

# Dating the Tower of Babel events with reference to Peleg and Joktan

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This paper discusses and seeks to identify the date of the Babel event from the writing of biblical and extra-biblical sources. This is a relevant question for creationists because of questions about the timing of post-Flood climatic changes and human migration. Sources used include the Masoretic Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, and the *Book of Jubilees*, and related historical commentaries. Historical sources suggest that the Babel dispersion occurred in the time of Joktan's extended family and Peleg's life. The preferred solution of this paper is to follow the Masoretic Text and the *Seder Olam Rabbah* commentary that places the Babel event 340 years post-Flood at Peleg's death. Other texts of the Second Temple period vary from this by only three to six decades, which lends some support to the conclusion.

This paper seeks to identify the date of the Babel incident with reference to events in the life of Eber's sons, Peleg and Joktan. Traditionally the Babel event is associated with a division (Genesis 10:25) in the life of Peleg, and this traditional understanding, relating to confusion of languages and demographic scattering, is accepted here. There are various biblical and extra-biblical sources that are available for consultation, including the Masoretic Text (MT), the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP), the Septuagint (LXX) and the *Book of Jubilees*. The text of Genesis 10:25 reads as follows:

“To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan” (Genesis 10:25).

But at what point in Peleg's life do the events occur? Answering this question is important because it will help us understand the timeframe of post-Flood climatic changes and human migration. A number of present-day Christians who hold to a literal reading of Genesis consider that the reference to Peleg is linked to his birth, combined with acceptance of the MT. This suggests the Babel incident occurred as early as 101 years after the Noahic Flood, although with some flexibility of several decades (figure 1).<sup>1</sup> The very earliest dates are, however, implausible because other verses in Genesis 10 (26–32) inform the reader that the demographic scattering occurred in the time of Joktan's extended family, and this problem was recognised by both Augustine of Hippo and Bishop Ussher.<sup>2</sup> Genesis 10:26–32 reads as follows:

“Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east.

“These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

“These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.”

The problem is that even if Joktan was the elder brother (which is doubtful because the name implies lesser or younger)<sup>3</sup> it would be impossible for him, according to the period relayed in the MT, to grow up and have such a large family prior to Peleg's birth. This natal event occurred when his father Eber was 34 years old. But in addition to this consideration, the first-century commentary of Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, follows the longer timeframe of the Septuagint (LXX) and Samaritan Pentateuch (SP), and places the events at Peleg's birth.<sup>4</sup> While early commentaries on the MT, for instance the *Seder Olam Rabbah*, place the events at a later stage in Peleg's life, namely at his death.<sup>5</sup> But both *early* approaches require at least several hundred years from the Flood to the Babel event, and this length of time is supported by the *Book of Jubilees*.<sup>5</sup> This evidence constrains the time of the Babel scattering to several centuries post-Flood.

## Supporting the traditional view

The traditional view of the meaning of the verb ‘was divided’ [*nip̄-lə-gāh* נִפְּלָה] (Genesis 10:25) holds that it is a reference to the destruction of the Tower of Babel episode (figure 2), which is recorded in Genesis 11 and involves a geographical scattering of people, following the confusion of languages. This traditional view is supported by Fouts<sup>6</sup> and Sarfati,<sup>7</sup> who both point to the commentaries of a number of conservative theologians, or at least Fouts thinks the traditional view is the one with the least problems.<sup>8</sup> John Calvin spoke of the division of Peleg in terms of the Babel confusion of languages,<sup>9</sup> as did Bede in his chronology.<sup>10</sup> John Gill also held to a traditional view,

although acknowledging a diversity of views, for instance he discussed whether the events occurred at the birth of Peleg or afterwards, and highlights several positions from Josephus and other Jewish writers.<sup>11</sup> Some suggested the division occurred at Peleg's birth, while others pointed to events during his life, or his demise. Keil and Delitzsch, and Leupold, also hold to this traditional view, with the former commentary suggesting it correlates with Peleg's birth, while Leupold suggests Peleg was named in memory of the Babel incident.<sup>12</sup>

### Are different events implied?

John Skinner suggested there was no strong reason to hold the division to the event of Babel and considered that it may refer to some other dispersal, or to the separation of Peleg's family from that of his brother Joktan.<sup>13</sup> Recent comment from Morris and Johnson points out that a different verb, *parad*, is used in Genesis 10:5 and 10:32, which might imply separate events. Genesis 10:5 is with reference to the sons of Japheth: "From these the coastland peoples spread

[*nīp-rā-dū* גִּפְרָדוּ] in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations." And Genesis 10:32: for all the sons of Noah "These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread [*nīp-rā-dū* גִּפְרָדוּ] abroad on the earth after the flood."<sup>14</sup> At a superficial level use of *nīp-lā-gāh*, instead of *nīp-rā-dū*, might suggest that a different event is alluded to in Genesis 10:25.<sup>15</sup>

Taken as a whole, the passage through Genesis 10 and 11 appears to be giving a single account of the life and subsequent separation of the sons of Noah into geographic locations after the Flood. But the actual time of division occurred at some significant point in the lifespan of Peleg. The use of the verb *nīp-lā-gāh* in Genesis 10:25, as opposed to alternatives, may be merely giving the reader additional information about the nature of the event without the need to hold to separate events. The verb *nīp-rā-dū* is often used to refer to the act of *separation* of people (for instance in Genesis 13: 9, 11), while *nīp-lā-gāh* is sometimes used of a more general *division* or *splitting in two* (Psalm 55:10).<sup>16</sup>



Figure 1. The Tower of Babel by Pieter Bruegel the Elder 1563

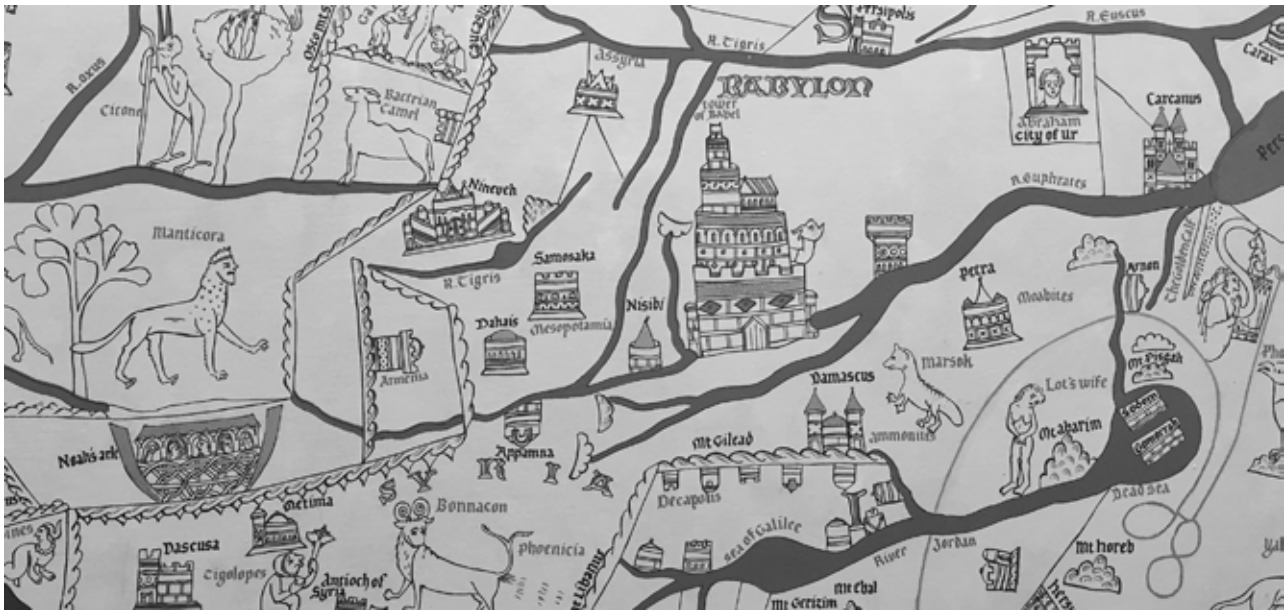


Figure 2. The Tower of Babel, Ur and Noah's Ark on the Mappa Mundi (world map) in Hereford Cathedral, England, c.1300

There are other places where the text of Genesis introduces a theme and then elaborates on it shortly afterwards. The creation account of Genesis 2 in relation to the Garden of Eden and the formation of Adam relays a more detailed account of events of the sixth day after they are first mentioned in Genesis 1. And the details of the Babel confusion of languages in Genesis 11 are first alluded to in Genesis 10. There are good reasons from the biblical text and commentaries to hold to the traditional understanding, not least that it is closest to a plain sense reading of Genesis 10 and 11 in giving a single account.

### Date of Peleg's division

There are two main points to consider in order to determine from the biblical text the time of Peleg's division, and from this the destruction of the Tower of Babel. This will help constrain the time of the Babel incident. First, at what point in Peleg's life did the events take place, and second, which Old Testament source should be considered the more reliable out of the main Old Testament document types available: especially the Masoretic Text (MT), the Septuagint (LXX), and the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP)? The extra-biblical *Book of Jubilees* may also be consulted for historical purposes. These give different dates for the lifespan and life events of the post-Flood Patriarchs, even though they broadly record the same information. Cosner and Carter have in fact already provided a useful analysis of the problem and give good reasons why the MT is the more reliable, and their view is preferred here.<sup>17</sup> However, as will

be shown below, the different sources in fact offer support to the MT in placing the Babel event several hundred years after the Flood.

### Creationist views

There are a number of views in the thinking of present-day creationists, ranging from those who hold to the LXX and those who hold to the MT. John Whitcomb and Henry Morris were at one time sympathetic to the LXX in *The Genesis Flood* and even considered the possibility of early gaps in the record. Babel they thought might have occurred 1,000 years post-Flood.<sup>18</sup> But more recent creationists tend towards acceptance of the MT. Bodie Hodge suggests a date for the Babel incident related to Peleg's birth between 101 and 130 years after the Flood, acknowledging the influence of the MT (although he prefers 120 years). He also acknowledges Ussher's work on his view, but suggests Ussher's work is sometimes influenced by Manetho and not without error.<sup>19</sup> Snelling and Matthews suggest a similar view correlating with Peleg's birth as a 'first estimate', and have a graphic which offers support to this early view, but they are open to later times in Peleg's 239 years of life.<sup>20</sup> John Morris and James Johnson broadly follow Ussher in suggesting that the birth of Peleg took place around 101 years after the Flood according to the MT, although because they suggest two events may be implied, it is not clear that it is linked to Babel.<sup>21</sup> The view of Sarfati, who follows the MT, is that the Babel event and dispersion may have occurred around the time of Peleg's birth or at some

other point in his life. So Peleg may have been named prophetically, perhaps in a similar way to the prophecy implicit in Methuselah's name.<sup>22</sup>

### The timeframe of the LXX and SP

There does initially seem to be support from some sources for the earlier time in Peleg's life. Josephus comments that "Heber begat Joetan and Phaleg: he was called Phaleg, because he was born at the dispersion of the nations to their several countries; for Phaleg among the Hebrews signifies *division*."<sup>24</sup> Among the Church Fathers, Julius Africanus thought the dispersion took place at least 399 years after the Noahic event (from 2262 to 2661 AM): "Heber, when 134 years old, begets Phalec in the year 2661, so called because the earth was divided in his days."<sup>23</sup> Augustine was also of the view that the name was linked to the separation of languages and that the event occurred at the time of Peleg's birth.<sup>24</sup> Augustine thought Peleg was much younger than Joktan:

"And therefore we must by no means suppose that they were born in the order in which they were set down; otherwise, how could the twelve sons of Joktan, another son of Heber's, and brother of Peleg, have already founded nations, if Joktan was born, as he is registered, after his brother Peleg, since the earth was divided at Peleg's birth? We are therefore to understand that, though Peleg is named first, he was born long after Joktan, whose twelve sons<sup>25</sup> had already families so large as to admit of their being divided by different languages. There is nothing extraordinary in the last born being first named."<sup>26</sup>

Josephus, Africanus, and Augustine broadly followed the timeframe of the LXX, which has Peleg's birth 401 to 411 years respectively, after the Flood; that is if we ignore the possibly late addition of Cainan into the LXX lineage.<sup>27</sup> Another source that followed a similar timeframe to the LXX was Manetho's *Book of Sothis*, which spoke of the Dispersion being 5 years into Peleg's life "... from the general cosmic year 2776, in which the Dispersion took place in the 34th year of the rule of Arphaxad and the 5th year of Phalec."<sup>28</sup> But while Manetho lived several hundred years before Christ, this is widely considered to be of questionable origin, and may have been written in the early Christian era, then translated by George Syncellus after AD 810.<sup>29</sup> It does seem to set out a similar chronology to the LXX, in which Peleg was born in the year 2773 AM. Although there is the wider possibility that the writers of the Alexandrian LXX extended their chronology by several hundred years in order to fit with Manetho's broader history.<sup>30</sup>

### Book of Jubilees

A shorter timeframe from the Flood to the birth of Peleg of 256 years (from 1309 to 1567 AM) is found in the pseudepigraphical *Book of Jubilees*, with the land said to be divided by lots at this time between the sons of Noah.<sup>31</sup> But instead of dispersion, according to *Jubilees*, the people rebelled against God's command to fill the earth and instead built a tower in Shinar. This work has the Babel dispersion around 379 years into the post-Flood era, some point after the birth of Reu. The building is said to have taken place between 1645 to 1688 AM.<sup>32</sup> However, if the period of Cainan's insertion (of 64 years) is subtracted from the text, the date for the Babel incident would need to be reduced to 315 years into the post-Flood era, although it is not clear in *Jubilees* whether the date of the Babel event is dependent upon this insertion.

This work is not considered Scripture by most Western Christians, but it is clearly present in the literature of the Second Temple period. Although the early church used this work, and translated it into Greek and Latin, much of it became lost, although in the nineteenth century complete copies were discovered in the Ethiopian Ge'ez text. Hebrew fragments of *Jubilees* have also been uncovered in the Qumran caves and lend support to the notion that it originated in the intertestament period, some copies existing from around 100 BC.<sup>33</sup> This work, sometimes referred to as Lesser Genesis (Leptogenesis) was known to the Church Fathers and seems to reflect a chronological tradition that is somewhat different from the LXX, MT, and SP, perhaps being influenced by a pre-MT manuscript.<sup>34</sup> However, popular copies seem to record the Christian era error of an additional Cainan, copies that have passed down to us from the Greek to the Ethiopian source.<sup>35</sup>

### Sources that favour the timeframe of the MT

There are other views regarding the timeframe of Peleg's division, mainly from Hebraic sources, that are different from the Greek textual influence of Josephus and Augustine. Gill's *Exposition of the Bible* points out that the Medieval Jewish scholar Jarchi (Rashi Yitzhaki) favoured Peleg's demise as the implied time.<sup>36</sup> The earlier Hebrew Rabbi Jose ben Halafta, in his second century *Seder Olam Rabbah*, linked the events to the division of languages and placed the incident at the time of Peleg's death, 340 years after the Flood.<sup>3</sup> He comments that the division cannot have occurred at the time of Peleg's birth because Genesis records that the demographic separation affected Joktan's thirteen sons, and Joktan was Peleg's younger brother (Genesis 10:26–30). The name Joktan infers that he was the younger or lesser brother.

Rabbi Jose further suggested the events could not have happened during Peleg's life because the time would then

be hidden in Scripture, when in reality Scripture is trying to explain events. This leaves the death of Peleg as the likely time, which Rabbi Jose suggests implies that Peleg was named at his birth through prophecy. We may note as well that in a few cases in Genesis names change to denote theological significance: for example, Abram to Abraham (Genesis 17:5), and Jacob to Israel (Genesis 32:28). So, as an alternative to a prophetic name, we may consider whether the name Peleg, as recorded in Genesis, was actually his name given at birth, or perhaps use of it is given in Scripture as a means of conveying a meaning that relates to division.

Although the early Greek-speaking Christian community used the LXX there was a move in subsequent centuries to accept the MT as the more reliable version, with influence from scholars such as Bede. However, a problem arose in this because of insufficient attention to chronological differences. The problem appears, for instance, in Bede's chronology from AD 725 *De Temporum Ratione* (*The Reckoning of Time*). Although he compared both the timeframe of the LXX and MT, he seemed to prefer the chronology of the MT. But he maintained in part the interpretation of commentators such as Josephus and Augustine, who placed the division at Peleg's birth, according to the LXX:

"Peleg means 'division' and his parents gave him this name because at the time of his birth the Earth was divided by the confusion of languages."<sup>10</sup>

This conflation of texts and commentaries across different traditions introduces a problem that needs to be addressed. It leads to an earlier time for the Babel event than the one held by historical Jewish commentators. However, Ussher's chronology of AD 1650 is slightly more circumspect and does consider some of the issues that arise from this transition of texts, but not all.

### Ussher's contribution

So, historical sources that follow the LXX or SP point to Peleg's birth as the time of the Babel event, while early Hebraic sources that follow the MT present Peleg's death as the preferred time. However, Ussher seems to do something slightly different. In some ways Ussher's discussion reflects commentary in Rabbinical literature (and the *Book of Wisdom*), although the source of some of his comments is not clear, and he would only have had fragmentary access to *Jubilees* via the Church Fathers. He also seeks to address the problem of Joktan's children in a similar way to that of Augustine in the *City of God*. This is done by proposing that Joktan was older than Peleg, and in effect places the confusion of languages at least several decades after Peleg's birth.

Ussher's commentary on the division in the time of Peleg mirrors comment in *Jubilees*. In *Jubilees* there was

a division of land by allotment: the text informs that the sons of Noah took lots in the presence of Noah (*Jubilees* 8:8–9:14). But the people rebelled against scattering and conspired to build the Tower of Babel in the Plain of Shinar. Later God destroyed the tower and confused the languages because of their disobedience. This is reflected in Ussher's commentary on the basis of a conditional opening statement, although Ussher's source is not clear:

"If this happened at the day of his birth [*Quod quidem fi de illius natali accipiatur*<sup>37</sup>], then it seems that when Peleg was born, Noah, who formerly knew all the places which were now covered with bushes and thorns, divided the land among his grandchildren. When this was done, they then went from those eastern parts (where they first went from the mountains of Ararat) into the valley of Shinar. Ge 11:2 Here the people impiously conspired as we find in the book of Wisdom /APC Wis 10:5 to hinder this dispersion of them as commanded by God and began by Noah (as may be gathered from Ge 11:4, 6, 8, 9 compared together). They went together to build the city and tower of Babylon. God frustrated this project by the confusion of languages he sent among them. (Hence it took the name of Babel Ge 11:9). The dispersion of nations followed."<sup>38</sup>

Ussher further discussed the problem of Joktan's children along Augustinian lines, pointing out the age problem: that even if Joktan was the elder, and born when Eber was only 20 years old, it would take many decades for the thirteen children of Joktan to reach sufficient age to be leaders or captains of people. Ussher then is conditionally suggesting the actual division occurred 'some years after' the birth of Reu (after 130 years post-Flood). Ussher's text reads as follows:

"Many companies and colonies settled down in various places according to their languages. The 13 sons of Joktan, the brothers of Peleg, as recorded in Ge 10:26–30 were among the captains and heads of the various companies. These brothers were not yet born when Peleg was born. Eber was only 34 years old when Peleg was born to him. Though we should suppose that Joktan was born, when Eber was only 20 years of age and that Joktan's oldest son was born to him when he was likewise 20 years old, yet still it appears, that the oldest son of Joktan must be 6 years younger than Peleg. So that at least the youngest of those 13 sons of Joktan, namely, Jobab and 3 other brothers of his are mentioned before him must be younger still. These countries rich in gold, Sheba, Ps 72:15 Ophir 1Ki 9:28 and Havilah Ge 2:11 were named after these men. These brothers could not be capable of such an expedition of leading colonies because of their youth until some years after Reu was born to Peleg."<sup>38</sup>

**Table 1.** Different views on the Babel incident in relation to Peleg’s life. Shaded areas are favoured dates given by major early biblical commentators for division in the time of Peleg.

	MT	Jubilees	SP	LXX	Josephus LXX	Manetho	Augustine LXX	Julius Africanus
Year of birth of Peleg after Flood	101	256	401	401 <sup>a</sup>	411 <sup>a</sup>	509	401 <sup>a</sup>	399 <sup>a</sup>
Possible date of Babel in Peleg’s life	140–200 <sup>c</sup>	315–379 <sup>b</sup>				514		
Year of death of Peleg after the Flood	340		640	740 <sup>a</sup>	/	/	/	738

<sup>a</sup> I have omitted Cainan as it is considered to be a late addition in the LXX. Otherwise, these dates would be 100 years higher.

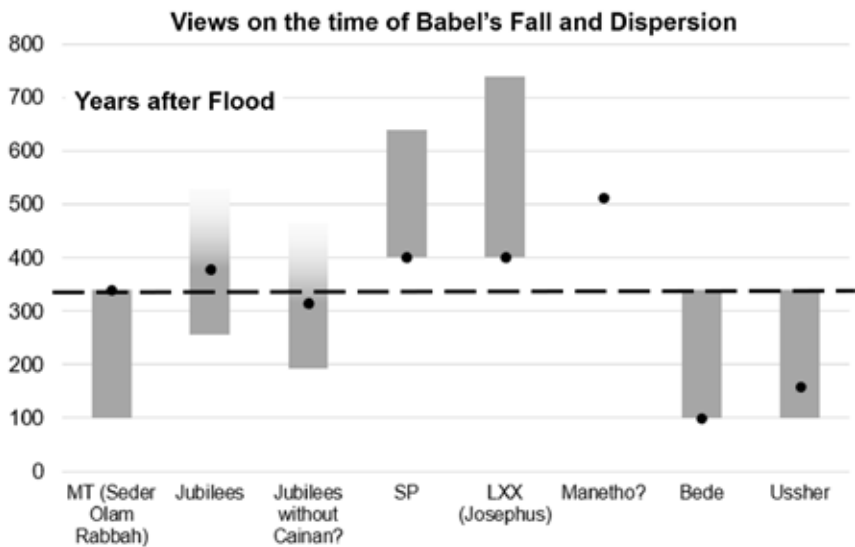
<sup>b</sup> This is the date at which Babel was destroyed; the lower figure (315 years) is obtained by omitting the extra Cainan. It is 379 years if Cainan is included.

<sup>c</sup> Estimated from Ussher’s writing to account for the necessary maturity of Joktan’s children.

To put this into closer context, if we assume that Joktan was born when Eber was 20 years old (1743 AM), then it might realistically be assumed that it would take 55 or 60 years for Joktan to: (a) grow up and marry (20 years), and (b) bring up a family of thirteen to the point where the youngest reached the age of 20 years old (35 to 40 years). This would take the *minimum* timeframe to 142 to 147 years post-Flood for the Babel event (with reference to the MT). Gill seems to offer some support to this, but is uncertain over the actual date and provides the reader with the possible range through Peleg’s life. Gill also notes that some “eastern writers say, that it was in the fortieth year of the life of Peleg, and then it must be in the year after the flood one hundred and forty one.”<sup>39</sup> But if Joktan was feasibly born 20 years after Peleg, then that time would run out to 181 years. And if we were to assume the more normal 30 years in the MT to birth of first born, then that *minimum* period would stretch to 200 years. Ussher doesn’t directly provide an actual date, but only a *minimum* period to deal with the problem of Joktan’s children. However, he does suggest that Babylon was founded when Peleg was 13 years old, and Egypt was founded 160 years post-Flood, which may indicate his view of the Babel dispersion.<sup>40</sup> But there is the possibility that the dates given by the sources Ussher used are inflated, which reduces confidence in this at this time.

### Discussion

As noted, there are several primary sources for the dating of Peleg’s life. The dates in table 1 and figure 3 have been determined by subtracting the birth of Arphaxad from Peleg’s life events, and adding a number of years back to the Flood. The texts record that Arphaxad was born two years after the family came out of the Ark, except Josephus’ LXX, which has 12 years. The LXX is inflated, partly because it includes the birth of Cainan, which the other texts omit, although this is probably a result of a transcription error.<sup>41</sup>



**Figure 3.** Time of the Babel scattering from the Flood according to historical sources. The grey boxes are the lifespan of Peleg. The black dots are the time of the Babel event from various sources. The dotted line is the proposed time of the Babel event. Note that *Jubilees* doesn’t give the death of Peleg, and the date of the Babel event in *Jubilees* is not strictly dependent upon the Cainan insertion. Ussher’s date for Babel is only hinted at in Ussher. The SP and LXX are plotted without the Cainan insertion.

But the SP and LXX have also *systematically* added 100 years to the time of birth of the sons for each of Peleg's descendants back to Arphaxad, while the LXX has extended Peleg's life for 100 years over the other two versions. These extensions may be influenced by Egyptian sources (Manetho) or Greek and Babylonian chronology at the time of writing of the LXX. The MT and SP are much closer to each other chronologically before the Flood, and the SP and LXX cohere better after the Flood. It may, however, be asked whether historians such as Josephus would have placed the Babel event around 400 years after the Flood if the LXX and SP had not artificially extended the lifespan of Peleg's ancestors. In response, the evidence suggests that other Hebrew manuscripts such as *Jubilees*, and commentaries on the MT, would still force constraint of the possible dates to a period of several hundred years after Noah's Flood. This view seems to have formed a consensus during the Second Temple period.

It is considered here that the MT is the more accurate, with the LXX and SP showing some inconsistencies, not least the obvious error that Methuselah outlived the Flood. *Jubilees* seems to fall between both MT and LXX, as does the SP. However, we should not forget that the MT text was standardized during the first century, possibly in part as a way of differentiating it from the Old Testament texts (mainly Greek LXX and pre-MT Hebrew text) available to the early Christian community.<sup>42</sup> Other earlier Second Temple texts that existed prior to AD 70 seem to have been lost, although with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls there may be the possibility of recovering some understanding of it, and *Jubilees* may, in part, reflect this earlier version. According to Lawrence Schiffman, evidence from Qumran caves suggests that proto-Masoretic text types comprise 60% of documents, while another 20% are in the Qumran style with proto-Masoretic text bases. Only 5% are of the proto-Samaritan type, with another 5% of the Septuagint text type, and around 10% are non-aligned.<sup>43</sup> However, other scholars have suggested the 60% for proto-MT is too high with greater textual diversity evident.<sup>44</sup> This may, however, only reflect manuscripts available to the Qumran scribes, but overall it does suggest the proto-MT type formed a major understanding within the Second Temple Jewish community.

So, there is some reason to regard the MT text as the more reliable, and from this, and early Jewish commentaries such as Rabbi Jose's *Seder Olam Rabbah*, consider that the time of the Babel division occurred at the end of Peleg's life, 340 years after the Flood. But there are other views. *Jubilees* has the event after 379 years (or possibly 315 years if the extra Cainan is omitted). An outside possibility is that the LXX or SP are the more reliable texts and that the events occurred at Peleg's birth, 401 to 411 years after the Flood. Ussher's later

novelty mixes commentary from *Jubilees* and blends it with the MT timeframe, but it gives a *minimum* period estimated at 140 to 200 years, with a tentative hint of a preferred 160 years post-Flood. Unfortunately, it is not possible to put a high confidence on Ussher's estimate because some of his non-scriptural sources may be inflated. Furthermore, it would appear from available evidence that no early Jewish commentators placed the Babel event as early as 101 years post-Flood, which suggests it is very unlikely.

## Summary

This paper maintains that the reference to Peleg's division correlates with the scattering of people and confusion of language associated with the Babel event. There is good scriptural and commentary evidence in its favour, at least being a major part of the account. Any understanding of the Peleg reference needs to take this into account.

In terms of the time of the Peleg-Babel incident, it is noted that early Jewish commentators placed it either at the end of Peleg's life according to the MT (340 years post-Flood in *Seder Olam Rabbah*), or according to the SP and LXX at Peleg's birth 401 to 411 years after the Flood (in Josephus's *Antiquities*). Evidence suggests the MT is the more accurate text and in an overall sense the preferred solution here, but either way the date actually falls into quite a narrow range, between 340 to 411 years post-Flood. Although *Jubilees* has it potentially as early as 315 years, and gives more information about Babel, most Christians do not consider this work to have scriptural authority. But it would seem that the general Jewish consensus in the Second Temple period and first century AD placed the event of Babel several hundred years after the Flood of Noah. So, the preferred date of Babel here is proposed at 340 years post-Flood, with an error margin of plus or minus several decades. There doesn't appear to be a strong *early* tradition that places the events at the beginning of Peleg's life according to the MT timeframe (101 years) post-Flood, and although that doesn't make it impossible, the problem of the necessary maturity Joktan's children makes it seem implausible. Even Ussher's more recent novel calculation suggests only a *minimum* date somewhere within the range 140 to 200 years.

## References

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2. Augustine, *City of God*; in: Schaff, P. (Ed.), *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers* (NPNF), Series 1, vols. 1–8, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, UK, 1886–1890, NPNF 16.11; Ussher, J., *The Annals of the World*, Pierce, L. and Pierce M. (transl.), Master Books, Green Forest, AR, vol. 1.47–52, p. 22, 2003.

3. Rabbi ben Halafta, J., *Seder Olam Rabbah: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology*, Guggenheimer, H.W. (transl.), Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, MD, p. 3, 1998.
4. Josephus, *Antiquity of the Jews*, Thackeray, H. St. J. (transl.), *Jewish Antiquities*, Books I–IV, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1.6.4.
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6. Fouts, D.M., Peleg in Gen. 10:25, *JETS* 41(1):17–21, March 1998.
7. See Sarfati, J.D., *The Genesis Account*, Creation Book Publishers, Powder Springs, GA, ch. 23–24, 2015; Sarfati, J.D., ‘In Peleg’s days, the earth was divided’: What does this mean? [creation.com/in-pelegs-days-the-earth-was-divided](http://creation.com/in-pelegs-days-the-earth-was-divided).
8. Fouts also suggests the traditional view may point to two aspects, one related to the Babel scattering, the other to a separation between Peleg and Joktan.
9. John Calvin (1509–1564), *Sermons on Genesis: Chapters 1–11* [from 1554]; Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, UK, p. 324, 1984.
10. Bede: *The Reckoning of Time*, Wallis, F. (transl.), Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, UK, p. 164, 1999.
11. Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, published in two parts: firstly, in 3 volumes on *An Exposition of the New Testament* (1746–1748), and secondly, in 6 volumes on *An Exposition of the Old Testament* (1748–1763). Commentary on Genesis 10:25 and 11:8.
12. See, for instance, Sarfati, ref. 7, p. 652; Keil, C.F. and Delitzsch, F., *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* 1:171, 176, 1857; and Leupold, H.C., *Exposition of Genesis*, 1:378, 1942.
13. Skinner, J., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edn), ICC: T and T Clark, Edinburgh, UK, p. 220, 1930.
14. Morris, J.D. and Johnson J.J.S., Rightly dividing the word about Peleg. Presentation at CRS Conference, 10 July 2009.
15. One Jewish source from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the midrash *Sefer haYashar*, also suggests two events: a division of people, and later a division of the earth. However, most Christian and Jewish sources consider it to be of questionable origin, and therefore unreliable. *Sefer haYashar*, ch.7:19 “These are the generations of Shem; Shem begat Arpachshad and Arpachshad begat Shelach, and Shelach begat Eber and to Eber were born two children, the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the sons of men were divided, and in the latter days, the earth was divided.” Edited by Parry, J.H., Published Parry and Company, Salt Lake City, UT, 1887. Claimed first edition 1552, Naples, surviving printed edition from Venice, 1625. See Jacobs, J. and Ochser, S., YASHAR, SEFER HA-, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol.12, pp. 588–589, 1906.
16. Often *nip̄-lā-gāh* is used with reference to water, but there is insufficient space to discuss that here.
17. Cosner, L., Carter, R., Textual traditions and biblical chronology, *J. Creation* 29(2):99–105, 2015.
18. Whitcomb J.C. and Morris, H.M., *The Genesis Flood*, P and R Publishing, p. 41–42, 1961.
19. Hodge, B., *Tower of Babel*, Master Books, Green Forest, AR, ch. 7, 2013.
20. Snelling AA. and Matthews, M., *When Was the Ice Age in Biblical History?* *Answers* 6:46–52, 2013.
21. Ussher, ref. 2.
22. Sarfati, ref. 7, p. 655.
23. Africanus, J., Extant Fragments of Five Books of Chronology of Julius Africanus, VI–VIII; in: Schaff, P. (Ed.), *Ante-Nicene Fathers (ANF)*, vol. 6, T and T Clark, Edinburgh, UK, 1886–1890.
24. Augustine, ref. 2. He also thought the original language was Hebrew and this was retained by the descendants of Eber.
25. Augustine suggests only 12 sons of Joktan; Augustine, ref. 2.
26. Augustine, ref. 2.
27. Josephus, ref. 4, 1.6.5; Augustine, *City of God*, NPNF, 16.10.
28. Waddell, W.G. (trans.), *The Fragments of Manetho*, Loeb Classical Library edition, Harvard University Press, appendix IV—The Book of Sôthis or The Sôthic Cycle (from Syncellus), pp. 238–239, 1940.
29. Adler, W., Berossus, Manetho, and 1 Enoch in the World Chronicle of Panodorus, vol. 76, no. 4, *The Harvard Theological Review*, Cambridge Uni. Press, pp. 419–442, 1983.
30. Pierce, L., In the days of Peleg, *Creation* 22(1):46–59, 1999.
31. *Jubilees* 8:8–11, “And in the sixth year [1567 AM] thereof, she bare him son, and he called his name Peleg; for in the days when he was born the children of Noah began to divide the earth amongst themselves: for this reason he called his name Peleg. And it came to pass in the beginning of the thirty-third jubilee [1569 AM] ... [Noah] called his sons, and they drew nigh to him, they and their children, and he divided the earth into the lots, which his three sons were to take in possession.” in Charles, R.H. *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK, 1913; also Segal, M., *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, Netherlands, p. 125, 2007.
32. *Jubilees* 10:18, 20, 21, “And in the three and thirtieth jubilee, in the first year in the second week, Peleg took to himself a wife ... and she bare him a son in the fourth year of this week [1628 AM], and he called his name Reu; for he said: ‘Behold the children of men have become evil through the wicked purpose of building for themselves a city and a tower in the land of Shinar.’ And they began to build, and in the fourth week they made brick with fire ... And they built it: forty and three years [1645–1688 AM].”
33. VanderKam J.C. and Milik, J.T., The first Jubilees manuscript from Qumrall Cave 4: A preliminary publication, *J. Biblical Literature* 110:243–270, 1991.
34. Shanks, H., Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 29 June 1993; VanderKam, J.C., Book of Jubilees; in: Schiffman L.H. and VanderKam J.C. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Oxford University Press, UK, vol. 1, p. 435, 2000.
35. For instance, Sarfati, J.D., Cainan of Luke 3:36, *J. Creation* 12(1):39–40, 1998; and Pierce, L., Cainan in Luke 3:36: insight from Josephus, *J. Creation* 13(2):75–76, 1999.
36. Gill suggested that Josephus favoured the later date, but the comment above suggests the earlier date.
37. Ussher, J., *Annales Veteris Testamenti of Prima Mundi Origine, Deducti: Una Cum Rerum Asiaticarum et Aegyptiacarum Chronico, A Temporis Historici Principio, Jacobo Usserio Armachano, Londini*, MDCL (1650).
38. Ussher, ref. 2, p. 21.
39. Gill, ref. 11, Commentary on Genesis 11:8 (Gill quotes, for instance, from Elmacinus *al-Majmu’ al-Mubarak (The blessed collection)*, pp. 1262–1268, and Hottinger, J.H., *Smegma Oriental*, p. 267, 1658.) Anderson suggests ‘in his days’ of Gen. 10:25 refers to Peleg’s life. Anderson, L., CRS 2016 Conference Abstracts, The Peleg problem, part 1: when did the event described in Genesis 10:25 occur? *CRSQ* 53(1):59–60, 2016.
40. Ussher, J., *The Annals of the World*, 49, p. 22. 1,903 years elapsed from this time [1771 AM, 2234 BC] to the capture of Babylon by Alexander the Great. This calculation and number of years was made according to astronomical observations by Porphyry, as we find in Simplicius, in his second book, *de Coelo*. This he affirms to have been transmitted into Greece from Babylon by Chalithenes at Aristotle’s request; Constantinus Manasses states that the Egyptian state lasted 1,663 years. Counting backward from the time that Cambyses, king of Persia, conquered Egypt, leads us to this period [1816 AM, 2188 BC]. About this time Mizraim, the son of Ham, led his colony into Egypt. See also Pierce, ref. 30.
41. For instance, Sarfati, ref. 35, and Pierce, ref. 35: *insight from Josephus*.
42. Cohen, M., The Idea of the Sanctity of the Biblical Text and the Science of Textual Criticism; in: HaMikrah V’anachnu (Ed.), Uriel Simon, HaMachon L’Yahadut U’Machshava Bat-Z’mananu and Dvir, Tel-Aviv, 1979.
43. Schiffman, L., *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Illustrated Edition, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 2007.
44. Peter Flint responds to a figure given by Emmanuel Tov of 47%, and suggests less than half are properly proto-MT type, with the majority showing influence from the SP or LXX. Flint, P., The biblical scrolls and the text of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; in: VanderKam, J. and Flint, P., *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity*, Harper San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, p. 146, 2002.

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