

Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?

by Wayne Goff

I am writing this on February 29, 2020 — the extra day that comes *usually* every four years, **Leap Day**. Our Gregorian calendar reckons a year to be $365 \frac{1}{4}$ days. Since you cannot count $\frac{1}{4}$ of a day, *about* every four years a day is added to bring us up to par. This is because the Gregorian calendar is based on “solar time” (how long does it take the earth to circle the sun once?) But doesn’t that make you wonder if we are really at the right time? Consider some things about time.

Jewish Time

The Jewish calendar is “lunar” (based on the moon). It has 12 lunar months of 29 or 30 days, which is about ten days short of a solar year, so seven years in every nineteen have an extra month. The Jewish calendar has no “B.C.” or “A.D.” and claims to be calculated from Creation. When Jewish time wants to reflect the Gregorian calendar, it substitutes “CE” and “BCE” for “A.D.” and “B.C.” The abbreviations mean “Common Era” and “Before Common Era.” So what year is it, according to Jewish calculations? **5780**.

Gregorian Calendar

The Gregorian calendar is used by most of the world and was named for Pope Gregory XIII who introduced this method of counting in 1582. The calendar was designed by Luigi Lilio, an Italian doctor, astronomer, and philosopher. It is far more accurate than other calendars, but it is not perfect. It is off by one day every 3236 years! Technically speaking, a year is 365.242189 days long, or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds. So an extra day is added **about** every four years to bring us up to the most accurate date possible with this system. The “leap year rule” is as follows: (1) The year must be evenly divisible by 4; (2) If the year is evenly divided by 100, then it is **not** a leap year, unless... (3) The year is also evenly divisible by 400. According to these rules, the years 2000 and 2400 are leap years while 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, 2300, and 2500 are **not** leap years. You can see how complicated this gets, but it’s all a matter of trying to stay with the “tropical year.”

Julian Calendar

The Julian Calendar was used prior to 1582, but it did not reflect the actual time it takes the earth to circle once around the sun (tropical year). The Julian formula produced a leap year **every** four years, which is too many. Again, a “tropical year” is the actual time it takes for the earth to revolve around the sun, and that time is exact, but not easily reflected in days.

Chinese Calendar

The traditional Chinese calendar is lunisolar, which means that it calculates dates according to astronomical phenomena. But the Chinese only use it for their traditional holidays and cultural events; they adopted the Gregorian calendar for daily use in 1912.

Dating Creation?

The date of **4004 B.C.** is given for the day of creation, based upon Ussher’s chronology. However, the Bible does not allow for an **exact** reckoning of the day of creation because calculations from the Bible are based on the genealogical records found in it. Just the same, 4050 B.C. would be the earliest date for creation, based upon biblical records. That is a far cry from the “billions of years” evolutionists give as a time frame for our universe!

Does It Matter?

Now that you have a headache trying to read this article and check out the information, you probably are asking what difference it makes. The answer is that the actual date from creation does not really matter to our lives. What matters is that you use the time you have been given wisely — **“redeem the time”** (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). Simply put, be sure that you are taking advantage of your opportunities. These “opportunities” are “your time.”

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