any further historical inferences, though sometimes much tempted to do so. I hope now to confirm it by a number of distinct arguments, all pointing to the same conclusion.

The peculiar value of the chain of reasoning in that article was that it decisively set aside the years immediately round 57.<sup>2</sup> Now it is well known to all who have attempted the difficult problems which ancient chronology everywhere presents, that the greatest difficulty is caused by the fact that in almost every case the reasoning which assigns an event to a special year would be almost, if not

<sup>1</sup> See 1896, May, p. 336.

<sup>2</sup> On a proposed relaxation of the reasoning, which would admit 56, while excluding 58, see below, p. 101.

quite, equally well satisfied by the year next to it. Owing to the number of factors which must in all strict reasoning be expressed by a double year (*e.g.* 57-58, etc.), the extraordinary variety of eras used in different parts of the Mediterranean world, the variation as to the beginning of the year in different cities and countries (or even in the same city at different periods), and a host of other causes, we have to regard a vast number of dates, commonly assigned in popular books on history to a definite year, say, for example, 301 B.C., as uncertain and requiring to be expressed by such a form as 302-300 B.C. (or even by wider limits). Hardly a season passes without new discoveries being made, which either change or give precision to the dates hitherto accepted.

The uncertainty of Pauline chronology is therefore not peculiar to that one department of ancient history, and constitutes no proof of special uncertainty in it. But modern scholars rightly recognise that, owing to the importance of this subject, one must not be content to state a probable date as if it were certain (as current books and even most scholarly books do habitually in other departments of ancient history).<sup>1</sup> In New Testament history the scholar will give no date as certain which contains any serious element of uncertainty.

If *Acts* be accepted as a trustworthy book, that chain of reasoning fixes one event either in the year 57, or in some year impossibly late or impossibly early. But such reasoning has no value for the ordinary pseudo-critic, who starts with the assumption that *Acts* is always inaccurate, except where external evidence is available to prove that its narrative is trustworthy.

<sup>1</sup> The older custom of assuming an arbitrary system of chronology in the New Testament, and speaking of dates as if they were certain, is not wholly banished even from such an admirable work as Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*; *e.g.* I. p. 129, where A.D. 52 is named as the year when Claudius expelled the Jews, as if it were a fixed and certain point.

Even to scholars who did not altogether despise the book of *Acts* as evidence on such a point there seemed to be at least one uncertainty in the dating. The Eusebian chronology would place the journey in question so very early as to come within the limits of possibility prescribed by *Acts*; but for various reasons the Eusebian chronology seemed to me not deserving of serious consideration. It was, however, taken up by two such high authorities as Prof. Harnack of Berlin, and Prof. McGiffert of New York, in works published soon after my article. It therefore became necessary to discuss Eusebius's dating more thoroughly, and this was done in an article in the *EXPOSITOR*.<sup>1</sup> I had a decided predilection for the Eusebian view, if it were possible. For many years the tendency of my work has been to find the ancient authorities more trustworthy than the extremists believe; and I had a strong predisposition in favour of the attempt by two such distinguished scholars to justify Eusebius; but several lines of reasoning showed his dating to be either improbable or in clear contradiction to good authorities.

Recently Prof. Bacon has published in the *EXPOSITOR* a series of articles on the subject.<sup>2</sup> After an elaborate examination he claims to support the Eusebian chronology, and places the voyage of *Acts* xx.-xxi. in A.D. 55. His reasoning, after careful study, seems to me unconvincing in the essential points; and the most serious error lies in calling his system Eusebian. Really he is in flat contradiction to Eusebius.

The facts are these: Eusebius's text has not survived. Our authorities are: (1) an Armenian translation of his *Chronica*; (2) Jerome's Latin translation, with numerous additions of his own; (3) excerpts, especially those in

<sup>1</sup> March, 1897, p. 201 ff.

<sup>2</sup> "A Criticism of the New Chronology of Paul," Nov., Dec., 1899.

Syncellus's *Chronographia*.<sup>1</sup> Put dogmatically and shortly, the Eusebian account of Felix is as follows:—

Eusebius mentioned under the year 54<sup>2</sup> that Felix was succeeded by Festus. This is shown both by the Armenian translation and by the order of Syncellus. Now Eusebius knew well that Festus was selected and sent by Nero: he tells us so in his History. Syncellus also knew it, and quotes Eusebius's History to that effect; but, bound by the order in the *Chronica*, he tells all about Paul and Felix under the heading of Claudius, and then begins a new heading, "Emperor of the Romans VI Nero, XIII years."

The simple Armenian translation reproduced the order.<sup>3</sup> But Jerome was too learned to keep such a thoroughly false order. He brought down Festus from 54 into the reign of Nero to 56, and the events under Felix correspondingly, the riot of the Egyptian from 51 to 53, that in Cæsareia from 53 to 55.

Obviously, Prof. Bacon has no justification in quoting Eusebius as supporting his date 57 for the coming of Festus. We strongly assert the uncertainty of ancient chronology; but it does not follow that, when an ancient writer gives a date 54 or 56, we may call it 57, and quote that writer as authority for 57. Prof. Bacon has every right to advance a new theory of date; but he should not call his theory the Eusebian. He deserves best thanks for his investigation; but his result is simply to prove that

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear what is the meaning of Prof. Bacon's references to the Eusebian Chronicle as a distinct authority from Jerome and from Arm. (see, e.g., *EXPOSITOR*, December, 1899, p. 417 note, six lines from bottom of page).

<sup>2</sup> I put his reckoning into simple modern form.

<sup>3</sup> Eusebius did not shrink from putting Festus in 54, though he knew Nero sent him, because he also knew that Nero began to reign during 54, though on his system of counting by whole years he calls 55 the first year of Nero. We, however, know that Festus came soon after midsummer, while Nero succeeded to the throne in October.

not a shred of ancient authority can be quoted for his date.

But why did Eusebius fall into such a false arrangement? This was long obscure, but has recently been explained in the detailed criticism of the foundation on which the Eusebian chronology rests by Dr. Carl Erbes, in a paper entitled "Todestage Pauli und Petri,"<sup>1</sup> published in 1899.

Dr. Erbes shows that the Eusebian system of Palestinian chronology for the period 52-59 contains various blunders, resting on certain misconceptions of Eusebius as to the dates of Agrippa II. (the Agrippa of *Acts* xxvii.). No one who reads Dr. Erbes's paper is likely to recur to Eusebius as an authority for the early dating. The argument on which Prof. Bacon lays so much stress in *EXPOSITOR*, December, 1899, p. 423, lines 6, 7, shrivels up before Dr. Erbes's previously published criticism.

Dr. Erbes's reasoning is not all equally convincing throughout the paper. Like Prof. von der Goltz<sup>2</sup> we must accept the general principle of his criticism of Eusebius, and regard some other parts as fanciful theorizing. One point closely concerns our present purpose. Put briefly and roughly, with a necessary correction, it is this. Eusebius put Festus's entrance on office five years too early, owing to a peculiarity in the dating of Agrippa's years. Eusebius wrongly took A.D. 45 as the first year of Agrippa's reign, whereas A.D. 50 was the first year (as we know from Josephus).<sup>3</sup> He found in his authority<sup>4</sup> that Festus was sent in a certain year<sup>5</sup> of Agrippa; and, erroneously reckoning from 45 instead of 50, he set down in his

<sup>1</sup> *Texte und Untersuchungen*, xix. 1, p. 1 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Review of Erbes in *Theolog. Literaturztg.*, Oct., 1899.

<sup>3</sup> His reason was that 44 was the last year of Herod Agrippa I. (*Acts* xii.), and he therefore made 45 the first of his son Agrippa II. (*Acts* xxvi.). But there was an interval, Josephus, *Ant.*, xix. 9, 2, xx. 5, 2; *Bell.*, ii. 11, 6; 12, 1; 14, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly Justus of Tiberias, an opponent of Josephus, as Erbes suggests.

<sup>5</sup> Tenth, as I think; eleventh, according to Erbes.

Chronicle that Festus came to Palestine in A.D. 54, five years too early.

Thus we must transform Eusebius's date 54 for the appointment of Festus into 59; and we find a Eusebian confirmation of the reasoning from *Acts* on which I have always relied. Paul's voyage to Jerusalem, therefore, was in the spring of 57: when arrested, he was thought by Lysias to be the Egyptian that caused the riot a few months before; in 59 Festus sent him to Rome.

But Dr. Erbes, assuming the old theory that Paul was sent to Rome in 60, and that a misreckoning of five years would give 55, reasons thus: the Armenian translation says 54, and Jerome says 56, therefore the common Eusebian Greek original must have assigned 55 as the year when Festus was sent to Judæa. That leaves unexplained why Syncellus and the Armenian translation transferred an event from the time of Nero into the Claudian paragraph.

I shall now proceed to advance another argument, founded solely on coins and on Josephus, to prove that not 60, but 59, was the year when Festus, coming to govern Palestine, sent Paul to Rome for trial.

It is well known that there were a number of different eras used in the reign of Herod Agrippa II., according as one or another of various important events in his reign was made an epoch, and the year in which the epoch-making event occurred was taken as the year 1. It is, therefore, sometimes difficult to tell from which of the various eras some of the dates on the coins or inscriptions in question were reckoned. In this subject we shall follow the ordinary numismatic and archæological authorities, who have no theories to distort their judgment, but simply go where the evidence leads them, and we shall avoid the scholars who write about early Christian antiquities,<sup>1</sup> because they treat dates on coins and

<sup>1</sup> I have read many important and recent works on the subject, whose divergences from the view here stated are tacitly passed by (see p. 94, note 3).

inscriptions as witnesses whose evidence must be tortured into conformity with their theories.

Avoiding the theological authorities, we turn to De Sauley, Madden, Niese, and Mommsen;<sup>1</sup> and ask what is the free natural outcome of their opinions, amid the many points of dispute among them. There was an era dating from the refoundation by Herod Agrippa II. of Cæsareia Philippi as his capital, under the new name Neronias. That era had A.D. 61–62 as its year 1: the year may be confidently assumed to have begun in the spring, as was customary in Southern Syria,<sup>2</sup> and hence Neronias was founded either in the summer or autumn of 61, or the early spring of 62. The occasion, doubtless, was signaled by some imperial favour to Agrippa, and became an era employed in a number of cases known to us, but it would be out of place to enter upon the question here.<sup>3</sup>

The important point to observe is that the refoundation of Cæsareia as Neronias occurred after Albinus had succeeded Festus as procurator of Palestine. Josephus leaves no opening for doubt on this point. He describes<sup>4</sup> Albinus as having been present in Jerusalem some time before a certain feast of the Jews, and Neronias as founded about the time of that feast. Lewin and many other authorities, among whom is Dr. Erbes, understand that the festival in question

<sup>1</sup> De Sauley, *Etude Chronologique des Monnaies des rois Agrippa*; Madden, *Coins of the Jews*; Mommsen in *Wiener Numismat. Zeitschrift*, 1871, p. 451 ff. Some of their reckonings must be slightly modified in accordance with the principle established by Niese, *Hermes*, xxviii. p. 212 ff., that Josephus reckoned the year 1 of Claudius to begin in spring on 1 Xanthikos of A.D. 44, 1 of Nero in spring 55 (see also Erbes in *Zft. f. Wiss. Theologie*, xxxix. p. 415 ff, who is scientific in method and important).

<sup>2</sup> See Clermont Ganneau, *Recueil d'Arch. Orient.*, I. p. 8 ff.; Niese in *Hermes*, xxviii. 1893, p. 208 ff.; and my *Christ Born in Bethlehem*, p. 221 ff.

The exact year is fixed thus: 25 and 26 of the era both correspond to A.D. 86 (twelfth consulship of Domitian). The Biblical critics doubt that this era was connected with Neronias. It is not possible here to discuss the question fully; and partial discussion can never be quite fair.

<sup>4</sup> *Ant. Jud.*, xx. 9, 1 ff.

was the Feast of Tabernacles, in October A.D. 62. It is, indeed, quite certain that Albinus was in Jerusalem on that occasion; but, as Neronias cannot have been founded later than the early spring of 62, that date is impossible. Other reasons confirm this (see below).

There are three alternatives:—1. Passover of A.D. 61, March 24.<sup>1</sup> Neronias would then have been founded in April–May, A.D. 61. This would suit the course of the narrative of Josephus, for he tells about Neronias after he has spoken of the feast and the serious events that occurred at and after it, which probably implies that Neronias was founded after rather than before the festival. This date will, however, be found impossible.

2. Feast of Tabernacles, A.D. 61, September 18: Neronias founded shortly after. This will be found to be highly probable.

3. Passover of A.D. 62, April 12: Neronias would be founded about March of that year. This cannot be decisively disproved, but two separate arguments tell strongly against it. It places the foundation before the feast instead of after; and, moreover, another line of reasoning suggests that the Feast of Tabernacles in 61 was the occasion. That line of reasoning is somewhat long; but it leads to highly important results, and we now proceed to it.

Festus, the predecessor of Albinus, had permitted the Jews to send an embassy to Rome to complain of the conduct of Herod Agrippa II. That king had built a tower on his palace in Jerusalem from which he could overlook the ceremonies performed by the Jews at the Temple. The Jews built a wall to intercept his view, and Agrippa then procured from his friend Festus an order that they should demolish the wall. The Jews, however, induced Festus to postpone execution of the order until

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Bacon would perhaps put it a day later: that is immaterial for our argument. So with the Passover of 62.

they sent an embassy to Rome. This embassy doubtless went in summer, while the sea was open, and travel was easy and safe.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the high priest was a member of it, and he was not allowed to be absent from Jerusalem at the Passover. May, therefore, probably was the month in which the embassy sailed, doubtless from Cæsareia, the capital of the province. Now the year 62 is excluded by the considerations just stated, and there remains therefore only May 60 (or May 61).<sup>2</sup>

The embassy was successful through the influence of Poppæa; but the high priest was detained in Rome by her. When news of this was brought to Palestine, Agrippa appointed Joseph, son of Simon, high priest.

Obviously these events occupied considerable time. The embassy had to travel to Rome, a long, slow process with the prevailing westerly breezes of the Levant.<sup>3</sup> Some residence and negotiation in Rome must be allowed. The return journey would be more rapid, as the winds favoured the voyage back. But we can hardly suppose that the elevation of Joseph to the high priesthood occurred before the end of September, either 60 (or 61) A.D., and probably it was still later in the season.

The next event mentioned by Josephus is the reception by Nero of the news of Festus's death. The message would be carried to Rome, of course, faster than the ambassadors would travel; but, on the other hand, the bad season of the year had now begun, and travelling by sea would be slower and less certain.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sea open from 10 March; but still dangerous till 15 May.

<sup>2</sup> Here, and in the following paragraphs, alternative years are given. In the sequel it will be shown that the later alternative in each case is impossible. For clearness' sake, therefore, the second alternative is always put in parentheses.

<sup>3</sup> See *St. Paul the Trav.*, p. 317.

<sup>4</sup> As to the time needed for messages of great events (death of emperors) going from Rome to Egypt, some striking statistics are given by Wilcken, *Griech. Ostrak.*, i. p. 800 ff. We add (1) that such messages would go much

Nero nominated Albinus to succeed Festus. Agrippa deposed Joseph from the high priesthood, and put Ananus in his place; and apparently this was done before the news of Albinus's appointment arrived at Jerusalem.

Ananus brought James the Just and some other Christians before the Sanhedrin, and had them stoned to death. His violent conduct caused strong disapproval among the better Jews, and they sent secretly to Agrippa, requesting him to forbid such conduct in future. Moreover, learning that Albinus was appointed, some of the Jews sent messengers to meet him as he was coming from Alexandria, denouncing the action of Ananus as illegal, inasmuch as it had been carried out without the procurator's approval.

Why and how could the Jews in Jerusalem know that Albinus was to be found in Alexandria? Alexandria was not on the road from Rome to Jerusalem, and no official coming from Rome could have been expected as a matter of course to pass through Alexandria. Obviously Albinus must have been holding a position there when he was transferred to the government of Palestine. The Jews, hearing of his nomination, heard also where he was to be found.

Now, we learn from Eusebius and Hegesippus that James the Just was murdered at a Passover;<sup>1</sup> and this Passover must have been either that of 61, beginning 24 March (or 62 A.D.).<sup>2</sup> Lewin thinks that the stoning would not

faster in summer than in winter, perhaps by direct voyage to Egypt; (2) that return messages to Rome were much slower on account of the prevalent westerly winds of the Levant.

<sup>1</sup> While it is true that the details in the account quoted from Hegesippus by Eusebius, ii. 23, are to some extent due to creative imaginative tradition, there seems no reason to question the coincidence with a Passover. That was a natural time for the outbreak, and tradition was likely to preserve the memory of the occasion. Moreover, the following paragraphs confirm our theory of the correspondence of events with seasons of the year.

<sup>2</sup> 24 March is given in the Hieronymian Martyrology as *Passio S. Jacobi Apostoli fratris Domini*, a striking confirmation. The Armenian Version of

take place until the days of Unleavened Bread were ended, as the Law forbade any execution to take place during the feast. But the tradition clearly was that James's death, like that of Jesus, coincided with the preparatory day.

Albinus wrote an indignant letter to Ananus, threatening to punish him for his conduct. Thereupon<sup>1</sup> Agrippa deposed Ananus, after he had held office for only three months, and made Jesus, son of Damnaios, high priest in his place. A month at least must have elapsed between the crime and the deposition; for Agrippa was evidently absent from Jerusalem (probably engaged on duties under Corbulo in the frontier wars, as Lewin points out). The high priesthood of Ananus, therefore, lasted from about early February to early May, A.D. 61 (or from the end of February to the end of May, A.D. 62).

Thus we see that the events between the departure of the Jewish embassy to Rome, and the deposition of Ananus, occupied a full year. During a considerable part of that time Festus had been dead; the affairs of the province had drifted into anarchy; and the Assassins, *sicarii*, whom Festus had put down for the time, became once more a serious danger.

Albinus came to Palestine soon afterwards. He doubtless had to spend some days or weeks in Alexandria, putting affairs in order for his successor. Then he came to Cæsareia, the capital, and took over the government. After this was done, involving one or two days' delay, he seems to have gone to Jerusalem, as the point first calling for serious attention (just as his predecessor, Festus, had done, Acts xxv. 1). There Albinus made it his first duty to put down

Eusebius rightly assigns the martyrdom to A.D. 61, but Jerome moves it to A.D. 62.

<sup>1</sup> διὰ τοῦτο, says Josephus, evidently referring to the action of Albinus: Agrippa did not care to support his nominee against the strong disapproval of the Roman governor.

the Assassins and give peace to the country. This was a matter that needed more than a few days or a few weeks; and Josephus says he devoted much care and forethought to the task.

During this time a former high priest, Ananias (Acts xxiii. 2, xxiv. 1), who had been deposed several years previously by Agrippa, was the most influential person in Jerusalem; and by means of his great wealth he continually increased his power by giving bribes to Agrippa and the present high priest, Jesus. At the same time he added to his wealth by illegally collecting the tithes due to the priests (some of whom were starved in consequence); and his servants went round the threshingfloors and seized the tithes for him. This confirms the view we have taken as to the season of the year. The summer was now at its height in the end of June or in July; and, when the wheat was threshed and ready, the servants of Ananias went round and carried off the tithes.

There followed a feast, at which a daring outrage was perpetrated by the Assassins. They carried off out of the midst of Jerusalem the secretary of Eleazar, son of Ananus, and held him to ransom, sending to Ananias to offer to release him, if he persuaded Albinus to set free ten captive Assassins. This was done, and the concession proved the beginning of much mischief, as the Assassins now made a practice of capturing Ananias's servants and holding them to ransom in exchange for any captives of their number.

It was about the time of this feast that Neronias was founded. The reasoning of the last two paragraphs suggests that the feast was that of Tabernacles in October, following the coming of Albinus; but it does not wholly exclude a later feast, as the governor's operations against the *sicarii* might have lasted a long time. The coincidence with the foundation of Neronias, however, excludes any feast later than the Passover, A.D. 62.

Thus we have narrowed down the issue to either the Feast of Tabernacles, A.D. 61, or the Passover, A.D. 62, with a preference for the former. In either case we have succeeded in fixing precisely the whole preceding series of events from the embassy onwards as follows:—

Embassy goes to Rome . . . . .	May, 60
Agrippa makes Joseph high priest . . . . .	about Oct., 60
Death of Festus. . . . .	autumn or early winter, 60
Agrippa makes Ananus high priest . . . . .	early Feb., 61
Murder of James the Just . . . . .	24 March, 61
Agrippa makes Jesus, son of Dāmnaïos, high priest . . . . .	early May, 61
Albinus comes to Cæsareia and Jerusalem, late May or June . . . . .	61
Foundation of Neronias . . . . .	probably Oct., 61 or at latest, early spring, 62

Most previous writers on the subject assume that the feast at which the Assassins captured Eleazar's secretary was that of Tabernacles, A.D. 62, because it is certain that Albinus was present in Jerusalem on that occasion. But besides the coincidence with the foundation of Neronias, an established and certain date, we notice that: (1) It is not at all clear from Josephus that Albinus was in Jerusalem at the feast when the secretary was captured, for the negotiations between the Assassins, the governor, and Ananias, might be very well carried on, while all the parties were in different places. (2) Josephus expressly says that at the Feast of Tabernacles in 62, when Albinus was in Jerusalem, the city was enjoying profound peace and order.<sup>1</sup> He could not reasonably say this of the Feast at which such an outrage was perpetrated in the city by the *sicarii*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Bell. Jud.*, vi. 5, 3.

<sup>2</sup> But see below, p. 104.

We have thus a series of events definitely fixed from May 60 to October 61 (or, perhaps, April 62). They are fixed by several separate coincidences with feasts and seasons of the year. It follows that: (1) Festus, who came to govern Palestine in the height of summer,<sup>1</sup> probably in July, must have arrived in Cæsareia not later than A.D. 59. (2) The voyage of Paul from Cæsareia to Rome began not later than the autumn of that year, and ended in February following. (3) The journey of Paul from Philippi to Jerusalem (Acts xx., xxi.) took place not later than the year 57.

Mr. C. H. Turner, in his admirable article on the chronology of the New Testament,<sup>2</sup> while accepting the principle of the reasoning from the lapse of days in Acts xx. 5 ff., contends for a relaxation of the conditions regarding the Passover which would admit 56 as the year of the voyage described in Acts xx., xxi. But it has been argued in the *EXPOSITOR*, December, 1899, p. 438, that such a relaxation is not justifiable; and Dr. Erbes's line of argument tends strongly to push the series of events later than Mr. Turner allows.

There remains one question as to the dating which we propose. Is it possible that the events in the administration of Festus could have all occurred during the time that we assign to him—about fifteen or sixteen months? Taken as a whole, that is generally accepted as quite possible. Hardly any authorities assign two full years of government to Festus. Almost all are agreed that he died during his second year. Josephus is clearly opposed to the exceptionally long term 54 to 60 assigned to Festus by the Eusebian dating (56 to 61 in Jerome).

Little is recorded by Josephus about Festus. The embassies sent by the Cæsarean Jews and the Cæsarean Syrians to Rome, with the events connected with them, must cer-

<sup>1</sup> This is universally admitted.

<sup>2</sup> *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*.

tainly have occupied some considerable time ;<sup>1</sup> but they were sent under Felix, and may have reached Rome late in 58 or in 59. They returned to Cæsareia after Festus came.

This embassy in 59 found the leading court influence anti-Jewish.<sup>2</sup> In 60 the leading influence was Jewish. History explains the difference. In 59 Poppæa was struggling for mastery with Agrippina, Nero's mother. Until that struggle was ended, Poppæa was always in danger from her terrible enemy, whose power might at any moment revive. Even after the murder of Agrippina in the latter part of March 59, while Nero dreaded the consequences, Poppæa was not so firmly seated as she became before the next embassy in the summer of 60, when her Jewish favouritism was the ruling influence in Rome.

The successful operations of Festus against the Assassins would also take some time ; but they were evidently the first and chief concern of Festus, and may be easily included in an autumn campaign during 59 and the whole summer of 60.

No difficulty is caused by the building operations of King Agrippa, and the counterbuilding on the part of the Jews in Jerusalem (alluded to above). Dr. Erbes assigns a year to these works, and we may fairly take that estimate as the extreme. But it is not necessary to suppose that Agrippa began his building after Festus arrived ; and Josephus says nothing implying that. The building of a chamber on the roof (which is all that Josephus mentions) need not have taken long ; and the Jewish counter-wall would not occupy many months. Josephus expressly says that these incidents were contemporary with those pre-

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xx. 8, 9 ; *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 13, 7.

<sup>2</sup> The riot in Cæsareia, which led to the rival embassies, occurred (according to Jerome and Eusebius alike) in the year before Felix was recalled and Festus appointed, *i.e.* in 58.

viously described; and we leave for them June 59 to April or May 60, which seems abundant.

Our argument would be not inconsistent with an earlier date than 59 for Festus's entrance on office. It absolutely excludes a later date. The earlier date is disproved by reasons already well known, and some of them well stated by Dr. Erbes.

But the events which we have found to extend over about eighteen months from a point shortly after one Passover until the Feast of Tabernacles in the following year are treated very differently by Dr. Erbes. He crowds them all together into the short space of less than six months. He fully acknowledges (p. 20) that the Jewish embassy must have started from Jerusalem shortly after a Passover, for the reasons stated above. The going and coming of the high priest's embassy to Rome, the tenure of the high priesthood by Joseph and by Ananus, the conveying of the news of Festus's sudden death to Nero, the appointment of a successor to Festus, the bringing of this news to Jerusalem, the going and coming of the envoys to Alexandria, the coming of Albinus to Cæsareia and to Jerusalem, his operations against the *sicarii* and the resulting peace—all these are supposed to have occurred in the six months.

The mere enumeration seems quite sufficient. There is not time enough for the events within six months.

The sole reason that Dr. Erbes has for trying to crowd them up so closely is that he believes Festus to have lived on into the summer of A.D. 62. This he infers from the fact that the Jewish embassy which Festus allowed to go to Rome to complain of Agrippa was successful with Nero because he desired to please τῆ γυναικὶ Ποππαῖα. He argues that Josephus would not have used the honourable term τῆ γυναικὶ about Poppæa until after her marriage, May 62. But Josephus speaks of Poppæa as a "God-

fearing" woman in this passage,<sup>1</sup> and tells how she aided the Jews to gain the favour of Nero. Is it conceivable that Josephus would have applied an opprobrious title (as Erbes will have it) to a woman whom the course of his subject obliges him to describe as "God-fearing"? One finds it hard to see what other expression except "the woman Poppæa" Josephus was likely to use. The word *γυνή* is quoted in the lexicons as applied to a concubine as well as to a wife. Dr. Erbes has no good ground for his inference.<sup>2</sup>

Further, besides the overcrowding, there are positive arguments against Dr. Erbes's theory.

1. He identifies the Feast of Tabernacles when the city was quiet with the one when the Assassins entered Jerusalem and carried off a Jew of rank.<sup>3</sup>

2. He disregards the authority of Hegesippus that James the Just was killed at Passover time. Hegesippus, after all deductions for a certain degree of legend that had attached itself to the death of James, is an early and first-rate authority. In opposition to this Dr. Erbes argues that 25th July, the day assigned by the Roman Church for the martyrdom of James the son of Zebedee (which is, of course, wrong), must be taken as that of the martyrdom of James the Just. Such conjectural remodelling of a tradition has no value as evidence.

The coincidence between two so different trains of reasoning, the old one based solely on the text of *Acts*, the new

<sup>1</sup> τῆ γυναικὶ Ποππηῆ (θεοσεβῆς γὰρ ἦν) ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἰουδαίων δεηθεῖσθαι χαριζόμενος (*Ant. Jud.*, xx, 8, 11).

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Lewin draws the opposite inference from the passage: he infers that she was still only a mistress, not a wife, and contrasts the language used two chapters later by Josephus, *φίλην οὖσαν τῆς Νέρωνος γυναικός* (*Ant. Jud.*, xx, 11, 1). That also is wrong: xx, 8, 11, might quite well mean either "desiring to please his wife Poppæa," or "the woman." Josephus chose an ambiguous term on purpose, and no inference is permissible: such is the general opinion, as Prof. Bacon rightly says.

<sup>3</sup> But, probably, not too much stress can be laid on the epithet *εἰρηνευομένης* in Josephus, *B. J.*, vi. 5, 3: he uses it merely in contrast to the state of war four years later.

one solely on coins and Josephus, forms a peculiarly strong confirmation of our dating; the very old tradition as to the *Passio* of James on 24th March completes the proof; a third line of argument, suggested by Erbes, suits 59 better than his date 60, and makes it highly probable that Eusebius used an authority who placed the coming of Festus in 59; and Josephus's narrative acquires far greater lucidity and completeness (so far as I can judge) when read on this chronology.

Not very many dates in ancient history seem to be fixed by so many converging arguments as the captivity in Cæsareia. To myself, almost the most satisfactory part of it is that which is due to Dr. Erbes, the explanation of Eusebius's misplacement of Festus through inference from his admitted mistake as to the numbering of Agrippa's years. Chronologists know how fruitful a cause of error the change from one chronological system to another has been.

W. M. RAMSAY.