Archbishop James Ussher was born on <mark>4th January</mark> 1581. He learned all he could about history and understood the Hebrew language very well. When he was a little boy he spoke the Irish language of his home. When he was older he collected all the old Irish books and papers he could find. He read the old Irish papers and books carefully. Then he wrote a book himself. It was about what Christians believed in Ireland hundreds of years before he was born. They believed the Bible just as Christians do today. He found this out from reading the old books and papers he had collected.

James Ussher also understood much about how the stars move in the sky. He learned all he could about how people measured the days and years. Most of all he read the Bible until he knew it all very well. Then he wrote another book. It was called *The Annals of the World. "*Annals*"* means a history of each year. He did not write it in English or in Irish but in Latin. Latin was the language clever people understood in many different countries. It was a very big book indeed. It tells everything important that happened in each year from the time of the Creation until seventy years after the birth of Jesus. He chose that date to end his book because in that year the Roman soldiers knocked down the city of Jerusalem. How did James Ussher know what year to start his book?

Everybody knew that Nebuchadnezzar also knocked down Jerusalem 588 years before Jesus was born. We call this year 588BC. BC stands for "Before Christ". James Ussher found the place where the Bible tells us about this. Then he counted backwards through the Bible. The Bible lists how old people were when their first sons were born. James Ussher used the lists. Back and back he went counting all the years. When he had finished he had done over a hundred pages of sums! He found there were 3416 years before 588BC. He added the two numbers together. Now he knew how many years had passed from the beginning of the world to the birth of Jesus. Can you do the sum and find the answer?

$$3416\ +$$
$$588$$
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