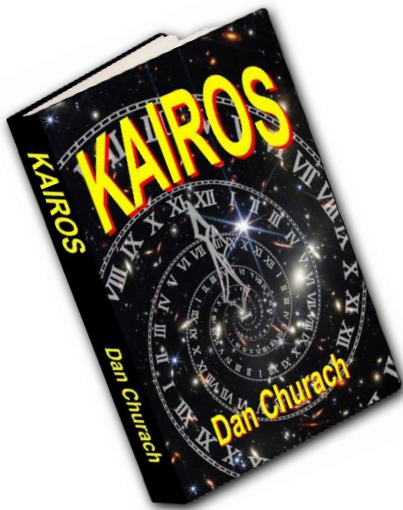


FOREWORD from *KAIROS*, pages 1-4

FOREWORD

"You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending"

– C. S. Lewis



The Ancient Greeks had two words for time: *chronos* (καρπός) and *kairos* (χρόνος). *Chronos* is quantitative time or incremental time and that marks events in sequential order. *Chronos* time is measured using numbers, clocks, sundials and calendars. In English, *chronos* has been incorporated into the language with words such as chronological, chronograph, chronobiology and so forth.

Kairos is qualitative time, a time when many things come together and provide an opportunity to act. The Greek philosopher Plato described *kairos* as the ‘opportune moment’ and described it as an essential concept needed to understand human interactions.

There also are religious references to *kairos* time. Biblical usage of the word *kairos* refers to it as ‘God’s time.’ In the Eastern Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, the Divine Liturgy begins with the Deacon’s words to the Priest speaking of *kairos* in proclaiming ‘now is the time to act’ in communion with God.

One well-known example of *kairos* used in a religious context is a familiar passage in *Ecclesiastes*, one of the ‘Wisdom Books’ in the Christian *Old Testament*. The lines quoted below have come into such common usage to have been recorded as popular music in recent decades:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

“To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to give birth and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted.

A time to kill and a time to heal; A time to tear down and a time to build up.

A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance.

A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones; A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing.

A time to search and a time to give up as lost; A time to keep and a time to throw away.

A time to tear apart and a time to sew together; A time to be silent and a time to speak.

A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace.”



No one can control the random accumulation of circumstances leading to that pivotable point at which a decision must be made, but once the *kairos* moment is upon us, we must choose a course of action. Moreover, avoiding a choice is not an option since NOT deciding is, by default, a decision. This decisive moment – the moment of truth – is *kairos*.

The tale that *KAIROS* tells applies this concept to the alignment of human history with the chance discovery of the preserved remains of our human ancestors. Set twenty-some years into the future, *KAIROS* brings *Homo sapiens* face to face with our genetic predecessors, *Homo parentibus*, in the hope of learning why their species has gone extinct. The Ancestor Restoration Project is designed to develop an atmosphere of trust between *Homo sapiens* and *Homo parentibus* people, allowing each to learn from the other.

The objective of the ARP is to explore the parallels between societies and individuals. Can an entire species-wide population face a *kairos* moment the way an individual does? Can *Homo sapiens* learn from the miscalculations our *Homo parentibus* ancestors made that led to their demise? Can this knowledge help humanity avoid the same fate?



The cover of *KAIROS* uses the first deep-field photograph captured by NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, which was released to the public in July 2022. The image of galaxy cluster SMACS 0723 encompasses a field of view equivalent to the size of a grain of sand held at arm's length. Within that incredibly tiny piece of our sky can be seen somewhere between 5,500 and 6,000 galaxies. On average, each galaxy has an estimated 100 million stars swarming about within its gravitational pull. Some of the most prominent galaxies in this Webb image are approximately 4.6 billion light years distant. In other words, the light Webb captured in this photograph left those stars about the same time Earth and our sun formed. The faintest background stars in this photo are farther away than 13 billion light-years, so their light had to travel for those more than 13 billion years before hitting Webb Telescope's mirrors.

I do not wish to make the reader grow weary eyed with numbers here, but when we contemplate what is visible in this one photograph, the inordinate amount of space and time challenges human intellectual capacity. The thought of billions and billions of suns revealed in that incredibly small area of the sky can, for many, trigger an unprecedented spiritual event. It did so for me, and that is why I chose this amazing photo to be the backdrop of the cover for *KAIROS*.



This image of galaxy cluster SMACS 0723 became the first Webb image to be released on 11 July 2022. (Credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, and STScI)



"Time as Occasion (Kairos)," 1543–1545, by Francesco de' Rossi. Palazzo Vecchio Museum, Florence. (Public Domain)

This is de' Rossi's painting of the Greek god of opportunity, *Kairos*. The wings on his legs and back symbolize how fleeting a favourable moment in time may be and reminds us that opportunity not sized can swiftly fly away. De' Rossi's depiction of Kairos being bald in the back of his head and having thick hair in the front is another reminder of just easily opportunity may be lost as time goes by.

Credit: Wikimedia Commons