

The Stream
of Time

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Bible Chronology and Time Prophecy

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Inquiries: 8060 Wing Span Drive, SD, CA 92119

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Section One

Introduction and Overview

This work is prepared for those who received our earlier study, *Time and Prophecy*, and others interested in chronology and time prophecy, specially those who have a heritage of faith in the Harvest Message.

No one in this readership need be told of the lively discussions among the Lord's people in recent decades concerning these subjects. We now believe those deliberations presaged a clearer view of these matters, here disclosed, not through the wisdom of men, or the cleverness of any turn of mind, but because the time has come that this information is advantageous for the household of faith.

We believe the present generation will not pass before the body of Christ is completed. Specifically, evidence is here presented that 6000 years of man's history, from Adam forward, will close about the year 2043 AD, and presumably the grand Seventh Millennium will then commence. This does not mean we know the date when the last saints will pass beyond the veil to their reward. We do not. But it does seem to give us an upper bound.

REASONABLE CONCERNS

The mention of such conclusions will at once stimulate some, and raise apprehensions among others. Some reasonable concerns come to mind which should be addressed.

- **Does this change the Lord's Return?** It does not. The 1260, 1290, and 1335 days of Daniel which led us to 1874 remain as always. The "blessedness" of Daniel 12:12 is the "Plan of the Ages" supplied at our Master's return, presented through the seventh messenger (Luke 12:37, Revelation 3:20).
- **What of other prophecies, types and parallels which depend on chronology?** The Jubilees, Seven Times, Seventy Weeks, and Harvest Parallels are more precise and complete than before. The Parallel Dispensations are modified, but the date 1878, and the length of 1845 years, remain meaningful. The complement of 1845 year time parallels is substantially augmented.
- **Are we in the Seventh Day?** The parousia did begin at the opening of a seventh "day," but this day refers to the seventh period of the Church, rather than the Seventh Millennium of mankind. Various scriptures about the third and seventh "days" and the "night watches" fit remarkably well, including several that were previously unexplained.
- **Why does this information come so late in the harvest?** Because it was not timely until now — and none can understand a matter before God's due time. It was untimely for the early church to know that 2000 years would pass before the kingdom. It was untimely for the brethren at the opening of the harvest to know their hopes would be deferred more than a century and a half. But now, as the end approaches, more precise information is timely, productive, and useful.

FOUR PILLARS

Four pillars of thought contribute to our present views.

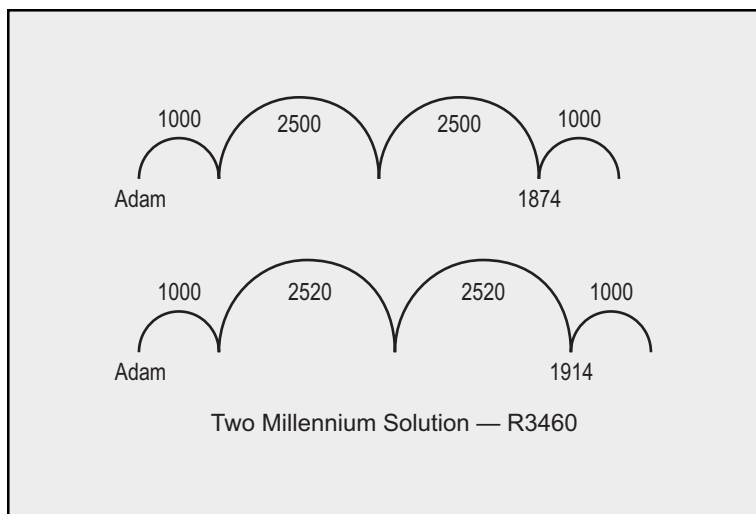
(1) Biblical data. This study began many years ago, when we supposed every fresh research would further confirm the customary views. But as time progressed, the evidence from scripture, reviewed over and over again, formed a bulwark of testimony that modifications were due. The record of Kings and Chronicles, supplemented with Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, now all fits. “We may see some day just how they can be harmonized, but at present we do not” (QB42). How honest an appraisal. At the time, no one else did either. But now, because it is timely, the Lord has provided the resolution. Now these passages are luminous — before they were closed.

(2) Historical accuracy. It seems not generally appreciated among the brethren how much improved are the historical facts available to us today, as compared with almost two centuries ago, when the chronology now current among the brethren was formed. It makes a difference. Two of the dates drawn from history and used in Volume 2 are now known to be incorrect. The first year of Cyrus began in the spring of 538 BC (rather than 536 BC), and the 20th year of Artaxerxes began in the spring of 445 BC (rather than 454 BC). In addition, factual records from Babylon and Assyria give us reliable historical dates well into the 9th century BC. This evidence precisely confirms the testimony of Kings and Chronicles as far back as the reign of King Ahab.

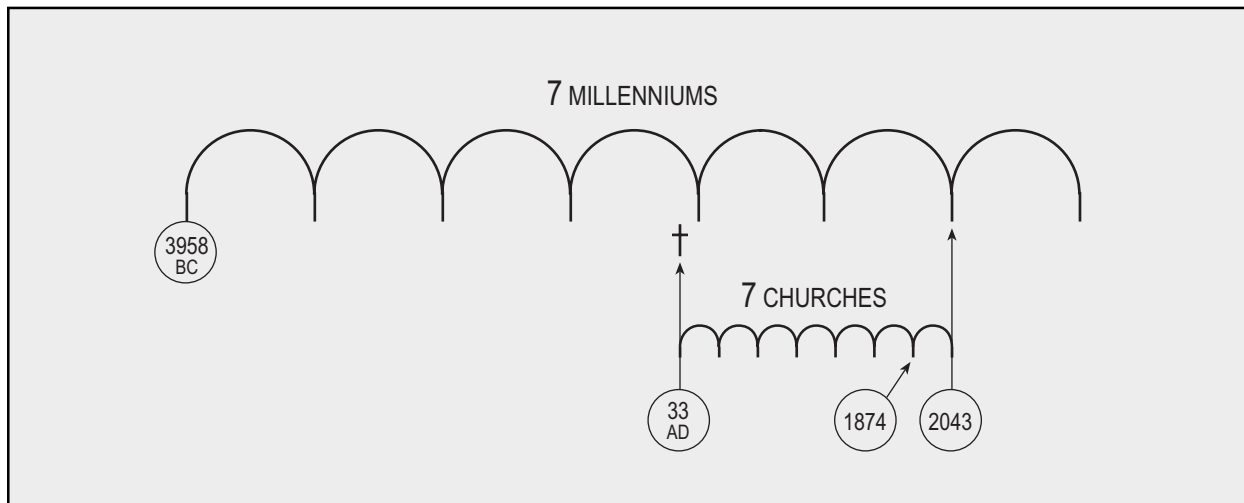
(3) Prophecy. Today we can look back at the prophetic package of the Miller movement and recognize subtle but persistent problems in the arrangement. Some dates were not precise, counting between BC and AD eras was off a little, etc. So with the prophetic package of Bro. Barbour, accepted by Bro. Russell. It was wonderfully better than before, and the essence is correct. But its details contain some imprecision, now clarified, which allow a sharper focus on prophecy.

(4) It resolves the issue Bro. Russell could not resolve (because it was not timely), one he wrestled with until his last years — the time of the Millennium. He never revoked the concept that the Seventh Millennium is the Millennium of Christ’s Kingdom, but he could not harmonize this with his express statement that the reign of Revelation 20:4 would begin after (a) all the jewels were complete, and (b) the Gentile Times finished (R2739). Thus he supposed the matter would be an open question for many years — and so it has proved.

Four years later he found a solution, namely that there are two Millenniums, and presented this view, with charts, in R3460. The first began with our Lord’s return in 1874, and the second would begin in 1914. But when that date arrived, and the kingdom did not break upon the world, he saw that that solution did not suffice. Probably for this reason, sometime during 1914, he changed the designation for the Kingdom on the Chart of the Ages from “Millennial age” to the broader “Messianic age.”



We are amazed at the precision of his pointers, considering that the resolution was then premature. In fact both of his opinions evidently are correct — the Millennium is the Seventh Millennium from Adam, and it does follow the completion of all the Lord’s jewels. Both of these views synchronize if the end of 6000 years is yet approaching, about the time when the harvest closes.



PATTERNS AND SYMMETRIES

Spontaneously arising from this chronology are patterns and symmetries of the years involved with sacred history and prophecy. These were never before apparent, nor could they be, until the proper dates of Old Testament episodes were ascertained — and this could not be until the due time.

These are secondary evidences, but they nevertheless form a remarkable testimony for the accuracy of the chronology which underlies them. The years have not been manipulated to produce them, for the chronology on which they depend was not invented by us. The scholars which have interwoven the factual records of history with the inspired testimony of the Kings of Israel did not conspire on our behalf, and are unaware of these particular fruits of their studies.

Scholars who respect the integrity of the Hebrew Old Testament generally agree that the spring of Solomon’s 4th year, when he began construction on the Temple of Jehovah, was 966 BC. We have simply prefixed the scriptural periods from Adam forward, as explained in the following pages. The patterns and symmetries referred to did not appear until almost two years after this chronology came into focus.

A WORD OF CONCERN

Many dear friends have responded with heart-warming encouragement to our studies, appreciating the finger of the Lord in the evident harmony of fact, scripture, prophecy, and the resolution of long standing questions.

However, some of the dear brethren, apprehensive of any change in the particulars familiar to them, foreclose the possibility of improvement, assuming this represents a subtle threat to the fabric of time prophecy. This concern is misplaced. Nevertheless, it has blunted the kind of thoughtful reflection which this subject deserves, and mitigated the sweet counsel of Pastor Russell (F318-19). Thus our earnest entreaties for a thoughtful hearing of the issues have been often rebuffed. Such dear friends

seem unaware that the suggestions tendered in our studies (a) bring harmony to the many scriptures formerly passed by, (b) show that history accords with scripture, (c) remove the small errors of calculation contained in the common views, (d) harmonize with time prophecy, (e) incorporate the latest parallel tendered by Bro. Russell before his passing, (f) resolve the issues which he acknowledged were unresolved concerning the Millennium, (g) embrace and harmonize both of his views concerning it.

WORTHY OF EXAMINATION

All of these matters are examined herein, which we commend to the thoughtful review of the Lord's people. We are grateful to the many brothers and sisters in Christ who have supplied so much of the detail we now appreciate — with thoughtful, devoted research beyond our scope or ability, insights which never occurred to us, hours of consultation and fellowship, and generous sharing of their sources and resources. Most of these dear ones are still with us. Gone from us, however, is one whose name we specially mention in his memory — Bro. Stephen Suraci — whose avid interest and concern for these issues predated our own, and whose enthusiasm for the subject was a constant joy and encouragement.

We wish this study will do for the reader what it has for us — increase our thanks, devotion, and reverence for the Father of Lights, from whom all blessings flow. Yours in Christ — Bro. David Rice

Section Two

6000 Years from Adam

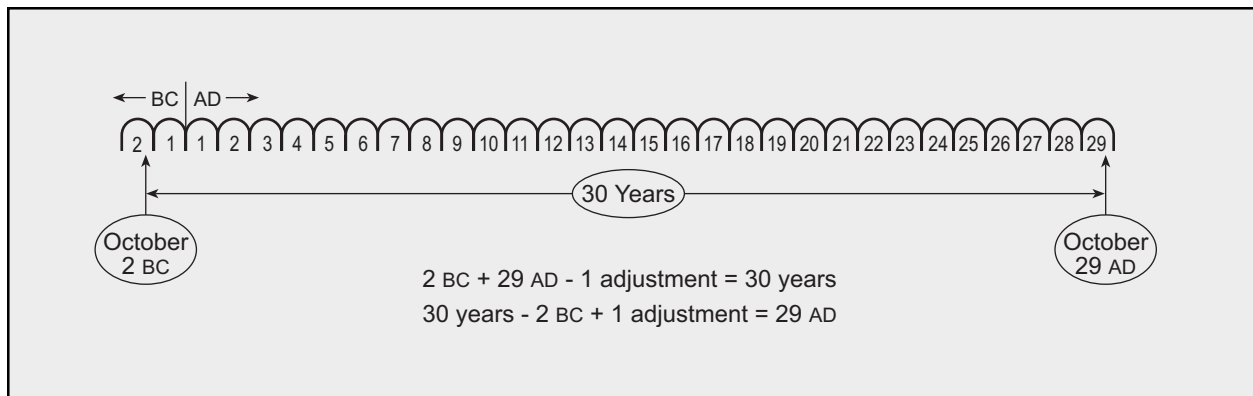
This section discusses the 6000 years from Adam forward. We begin with a list of the chronology familiar to the brethren, from Volume 2. We then explain the problems which require an adjustment of some of these periods.

1656	Adam to the End of the Flood
427	to the Covenant with Abraham
430	to the Exodus
46	to the Division of Canaan
450	Period of Judges
513	Period of Kings
606	BC date ending Zedekiah's Kingdom
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4128	BC, Creation of Adam

6000 years forward take us to 1873 AD. (6000 years - 4128 BC = 1872, adjust for crossing the BC / AD divide, yields 1873). The one year adjustment for crossing the BC / AD divide is often neglected. For this reason it is frequently supposed that 6000 years end in 1872 AD, which is imprecise. When this chronology first appeared in *The Three Worlds*, it was more precise. "The six thousand years did not end in 1872, but in the autumn of 1873" (*Harvest Gleanings I*, page 47).¹

MOVING ACROSS THE BC / AD DIVIDE

This detail has been a fruitful cause of confusion and imprecision, so we will take a moment to discuss the matter. If one computes years from, say, October of one year to October of another, and the computation is entirely within the BC era, the calculation is very easy. For example, from 47 BC, going forward 30 years, the result is 47 - 30 = 17 BC. However, if we cross the BC / AD divide, the result is off by one year. For example, Jesus was born in the autumn of 2 BC and when 30 years had passed he was baptized by John in the autumn of 29 AD. Yet 30 - 2 = 28, a result that is one year shy of the correct answer.



The rule of thumb is easy to remember. If one subtracts across the BC / AD divide, then adjust the result by *adding* one year. If one adds across the BC / AD divide, then adjust the result by *subtracting* one year. Thus 30 years forward from 2 BC would be $(30 - 2 + 1 \text{ adjustment}) = 29 \text{ AD}$. Likewise, from the autumn of 2 BC until the autumn of 29 AD would be $(2 + 29 - 1 \text{ adjustment}) = 30 \text{ full years}$. (See the preceding figure.)

THREE DIFFERENCES

What we propose, and demonstrate below, is that three items in the list of chronology above need to be changed. The last three items, and the resulting total, should be ...

349	Period of Judges
463	Period of Kings
587	BC date ending Zedekiah's kingdom
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3958	BC, creation of Adam

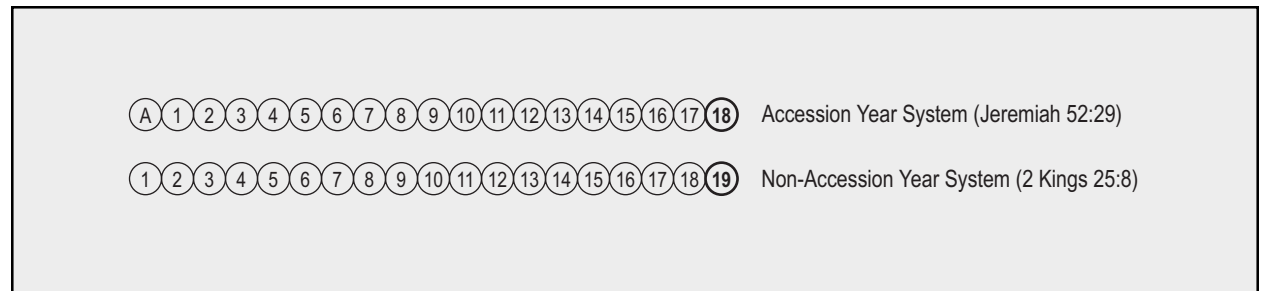
These changes involve a reduction 101, 50, and 19 years respectively, which total 170 years overall. This means that the creation of Adam would be 170 years later. This in turn means 6000 years from Adam end 170 years later. Instead of 1873, the date would be 2043. Let us now examine each change, and the reason for it, beginning with the last one.

DATE ENDING ZEDEKIAH'S KINGDOM

Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar. The scriptures twice place this episode in the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8, Jeremiah 52:12), but once place it in the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 52:29). Why this difference?

The first text counts Nebuchadnezzar's reign using the non-accession year method (used by Zedekiah). This means the year Nebuchadnezzar came to the throne was year one, the next was year two, etc. Jeremiah 52:12 is a copy of the passage in 2 Kings 25, and so uses the same method. However, Jeremiah 52:29 was added years later by a scribe in Babylon. (Jeremiah's own writings end at Jeremiah 51:64.)

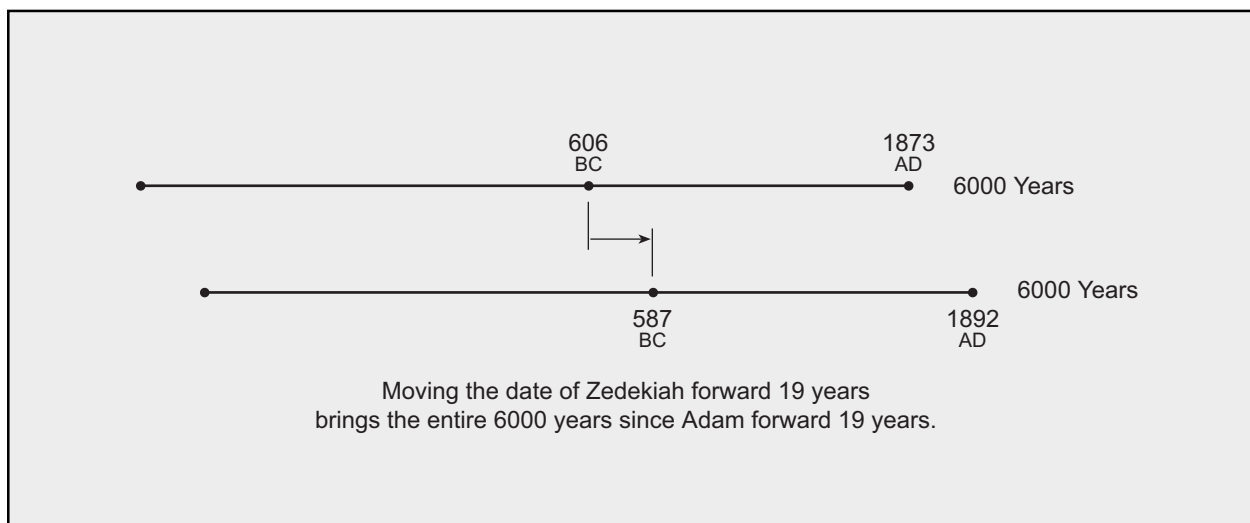
Jeremiah 52:29, evidently appended from Babylonian records, uses the Babylonian system, namely accession year reckoning. By this method the year Nebuchadnezzar came to the throne was his accession year, the next was year one, then year two, etc. Thus the date of events in the last year of Zedekiah recorded in Jeremiah 52:29 differs by one number from the date used by the Judean scribe responsible for the other two texts. Year 18 (accession year system) is the same as year 19 (non-accession year system).



This may appear confusing, but it is actually providential that both systems were used in the Bible record. By this means we know precisely which year was at issue. By Babylonian reckoning it was the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, which was, unambiguously, the year 587 BC.²

We look closely at this date in Appendix A and explain how we know it is trustworthy. For example, this reign is fixed in history by a series of 10 lunar eclipse records. This evidence itself suffices to establish the matter, but it is only one of 12 strands of complementary evidence. Appendix A also explains how this date, 587 BC, conforms to the scriptural testimony, and why the familiar date 606 BC does not. We urge anyone unsure about this matter to investigate the issue carefully. We will happily explain any particulars if they are not clear. We urge against the temptation to dismiss such profound evidence by which the Lord gives us a secure foundation for the end of the Judean Kingdom.

This date, 587 BC for the end of Zedekiah’s Kingdom, is 19 years later than the familiar date 606 BC. This means that the period from Adam to the present consumed 19 years less than formerly supposed. This moves the end of 6000 years from Adam forward 19 years. However, there are two other changes yet to examine.



PERIOD OF THE KINGS

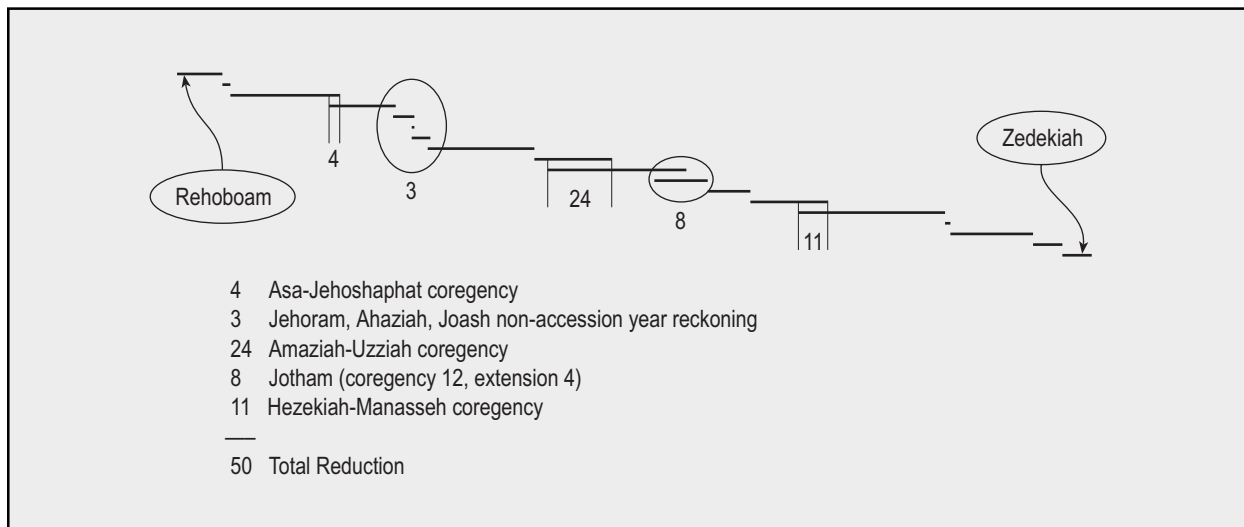
In Volume 2, on page 50, appears a list of the kings of Israel beginning with Saul, David, Solomon, then continuing with the kings of Judah through Zedekiah. The total of these reign lengths is 513 years, which seems straightforward. The complicating issue is that there is other information, also in the scriptures, which does not square with this total.

When all the relevant texts are examined and compared with each other, it is apparent that these reigns occasionally overlapped one another. This occurred for two reasons. (1) Some of these reigns were reckoned using the non-accession year method, which means the year a change of king occurred, that year was numbered both to the outgoing king and to the incoming king. Three such years were double counted, which reduces the period of kings by three years.³

(2) Sometimes there were coregencies, when a son was elevated to the throne while his father was still living. Asa and Uzziah each elevated his son due to ill health. The people of Judah elevated Amaziah’s son after Amaziah was captured in battle, though he continued to live for many years after. Hezekiah

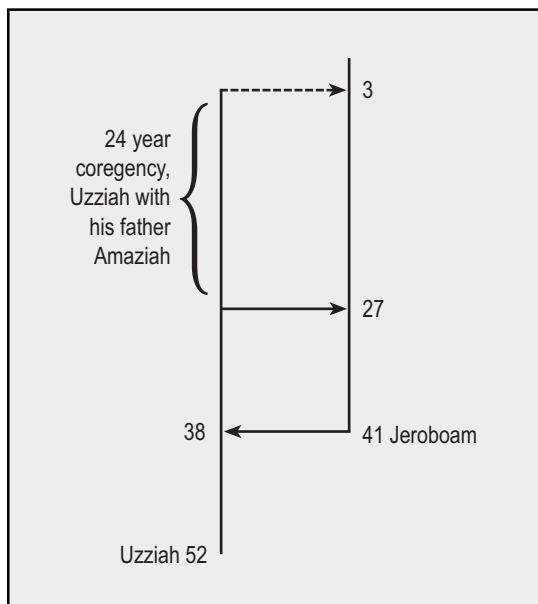
elevated his son upon reaching the age of responsibility, in light of Hezekiah's impending death. These coregencies amount to 47 years.⁴ Added to the three year reduction in point (1) above, the total reduction is 50 years. Thus the period of kings, rather than 513 years, actually lasted 463 years.

These issues were explained in a convincing study titled *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrews Kings*, by Edwin Thiele, copyright 1951, and republished several times since. Among scholars who embrace the scriptural data, his conclusions have been widely followed. Appendix B discusses the relevant texts, explaining how the scriptures *compel* an abridgement of this period. (A rigorous treatment appears in *Time and Prophecy*, Section Nine, "The Period of the Kings.")



This reduction of the period of Kings is neither arbitrary nor optional. As explained in Appendix B, the scriptures *require* an abridgement. How many times it has been intimated — without foundation — that our views are somehow antithetical to the scriptures. We have even been asked why we think the Hebrew records for the Kings are inferior to other historical records. This reflects a complete mis-

understanding of the matter. It is we who claim the Hebrew scribes were correct, and their records accurate, trustworthy and valuable. It is other dear brethren who *disregard, challenge or discredit them*.

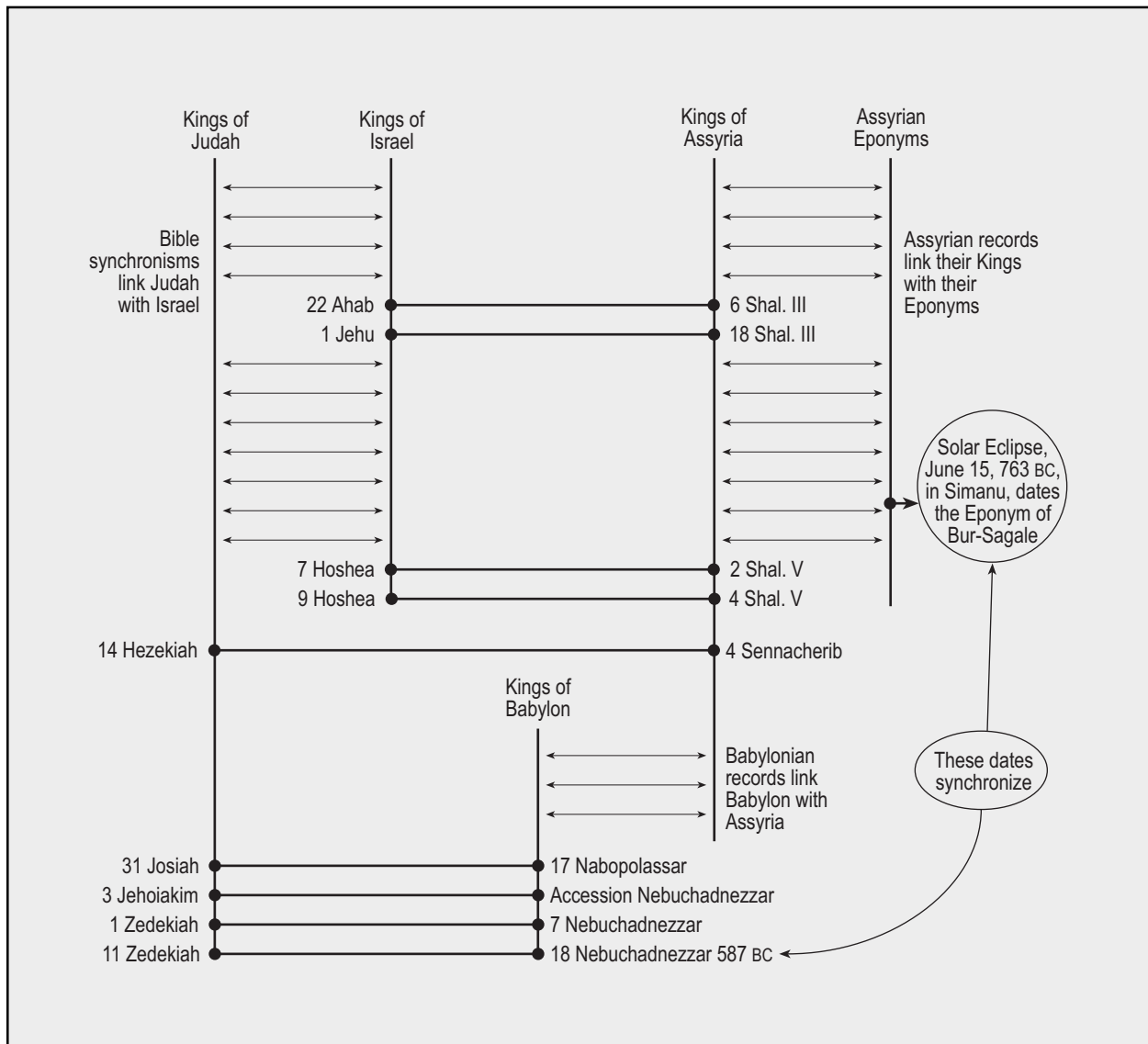


Here is *one* example. As explained in Appendix B, 2 Kings 14:23 and 2 Kings 15:1, 8 together require a 24 year coregency between Amaziah and Uzziah. If one does not embrace this testimony of a 24-year overlap ... then which of these scriptures is in error?

These texts tell us Jeroboam (the 2nd) of Israel reigned 41 years, his contemporary Uzziah of Judah reigned 52 years, and when Jeroboam died his successor Zachariah succeeded him in the 38th year of Uzziah. As one can see (diagram at left), this means that 38 years earlier Uzziah was just beginning his reign, in the 3rd year of Jeroboam (see the dotted line pointing to year 3).

Yet 2 Kings 15:1 says Uzziah (Azariah) began his reign in year 27 of Jeroboam, 24 years later. In other words Uzziah began to reign in one sense in year 3 of Jeroboam, and in another sense 24 years later. The first marks the beginning of a coregency while his father, Amaziah, yet lived. The second marks his sole reign at the death of Amaziah. Thus there is a 24 year overlap between Uzziah's 52 years and his father Amaziah's 29 years. The cause of this anomaly is explained in Appendix B. Here we simply note that the scriptural data *require* this overlap.

Additionally, there is a double-cord of evidence from the Assyrian empire with links to Israel as far back as the reign of king Ahab of Israel. As explained in Appendix B, and illustrated below, this testimony correlates precisely with the scriptures and the reduction discussed above.

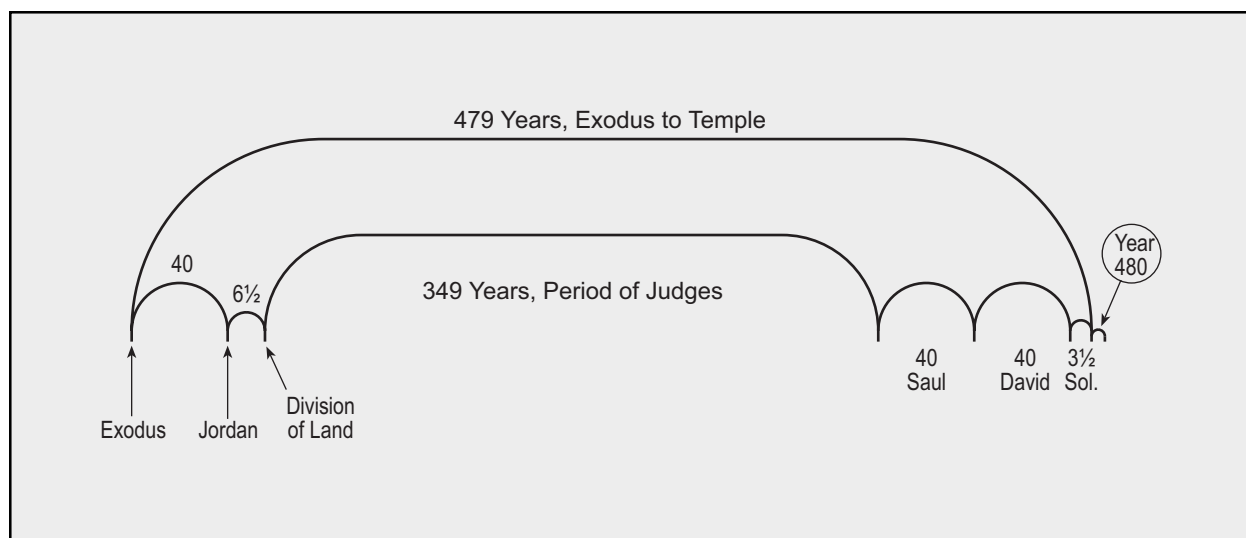


This reduction of 50 years in the period of Kings, coupled with the previous reduction of 19 years, means that if no other changes to the chronology were made, 6000 years would end in 1942 (1873 + 69 = 1942). Is that a credible beginning for the Seventh Millennium? It is not. However, there is one further change to examine.

PERIOD OF THE JUDGES

Most brethren know there are two scriptures which suggest two very different lengths for this period. Acts 13:20 gives a figure of 450 years and 1 Kings 6:1 produces an effective length of 349 years, which is 101 years less.

Sometimes 1 Kings 6:1 is imprecisely reported as yielding 350 years for the judges. Here are the particulars. The text says that the spring of Solomon's fourth year marked the 480th year from the Exodus, which was also in the spring. This means the elapsed time between was 479 years. If we deduct from the front end the 40 years in the wilderness and 6½ years⁵ conquering Canaan, and from the back end 40 years of Saul, 40 years of David, and 3½ years⁶ of Solomon's reign, we have 349 years remaining to cover the traditional Period of the Judges.



So, which scripture shall we follow, 1 Kings 6:1 or Acts 13:20? Whichever text one accepts, some explanation should be given for the other. Both are scriptures and we are not at liberty to simply discard one or the other. Remarkably, as we will explain, both texts are correct, when it is understood what they mean to say, and neither need be discarded.

A common approach is to suppose a textual error in 1 Kings 6:1. Benjamin Wilson suggests this in a footnote to Acts 13:20 in his Diaglott translation. He supposes that one Hebrew digit was taken for another (a Heth, 5, mistaken for a Daleth, 4), which caused 580 to be misread 480.

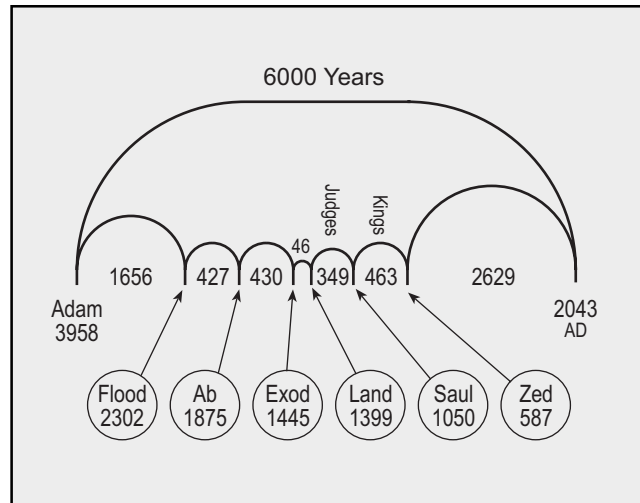
None of the Hebrew manuscripts extant today allow such an error, for in them the numbers are written out longhand, rather than abbreviated with Hebrew letters representing numbers. However, it is possible that very ancient manuscripts represented numbers this way, and that such an error occurred before the current manuscripts were composed.⁷ But against this are the following considerations.

(1) There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The last one represents the number 400, and there is no 23rd letter to represent the number 500. Therefore, if numbers were represented by letters, presumably 480 would be represented by two letters (400 = ך and 80 = ך) and 580 by three letters (400 = ך, 100 = ך, 80 = ך). An error would therefore require dropping an entire character, namely the one for 100. It would not be a simple misreading of four (daleth, ד) for five (heth, ה).

(2) All of the reign lengths and synchronisms in Kings and Chronicles have been transcribed correctly. This speaks for the statistical likelihood (albeit not certitude) that 1 Kings 6:1 has also been correctly transmitted.

(3) The difference between 450 and 349 is not 100, but 101. Thus a one digit error will not explain the precise disparity.⁸

(4) The information contained in Judges and 1 Samuel about this period supports the total given in 1 Kings 6:1. This is an important point, explained in detail in Appendix C. We urge the reader to examine that appendix carefully.



(5) The genealogy in Ruth 4:18-22 disallows so long a time as 450 years before King Saul. Such a length would require three generations of men to live an average of 142 years, which is not feasible. (Please see Appendix C for details.)

The proper resolution is in understanding what Paul intended in Acts 13:20. He used a practice common in his day, representing a span of time by the sum of the periods within it which were known, irrespective of whether they were contiguous, overlapping, or separated. Acts 13:20 simply gives us the sum of the 19 periods of peace, oppression and judgeship mentioned in Judges and 1 Samuel, which total exactly to 450. (Appendix C contains a list of all 19 periods.)

Paul certainly knew that these 19 periods have gaps and overlaps between them, so that their sum would not yield a precise length. But his subject was merely a general review of Israel’s history and this sum was sufficient for his purpose. His statement merely reflects a total of the periods listed, without any concern for refining the number.

The coincidence that these 19 assorted periods in the Old Testament produce precisely the number used by Paul is a compelling testimony about where he secured his number, and what he meant by it. He did not glean this result from a now lost record, or receive it in a night vision. He summed the figures. This also explains the word “about” in Acts 13:20, which would be unnecessary for a precise figure.⁹

An Important Point. Notice that the period Paul designates takes us “*until* Samuel the prophet.” The 19 periods in the Old Testament, which Paul summed up to get his figure of 450, do not include a specific period of years for Samuel. Thus Paul did not say “until Saul the king,” because the figures he used did not reach to Saul. They reached only “until” Samuel. It is therefore impossible to secure from Paul’s sum a figure reaching to Saul. This is an important point to observe. Without 1 Kings 6:1, we would be at a loss to secure any precise figure for the period of Judges.

Neither text is in error, when it is understood what each intends. Acts 13:20 merely — and accurately — reflects a sum of 19 periods from the Old Testament. 1 Kings 6:1, quite differently, spans the whole period from the Exodus to the Temple, and happens to include in its scope the 19 periods summed by Paul. This scripture is reliable, precise, specific, and a God-given key. It is the only information we have which supplies the precise length of the Judges — information we need to complete an unbroken record of Biblical Chronology. With thanks we receive it.

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW

We have sound reason for all three changes proposed to the chronology. We urge those who are able and interested to examine the deeper specifics in Appendices A, B, and C, devoted to these changes. We have very firm ground for the conclusion that 6000 years since Adam will terminate a few decades from now, evidently in the year 2043.

Actually the whole matter is quite simple, in retrospect. Scholars who follow the scriptures hold that the spring of Solomon's fourth year, when he began to build the Temple of Jehovah, was in 966 BC. To this we merely append the testimony of 1 Kings 6:1 to reach the Exodus in 1445 BC. Beyond that we add the scriptural periods back to Adam.¹⁰

Thus the dates we use were neither invented nor manipulated by us. This is important enough to repeat for emphasis. The dates we use were *neither invented nor manipulated* by us. Please remember this when we next find an *independent* verification of these dates, later see how they precisely support the *time prophecies* of the Bible, and still later discover some *extraordinary* patterns in time, previously unseen. How is it that all of this works, with dates we neither invented nor manipulated?

The Lord has supplied our need by directing the facts of history, and the harmony of scripture, to congeal in a convincing way, just as we approach the end of the Harvest. For this purpose He has been pleased to use the service of thoughtful academics and reverent scholars, but the benefits accrue to us. Below is a summary of our results, and a list of dates, which will prove useful as we proceed.

1656	Adam to the End of the Flood
427	to the Covenant with Abraham
430	to the Exodus
46	to the Division of Canaan
349	Period of Judges
463	Period of Kings
587	BC date ending Zedekiah's Kingdom
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3958	BC, Creation of Adam
2302	BC, end of Flood
1875	BC, Covenant with Abraham
1445	BC, Exodus
1399	BC, Division of Canaan
1050	BC, begin year one of Saul
1010	BC, begin year one of David
970	BC, begin year one of Solomon in the autumn
966	BC, Temple begun in the spring of Solomon's year four
930	BC, begin Divided Kingdom
587	BC, end of Zedekiah's Kingdom
538	BC, first year of Cyrus
2043	AD, end of 6000 years
3043	AD, end of 7000 years

(1) The presentation of the Gentile Times and the Jubilees in the same work did not continue this precision. The presentation of the Parallel Dispensations did. This is one of the problems in the time prophecies using the familiar chronology — some of the calculations do, and some do not, figure correctly across the BC / AD divide. This is passed by without notice by most brethren, but this inconsistency shows one or another of the applications impossible as they stand in Volume 2.

(2) Some readers know that the historical date for the fall of Zedekiah is sometimes given as 586 BC, and sometimes as 587 BC. This is not because of any ambiguity about the date of Nebuchadnezzar's official year 18 — that began in Nisan of the year 587 BC. The problem is mistakenly using Nebuchadnezzar's official year 19 (586 BC), not recognizing that the number 19 was in the Judean scribe's non-accession year system. Those interested in more specifics please see *Time and Prophecy*, Appendix E, "The End of the Judean Kingdom," and Appendix I, "The Calendar Years of Judah."

(3) This occurred in Judah for the reigns of kings Joram, Ahaziah and Jehu. These three kings all used a non-accession year system, apparently because of the influence of Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, who married Joram, son of Jehoshaphat (the kingdom of Ahab at this time used the non-accession year system). Athaliah herself reigned for seven years, and of course her reign would have been recorded also with the non-accession year system, but in Volume 2 she is allotted six years, which is the correct amount when one begins with seven and reduces it by one.

(4) The specific overlaps are: Asa-Jehoshaphat 4 years, Amaziah-Uzziah 24 years, Uzziah-Jotham 12 years (but four extra years reduce the effect to 8 years), Hezekiah-Manasseh 11 years. The total of these 4, 24, 8, and 11 year overlaps is 47 years.

(5) The 6½ years for conquering the land is reasoned as follows. The division of the land was 45 years after sending the spies (Joshua 14:10), which were sent out near Tishri, about 1½ years after the Exodus. Supposing Caleb meant 45 approximately full years, the division of the land occurred near the fall of the year, 6½ years after crossing the Jordan, 46½ years after the Exodus. (Also it is reasonable to suppose the division of the land followed the conquests of the current year, and the spring-summer of the year was a common time for battle, 2 Samuel 11:1).

(6) Solomon's regnal years ran from month seven to month seven (the month now called Tishri). Thus the

spring of his fourth year was 3½ years after the beginning of his "year one."

(7) That some such errors did occur — though extremely rare — is suggested by an apparent contradiction in Numbers chapter 3. Verses 22, 28 and 34 list counts of 7500, 8600 and 6200. These total to 22,300, yet verse 39 gives the total as 22,000. In a short but compelling article in *Beauties of the Truth*, February 1999, Bro. Jim Parkinson shows how an error may have occurred in verse 28, a scribe seeing "8300" but misreading it "8600." The Hebrew letter representing "300" is the letter "siyn." This happens also to be the first letter of the word "keeping" (literally "keepers") which immediately follows the number. Thus, if the short form of representing numbers was used, a scribe would have seen the letter for 8000 (perhaps the letter for 8 with a line drawn under it), then the letter for 300, then that letter again (as the first letter of the word "keeping"), and misread it as "8000 + 300 + 300."

(8) This concern is mitigated if one supposes Paul's "about 450" is only approximate. But those who take 450 as a precise number frequently explain the disparity as a one digit error. As we show later above, Acts 13:20 does not even reach to King Saul, so the disparity is all the more unexplained by a simple digit transcription error.

(9) The word "about" does not prove the stated length to be imprecise. But the origin of Paul's figure does explain the word "about."

(10) The chronology charts published by Bros. John and Morton Edgar are well known among the brethren, and from time to time we are asked how these impact the subject. Close inspection shows that the most significant points are calculated imprecisely, use incorrect dates, or point to dates which are not significant. For example, chart number 3 points to 2914 ad. Is that date significant? Chart number 4, "Abrahamic Covenant," uses the date 4128 BC for Adam's creation, and 2045 BC for the Abrahamic Covenant. But the dates the Edgars really intend are 4129 BC and 2046 BC respectively (otherwise the second 2081 years take us to 37 AD rather than the intended 36 AD). But if we use 4129 BC for the creation of Adam, then 1655 years later when the flood began would be 2474 BC, which does not work in chart number 8. If we use 2046 BC for the Abrahamic Covenant, then Isaac's marriage 65 years later would be in 1981 BC — the date which actually appears on chart number 3 — but 2520 years later take us to 540 AD rather than the intended 539 AD shown on the chart. If there are questions about any specifics, we would be glad to explain further by email.

Section Three

Verification by the Jubilees

This section explains a remarkable, independent verification of the three changes in chronology discussed in Section Two. This double-check is by means of the jubilee cycles and some texts of scripture long neglected.

If we could locate an express reference in the scriptures to a particular one of Israel's later jubilees, we could check our results by counting forward from the date the first jubilee would have been, to that later jubilee, to see if the span of years works correctly.

There is such a reference. Ezekiel 7:13 mentions the last jubilee in the history of Israel, the one they could not keep because they were captive at Babylon rather than in Israel on their ancestral lands. "For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive" (Ezekiel 7:13). Though Ezekiel does not use the word "jubilee," that clearly is what he had in mind. When else does a seller return to what he sells? Ezekiel thus points to the jubilee which would break the cycle and point forward to the antitype.

JUBILEES NOT ABANDONED

It is clear from Ezekiel's reference that Israel was accustomed to keeping jubilees, and knew when to expect the next one. Certainly there was good reason for Israelites to remember this law and look forward to the benefits each jubilee brought to so many of them.

Probably the counting of jubilees also provided a basic time-keeping method for the centuries as they passed, and explains how the scribes in Solomon's court knew the proper count of years from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:1).

DATING ISRAEL'S LAST JUBILEE

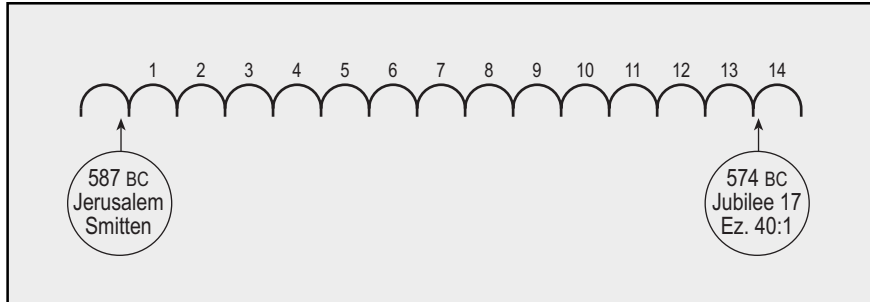
Ezekiel gives us specific information on the date of that last jubilee. This information is in Ezekiel 40:1, which introduces his vision of the Kingdom. He says the vision came to him in year 50, month 7, day 10, which as Bible Students know is the beginning of a jubilee year (Leviticus 25:9, 10). However, he gives this date in a way which must be reasoned out, and for this cause it is often overlooked. But the calculation is not difficult.

"In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the LORD was upon me ..." (Ezekiel 40:1).

As to the day, it is clearly specified, day 10. As to the month, the Jewish year then, as now, began on the seventh month, Tishri. (When month one is intended it is specified directly, as in Ezekiel 29:17 and 30:20.) As to the year, it is year 50, being 20 years after year "30" when the book opens (compare Ezekiel 1:1, 2, 40:1).¹ Year 50, month 7, day 10 — the beginning of jubilee.

This has long been observed in the Jewish Talmud, which even specifies the number of this jubilee. “Seventeen jubilees ... the last jubilee occurred on the tenth day of the month [Tishri], in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten (Ezekiel 40:1), which was the new years day of the jubilee (’Ab. Zarah 9b; ’Ar. 11b-12b)” (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, page 607).

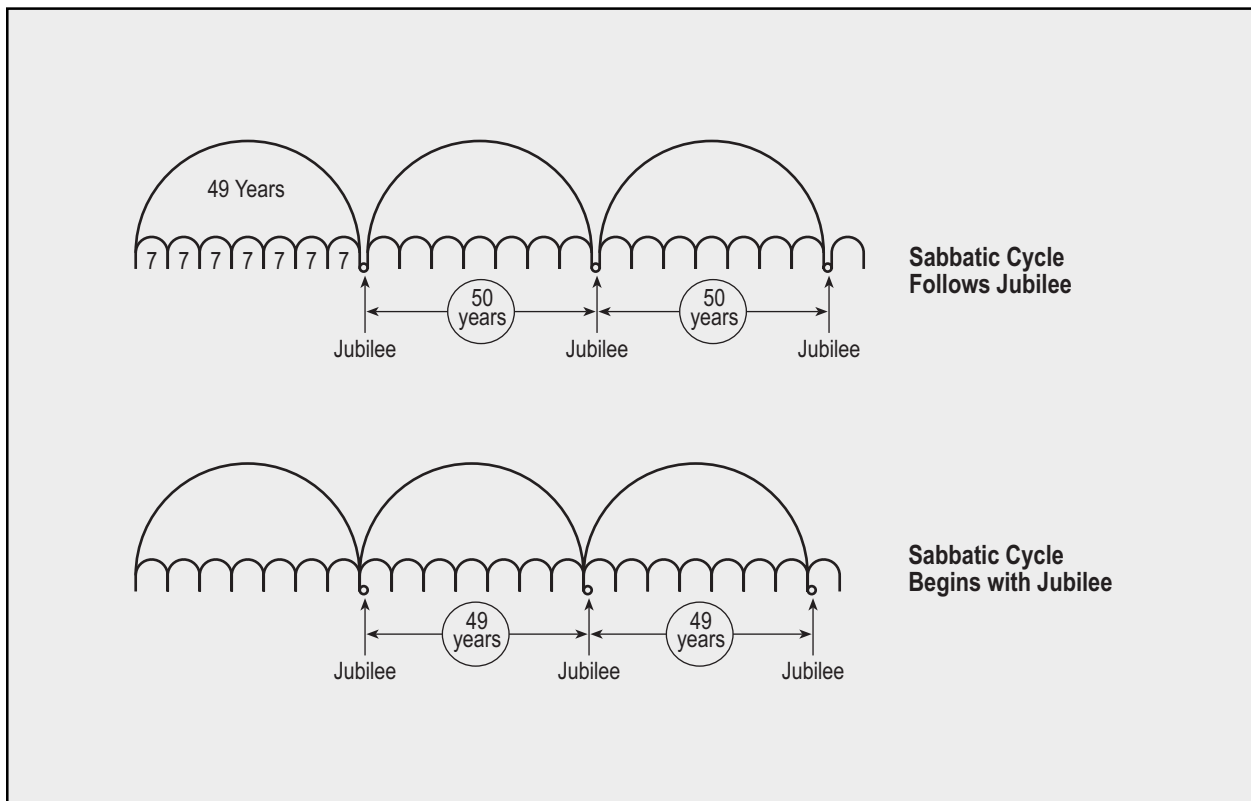
As to the date of this last jubilee, it was in the 14th year “after the city was smitten.” Jerusalem was plundered, and the temple burned, in the fifth month of the Jewish calendar. As we saw in Section Two, this was in the year 587 BC. Since the Jewish year



turned at the opening of month seven, the first year after the city was smitten began with Tishri of 587 BC. Thus the “fourteenth year after the city was smitten” began 13 years later, with Tishri of 574 BC.

HOW LONG BETWEEN JUBILEES?

However, before we can make use of this date we must determine how many years elapsed from one jubilee to the next. Jubilee was always year number 50. But which year became year “one” of the next cycle? Was it the year following the jubilee, or the year of jubilee itself? In the first case there would be 50 years from jubilee to jubilee, but in the second case there would be 49 years from jubilee to jubilee.



In the first case the sabbatic cycle of seven years is broken at each appearance of a jubilee (because the jubilee year intervenes between two cycles of seven years). In the second case, sabbatic years always fall on a seventh year from beginning to end, throughout the centuries (because the jubilee, year number 50, is also year number one of the next cycle.)

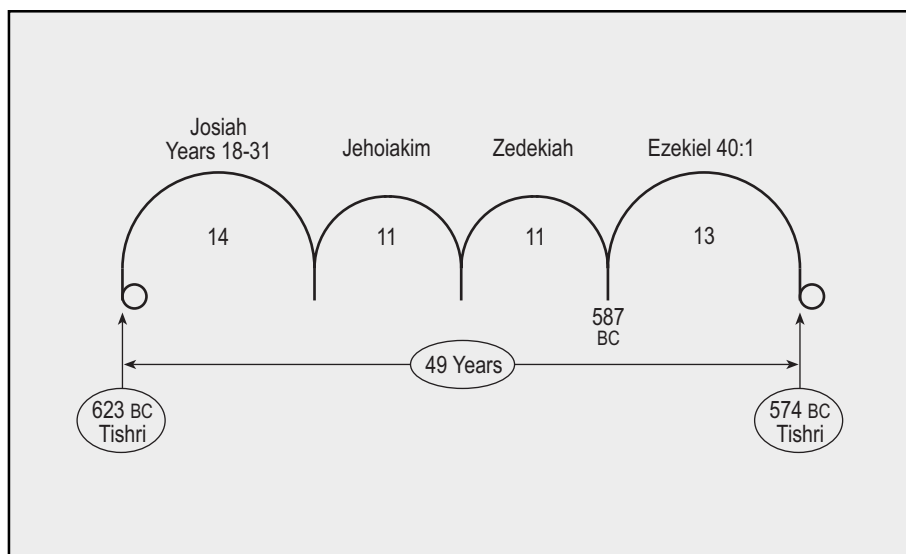
Both views have been entertained by Jewish scholars, and both are reflected in Jewish writings. “Both in the tannaitic literature and in the Apocrypha two different systems of calculation for the jubilee and sabbatical year are found. A baraita declares that the jubilee year is the 50th year, after the completion of seven sabbatical cycles, the following year being the first of the ensuing shemittah ... Judah, however, holds that ‘the jubilee year enters into the calculation of the heptad,’ i.e., the jubilee year is the ... first of the ensuing shemittah and jubilee” (*Encyclopedia Judaica*, 579).

JOSIAH'S YEAR 18

This question can be resolved by a comment in the Talmud about the 16th jubilee. “The sixteenth jubilee occurred in the eighteenth year of Josiah” (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, page 607). This is credible, for the search of records incident to a jubilee year is a credible precipitator of the repairs in the house of God, leading to the discovery of the book of the Law in that year (2 Chronicles 34:8, 18, 19).

Therefore, by dating Josiah’s 18th year we can date the 16th Jubilee. We can then compute the years between Jubilee 16 and 17 and determine whether from one Jubilee to the next is 49 years or 50 years.

We can date Josiah’s year 18 by counting back from Zedekiah. Zedekiah lost his throne in the late summer of 587 BC near the end of his 11th year. Counting back through 11 years of Zedekiah, 11 years of Jehoiakim, and the last 14 of the 31 years of Josiah yields the date 623 BC for the beginning of Josiah’s year 18. (587 BC + 11 + 11 + 14 = 623 BC.)²



Thus 623 BC would be the year beginning the 16th jubilee. As seen above, 574 BC was the year beginning the 17th jubilee. Between these two dates are exactly 49 years, from one jubilee to the next.³ Thus the second possibility (diagram page 16 bottom) is the correct one.

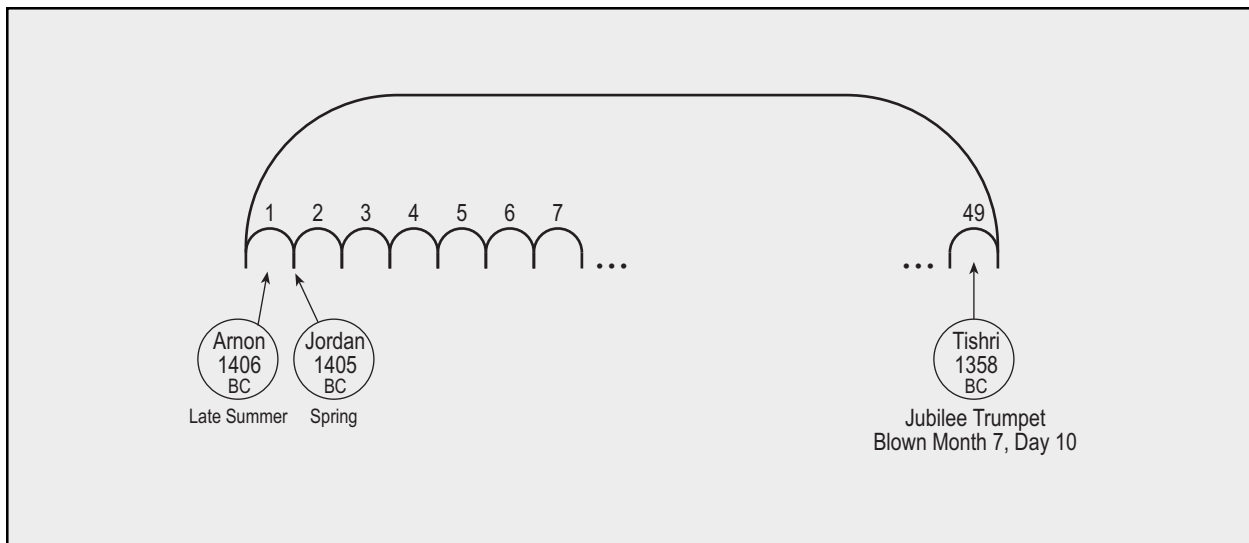
THE FIRST JUBILEE

We now need to determine the date of the first Jubilee. The Exodus was in the spring of 1445 BC (see the list closing Section Two), and the crossing of Jordan was 40 years later in the spring of 1405 BC. However, 2½ tribes had settled east of Jordan already, shortly after crossing the Arnon in late summer the previous year, 1406 BC. (See *Time and Prophecy*, Appendix J, “Years Counting from the Exodus.”)

At this time the Israelites counted years from spring to spring. How do we know? Numbers 33:38 says Aaron died in the “fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month.” Later, Deuteronomy 1:3 speaks of “the fortieth year, in the eleventh month.” Had these numbered years turned in the month Tishri, this would have been the 41st year.

These two conclusions — that Israel entered the land in late summer of 1406 BC, and that they (initially) numbered spring years — mean year one of their settlement ran from the spring of 1406 to the spring of 1405 BC. God had said “when you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field ... and gather in the fruit thereof ...” (Leviticus 25:2, 3). Presumably, therefore, the opening set of six years began to count this year, with the first settlements in the promised land.

If year one began in the spring of 1406 BC, then year 49 would have begun in the spring of year 1358 BC. When the seventh month arrived it would be time to announce the year of jubilee. “Thou shalt number ... forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement” (Leviticus 25:8, 9). Thus the first jubilee would begin in Tishri of 1358 BC. (See *Time and Prophecy*, Appendix J, subhead “Year One of the Sabbath Cycle,” for some comments about the transition from spring years to autumn years.)

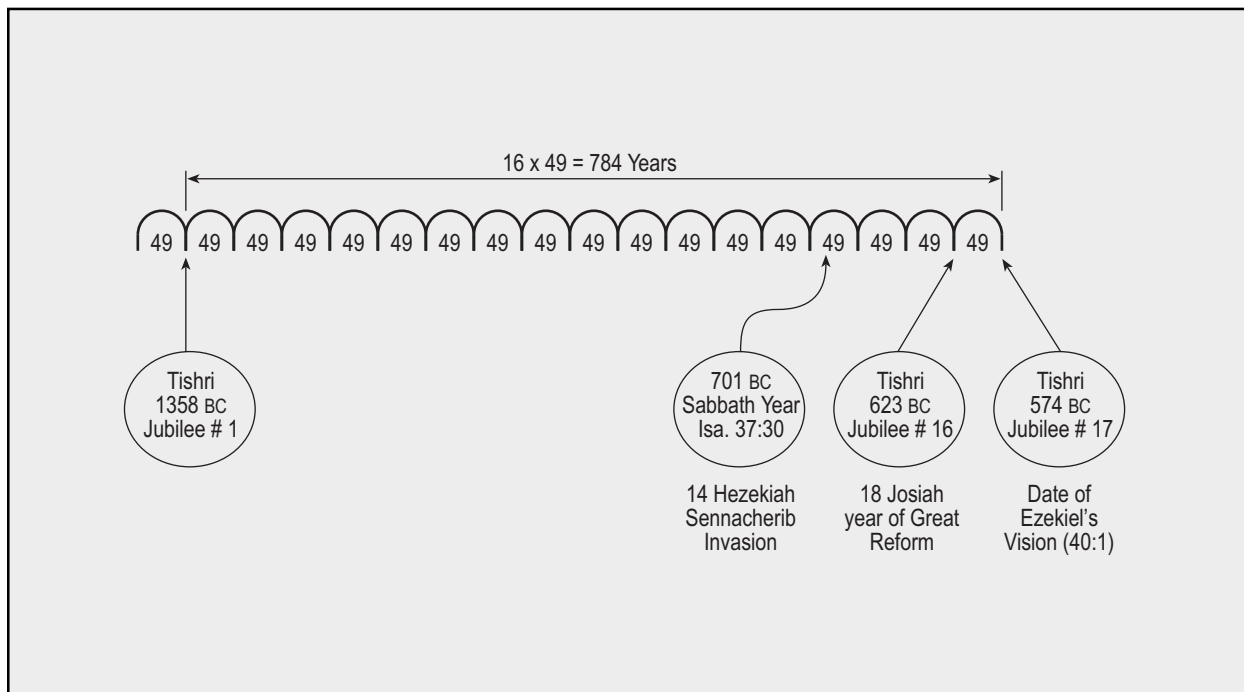


THE CRUCIAL TEST

If jubilee number one began with Tishri of 1358 BC, and jubilee number 17 began with Tishri of 574 BC, the interval between is 784 years, which is exactly 16 periods of 49 years each — a precise confirmation. Pause a moment to reflect on this finding, and absorb the strength of this point. From a specific jubilee marker in Ezekiel we can count back through the years to the first jubilee of Israel, and find it synchronizes with the dates of Bible chronology.⁴

The record in the Talmud that the jubilee of Ezekiel was the 17th in the series is information apparently preserved in the cultural memory of the people, who generation by generation counted out jubilees as our culture does centuries. They would have known it was jubilee 17, just as we know it is the 21st century, without stopping to figure out all the history past, simply by common knowledge preserved in real life. By this means we have a highly satisfactory “double-check” on our conclusions.

These jubilee pointers in Ezekiel have not been attended to by brethren, perhaps because they do not coincide with previous jubilee presentations. Nor did Edwin Thiele observe these jubilee pointers in his work on the chronology of the Hebrew Kings. Nor, as far as we know, did anyone see how these harmonized with chronology, until we were alerted to it by a thoughtful brother late in 1989 in private correspondence. This precious, hidden confirmation came at an appropriate time, through the providence of the Lord, quite to our amazement. The value of this deeply impressed us.



Please apprehend this point. Please do not pass without recognizing the compelling testimony this jubilee confirmation presents for the accuracy of the underlying chronology. Sometimes a discussion of facts and numbers can numb the mind just a bit, foreclosing the deep impression such precise evidence should afford.

We personally pondered this contribution of knowledge for days and weeks. Wonder passed over us time and again as we deliberated on this remarkable confirmation, and its so very deep implications. It was a veritable “seal” upon the whole testimony of Kings, Chronicles, Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, and their multiple, well attested links to the history of the world. In all of this we perceive the mind of the Lord ... and give thanks.

A SECONDARY CONFIRMATION

Isaiah 37:30 also synchronizes with this. If a Jubilee began in 574 BC, then a sabbath year began in the autumn of 575 BC and at each previous seven year interval, such as 701 BC, the 14th year of Hezekiah. Before autumn of that year Jerusalem was sieged by Sennacherib, King of Assyria (2 Kings 18:13). At that time Isaiah said “Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap” (Isaiah 37:30). The sieging army had ravaged Judah’s crops for the current year, and the next (beginning autumn of 701 BC) evidently was a sabbath year ... which fits (see diagram above).

(1) Some suppose the “30th year” of Ezekiel 1:1 means Ezekiel was 30 years old when he entered his prophetic office, as for example priests were able to officiate when they were 30 years old. However, if ages then were reckoned as ages are today, Ezekiel would have been 29 in his 30th year. (And if it referred to his age, one might expect the text to say “his” 30th year, rather than “the” 30th year.) Ezekiel does not specify his meaning, suggesting it was a cycle well known to his audience, which is consistent with it being the 30th year of the current jubilee cycle. It is also the 30th year since Josiah’s reforms, but this is a consequence of those reforms occurring in a jubilee year.

(2) This is a simplified explanation and chart. Actually the count following Josiah should be an accession year for Jehoahaz, 11 years for Jehoiakim, and 10 years for Zedekiah (he used a non-accession year reckoning, so his year one was the same as year 11 of Jehoiakim, leaving 10 full years more until the end of the kingdom). But the result is the same.

(3) This also accords with the way jubilees were counted in the apocryphal “Book of Jubilees,” which presumably reflected current opinion when it was composed, often thought to be the second century BC.

(4) In the interest of full disclosure, there is a theoretical way the Exodus could be dated one year earlier, *i.e.* 1446 BC, and thus the crossing of the River Arnon in the spring year 1407 to 1406 BC. In this case, beginning year one of the first jubilee cycle as the autumn year beginning Tishri of 1407 BC would also make the first jubilee begin in the autumn of 1358 BC, and therefore also synchronize with the 17th Jubilee beginning in 574 BC. At issue is a very technical point in the period of the kings: the overlap between Jehoshaphat and Asa may have been three years rather than four, if the early synchronisms of Israel and Judah did not cross-impute to each other the scribe’s own system as regards accession / non-accession reckoning. (See *Time and Prophecy*, page 46, and its endnote number 52 on page 131).

Section Four

The Jubilees

We have seen compelling evidence that 6000 years will end about the year 2043, and a compelling verification through the historical jubilee cycles. The reader may be interested to know how this accords with texts linking the return of Christ with the opening of a new “day,” if the seventh millennial “day” has not yet arrived. However, we will hold the pleasant resolution of these texts for a later section, while we first explore how this affects the types, prophecies and symmetries which depend on Old Testament chronology.

Because we have just discussed the jubilee cycles, we will start with them. What of their antitype? Do the cycles of jubilee, so prominent in the type, also point to a fulfillment? They do indeed. The last jubilee of Israel, noted in Ezekiel 7:13 and 40:1, was unkept as Ezekiel predicted because God had removed the Israelites from the land. Thus was the type interrupted, and on that very occasion God gave a grand vision of the Kingdom when Israel, and through them the world, would be restored to the perfection of Eden.

That vision, nine chapters in length, is commonly termed the Vision of Ezekiel’s Temple. It begins in Ezekiel 40:1, precisely dated to Tishri 10, 574 BC. The Kingdom which that vision symbolically describes will not begin for some years yet. However, the first work of the great restorer has begun — the preliminary, preparatory work necessary for its inauguration. The increase of technology so crucial to this enterprise has already broken upon the world. And, significantly, Israel is being restored, for at Israel will the kingdom be established and through them will its blessings flow to others (Micah 4:1-2, Isaiah 2:2-3, Jeremiah 31:31, Zechariah 14:8).

The first signs of Israel’s regathering appeared in 1878. The Berlin Congress of Nations assembled to resolve the Russo-Turkish War of the previous year, and among their agreements was a provision extending equal treatment of law to all the people of the Ottoman Empire. Notably, this included the Jewish people, who took advantage of the opportunity to found the first new settlement of modern times in the land of Israel — Petah Tikvah.¹

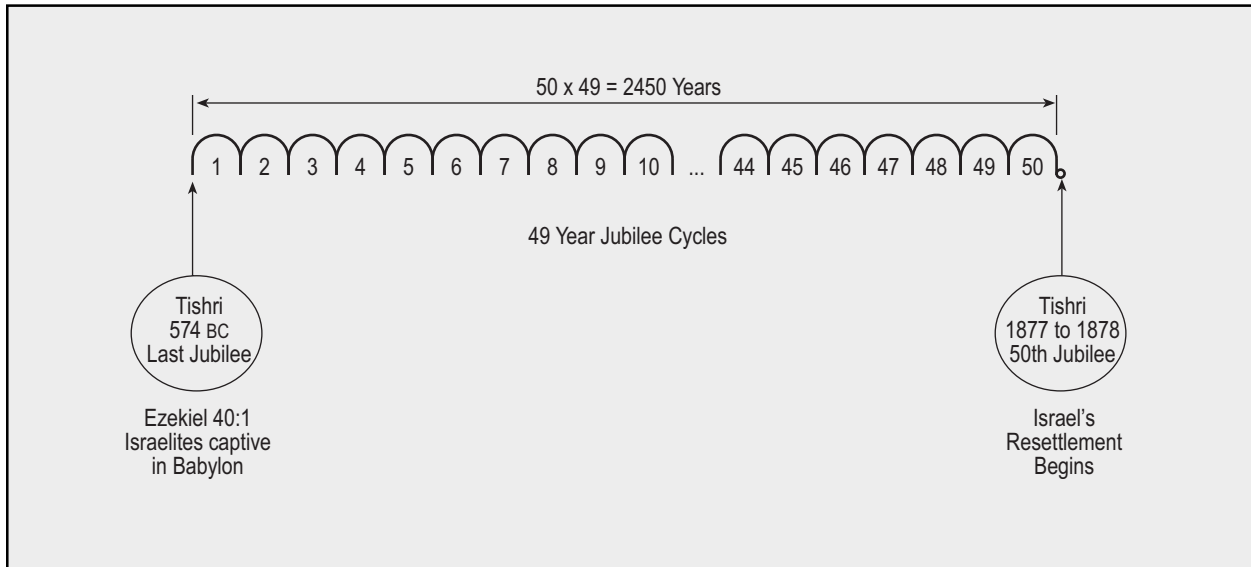
JUBILEE CYCLES POINT TO 1878

The Jubilee was all about the restoration of land, and the restoration of land to the Israelites began in 1878. Thus it is a very engaging observation that 50 jubilee cycles, from the breaking of the type in 574 BC, lead to 1878.

But why should 50 cycles, in particular, point to this restoration? This common approach is justified as a reasonable extension of the pattern of sabbatic days and years in the Jewish system, of which the jubilee was the apex. For Pentecost we count 50 days, for jubilee we count 50 years, so for the antitype we count 50 jubilees. The results of this credible extension of the pattern are highly productive.

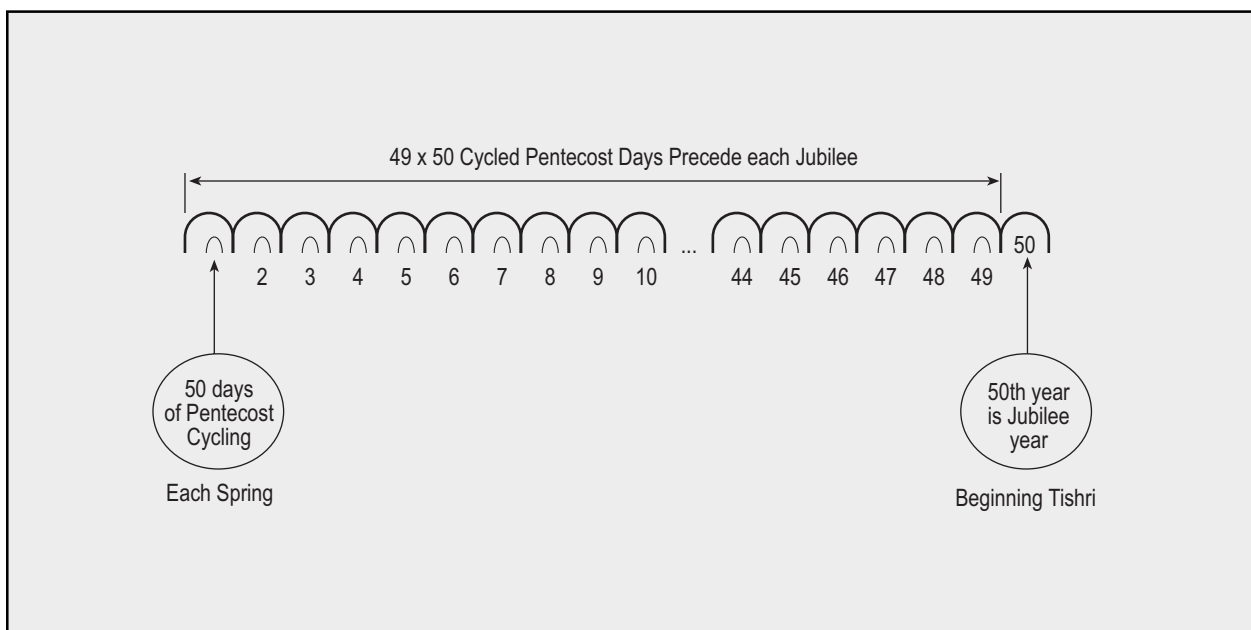
Here are the specific numbers. As the jubilees were spaced 49 years from one to the next, 50 jubilee cycles would take $50 \times 49 = 2450$ years, followed by the 50th jubilee, year number 2451. The year the

type ceased, the year Ezekiel 7:13 points forward to, the year marked explicitly by Ezekiel 40:1, was 574 BC. Forward 2450 years from that date is 1877 AD (remember to adjust by one), and the ensuing year 50 ran from the autumn of 1877 to the autumn of 1878. During that very year the Berlin Congress met and Petah Tikvah was settled.



ANOTHER APPROACH

There is a second, compatible approach which yields the same results and shows how this cycle of 2450 years accords with the type. Within each of the 49 years leading to a jubilee, in the spring of the year, was a counting of 50 days to and including Pentecost. Therefore, preceding and introducing each jubilee were 49 cycles of 50 days each — 2450 days total. This nicely corresponds to the 2450 years introducing the fulfillment of the jubilees beginning in 1878.



SUMMARY

The jubilees are sometimes considered the most involved part of time prophecy. In fact, as the reader can see, they are very straight forward. Merely following the example of the type, 50 days bring us to Pentecost, 50 years to the jubilee, 50 jubilees to the fulfillment. It is the simplest, most direct, most precise approach to the jubilees we have ever seen. From 574 BC we can trace the jubilees backward to the source, or forward to the antitype. It is lovely, harmonious, clear.²

(1) “The state did not come into existence on that great day of May 14, 1948, nor was it the 650,000 Jews who lived in the country on that day who established it. Pioneering activities of three generations preceded the Declaration of independence, beginning in 1878 when the first Hebrew settlement in the country, Petah Tikvah, was founded” (David Ben Gurion, first Prime Minister of Israel, 1958. See *The Herald of Christ's Kingdom*, June 1958, “Israel Marks Tenth Anniversary,” page 95.)

(2) This reckoning is free of several anomalies in the usual approach. For example, the usual calculations (1) do not compute correctly across the BC / AD divide, (2) assume the jubilees were separated by 50 years rather than 49, (3) assume the years of desolation apply only to unkept *jubilees*, whereas 2 Chronicles 36:21 includes all the *sabbatic* years, (4) assume 70 years of desolation whereas there were only 49 — one full sabbatic cycle, a fitting period to “atone” for all the poorly kept sabbaths and jubilees during Israel’s tenure (see Appendix A).

Section Five

Seven Times

We assume the reader is familiar with the basic calculation of this period. The seven times are seven periods of 360 years each, 2520 years total, during which Israel was subordinate to Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome and its offshoots.

This view originates from Daniel chapter four. There seven “times” passed over Nebuchadnezzar in his beastly state, representing seven prophetic “times” beastly gentile empires would rule Israel. The 3½ “times” of Daniel 7:25 are 1260 years, so seven “times” are twice as long, namely 2520 years. The same period is reflected in Leviticus 26, where seven times, or strokes, or episodes, are the punishment promised for national infidelity to the Law.¹

CALCULATING PRECISELY

If these times ended in 1914, then they necessarily began in the year 607 BC. ($2520 - 607 + 1 = 1914$, remembering to adjust one year for crossing the BC / AD divide.) However, this is one year different than the familiar date 606 BC so often cited as beginning the Gentile Times. (606 BC is calculated by adding 70 years to 536 BC, the supposed first year of Cyrus.)

Brethren who recognize that 606 BC does not take us to 1914 tend to change 606 BC into 607 BC (and 536 BC into 537 BC), and assume this was Bro. Russell’s view right along. This is a mistake. When Bro. Russell said 606 BC, he meant 606 BC. “Zedekiah’s captivity took place in October, 605¼ years before AD 1” (R5142).² When he said 536 BC he meant 536 BC. “The seventy years of Jewish captivity ended October, 536 BC” (R5141). How, then, did Bro. Russell handle the one year disparity?

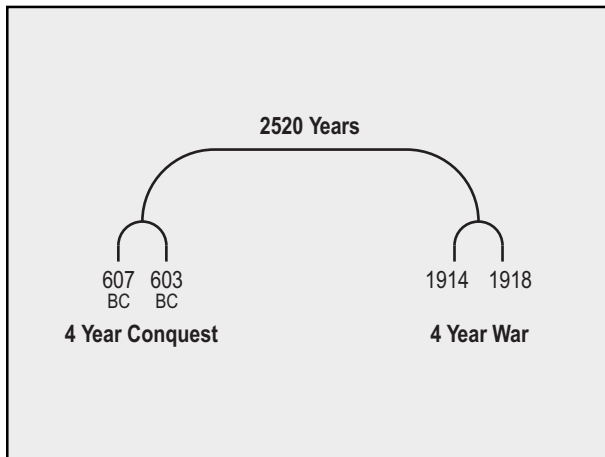
In the article “The Ending of the Gentile Times,” written late in 1912, Bro. Russell acknowledged this concern. “The matter seemed less important thirty or forty years ago than it does today.” He then correctly reasoned that if there is no zero year (and there isn’t), then “the 2520 years would reach to ... October, 1915” (R5141). This was a different ending point than usual, but it was appealing because it paralleled the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem in 70 AD, 1845 years earlier. (He refers to this parallel on R5142, top paragraph, also on B219, C132.)

But then 1914 came, and the war began. What would anyone think? Apparently the Gentile Times did end in 1914, and two years later this conclusion was expressed in R5950. “The prophetic period known as the Times of the Gentiles ended chronologically in October, 1914.” But what about the calculations being one year off? The matter was never resolved.³

THE ACTUAL DATES

But the matter is easily resolved using the actual historical dates for Nebuchadnezzar. In the year 607 BC Nebuchadnezzar, as crown prince, for the first time in his career, crossed the Euphrates River which was the northern border of the promised land. On this occasion he took the city of Kimuhu west of the Euphrates. Next year the Babylonians took three more cities across the Euphrates. Within four years

from the first incursion the Babylonian conquests had brought all of the holy land under their control (2 Kings 24:7, Jeremiah 46:2, Daniel 1:1).



This exactly parallels the four years from 1914 to 1918, the dates of World War I. 1914 was only the beginning of the war which diminished the European “Great Powers,” and liberated Palestine from the Ottoman Empire. The Great War ended in an armistice in 1918. The parallel date, 2520 years earlier, was 603 BC, the 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar. In that very year, after four years of campaigning, he was declared by Daniel the “head of gold,” his empire already established (Daniel 2:1, 38).⁴ The four years from 607 BC to 603 BC perfectly parallel the four years from 1914 to 1918, 2520 years later.

SEVEN YEAR PARALLEL

But the parallel is even greater than this. Babylon’s 70 years began with the fall of Assyria in 610 BC. Thus the process of consolidating their hold over Assyria, combined with conquering southward through Israel to the border of Egypt, consumed seven years, until 603 BC when Nebuchadnezzar was declared to be the “head of gold.”⁵

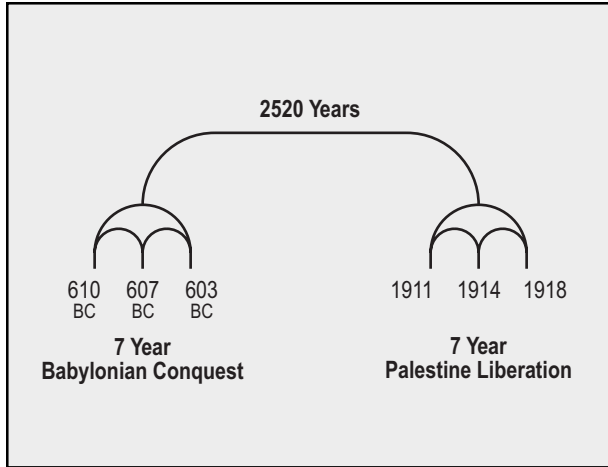
The parallel period 2520 years later was 1911 to 1918. Winston Churchill composed a four volume history of the war, recently republished in two volumes titled *The World Crisis, 1911-1918*. Chapter three is devoted to the significance of the year 1911, the year of the Agadir Crisis, which brought Germany and France almost into open conflict.

“All the alarm bells throughout Europe began immediately to quiver” (page 29). “Apprehension lay heavy on the minds of all ... the War Office hummed ... every preparation by forethought was made and every detail was worked out ... I could not think of anything else but the peril of war” (page 46). The crisis was at last resolved peaceably, but from that time the nations began preparations for the coming debacle. Churchill details several examples of the significance of that year as a turning point.⁶

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

1911 was also a milestone year in the demise of the Ottoman Empire, in whose grips the holy land had lain for 400 years. If Israel was to regain their national homeland, that empire would have to fall, and the seven years from 1911 to 1918 clearly define the seven years of its collapse. In 1911 Italy attacked their north African holdings. In 1912 Greece successfully engaged them in war. In 1913 Turkey ceded to the Great Powers her European territories. In 1914, to the surprise of England, Turkey entered the war on the side of Germany. For this reason England sent a force to the middle east which wrested the holy land away from Turkey. By 1918 the Ottoman Empire had turned to dust. History marks 1918 as the end of an era for Turkey.

Meanwhile England had issued the Balfour declaration in November of 1917, just prior to General Allenby’s peaceful conquest of Jerusalem later that month. “Her majesty’s government views with



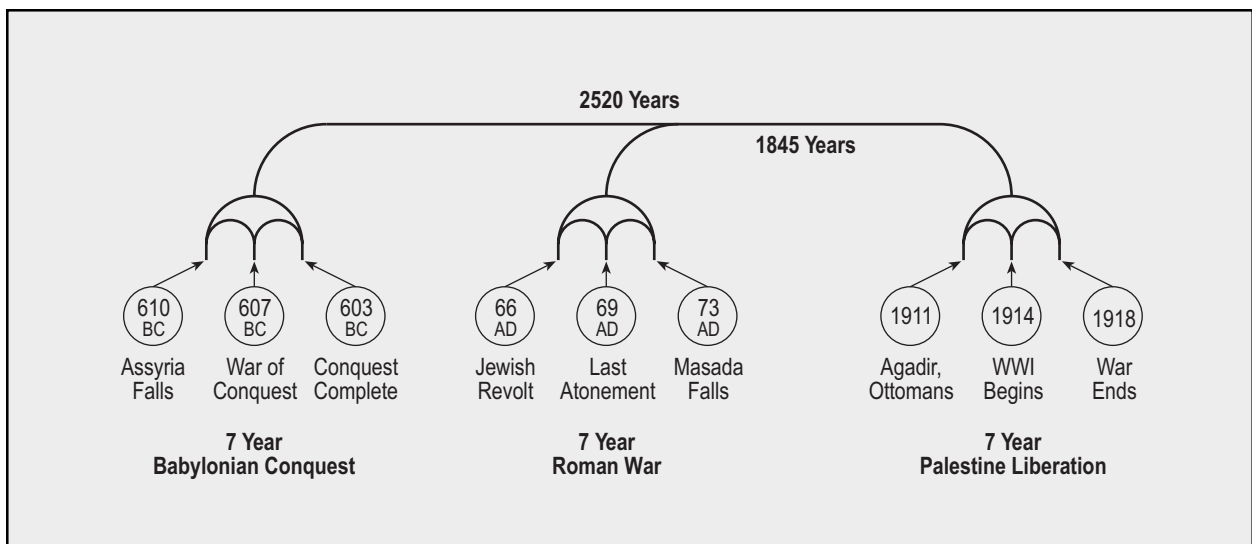
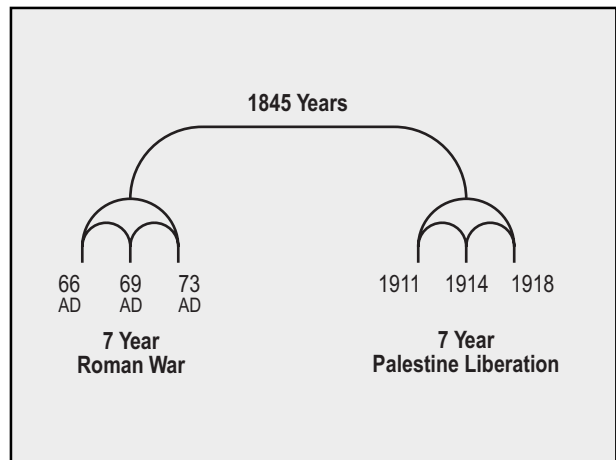
favor the establishment of Palestine as a national homeland for the Jewish people.” As a result of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, England could now effect the new policy. The seven times of Israel’s national punishment had ended. The bands “of iron and brass” were broken, and the bud of Jewish nationalist sentiments began to grow (Daniel 4:15, Isaiah 45:2, Psalms 107: 10-16).

HARVEST PARALLELS

This seven year parallel is all the more striking when we realize the same period appeared in the

Roman Wars against Judea, from 66 - 73 AD. The date 70 AD is famous for the burning of the Temple by Titus, but this was only one episode in a campaign which absorbed seven years. The initial Jewish Revolt broke out in 66 AD, and by fits and starts continued until the fall of Masada in 73 AD. The parallel dates, 1845 years later, are 1911 to 1918 — exactly the same dates as those 2520 years after the seven year Babylonian conquest.

The date 1914 is also foreshadowed in the 1845 year parallels. The corresponding date would be 69 AD, and in the autumn of that year, for the last time, the Jewish Atonement Day sacrifices were offered in the Temple. That completed a period of probation and opportunity (for Israel) of 40 years from the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. 1914 completed a period of probation and opportunity (for Christendom) of 40 years following Jesus’ second advent.



EXTENDED 2520-YEAR PARALLELS

But there is more even than this. There are additional harmonies not previously visible, nor could they be, until the years passed so they could be observed in retrospect. But now we can see them, and they are striking — a reward and encouragement for attending these prophecies with faith and interest. The Lord supplied a string of episodes at the beginning of Israel's Seven Times which parallel a string of episodes at the end of Israel's Seven Times, restoring their national hopes.

At the close of World War I the Jewish people had yet much to endure before taking their place as an equal among other nations. The largest factor precipitating the State of Israel was Hitler's holocaust, and there were several significant steps in the rise of this enemy. Hitler laid out his program in *Mein Kampf*, published in 1924. The Nazi party came to power in a three-year political coup. In the summer elections of 1932 the Nazi party became the largest single party of Parliament. In 1933 Hitler was elected Chancellor. In 1934, when President Von Hindenberg died, Hitler secured that post as well, and became virtual dictator of the former republic.

In 1939 World War II began with the German invasion of Poland, and immediately also began the Holocaust. As the population centers were taken, the Jewish inhabitants were marched out and shot. In November 1947, in the aftermath of that atrocity, the United Nations allowed Israel independent statehood, effective the following spring. In 1960 they were granted an equal standing among other developed nations of the world in the United Nations.⁷ Here, then, are the prominent dates in the reestablishment of the State of Israel from World War I forward.

1911	Preparations for impending war / Ottoman Empire begins decline
1914	World War I begins
1918	End of the war, Palestine liberated
1924	Publication of <i>Mein Kampf</i>
1932	Nazi party takes greatest share of seats in government
1933	Hitler becomes Chancellor
1934	Hitler becomes President
1939	Holocaust begins
1947	Israel's statehood declared, effective the following spring
1960	Israel granted an equal standing among developed nations

This sequence of episodes is matched, date for date, by a sequence of episodes in the decline and eventual dissipation of the Judean state in the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

610	Babylon defeats last Assyrian Stronghold, Harran
607	Conquest across the Euphrates begins
603	Nebuchadnezzar declared to be the "head of gold"
597	Jerusalem falls a second time to Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiachin taken captive
589	Siege of Zedekiah's Jerusalem begins
588	2nd year of siege
587	Jerusalem falls, end of Zedekiah's Judean kingdom
582	Final deportation of captives (Jeremiah 52:30)
574	Ezekiel's vision of restored Israel at their last Jubilee
561	Jehoiachin honored among other national leaders (Jeremiah 52:31-33)

We have a complete pattern of events in the fall of ancient Israel which parallels a complete pattern of events in the establishment of modern Israel 2520 years later. The central and venerated core of the 2520 years, 607 BC to 1914, is thus more vibrantly attested than formerly. Here is a side by side comparison.

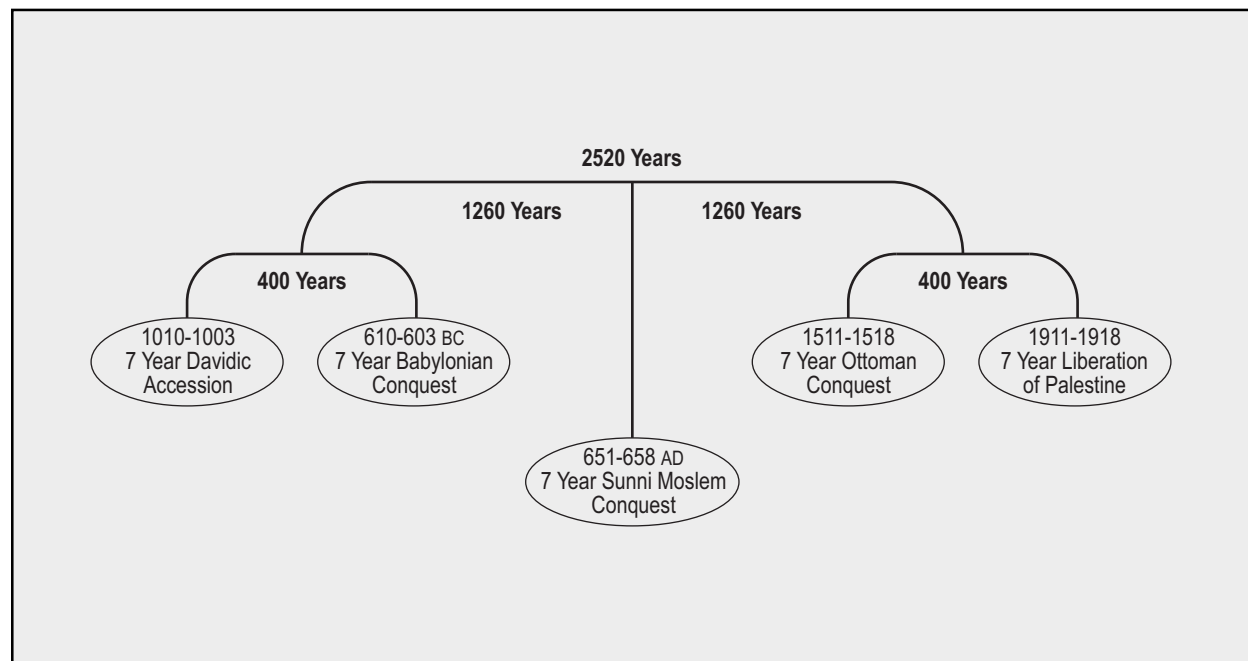
610-603	Babylonian Conquest	1911-1918	World Crisis, fall of Ottomans
597	Jehoiachin's captivity	1924	Mein Kampf
589-587	3 year siege of Zedekiah	1932-1934	3 year rise of Hitler
582	Last Deportation	1939	Holocaust Begins
574-573	Last Jubilee, Restoration Vision	1947-1948	Reestablishment of State
561	Elevation of Jehoiachin	1960	Elevation of Israel

400 YEAR KINGDOM / OPPRESSION

But even this is not the whole picture. The Ottoman Empire controlled the holy land for 400 years before they lost it through their collapse in the seven years from 1911 to 1918. They had acquired it 400 years earlier through Selim's rise to the Sultancy and subsequent conquests, 1511 to 1518.⁸ (Genesis 15:13 may have some meaning here.)

Only while preparing this study did we observe that the Davidic Monarchy existed for the same length of time, 400 years, before it was subdued during Babylon's rise to power. David came to power in a seven year span (1010 BC - 1003 BC, 2 Samuel 5:5). Babylon came to power also in a seven year span (610 BC - 603 BC) — exactly 400 years later.

Already this forms an interesting parallel. The Davidic monarchy (until Babylon), and the Ottoman rule (until World War I), both lasted 400 years. Now observe that these two 400 year periods are precisely 2520 apart. On the left are the 400 years of David's Kingdom until the rise of Babylon. On the right are the 400 years of oppression, broken in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire — 2520 years later.



Note further that the 2520 years are comprised of two blocks of 1260 years, the last of which defines the 1260 years of Sunni Islamic control over the land of Israel. The Sunni Moslem conquest of the middle east was, interestingly, also a seven year episode, from 651 to 658 AD.⁹ Thus, just as Spiritual Israel was dominated by a false religious system for 1260 years (539 to 1799), Natural Israel also was dominated by a false religious system for 1260 years.¹⁰

These symmetries speak of divine design. Let the reader reflect thoughtfully on them, and appreciate the sense of this which springs as a natural consequence of accepted history. These are treasured glimpses into a divine arrangement which presumably is grander than we yet see fully.

SUMMARY

By using the correct dates, we can now remove the lingering imprecision from the calculation of Israel's Seven Times of national punishment. Now they are clean and precise. The campaign of conquest which began them commenced in 607 BC, and the war which ended them commenced in 1914 AD — 2520 years later. The parallel extends to seven years in each case, and incorporates the Roman War from 66 to 73 as well.

In addition, the 2520 years are augmented with a full pattern of corresponding dates and events at the opening and closing. Every major episode in the decline of the Judean Kingdom has a corresponding episode 2520 years later in Israel's national restoration. Lastly, there is a symmetrical balance of 400 years of the Davidic Kingdom at the beginning with 400 years of oppression by the Ottoman Empire at the close.

These are encouraging results, deeper, richer, fuller, than before. The symmetry and order of these features are reasonable evidence that the underlying chronology, built upon scriptural records and anchored to world history, is sound.¹¹

(1) The word “times” is not represented in the Hebrew text of Leviticus 26, being implied by the context. Thus we do not argue that the specific word “times” is the justification for a period of 360 years here. But this period of punishment evidently coincides with the “times” of Daniel 4. Note the connections — in Daniel 4 the tree is restrained from growth by bands of iron and brass. In Leviticus 26:19 “I will make your heavens as iron, and your earth as brass” — the same two symbols. The most intense persecution of Israel came under the later phases of the Grecian empire (brass) and the Roman empire (iron), thus it is fitting that these two elements be mentioned specifically.

The reference to “seven times” occurs in both passages exactly the same number of times, namely four, which further connects the two accounts. Perhaps the four-fold statement intimates that four empires would rule Israel — Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Perhaps it also suggests there are four possible applications —

(1) Seven times upon Nebuchadnezzar — whether years, months or seasons is not specified. (2) Seven decades for Babylon, which subjected Israel. (3) Seven prophetic

times of 360 years each = 2520 years (the conventional approach). (4) Seven millenniums which pass over mankind before their lost dominion is restored.

(2) The Reprints contain a typographical error here. R5142 says “605 3/4 years before AD 1” — which would be the spring of 606 BC — but the original Towers say “605 1/4 years before AD 1” — which means October, 606 BC. The Harvest Truth Database has it correctly.

(3) One could suppose a scenario to make October 537 BC the date of Israel's resettlement (and 607 BC to begin the Gentile Times). This could be done by using the correct date for the first year of Cyrus — not 536 BC, but 538 BC — and assuming the decree came at the end of Babylon's spring year, just before the spring of 537 BC. Thus Ezra 3:1 would mean the autumn of 537 BC.

But this spawns the difficulty that other dates familiar to the brethren, based on 536 BC, would be altered by one year. For example, the date of Jacob's death would shift from 1813 BC to 1814 BC, making the Jewish Double imprecise. So the state of affairs has been for many decades ... unresolved.

(4) This testimony is emphatic that the image of Gentile Power began its authority, which was to last 2520 years, already by the 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar. It is therefore clear that the 2520 years did not wait until the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar, when Zedekiah lost his throne. Had the last Judean kings submitted themselves to the Babylonian overlordship, their kingdom could have continued (Jeremiah 27:11, 12).

(5) Here are the activities of the Babylonians in this period.

610 — The Babylonian army “marched about victoriously in Assyria” and then took Harran.

609 — The Assyrians counter attacked, but failed to retake Harran from the Babylonians.

608 — Nabopolassar and his army campaigned up the Tigris in old Assyrian territory.

607 — Nebuchadnezzar conquered northward; later crossed the Euphrates and took Kimuhu.

606 — Egypt sieged Kimuhu; Nabopolassar took three cities west of the Euphrates.

605 — Nebu. wins at Carchemish, pursues Egyptians, returns for throne, returns to Palestine.

604 — Victorious march in “Hattu” (Palestine), and all its kings yield him their tribute.

603 — Daniel, captive in Babylon, interprets Nebuchadnezzar to be the head of gold.

(6) Agadir was the name of a harbor on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, in which country France had obtained considerable influence. “On the morning of July 1 ... it was announced that His Imperial Majesty the German Emperor had sent his gunboat *Panther* to Agadir” (page 29). It was a time of confrontation between the major disputants of the impending war.

(7) We have twice read this claim, though we have been unsuccessful in documenting it. The story is that during a discussion at the United Nations regarding the detention and trial of Adolph Eichmann, Golda Meir challenged their authority to dictate to Israel, whom they did not recognize as an equal among them. In response, one of the delegations moved, and it was quickly passed, to so acknowledge Israel. (Whereupon Golda Meir asserted that if they were equally sovereign, they had a right to conduct themselves as they saw best.) But, as we say, we have not been able to confirm this. If it cannot be, it would mitigate the last parallel listed on page 28.

(8) In the summer of 1511 Prince Selim, son of Sultan Bayezid II, was in open rebellion to take the throne. The next year Selim became strong enough to force his father’s abdication, and Bayezid died a few days later, evidently poisoned on command of his son. Selim secured the empire, killing his brothers and their sons, and embarked on a campaign of conquest. In 1514 he defeated the Persian King Ismail, in 1516 he took Damascus, Beirut, Gaza and Jerusalem, in 1517 he defeated the Mameluk Sultan Tuman outside Cairo, and he took Algiers in 1518. “The Ottoman Empire now included all of Mesopotamia, Ar-

menia, lands to the Caspian Sea, Syria, Palestine and Egypt.” (*The 6th to 18th Centuries*, Chapter 17, Frank E. Smitha, www.fsmitha.com, 1998).

(9) There are two main branches of Islam, the Shiite and Sunni, which diverged over a question of leadership after the death of Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed. “While the great body of Islam, the Sunnites, accepted the succession of the first four Caliphs and the laws and traditions (or *sunni*) of the early period, a minority of sectarians (*shiites*) hold that ever since the murder of Ali, the line of the Caliphate has been in the hands of usurpers” (*The Fires of Faith*, page 54). In 651 the Sunni Moslems conquered Persia, and in 658 they retook Egypt, completing their takeover of the middle east. (See *Time and Prophecy*, pages 62-63, and its footnote 68 on page 134, for details.)

(10) Mohammed is an Arabic word meaning “the predicted Messiah” (Mc&S, “Mohammed,” page 403), which means he usurped the position of Christ, just as Papacy did.

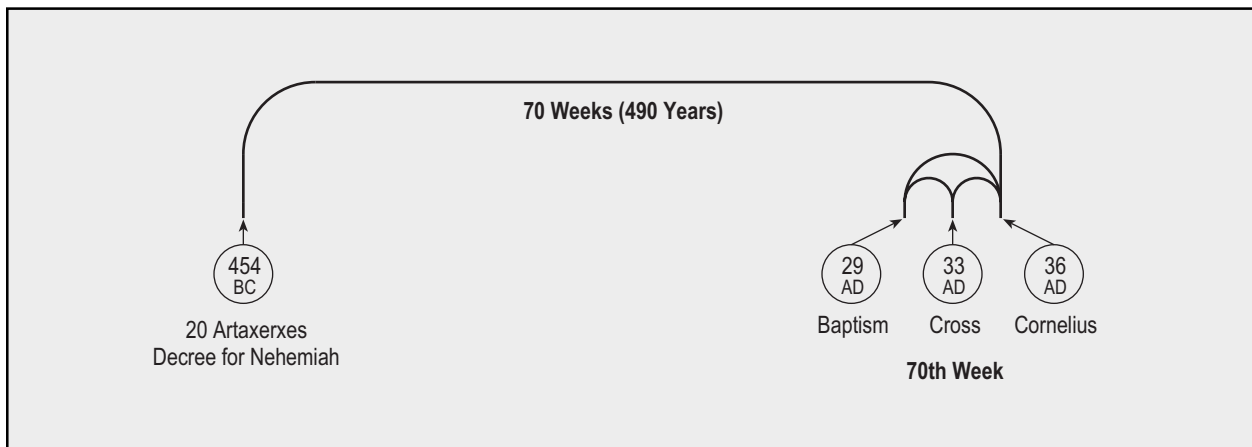
(11) Notice the prominence of the seven year periods — five of them in the diagram at the bottom of page 29, six if we add the seven years of the Roman Wars on the previous one. There may be two reasons for this. (1) It is at least conceptually consistent that Israel’s “seven times” open and close in a period of “seven years.” (2) As we will see in the next Section, the 70th week of Daniel 9, so prominent in that prophecy, stands in parallel to both the Roman Wars of 66-73 and the World Crisis of 1911-1918.

Section Six

Seventy Weeks

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27 begin with “the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem,” and reach to “Messiah the Prince,” including his death on the cross making “reconciliation for iniquity.” All agree that Jesus became Messiah at his baptism in the autumn of 29 AD, and died in the spring of 33 AD,¹ but all do not agree how these dates are identified by the prophecy.

The popular view is that the decree beginning the 70 weeks is that issued by the Persian King Artaxerxes in his 20th year, allowing Nehemiah to return and rebuild Jerusalem in the year 454 BC. According to this view Jesus was baptized at the beginning of week 70, he died in the middle of that week, and the remaining 3½ years continued favor to individual Israelites until Cornelius, a gentile, was baptized at the end of that week. This view is presented in Volume 2, chapter 3, and diagrammed below.



However, the thoughtful reader will perceive a problem with this view. The dates do not compute correctly, because no adjustment was made for computing across the BC / AD divide. Actually 69 weeks from 454 BC end in 30 AD, the middle of the week would be 34 AD, and the end of the week would be 37 AD — which does not fit. This problem is fatal to the view.

This matter is worth reflecting on. There is no question about the issue — the dates do not work. The reader may wonder how such a straightforward issue could circulate so long among brethren without being perceived, noticed, commented upon ... corrected. Such lapses are not unusual respecting religious subjects, for the gravity of the subjects notwithstanding, good people tend to trust the respectable presentations of other good people, and fail to duly examine the particulars of their faith.

Errors of addition across the BC / AD divide came to our attention in our teenage years, when we took up a study of Volume 2. As we consulted one after another adult brother — mostly elders — we found precious few familiar with the problem. The situation has improved a little in the decades intervening. However, even today we hear and read claims about the accuracy and precision of the customary views on chronology which betray a profound insensibility to this concern ... even when advised of it.

We hope the reader will take this point to notice, and observe the value of precise thinking on these issues, and on other elements of faith. This should not lead one to a captious or critical disposition. It should, instead, lead one to a thoughtful, respectful, reverent examination in all their studies of the Lord's Word, and thus venerate the apostolic advice to "prove all things, hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). This is a foundation principle of the Harvest Truth Movement, and everywhere supported by the Harvest Messenger. "The true saints ... will lovingly and critically examine every teaching and every teacher" (R3427). Carelessness in such principles is not a virtue. Nor will it prove advantageous.

HISTORICAL PROBLEM

A second problem with the common view is that 454 BC is not the date history supplies for Nehemiah's return in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1 and context). The proper date, as current histories show, was nine years later, namely 445 BC.

However, unlike the problem above, this was not a simple oversight. It was an acknowledged difference with prevailing history. "The date of Nehemiah's commission is ordinarily stated to be B.C. 445. But Dr. Hale's work on chronology (pages 449 and 531) and Dr. Priestley's treatise on the 'Harmony of the Evangelists' (pages 24-38) show this common view to be nine years short, which would give B.C. 454 as the true date of Nehemiah's commission" (B67).

An examination of Dr. Hale's work, however, shows that his date is but one year different than current histories, rather than nine years.² Dr. Priestley does explain a nine-year difference theory, but in the following chapter explains why he preferred a slightly different view.³ Therefore neither source is good support for the nine-year variance — which in any case does not compute correctly.⁴ Is it not, therefore, quite evident that holding the date 454 BC is counter-productive to the cause of truth?

PROPOSED SOLUTION

It is clear that Bros. John and Morton Edgar recognized problems with this date. Certainly they realized it does not compute correctly, and probably they realized by checking the sources that neither Hales nor Priestley was good support for it.

Therefore they abandoned that solution, and found another. They used a ten year variance instead of a nine year variance, which placed Nehemiah's commission in 455 BC rather than 454 BC. This view is explained at length in Section 59 of *Great Pyramid Passages*, Volume 2 (page 295 in the large version, 315 in the small version).⁵ It is based on the writings of the German theologian E. W. Hengstenberg, *Christology of the Old Testament*.

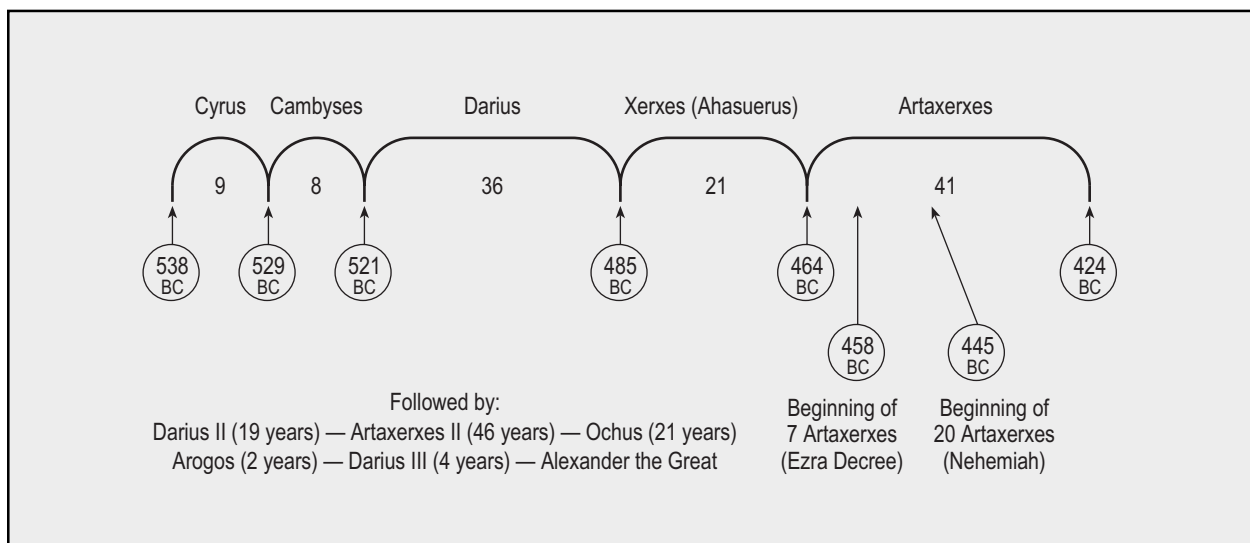
Hengstenberg's solution was that Ptolemy's Canon mistook the number 11 for the number 21 in recording the reign of Xerxes, the father of Artaxerxes. Assuming, as all do, that year one of Xerxes began in the spring of 485 BC, such an error would push the first year of Artaxerxes forward artificially, from 474 BC to 464 BC. Correcting the error would begin his first year in 474 BC, and his 20th year, 19 years later, in 455 BC. By this means the arithmetic works — 70 weeks of years from 455 BC is indeed 36 AD.

However, this solution is no longer possible.⁶ When Hengstenberg published this view in the 1830s, the actual records from the ancient near east had not yet been excavated. Now they have been. There is no longer any question about how long Xerxes reigned — he reigned 21 years. Period. Our confidence

in this is not dogmatism, it merely reflects the testimony of the actual, first hand records of the Persian Empire, now excavated and published.⁷ Remember that the only evidence we have for dating the reign of Artaxerxes is historical evidence, and it is decisive.

It was customary in ancient times to date financial transactions by the year of the reigning king of the empire, and by examining the dates posted on clay tablets from that era it is possible to reconstruct the reign lengths of these kings. In particular, there are extant records dating from years 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20 and 21 of Xerxes, which establish that his reign was not limited to 11 years as Hengstenberg theorized. Had these tablets been available in the early 1800s, Hengstenberg's theory would not have seen the light of day. Beyond this there is explicit scriptural testimony in Esther 3:7 that Ahasuerus (the same person as Xerxes) reigned at least to the end of his 12th year, and evidently into a 13th year (Esther 3:13). Beyond this are eclipse records registered for years 3 and 21 of Xerxes which identify those years as 483 BC and 465 BC respectively.^{8, 9}

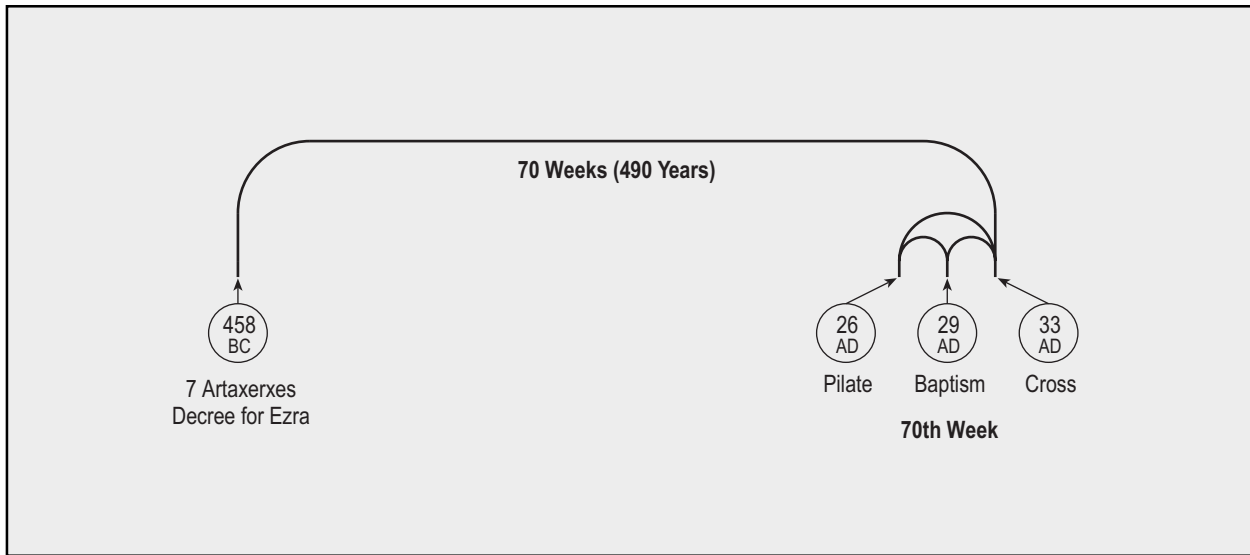
All of this evidence has previously been published in *Time and Prophecy*, pages 23, 36 and associated footnotes, complete with sources which anyone can check and recheck. We would be delighted to provide any interested party any explanations or assistance or copies or references one might desire to establish these issues.¹⁰ Immediately below is a diagram of the Persian Kings.¹¹



THE EZRA DECREE

These facts, so clearly attested, tell us Nehemiah's commission in year 20 of Artaxerxes, 445 BC, cannot be the decree intended in Daniel 9:25. Therefore we turn to another option. Isaac Newton, William Miller, and many others, believed the decree beginning the 70 weeks was the one allowing Ezra's return in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, which was 458 BC.

The reader will find this decree recorded at length in Ezra 7:11-26, and will at once be impressed how formally this decree is registered, as though by this means the holy Spirit calls attention to it as pivotal to the prophecy. Daniel 9:25 says the decree was to "restore and to build Jerusalem," and Ezra proceeded to do both. He restored the temple built 57 years earlier (Ezra 6:15, 7:8) and laid foundations for the walls of Jerusalem. As his opponents observed, they were "building the ... city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations" (Ezra 4:11, 12).¹²



Thirteen years later Nehemiah would complete this work which was meanwhile interrupted.¹³ Just as Cyrus years earlier issued a decree for the rebuilding of the Temple, but it was interrupted until resumed in the 2nd year of Darius (Ezra 4:24), so the decree authorizing the restoration and building of Jerusalem came to Ezra, but was interposed until resumed by Nehemiah.

Ezra returned from Babylon to Jerusalem in Nisan of the seventh year of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:9, 7), which was in the year 458 BC. Jesus died in Nisan of the year 33 AD, “to bring in everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24). Between these two events is exactly 490 years — 70 weeks of seven years each.

AN IMMEDIATE BENEFIT

Many Christians in fundamentalist circles separate the last week of the prophecy, or last half week, from the previous portion, and carry it forward 2000 years to the return of Christ. This has never been a reasonable way to handle the prophecy. But now such a possibility is clearly excluded. Since the 70 weeks expire in the spring of 33 AD, there is nothing left of it to carry forward. Not seven years, or 3½ years, or any amount.

AN IMPRECISION REMOVED

Notice how clean this application is. Ezra’s decree was received in the Spring of the year, and 490 years later in the spring of 33 AD Jesus gave his life on the cross. In the previous view, using Nehemiah’s commission, the decree was given in the spring, the whole number of 490 years would therefore end in the spring, yet the middle of the last week, which should be in the autumn, was linked with the death of Christ in the spring — a contradiction. This imprecision is now avoided.

“THE MIDST OF THE WEEK”

The prophecy is given in units of “weeks” — seven year increments. Using this fairly coarse measure, the prophecy stipulates the number of weeks which would pass until the appearance of Messiah, namely 69. Messiah did appear subsequent to the end of 69 weeks, and of course before the end of 70 weeks, so this part of the prophecy is correctly fulfilled.

But precisely when in this last week would his ministry begin? In order to specify this the prophecy says God would cause the “sacrifice and oblation” of the Law to cease “in the midst of the [last] week.” The middle of that week would be the autumn of 29 AD, the very time Jesus presented himself to John at Jordan for baptism. At this time Jesus began replacing the typical arrangements by becoming the antitype of them. “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first [the Law and its types], that he may establish the second [the antitypes]” (Hebrews 10:9).

Notice that the prophecy does not say Jesus would be cut off in the middle of the week. This thought, though a common interpretation of the prophecy, is not actually stipulated in the text. Verse 26 says “Messiah will be cut off,” and verse 27 says in the middle of the week God would cause the “sacrifice and oblation” to cease, but these are two separate parts of the prophecy.

CONFIRMED FOR ONE WEEK

Verse 27 says “he [God] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.” When the text says “he,” clearly God is the one intended. Some suppose Christ is meant by this pronoun, and claim the antecedent is the same as the pronoun “himself” in verse 26 (King James version). But in that verse “himself” does not appear in the Hebrew. The “he” of verse 27 who confirms the covenant is the same as the one who “determined” the seventy weeks (verse 24), namely God.

The week referred to is clearly the last week, which included the ministry of John the Baptist, which began before Jesus appeared as Messiah in the middle of the week. The Jewish Covenant was “confirmed” to them by both John and Messiah, in order for faithful ones to be transferred from Moses into Messiah. After the cross Jesus became the “end of the law ... to everyone that believeth” (Romans 10:4). The Law Covenant was not being “confirmed” to the Jews after Christ died.

26 AD

The beginning of the week would be 26 AD, and it is natural to ask what episode marked this date. But the prophecy does not specify any particular event. The prophecy does stipulate that 69 weeks would pass before Messiah appeared, but this does not require Messiah to appear immediately at the expiration of 69 weeks, any more than verse 26 requires Messiah to be “cut off” immediately “after threescore and two weeks.”

However, we incidentally notice that 26 AD was the date when Pontius Pilate assumed the governorship of Judea, setting the stage as it were for the events soon to unfold.¹⁴ We will refer to this in the next section.

SUMMARY

The fundamental basis for applying the Seventy Weeks must be proper historical dates. If we loose ourselves from this requirement, the whims of interpretation can direct the issue a variety of ways, with no anchor of fact to settle the matter.

Today we have that anchor. Ezra’s commission was in 458 BC, Nehemiah’s in 445 BC, and only the first one fits the prophecy. Seventy weeks of years forward terminate at Calvary, with no imprecision crossing the BC / AD divide. Surely this information will be appreciated by the reverent student, desirous of knowing the mind of the Heavenly Father.¹⁵

FOREGLEAMS

The correct placement of the 70 weeks will prove of great value — as we should expect, when greater clarity comes to view. It will add a new dimension to the Harvest Parallels (next section). It will open a remarkable series of expanded parallels (2 sections following). It will bring new meaning to Habakkuk's expression, "the midst of the years" (3 sections following). It will unlock some remarkable patterns (4 sections following). Such is the nature of truth.

(1) All of our likely readership, that is. The dates of Christ's life are sometimes disputed elsewhere. But the evidence has been decisively shifting in favor of the Bible Student view. In October, 1966, in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, appeared an article by William Filmer, "The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great," showing that Herod died near the opening of 1 BC (rather than 4 BC), which allows Jesus' birth in the fall of 2 BC, 30 years before his ministry began in the 15th year of Tiberius (Luke 3:1, 23). As three passovers in Jesus' ministry are explicitly referred to in the book of John, and possibly another in John 5:1, this is consistent with a 3½ year ministry which would have ended at Passover in the year 33 AD, in which year Nisan 14 did fall on a Friday, consistent with the Gospel narratives. See also "Dating the Crucifixion," by Humphreys and Waddington, *Nature* magazine, December, 1983, which shows this to be the only feasible date for the crucifixion in all the years Pontius Pilate governed Judea, namely 26 AD to 36 AD.

(2) Citing Hales for this view is clearly a mistake. On page 531 of his work he does suggest adjustments of 5, 3 and 1 year respectively, which total 9 years, but this has to do with events in the Grecian period, many years after Artaxerxes in the Persian period. On page 449, and again on page 531, Hales explicitly associates the year 444 BC with the governorship of Nehemiah. "From the date of his commission, B.C. 444 ..." (Page 531). This is but one year different than the customary historical date 445 BC. Many prophetic students of his era followed this one year divergence, which endures even to the present among Adventists, including even the reputable Edwin Thiele. (It took considerable time and research to track down the flaw in Thiele's support for this error ... contact us if interested.) The motivation for this one year divergence takes us back to William Miller. He agreed that Jesus was crucified in the spring of 33 AD, and began the 70 weeks, as we now do, with the decree authorizing Ezra's return to Israel. He used the date 457 BC for this decree (one year later than the true date 458 BC). This "worked" for Miller because he failed to adjust one year when calculating across the BC / AD divide. Thus he figured, simply, $490 - 457 \text{ BC} = 33 \text{ AD}$, and also that 2300 days would end in 1843 ($2300 - 457 = 1843$). When others recognized the problem, they adjusted the dates to 34 AD and 1844

AD, rather than correcting the starting date ... and so Adventists have it to this day. (See *Time and Prophecy*, page 8, and its footnotes 5 and 6, for more specifics.)

(3) Priestley opted for a 10 year difference, as John and Morton Edgar did, though his reasons for this differ from those embraced by the Edgars.

(4) Two of the computations in Volume 2 which cross the BC / AD divide do work properly, namely 1813 BC to 33 AD is 1845 years, and 2 BC to 29 AD is 30 years. All the rest do not. One might wonder how this occurred — some do work, and some do not. It is probably in part because the various calculations came from different sources originally, some of the originators handling the BC / AD divide correctly, some otherwise. This detail was a problem for many writers in bygone years.

(5) Some brethren seem to assume this is the same view as in *The Time is at Hand*, only reexpressed, but it is not. It uses a different year, based on different supporting evidence. One uses a nine year variance, the other a ten year variance.

(6) It also requires an unexplainable 10 year extension later, in order not to confuse the history of all successive kings.

(7) Some brethren have thought the ancient historian Thucydides recorded a reign length of 11 years for Xerxes. This is a mistake. Thucydides did not, nor did any other ancient chronicler.

(8) The Edgars acknowledged that shortening Xerxes' reign by 10 years was only possible if his reign of 21 years "is not astronomically fixed" (*Great Pyramid Passages, Volume 2*, page 316, small version). In the 1830s, it was not. Now it is. The reigns of the kings of the Neo-Babylonian empire, and the Persian kings through Artaxerxes, are all astronomically fixed. One of the records which fixes this period is an 18 year eclipse cycle tablet, specifically touching years 3 and 21 of Xerxes, and year 18 of his successor Artaxerxes.

(9) No lack of imagination has been exercised by some of the dear brethren seeking novel ways to alter Persian history by 10 years. Such emphatic evidence as presented above has been met with impromptu speculations about

coregencies between Artaxerxes and Xerxes, or perhaps Xerxes with his father Darius — none of which carry the least credibility, and are refuted by the known records of the times. Artaxerxes, for example, was but a teenager when he succeeded Xerxes, and would have been but a small boy if elevated to a coregency 10 years earlier. Also, before Artaxerxes received the throne a usurper Artabanus interposed briefly following the death of Xerxes. Between Darius and Xerxes? Herodotus (Book Seven, first two pages) records that Xerxes was not chosen as the successor of Darius until a year before he received the throne, clearly prohibiting any mythical 10 year coregency. Nor would any condensing of history by 10 years fit the record of eclipses at 18 year intervals which run all the way from the Babylonian empire into the reign of Artaxerxes. The reverent student may examine a variety of possibilities, but should not court vacuous propositions. Sound history is a providential aid in understanding divine prophecy, and yields blessed dividends.

(10) Sources: *Catalog of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, Volumes VI, VII, VIII: Tablets from Sippar 1, 2, 3*, Leichty, Finkelstein and Walker, British Museum Publications for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1986-1987. *Babylonian Chronology 626-75 AD*, Parker and Dubberstein, Brown University Press, 1956. *Supplement to Gentile Times Reconsidered*, pages 40-44, Carl Olof Jonsson, Odeon Books, Danville, 1989.

(11) Shown are the kings who reigned at least a year. Between Cambyses and Darius reigned one Bardiya who called himself Smerdis, but he did not fill out his accession year. Nevertheless he is important to prophecy, as Daniel 11:2 said during the reign of Cyrus, “there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than they all ... he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.” That fourth king was Xerxes who is famous for his failed campaign against Greece. Without recognizing the reign of Bardiya the numbers would not work, but of course he was truly a king, even if only briefly, and the prophecy correctly includes him as one of the three between Cyrus and Xerxes (namely Cambyses, Bardiya or Smerdis, and Darius).

(12) Rebuilding the temple is not specified in the seventy week prophecy, evidently because it was rebuilt many years before the seventy weeks began. At the beginning of the 70 weeks Ezra restored the temple and began building the city. His commission was to “enquire concerning Judah and *Jerusalem*,” which he did (Ezra 7:14). Seventy weeks later Jesus cleansed the temple and laid the foundations of New Jerusalem, which makes his work parallel to Ezra’s.

(13) If Ezra foreshadowed Jesus, did Nehemiah foreshadow Paul? Nehemiah was governor, was Paul the first “star”? Nehemiah ended his first service in 433 BC (Nehemiah 5:14, 13:6), Paul was sent a prisoner to Rome when Festus became governor, dated by some to 58 AD (70 weeks later). Nehemiah returned for another tour of service, Paul was evidently freed and served again. (Do the “seven counsellors” of Ezra 7:14 pertain to the “seven stars” of Revelation?)

(14) Mc&S, “Pilate,” page 199 — “Pontius Pilate (*Antiquities* 18, 2, 2), who was appointed A.D. 25-6, in the twelfth year of Tiberius. He held his office for a period of ten years (*Antiquities* 18, 4, 2).” Tiberius received the throne in August of 14 AD. If the remainder of that year was an accession year, then his first year would be in 15 AD, his 12th when Pilate was appointed would be 26 AD, and his 15th when John the Baptist began his ministry would be 29 AD.

(15) Now that the facts are resolved, an engaging parallel can be seen between the rebuilding of the temple under under Cyrus, Joshua and Zerubbabel, and the rebuilding of the city under Artaxerxes, Ezra and Nehemiah. Cyrus issued a decree for the rebuilding of the temple and the foundations were laid only a year after the return of the Jews. But the work languished, stymied by the enemies of Israel who complained to the King. The work was later resumed in the 2nd year of Darius on the strength of the original decree (Ezra 3:8, 4:4, 5, 24).

Likewise the decree by Artaxerxes given to Ezra on behalf of Jerusalem. After restoring the temple Ezra laid the foundations of the walls of Jerusalem, but the work was stymied through their enemies’ complaints to the King. It was resumed a few years later under Nehemiah who completed the work begun by Ezra. Both with the temple and the city there was a commencing decree, foundation, cessation and resumption.

Incidentally, as regards the account of Ezra concerning these issues, note that Ezra 4:6-23 recounts parenthetically various complaints of the enemies of Israel which actually occurred after the reign of Darius, who is mentioned in verses 5 and 24. Kings Ahasuerus (Xerxes) and Artaxerxes of verses 6 and 7 followed Darius (Darius Hystaspes, not to be confused with Darius the Mede of the book of Daniel). A misunderstanding of this point is at the base of some otherwise engaging treatments of Ezra and Nehemiah by writers of the 1800s, and some of this confusion is picked up now and then today by unaware readers. The Ahasuerus of Ezra 4:6 is the same as Ahasuerus in the book of Esther, who is correctly identified by Bro. Russell, and by modern writers, as Xerxes, the father of Artaxerxes.

Section Seven
Harvest Parallels

The harvest parallels, diagrammed on page 219 of Volume 2, are based on the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy, and also the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. Here are the parallel dates for the harvest listed on that chart, each pair of dates separated by 1845 years.

29	1874
33	1878
36	1881
70	1915

When the date 1915 passed without an end to the kingdoms of this world, Bro. Russell modified the parallels, in particular the last pair of dates. He observed that Masada fell in 73 AD, ending the Jewish revolt against Rome, and the parallel year (1845 years later) would be 1918. Thus he replaced the 70 / 1915 parallel with a 73 / 1918 parallel. The parallels in R5950 are ...

29	1874
33	1878
36	1881
73	1918

This modification appears fruitful. Though the kingdoms of this world did not pass by 1918, that year did mark an end of the World War, which is a reasonable parallel to the end of the Roman War against Judea which closed with the fall of Masada.

But what about the date 1914? Should it appear anywhere in these parallels? If so, then it would have to parallel the date 69 AD (1845 years earlier). What happened in the year 69? As regards the Roman War, it was a year of peace, while General Vespasian was occupied in Rome securing his throne. The campaign against Judea did not resume again until the spring of 70 AD, when he sent his son Titus to take Jerusalem.

But the autumn of 69 AD did mark something of consequence. It was the last year the Jews kept the Day of Atonement offerings in the Temple, for by the following year the Temple had been destroyed. This date marked 40 years from the time Jesus presented himself at Jordan as the antitypical atonement offering in the autumn of 29 AD. Thus a period of 40 years of probation closed for Israel, just as a parallel period of 40 years of probation for Christendom closed with 1914, when the Great War erupted. Adding this, the parallels would be ...

29	1874	69	1914
33	1878	73	1918
36	1881		

We arranged the last two pairs of parallel dates to the right of the others, 40 years advanced from the others, to show the obvious symmetry which suggests another pair of parallel dates, 40 years following 36 / 1881, namely 76 / 1921. Here is the full complement, with this added.

29	1874	69	1914
33	1878	73	1918
36	1881	76	1921

However, this presents a problem. Nothing of consequence is known to have occurred in 76 AD, or in 1921 AD, to warrant these dates being significant in God’s plan. They fit a pattern, but otherwise have no meaning. Also notice that the dates 40 years earlier, 36 and 1881, constitute the weakest part of the remaining parallels. Why? Because both of these dates also rest only upon a pattern, without a demonstrable event.

It is supposed that the date 36 is the end of the exclusive favor to the Jewish people, and that this was signaled by Peter taking the Gospel to Cornelius (Acts 10). But there is no independent way of knowing that 36 AD was the date of this mission. Possibly it is the correct date — it is not inconsistent with the narrative of Acts — but it cannot be demonstrated.

Similarly, the date 1881 was produced by the symmetry of the parallels, but what is the significance? Originally it was supposed that this date would mark the completion of the church (R175-8, R177-2, R180B-1). “Until the ‘little flock’ are born, an event expected during 1881" (R183B-3). These expectations were clarified in May of that year, in an article titled “The Year 1881,” which concluded “with this year ... the door to that high calling ... [will be] closed forever” (R224-7). In Volume 3 this is further refined to the ending of the General Call, whereas the closing of the “door” would be later (C212-2). In each case, however, the application is to something unseen.

PARALLELS RESTATED

Now, however, it is apparent that the 70th week runs from 26 AD to 33 AD. Using the same concept as above, the parallels would be ...

26	1871	66	1911
29	1874	69	1914
33	1878	73	1918

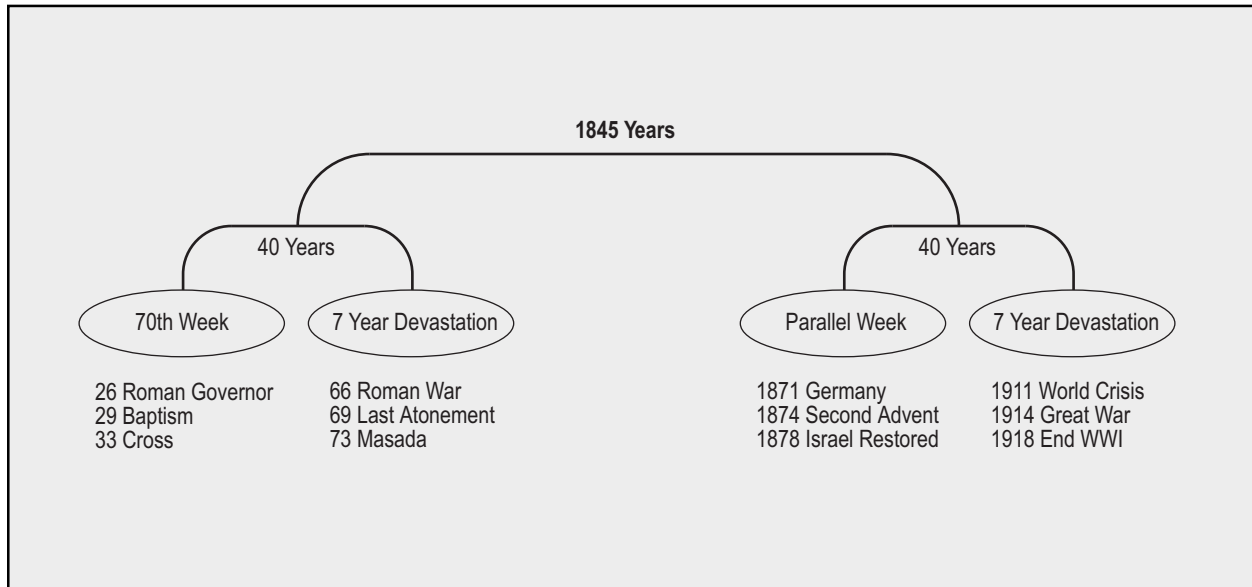
The year 66 AD was the beginning of the seven years of Roman Wars against Judea. The year 1911 was the beginning of the build-up toward World War I, the beginning of the seven years of World Crisis as we observed in Section Five.

But what of 26 AD, and 1871 AD? On the first date Pontius Pilate was appointed governor of Judea, setting the stage for the climactic events to follow, as we noted in Section Six. On the second date the German Republic was formed, setting the stage for World War I.

As Churchill points out in the introductory chapters of *The World Crisis*, the backdrop for World War I was the Franco-Prussian War. The treaty which unsatisfactorily concluded that war was completed in 1871, and early that year “William I of Prussia was proclaimed Emperor of Germany at Versailles. The German Empire had been born” (*Milestones of History*, Volume 9, page 77). Just as the appointment of the Roman governor 1845 years earlier, this set the stage for the debacle to follow 40 years later.

SUMMARY

The Harvest Parallels are now more secure, more complete, more stable than before, incorporating the latest revision from R5950 and the outbreak of the Great War in a complete, symmetric arrangement. We have a full complement of parallels based on the correct application of Daniel's 70th week. Now each date is independently established, historically or prophetically. This increased stability, and augmented breadth, accrues naturally from a factual foundation for the prophetic word.



Section Eight

Expanded Parallels

The Harvest Parallels in the previous section are based on the 70 week prophecy, given through Daniel. The length of time between parallel dates, 1845 years,¹ is the span between the two advents of Christ, which are marked by Daniel’s prophecies — the first advent by the 70 weeks, the second advent by the 1335 days of Daniel 12:12.² Another of the parallel dates, 1914, is also marked by Daniel — it is the ending of the Seven Times of Daniel chapter four.

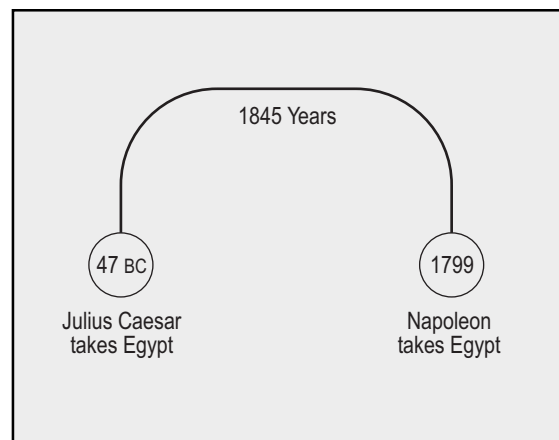
Thus the parallels touch three of the prophetic periods of Daniel — the 490, 1335, and 2520 years. But what of the remaining three prophetic periods of Daniel — the 1260, 1290, and 2300 years? We now examine them, and will find they also intertwine with the parallels.

1260 YEARS

Only recently did we recognize that an 1845 year parallel also applies to the 1260 years of Daniel chapters 7 and 12. This period closed with the year 1799 (C50). This specific year is prominent in the experiences of Napoleon, and included in the episodes described in Daniel 11:41-45. In 1799, after taking Egypt the previous year, Napoleon ventured northward through Palestine. He did not venture eastward, so “Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon” were not taken, as Daniel 11:41 says.

In this trip northward he would have paused for encampments “between the seas, towards the beautiful holy mountain” (Rotherham, verse 45). Presumably the seas are the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea (Zechariah 14:8), and the beautiful holy mountain describes Jerusalem (Daniel 9:16, 20, 1 Maccabees 11:37). In other words Napoleon would venture northward from Egypt without going inland eastward, such as to Edom, Moab or Ammon. Napoleon fulfilled this in 1799, and shortly afterward returned to France and claimed power. The Pope died a prisoner in France the same year and Napoleon refused to allow the election of a successor. Roman Papacy was at its low ebb.

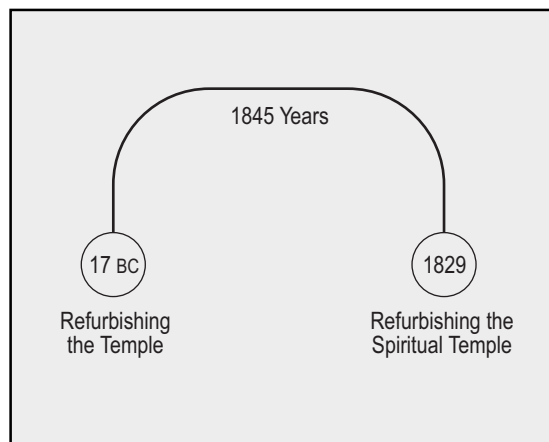
Calculating back 1845 years produces the date 47 BC, which was during the time of Julius Caesar, who established the Roman Empire (as an empire, distinct from a Republic — for which he paid dearly on the infamous Ides of March). Remarkably, the year 47 BC was the very year Julius Caesar also marched from Egypt northward through the land of Israel, “between the seas, towards the beautiful holy mountain,” then returned to Rome to claim power. It is a parallel in circumstance with Napoleon — Julius establishing Roman authority, Napoleon terminating (Papal) Roman authority.



Thus the prophecy of 1260 years is a fourth time prophecy of Daniel which is marked by parallel dates 1845 years apart. This is significant, because it applies to a prophecy that does not point to the harvest directly. This raises the question whether the other time prophecies of Daniel are also marked with parallel dates. We find that they are.

1290 YEARS

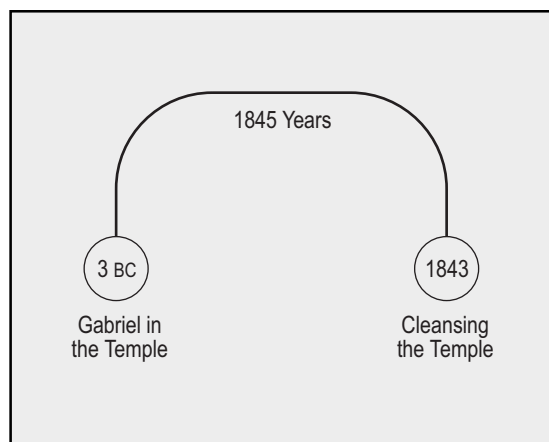
The 1290 years of Daniel 12:11 end in 1829 (C84). Calculating back 1845 years takes us to the date 17 BC. Is this significant? It does not strike a familiar tone, but a little investigation proves fruitful. It is the date suggested in John 2:20, spoken at the first passover of our Lord’s ministry, which was 30 BC. The text says “Forty and six years was this temple in building.” Presuming this means the building work had been proceeding for 46 years up to that point, it would have begun in the year 17 BC.³



The 1290 years, ending in 1829, were to mark the time the “wise shall understand” the prophecies (Daniel 12:10, 11). This was about the time interest in the prophecies began to blossom, stirring the temple class in a spirit of revival. This rebuilding work in the spiritual temple is reasonably paralleled by the rebuilding work in the literal temple.

2300 YEARS

This prophecy comes from Daniel 8:14, and is generally supposed to count from the beginning of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 (C107). Using the date 458 BC for this beginning as in Section Six, the 2300 years would end in 1843, which is the date Adventists expected the Lord’s return (modified slightly after the initial disappointment). Thus 1843 marks a culmination of the Miller Movement, through which several defiling errors were identified, and the temple class thus “cleansed,” awaiting the reinstatement of the old truths during the Harvest.



Calculating back 1845 years from 1843 brings us to 3 BC (remembering to adjust one year for crossing the BC / AD divide). This was the very year the angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias in — notice — the temple, announcing the preparatory work preceding Messiah (Luke 1:9-12). The same Gabriel appeared to Daniel at the giving of the 2300 day prophecy (Daniel 8:14-16). The cleansing of the temple in 1843 was paralleled 1845 years earlier by Gabriel’s visit during the offering of incense.

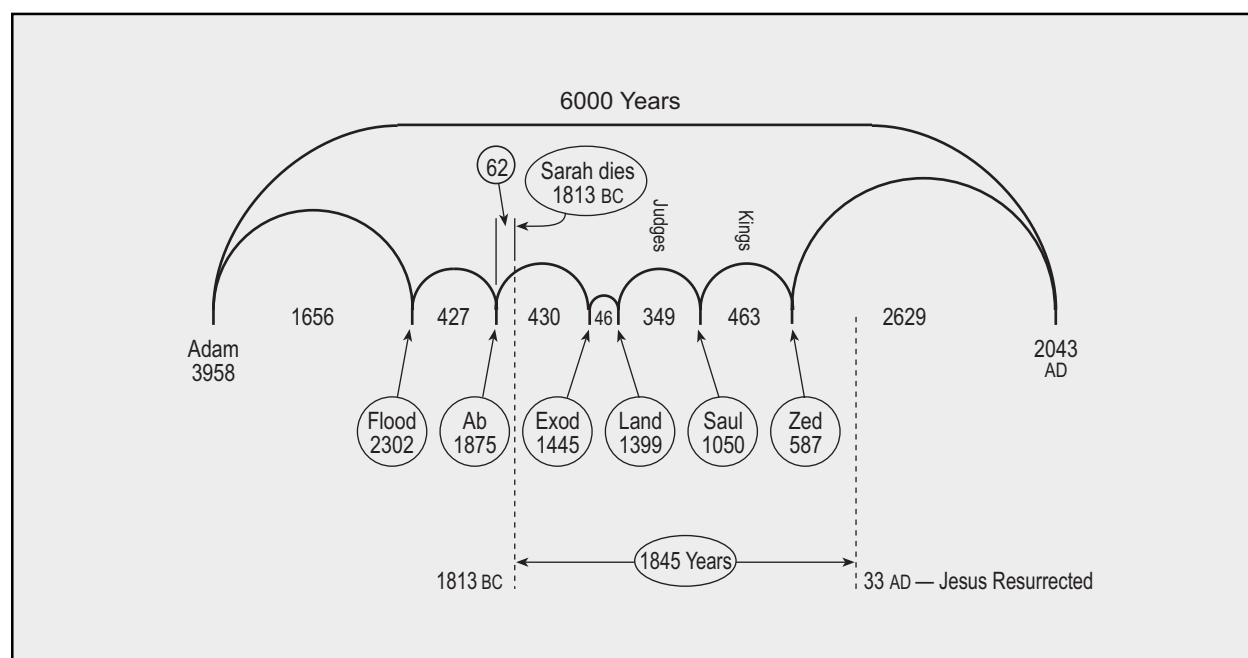
The offering of incense is connected with the prayers of saints in both Psalms 141:2 and Revelation 8:3. Perhaps the incense offering of Zacharias in the temple represents the prayers of saints searching the prophetic word as the days of the second advent approached. In both cases the episode was in preparation for the blessings to follow at the advent of Christ.

70 WEEKS

We have already mentioned the 70 week prophecy. In the previous section we observed that the 70th week of this prophecy provides the backbone of the Harvest Parallels. But notice that in each of the other time prophecies — 2520, 1335, 2300, 1290, 1260 — the parallel is from the terminus of the prophecy back 1845 years.

To be consistent, knowing that the 70 weeks terminate in 33 AD with the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, we should look for a parallel date 1845 earlier, namely 1813 BC. This is a familiar date to the brethren, because in the customary chronology this was the date of Jacob's death. The 1845 years between this and the crucifixion measure Israel's existence as a chosen people until their rejection shortly before Christ died.

However, the chronology back through time from Christ to Jacob we now know to be 170 years shorter than supposed, which locates Jacob's death in 1643 BC rather than 1813 BC. What, then, if anything, occurred in 1813 BC in the corrected chronology? It turns out — quite remarkably — that something significant did occur, namely the death of the only woman in the Old Testament whose age and date of death are known — Sarah, the wife of Abraham.



Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born, and Jacob lived 147 years. Thus there were 207 years from the birth of Isaac to the death of Jacob. Sarah was 90 at the birth of Isaac, and lived 37 more years to the age of 127. If we subtract these 37 years from the 207 years, we have the length of time from the death of Sarah to the death of Jacob — exactly 170 years, the same length by which the chronology was shortened. All of which means Sarah died in the year 1813 BC, when we formerly supposed Jacob had died.⁴ (In the chart above, Sarah was 65 on entering Canaan and died at 127, 62 years later, in 1813 BC.)

Sarah was typical of the Abrahamic Covenant which bears the promised seed of blessing. The first product of that covenant, Christ, was “born” beyond the veil at his resurrection in 33 AD. Thus the first product of the Sarah covenant was produced 1845 years after the type ceased with Sarah’s passing.

EXPANDED PARALLELS

Thus each one of Daniel’s time prophecies supplies an appropriate time parallel 1845 years earlier. Here is a list of them.

Prophecy	Ending Date	Parallel Date 1845 years earlier
490 years	33 AD	1813 BC
1260 years	1799	47 BC
1290 years	1829	17 BC
2300 years	1843	3 BC
1335 years	1874	29 AD
2520 years	1914	69 AD

Such a list could not appear before, because two entries in the list depend upon the corrected dates for the 70 week prophecy — the 490 years, and the 2300 years. Once again a remarkable symmetry emerges, in this case blending the facts of history, the chronology of the Bible, and the prophecies of Daniel. The scriptures are yielding up more insights as time advances, and our deliverance approaches.

(1) Seeing the prominence of this period of 1845 years woven through the prophecies naturally leads one to inquire if this number of years is significant symbolically. The number is the product of 41 and 45. The first is a prime number, the sum of its digits reducing to the single digit 5. The latter is a composite number, $5 \times 3 \times 3$. Thus the two numbers which appear equally in the constitution of this overall number of years are 3 and 5. The former is the scriptural number for the atonement, the latter the scriptural number for the new creation. Thus the symbolism behind this number of years is appropriate to designate the length between the two advents which bracket the age of redemption for the Church.

(2) The parallels 1845 years apart were evidently first seen by Bro. Nelson Barbour, as reflected in his periodical *The Midnight Cry*. Barbour of course was an associate of William Miller in his early years, and some years after the great disappointment, and after the passing of Bro. Miller, he saw that rather than ending the 1260 and 1290 days at the same time as Miller did, they should begin at the same time which would end the 1290 days 30 years later, in 1873. This evidently triggered the observation that if Jesus was born at a theoretical year “zero” (which does not actually exist), just before the beginning of 1 AD, and 30 years later entered on his ministry as Messiah, this paralleled the 30 years between 1843 when so many expected Christ, and 1873 when he then expected Christ. Thus the original span of years in Barbour’s “parallels” was 1843 years. He then observed that by his chronology Jacob died in 1813 BC. Adding the 30 years in the

AD era until Jesus’ ministry totaled again 1843 years, from Jacob’s death to Jesus’ Messiahship, and this formed the first nucleus of his concept of a “double” — 1843 years in each fold — 1813 BC to 30 AD to 1873 AD — marking the two advents of Christ. This was later refined and adjusted in steps to the parallels presented in Volume 2. As late as the publication of *The Three Worlds*, in 1877, he had not extended the parallels as far as 1881, thinking then that the heavenly call would be completed in 1878. Those interested in more details please consult “Histories, Chronologies, Chronologists and Time Prophecies” by Bro. Jeff Mezera, available from him as an electronic document.

(3) Evidently the rebuilding was not finished until some years later, which leads to the view that John 2:20 marks the time from the beginning of the rebuilding to the time then present, 30 AD. Josephus says Herod began building this temple in the 18th year of his reign (*Antiquities* 15, 11, 1). William Filmer says “Josephus says that Herod reigned thirty-seven years from his appointment by the Roman Senate, or thirty-four years from the overthrow of Antigonus” (*The Journal of Theological Studies*, October 1966, “The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great,” page 291). He concludes that if the 18th year is reckoned from his appointment then the date would be 20 BC. Therefore, if the 18th year is reckoned from the overthrow of his predecessor, the date would be three years later, namely 17 BC, consistent with John 2:20.

(4) Therefore it is not possible to maintain the traditional “Jewish Double,” as the facts do not permit it. As usual, when facts point to inevitable conclusions, the scriptures

shine further light on the subject. There are three scriptures generally supposed to support the Jewish Double — an equal number of years of favor and disfavor — namely Isaiah 40:2, Jeremiah 16:18, Zechariah 9:12. However, there is a fourth text about the “double” which is not compatible with the customary view. It is Isaiah 61:7, and its word “double” is *mishneh* as in Jeremiah and Zechariah (duplicate in the sense of repetition. In Isaiah 40:2 it is *kephel*, duplicate in the sense of fold). “For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.” Clearly this double is a time of blessing, not of punishment. It refers not to an equal period of years, but to a blessing commensurate with past afflictions. In fact Zechariah 9:12 also refers to blessing rather than punishment, “This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you” (see NASB, NIV, REB, Rotherham, and others). It is prophetic of the blessing of those who received Messiah at the first advent, and the nation which is converted to Christ at the second advent.

Isaiah 40:2 and Jeremiah 16:18 do refer to punishment, but not to a particular length of time equal to some previous number of favorable years. Notice for example Revelation 18:6 where the punishment of Babylon is “double” in the sense of being commensurate with their past sins, but not for a certain period of years. Likewise in Isaiah 40:2 and Jeremiah 16:18.

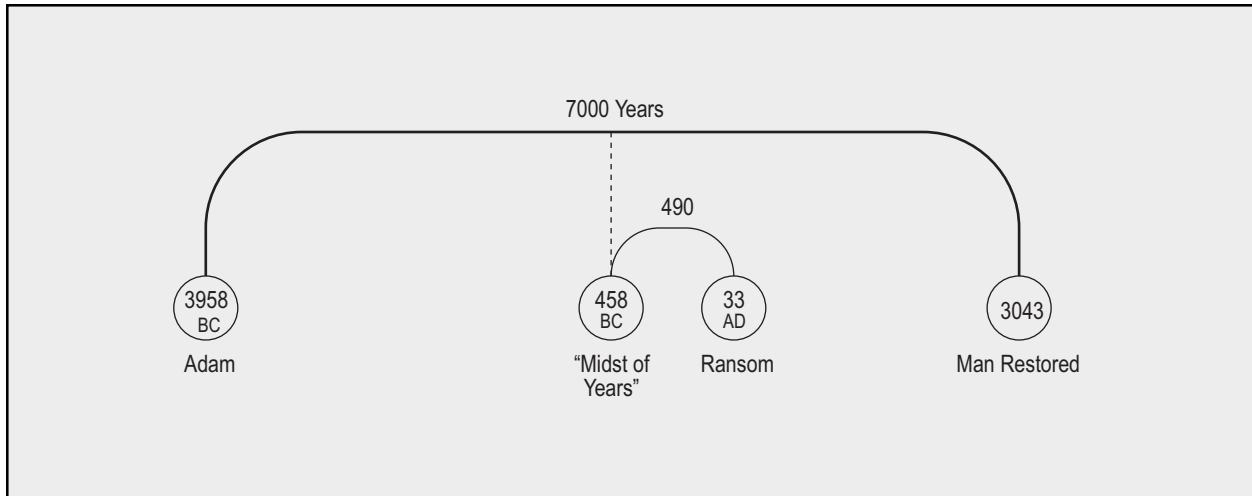
Remember that in the customary chronology, if 606 BC is changed to 607 to make the Seven Times and Jubilees compute properly across the BC / AD divide, then the date 1813 BC for Jacob’s death automatically becomes 1814 BC, which does not compute properly for a double of time. Now it all makes sense — the prophecies of a “double” do not intend equal time periods, but commensurate punishments and blessings.

We are forced to drop an imprecision, but it is replaced by an even more remarkable set of expanded parallels ... as we might expect of the truth. The original basis of it all was Barbour’s observation of parallels between the first and second advents, which was essentially correct, now enhanced, expanded and polished.

Section Nine
Midst of the Years

Some months ago, long after recognizing that Bible Chronology places Adam’s creation in the year 3958 BC, and several years after recognizing the 70 weeks began in 458 BC, we realized that half way into the 7000 years from Adam was precisely the year 458 BC. It was a stunning moment.

Brethren have long observed the hint from Habakkuk 3:2 that the midst or middle of these seven millennia might mark a significant milestone in man’s recovery from sin and death. “O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.” What a remarkable milestone it is — the very year which prophecy designates to begin counting to the atonement for sins at Calvary.



It is, as it were, a seal, a marker, a confirmation, that we have accurately divined the sacred testimony. Habakkuk prophesied about Babylon, the nation used to punish Judah for their sins and suspend the Davidic monarchy. How appropriate that this marker should be revealed to Daniel, a prophet of the Babylonian captivity, and mark (1) the work of restoring Jerusalem, (2) the ransom at the cross, and (3) the completed atonement at the end of the Millennium, when New Jerusalem and all its inhabitants will be restored from condemnation.

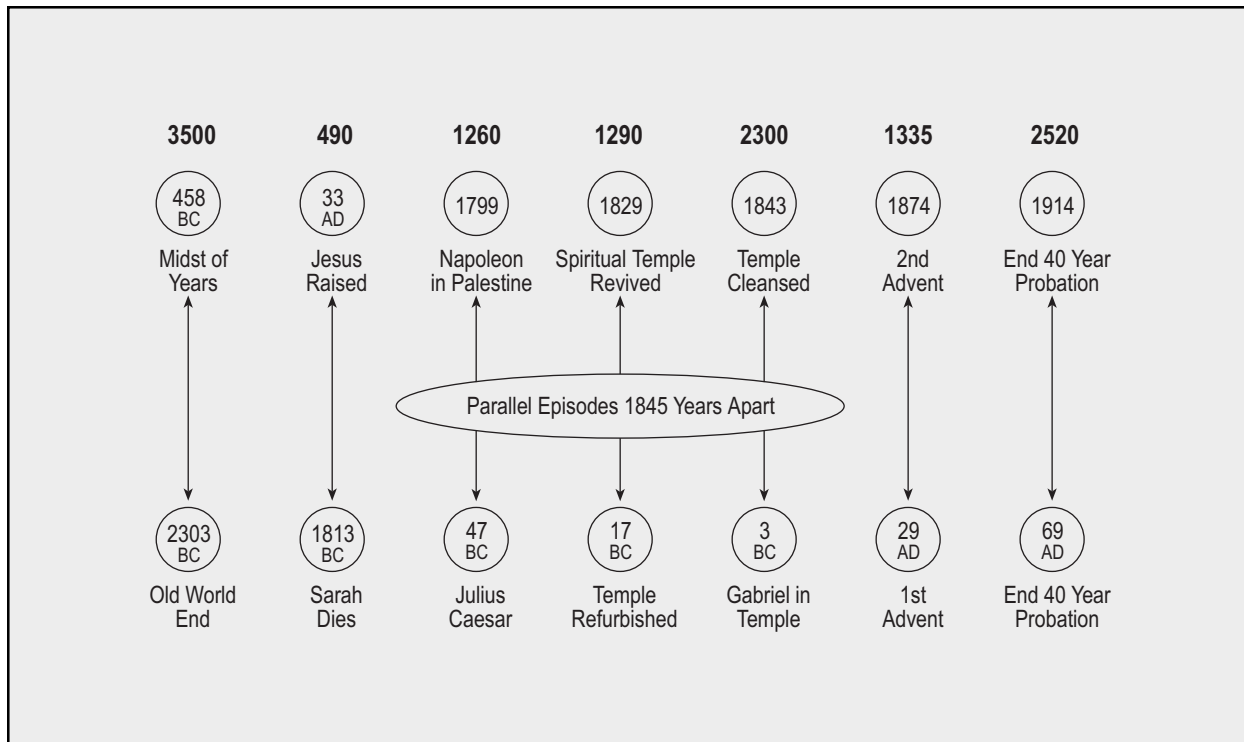
ONE MORE EXPANDED PARALLEL

This milestone, ending 3500 years of the Adamic curse, ending the first half of the grand week of millennia, provides one more marvelous terminal point from which to project backward a parallel episode 1845 years earlier. From 458 BC, back 1845 years, we arrive at 2303 BC ... precisely the year the flood brought to a close the “world that was,” closing out an old chapter, and opening up a new one in the drama of the ages. How fitting a parallel to the grand “midst of the years” which draws down the curtain on 3500 years of sin and death, and marks the opportunities for restoration, ransom and redemption.

Thus we have now seven prominent terminal points from the prophecies of Daniel, each marking a step forward in God’s plan of the ages. From each of these we have a parallel date and episode, 1845 years earlier — a complete complement.

Prophecy	Ending Date	Parallel Date 1845 years earlier
3500 years	458 BC	2303 BC
490 years	33 AD	1813 BC
1260 years	1799	47 BC
1290 years	1829	17 BC
2300 years	1843	3 BC
1335 years	1874	29 AD
2520 years	1914	69 AD

Such a list could not appear before, because three entries in the list depend upon the corrected dates for the 70 week prophecy — the 490 years, 2300 years, and 3500 years. Again a remarkable symmetry emerges blending the facts of history, the chronology of the Bible, and the prophecies of Daniel. The same information is represented below.



DIVIDING THE WEEKS

The essential point of this Section is that the grand “week of millenniums” is divided half way through by an explicit prophetic marker, the decree of Daniel 9:25 recorded at such length by Ezra (7:11-16). Thus “the midst of the week” on this grand time scale is remarkably meaningful, just as the “midst of the week” of Daniel 9:27 is meaningful (the baptism of Christ).

The work of restoring and building, literal Jerusalem and then antitypical Jerusalem, fills 3500 years, the second half of the great week of millennia. Similarly, the ministry of Christ beginning in “the midst of the week” consumes 3½ years, the second half of that week of years. Will the same concept hold true for other prophetic “weeks”?

Revelation divided the Gospel age into a “week” of seven variable-length periods — the seven Churches. The middle church was number four, Thyatira. As shown in the four horsemen of Revelation six, the work which began well (white horse) gave way to symbolic war (red), famine (black), and death (pale). But midway in this middle church things began to turn upward. “I know thy works ... the last to be more than the first” (Revelation 2:19). Then followed periods five (Reformation), six (Protestant expansion), and seven (Harvest). The last 3½ periods see a resurgence, completing the work.

In Section Five we saw that the Seven Times divide into two periods of 1260 years — another example of dividing a period of seven. In the next section we will explore this pattern further. It will produce some satisfying results.

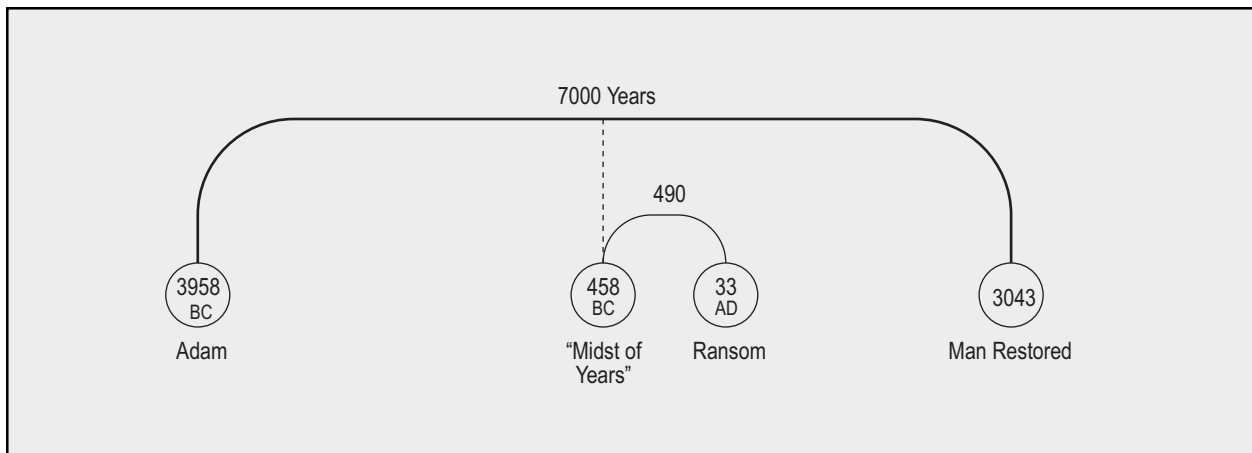
SUMMARY

The division of the grand week of Seven Millenniums exactly at the pivotal year 458 BC provides three benefits. (1) It provides an independent consistency, or symmetry, that we had not expected. This rose spontaneously from the proper dates of Bible Chronology which we neither invented nor manipulated, and the proper date for the decree of Daniel 9:25 which is fixed and sure in the historical record. (2) It augments the expanded parallels with a striking correspondence between the passing of the “world that was” and the close of the first half of man’s 7000 year educational experience. (3) It provides a key to be used in the next Section, which will open yet more rich harmonies interrelating the various “weeks” of time in the Divine Plan.

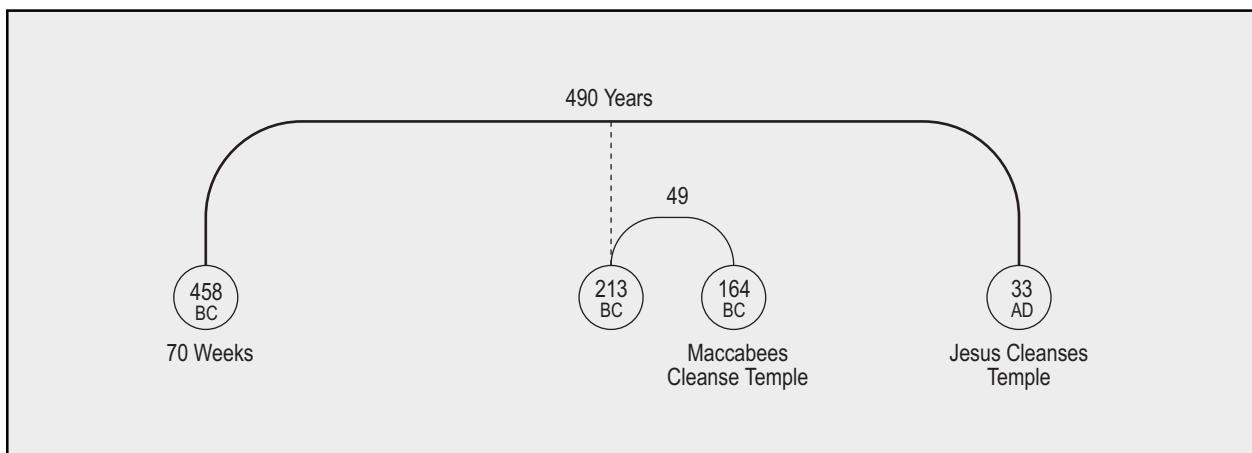
Section Ten

Dividing the Weeks

This section explores the division of various “weeks” — 7000 years, 490 years, 70 years, and others, suggested by the previous section. The purpose is to observe a deeper pattern, which forms another evidence that the underlying chronology is correct. This pattern may also explain why Daniel 9:25 segregates the first seven of its seventy weeks from the others. We begin with a chart of the 7000 years discussed in Section Nine.



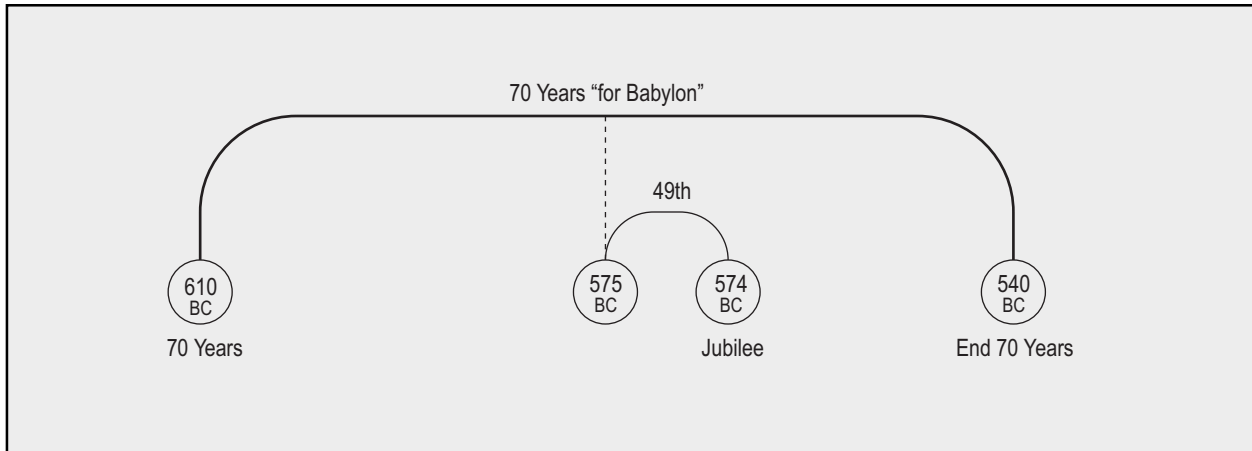
We immediately follow this with another chart which does with the 490 years what was done to the 7000 years.



The pattern is clear enough, and the scale is reduced so that the period beginning at the half-way mark is 49 years, rather than the larger 490 years of the first chart. The middle date, 213 BC, is merely the half-way marker, not otherwise meaningful, except that it begins a count of 49 years to the heart of the

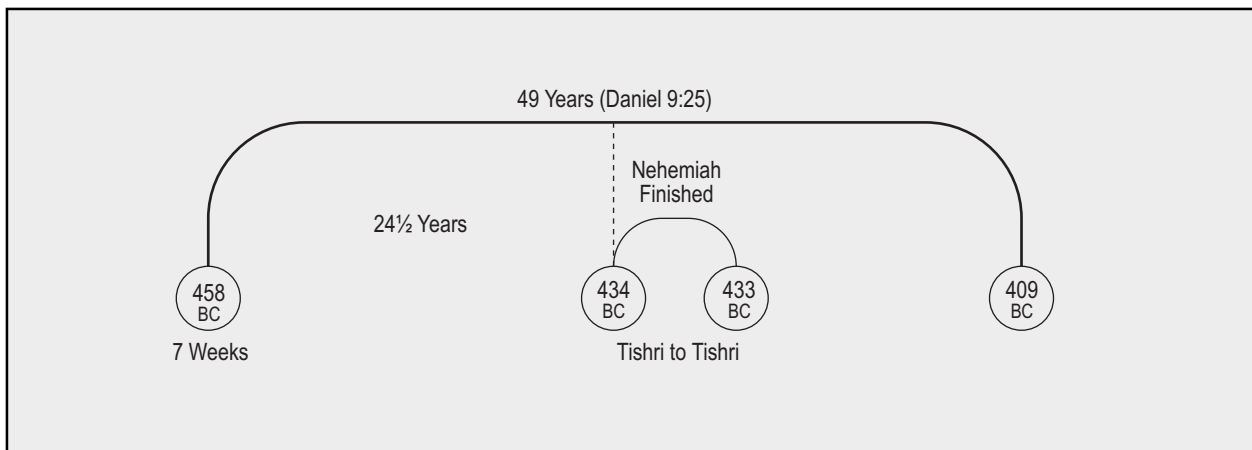
issue, 164 BC. This year is not fresh in the minds of most brethren, but it was a highly significant date in Jewish history, when the Maccabean revolt successfully overcame their Syrian (Grecian) overlords and cleansed the temple from the defilements of Antiochus Epiphanes.

This victory is referred to expressly in Zechariah 9:13 which predicts God would give Judah a victory over their Grecian rulers, as a defining moment in the historical prelude to the coming of Messiah.¹ The cleansing of the temple in 164 BC by the Maccabees was a precursor to the cleansing of the temple in 33 AD by Messiah.



The 70 years of this chart are the seventy years “for Babylon” (Jeremiah 29:10). As explained in Appendix A, these years ran from 610 BC to 540 BC. These 70 years are related to the 70 weeks in Daniel 9, for the latter were given while Daniel was praying respecting the former.² The diagram above treats the 70 in the same manner as the 490. The midpoint is 575 BC. The date 574 BC, the heart of the issue, is the date beginning Israel’s last Jubilee, from which the cycle of 50 Jubilees point to the antitype begins (see Section Four).

The scale of this chart, being reduced from the previous one, does not allow 49 years from the middle forward. In fact only one year separates the midpoint from the focal date 574 BC. But that year happens to be year number 49 — the one immediately preceding year 50, the last Jubilee, 574 BC. Thus the pattern of years from the mid-point is continued — 490, 49, 49th.



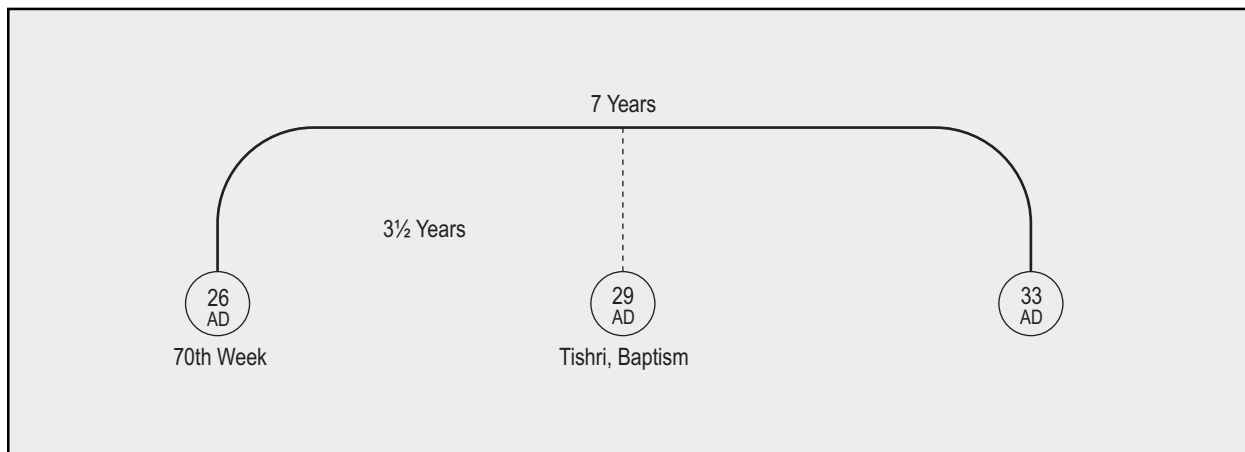
The 49 years of this chart are the 49 years specified in Daniel 9:25, which segregates the seventy weeks into “seven, and threescore and two,” and one remaining to total 70. The mention of the last week separately is understandable. But the separate mention of the first seven weeks (49 years) has perplexed brethren for a long time. What happened in 409 BC that this date should be separately identified?

We have read a general explanation that by the end of these 49 years Jerusalem’s restoration had been accomplished, and the city was prosperous as a regional center of trade and activity. This sounds reasonable, though we have never heard anything specific about the year 409 BC in particular.

But handling this chart like the others does produce a meaning to the middle point, 434 BC. Each chart covers a smaller span than its predecessor, and the years counting from the midpoint are consequently reduced in each case — 490, then 49, then the 49th. To reduce further suggests no intervening numbers, but that the year of significance be immediately introduced by the midpoint ... and such is the case in this fourth chart.

Half of 49 is $24\frac{1}{2}$. Beginning in the spring of 458 BC, 24 years take us to the spring of 434 BC, and a half year further to the autumn of that year, introducing the Jewish year Tishri 434 to Tishri 433. (Jewish calendar years run from Tishri to Tishri even today.) During that year Nehemiah completed his work in Jerusalem and returned back to the service of Artaxerxes. Nehemiah 5:14 and 13:6 specify that he departed Jerusalem in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes. He had arrived in the 20th year, 12 years earlier. Twelve years from Nehemiah’s commission in the spring of 445 BC lapsed in the spring of 433 BC, by which time the combined work of Ezra and Nehemiah was completed, in fulfillment of the decree originally issued in the seventh year of Artaxerxes.

In each case, dividing the designated “week” locates a midpoint which marks progress toward a specific goal of the divine program. The concept of “49,” prominent in each of the first three charts (490, 49, 49th), is maintained in the fourth as the complete 49 year span of the chart. In the fifth chart, following, it is maintained by seven years being the square root of 49.



Following the same pattern, we come to the last and smallest week, a week of single years. This is the 70th week of the prophecy, segregated by itself, introduced by the seven and 62 which precede it. The scale being considerably reduced, the midpoint in this case does not “lead to” a fulfillment, but is itself the date of the fulfillment, namely the baptism of Christ inaugurating the redemption.

In one unified pattern we have gone from the macro to the micro — from 7000 years, the midst beginning 3500 years which complete the plan of redemption, to 7 years, the midst beginning 3.5 years which complete the price of redemption.

In each of these charts the date of significance is the date which is “counted to” from the midpoint. In each case this dates an activity significant to the whole span involved. Here are the five dates, and their relevance.

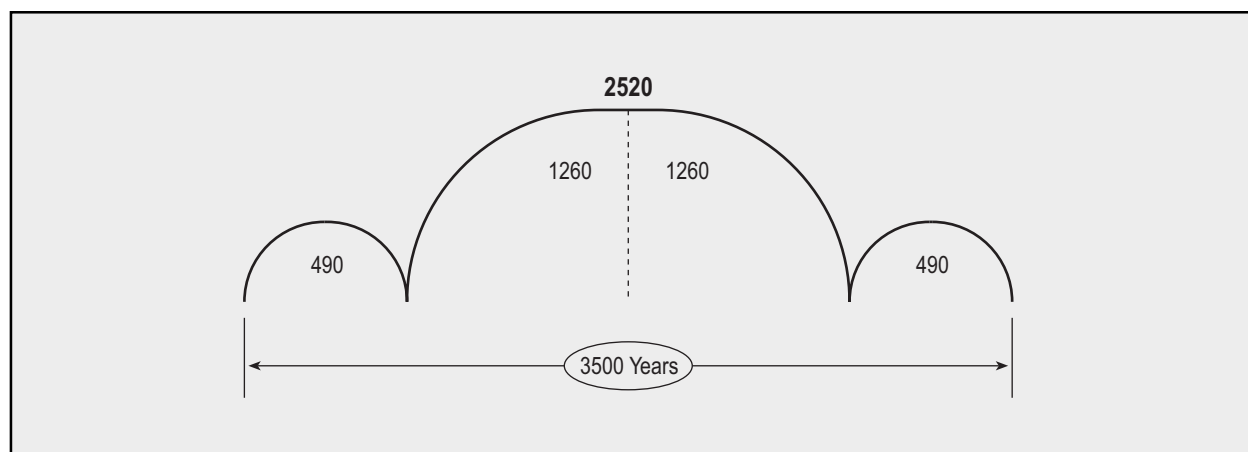
- (1) 33 AD, the ransom which secures the redemption effected in the 7000 years.
- (2) 164 BC, the Maccabean temple cleansing, a picture of Christ’s temple cleansing in 33 AD.
- (3) 574 BC, beginning a grand cycle to Israel’s final return to the land lost during the 70 years.
- (4) 433 BC, the Ezra-Nehemiah work of restoring and building Jerusalem complete.
- (5) 29 AD, introducing Jesus’ ministry which would terminate at the cross.

2520 YEARS

This leaves one “week” unaccounted for, the week of prophetic times, 2520 years (7 x 360). This week is distinct. The others are related to the 70 week prophecy — this one only indirectly. But it is related to the foregoing series, specially to the 7000 year week of millenniums.

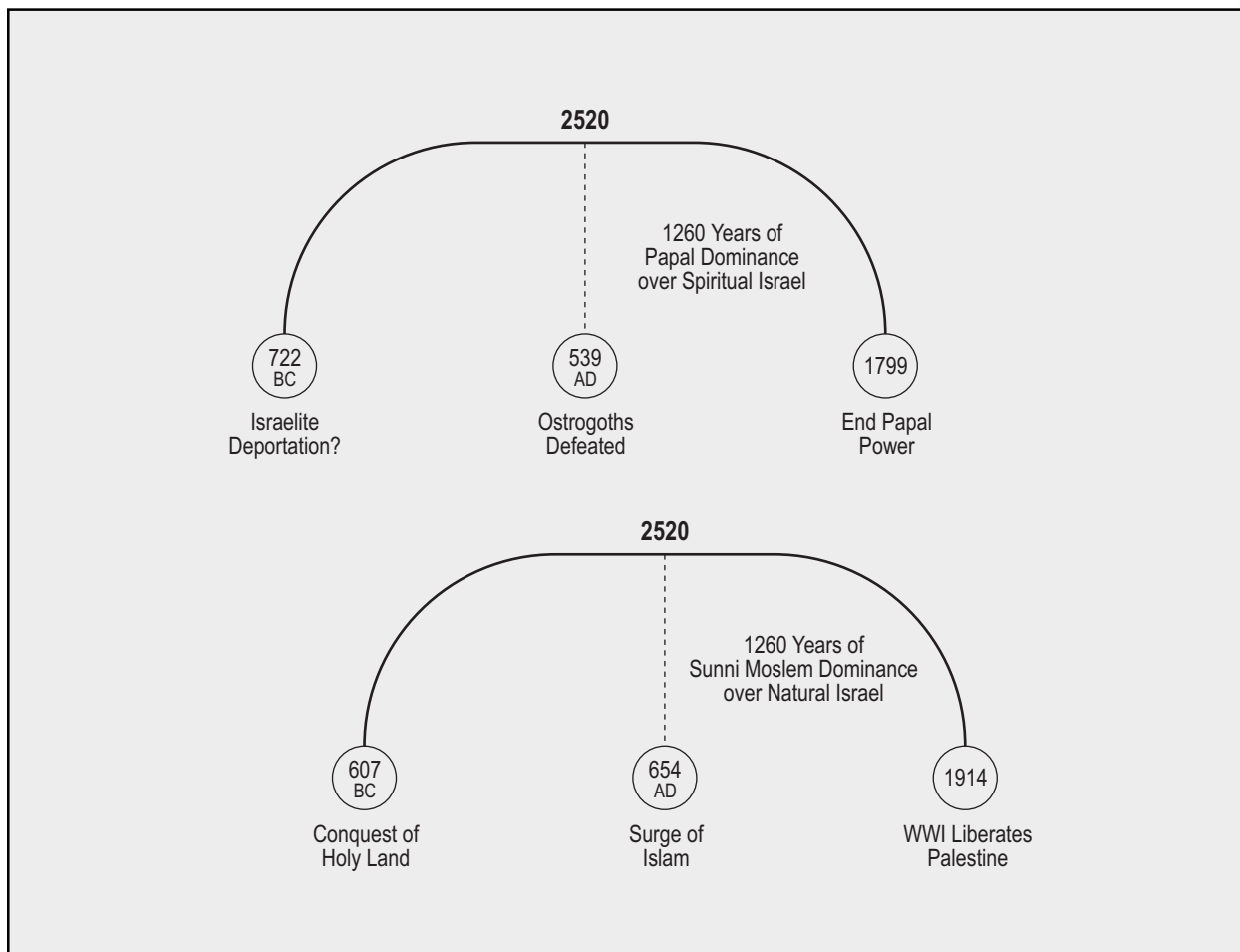
Recall Daniel 4, which speaks of Nebuchadnezzar. He lost his dominion and “seven times” passed over him before it was restored. This represents both the 7000 years which pass over mankind before their dominion is restored, and the seven prophetic times, 2520 years, which pass over Israel before their dominion is restored. Thus the two long “weeks” we are now comparing are related through the prophecy. The 7000 years divide into two periods (3500 years each), and as we observed in the last section the 2520 years also divide into two periods (1260 years each). So far so good.

In the pattern above we began from the middle and counted forward 490 years, then 49, then the 49th, then the same year, then none at all ... what shall we do in this case? This week is a large one, on roughly the same order of magnitude as the week of millenniums, so let us retain the 490 years used there. Counting forward from the middle produces nothing meaningful. Appending the 490 to each half does. 490, 1260, 1260, 490 total 3500, the length of the productive half of the seven millenniums.³ From this we infer only that it is part of a cohesive design ... augmenting the evidence that the chronology underlying is sound.



PARALLEL 2520

Another period of 2520 pertains to the 10 tribe kingdom in the north, which succumbed to Assyria in 723 BC, followed by a deportation which may have been the following year in 722 BC.^{4, 5} Forward 2520 years leads to 1799, which closes the 1260 years renown from Daniel and Revelation, repeated seven times in those books. Thus this period also cleanly divides into two equal parts, the last half being the 1260 years oppression of spiritual Israel by Papacy. This adds weight to our previous observation (Section Five) that the last half of Judah's 2520 years is 1260 years of Islamic oppression of the land of Israel.⁶



SUMMARY

These patterns provide a lovely testimony on behalf of the chronology and prophecy which underlies them. This is secondary evidence. It is not the material from which facts are founded. Nevertheless it is reasonable supportive evidence, uniting as it does so many scripturally attested weeks of time.

(1) The Maccabees were of the tribe of Levi, and assumed kingly authority, thus combining the priestly and kingly offices as Christ would later when resurrected as Melchisedek. In this way the Maccabees were a figure of the coming Messiah. Their revolt was predicated on righteous faith, and was blessed of the Lord (even though in time things corrupted as often happens). The cleansing of the temple in December, 164 BC, is celebrated by the Jewish people today as Hannukah.

(2) There are other connections between the 70 years and the 70 weeks. The 70 weeks are divided by the prophet into seven, sixty-two, and one, which means the span includes a distinct period of 49 years. Within the 70 years are introduced a distinct period of 49 years, namely the desolation of Judea, which lasted from 587 BC (end of the Judean kingdom) to 538 BC (return of Israel in the first year of Cyrus). There is also an interesting numerical connection — 70 less 49 is 21. 70 weeks less 49 is 21 squared. (But note, the 49 years of desolation are not confined within the 70 years “for Babylon.” The former ended in 538 BC, the latter in 540 BC. The years of desolation do complete the 70 years, as 2 Chronicles 36:21 and Daniel 9:2, properly rendered, affirm. But they also continue two years beyond.)

(3) We at least observe that from the beginning of Judah’s 2520 years (607 BC) to the beginning of Daniel’s 70 weeks (458 BC) is 149 years ... the “49” in another form.

(4) Following the lead of the previous footnote, from the beginning of Israel’s 2520 years (722 BC), 149 years forward take us to 573 BC, the end of the unkept Jubilee of Ezekiel 40:1.

(5) In 732 BC King Pekah lost his throne to Hoshea in a popular uprising. In 1789, 2520 years later, King Louis XVI lost his throne in a popular uprising which became the infamous French Revolution. In 725 BC the three year siege of Samaria began. In 1796, 2520 years later, Napoleon successfully attacked the Papal States. In 723 BC Shalmaneser of Assyria took Samaria, ending Hoshea’s nine year reign (2 Kings 17:3-6). In 1798, 2520 years later, Pope Pius VI was taken from Rome to France where he expired the following year. Napoleon refused to allow the election of a successor, leaving Papacy temporarily headless late in 1799.

(6) Bro. Donald Holliday observed that the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom may pertain to the 10 horns of the Papal kingdom which ruled from 539 to 1799, which yields a symbolic connection between this 2520 and the 1260 of Papal rule. This causes us to wonder if the 2 tribes of the southern kingdom pertain to the two branches of Islam (Sunni and Shiite), dominated by the Sunni branch during the 1260 years from 654 to 1914. (654, midway in the seven years 651 to 658 mentioned in Section Five, saw a rapid expansion of Moslem conquests throughout North Africa. Some believe this was also the year the Koran was edited into its current form — feasible, though not yet confirmed.)

Section Eleven
Ezekiel Chapter Four

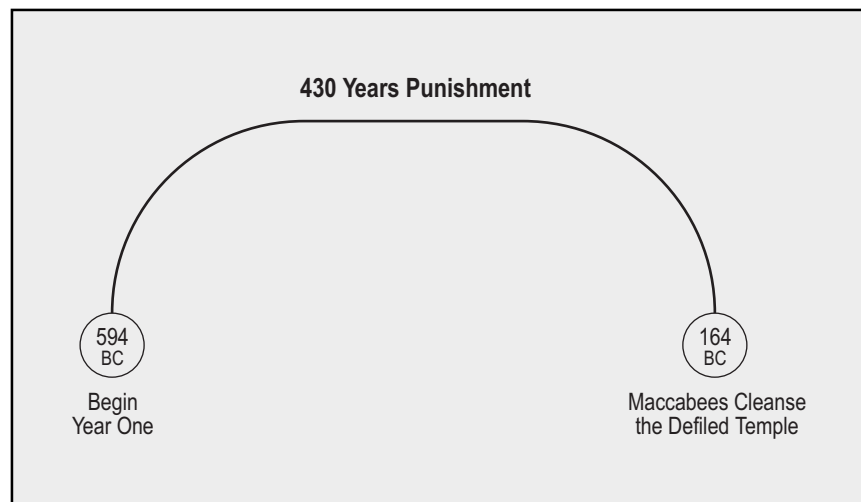
This chapter records God’s command to Ezekiel to lay on his left side 390 days, and his right side 40 days, to represent the years of iniquity of Israel and Judah respectively. (Presumably he rose from time to time as circumstance required, but this was his normal posture as a sign to his fellow Jewish captives.)

Apparently these were years of iniquity during the period of kings, and it is a reasonable to ask how they relate to the chronology of Israel and Judah. However, a point sometimes missed is that these periods also apply forward from Ezekiel’s day, as a punishment for past sins. During the 390 and 40 days Ezekiel was to eat 20 shekels of bread mixed with six ingredients which represented the defiled “bread” they would have under the rule of gentiles who would corrupt the purity of their religion (Ezekiel 4:13). Thus these 390 and 40 days represent so many years reaching into the past (sins), and into the future (punishment). Where did they begin? Where do they end?

GOING FORWARD

We will discuss the latter question first. The date of Ezekiel’s vision is the “fifth year of king Jehoiachin’s captivity” (Ezekiel 1:2). That captivity began in the spring of 597 BC. Both scriptures and Babylonian documents record this captivity, and it is easily dated by this combination.¹ That Jewish year began the previous autumn in 598 BC, and became year one of the captivity. Year five of the captivity therefore began in the autumn of 594 BC (about 9 months before Ezekiel’s vision.) 430 years later would be the autumn of 164 BC, and it was in December of that year that the Maccabees threw off their oppressors, cleansed the temple, and rededicated it to Jehovah. The punishment had lasted, as predicted, 430 years.

Let us pause to reflect on the meaning of this. This at last resolves the question of where to place the 430 years of punishment. Also, it is an unique testimony to the precision of prophecy, for even critics usually acknowledge Ezekiel was written long before the Maccabean era. Also, it verifies the chronology of Jehoiachin, and thus Nebuchadnezzar, Zedekiah, and the desolation.



We thus have mutually confirmed (1) the precision of prophecy, (2) the sanctity of the divine record, (3) the accuracy of history. These are tangible results of pursuing the factual evidence.

Further, this pointer to the Maccabean reformation, marked also by Zechariah 9:13 and context, adds credibility to the second chart of the previous section (page 55), which highlights this episode. Let us allow these confirmations to have their intended influence.

THE YEARS OF INIQUITY

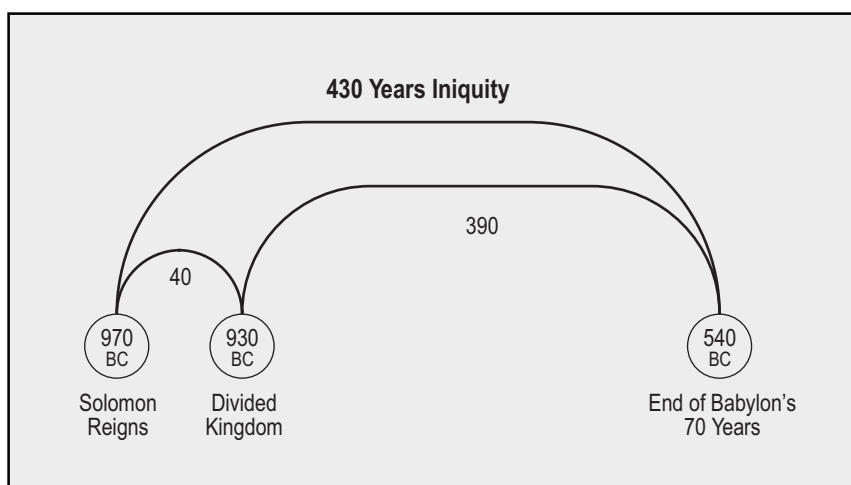
It would have been nice for us had Ezekiel specified when the years of iniquity of Israel and Judah began and ended. It has been an open question for a long time. However, Ezekiel probably did not know the answer, nor understand the count of years back through the kings. Now we do, because of the advantages providence has concentrated in our times. When did these 390 and 40 years of iniquity apply? Apparently to the period of kings forward, but beginning where?

Shall we begin with Saul? The years do not allow it, for the 463 years from Saul to Zedekiah inclusive are greater than the sum of 390 and 40, namely 430. This prompts us to observe that during Saul's time there is no indication that Israel left the worship of Jehovah, and Saul's personal sins were evidently recompensed by the fall of his ruling house. David replaced Saul, and was renown for keeping steadfast to the worship of Jehovah, his personal sins notwithstanding.

This takes us to the time of Solomon, under whom the Israelites did waver. Because Solomon was partly responsible for this, the kingdom was rent into two parts in the next generation. So, let us try an application beginning with Solomon. He ascended the throne in 970 BC. Beginning the 430 years of Ezekiel there, they would expire in 540 BC. Is that a date of consequence?

It is. That date closed out the 70 years "for Babylon" (Jeremiah 29:10). Babylon had conquered the last Assyrian stronghold, Harran, in 610 BC, and in 540 BC Babylon's allotted 70 years expired. That same year Cyrus, having completed his conquest of Lydia (one of the three ribs in the mouth of the bear, Daniel 7:5), turned his attention to Babylon, which fell in the autumn of 539 BC.² The next year Cyrus allowed the Israelites to return home.³

If this is the intended meaning, then the 40 years for Judah, segregated from the 390, may apply to the 40 years of Solomon during which the kingdom was still united under the Judean (Davidic) monarchy.^{4, 5} In this case the 390 years are represented first in Ezekiel's drama because they constitute the bulk of the years and were most recent.⁶



SUMMARY

The 430 years of punishment appears clear. If the year of Ezekiel's prophecy is number one, then number 430 closed shortly before the rededication of the temple by the Maccabees. The 430 years of iniquity evidently span from Solomon's reign to the end of the 70 years allotted Babylon.

(1) The scriptures are 2 Kings 24:8-16, 2 Chronicles 36:9-10. The Kings passage dates the surrender of Jehoiachin to year eight of Nebuchadnezzar (using Judah's non-accession year system), but Jeremiah 52:28 ascribes this to year seven (using Babylon's accession year system). Both actually describe the same year, namely 597 BC. This date is firm. The reign of Nebuchadnezzar is historically fixed by several means, among them lunar eclipse records in his years 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 30, 31, 32, 41, 42. Therefore the scriptural references to the years of Nebuchadnezzar are anchors into history.

The Babylonian record of the taking of Jehoiachin is in the royal annals for the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and reads as follows. "The seventh year: In the month Kislev the king of Akkad {Babylon} mustered his army and marched to Hattu {Palestine}. He encamped against the city of Judah and on the second day of the month Adar {month 12} he captured the city (and) seized (its) king. A king of his own choice he appointed in the city (and) taking the vast tribute he brought it into Babylon" (*Texts from Cuneiform Sources, Volume V, Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Chronicle 5, page 102, Grayson, 1975).

(2) Jeremiah 25:12 says "I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation" after the end of 70 years. This means the 70 years ended at least by 539 BC, which *proves* they did not end in either 536 BC or 537 BC. We adopt the terminal date 540 BC because it is 70 years after the taking of Harran, Assyria's last stronghold, when Babylon became the dominant world power.

(3) Our thanks to Sr. Mary Ann Fiorillo for observing this application of the 430 years. It may seem peculiar that the 430 years of iniquity reach to the end of the 70 years, some decades after Ezekiel. But the Babylonian captivity purified Israel from their national sins (Isaiah 1:25). Perhaps for this reason their sins are depicted as enduring till the end of that experience. Their sins continued even after Zedekiah (Jeremiah 43:7).

(4) We have considered the suggestion that these 40 years pertain to Judah from the beginning of Jeremiah's ministry to the end of the kingdom. Perhaps, but there are four impediments to the view. (a) Counting the year Jeremiah began preaching, through to the end of Zedekiah's 11th year (Jeremiah 1:2, 3), there are 41 years rather than 40. (b) Judah was deep in iniquity before that time. (c) Presumably this would mean the 40 and 390 were overlapping rather than sequential, differently than one would suppose. (d) This would mean the sins of Judah under kings Ahaz and Manasseh, two of the worst, would not be recognized in these years. Whereas, if the 40 are the period of the united Judean monarchy (under Solomon), the 390 for "Israel" evidently apply to both strands of the kingdom from the division forward.

(5) In this case the original 40 years preceded the 390 years. It is worth noting that the first 40 years of punishment, from Ezekiel's day forward, introduce the year 553 BC. Is this meaningful? Nabonidus, the last emperor of the Babylonian empire, reigned 17 years. His last year began in the spring of 539 BC, so his third year began in the spring of 553 BC, 14 years earlier. In that year he committed the kingship to his son Belshazzar, and that very year marked the beginning of the visions Daniel himself received (Daniel 7:1). Perhaps this favor was intentionally given to mark the end of the first 40 years of the punishment mentioned to Ezekiel.

(6) Some suppose the 390 years ran from the apostasy of Israel after the kingdom split to the end of Zedekiah. This is an endeavor to support 513 years for the kings of Israel. However, subtracting from 513 three periods of 40 for Saul, David and Solomon leaves 393 years remaining, not 390, and 1 Kings 12 shows the apostasy of king Jeroboam was immediate, not delayed three years. Possibly for this reason Jehovah's Witnesses shorten the kings period by three years, but this is only the beginning of the abridgements necessary. The kings really consumed 463 years rather than 513.

Section Twelve
The Seventh Day

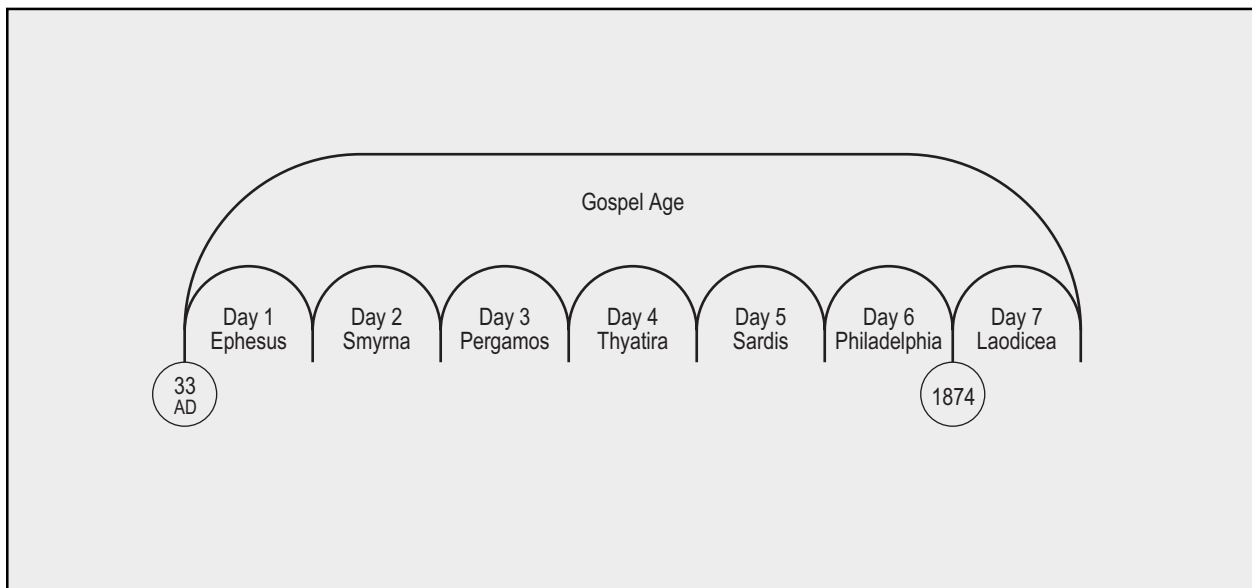
It is apparent from all the foregoing that 6000 years from Adam will close about the year 2043. Then will commence the grand Seventh Millennium, presumably the thousand years of Revelation 20:6. But what of scriptures which link Christ's return (1874) to the opening of a seventh day? The seventh day in these cases is not the Seventh Millennium, but the seventh stage of the church, as we will see.

JOSHUA

For example, consider Joshua's circling of Jericho for seven days (Joshua chapter six). For each of six days the Israelites were to march around Jericho with seven priests blowing trumpets, and on the seventh day to circle the city seven times, shouting at the climax, at which the walls fell and the city was taken. These seven days represent the seven trumpet periods of Revelation which culminate in the harvest with a seven-fold judgment (seven last plagues). Thus Jericho (Christendom) falls (compare Revelation 16:19).

Clearly these seven days are not seven millenniums, but seven parts of the Gospel Age. On the first day "*Joshua* rose early in the morning" (verse 12), just as Jesus our leader rose from the dead early in the morning of the first stage of the church.¹ On the seventh day "*they* rose early about the dawning of the day" (verse 15), probably indicating the raising of the sleeping saints at the dawning of the seventh stage of the church.

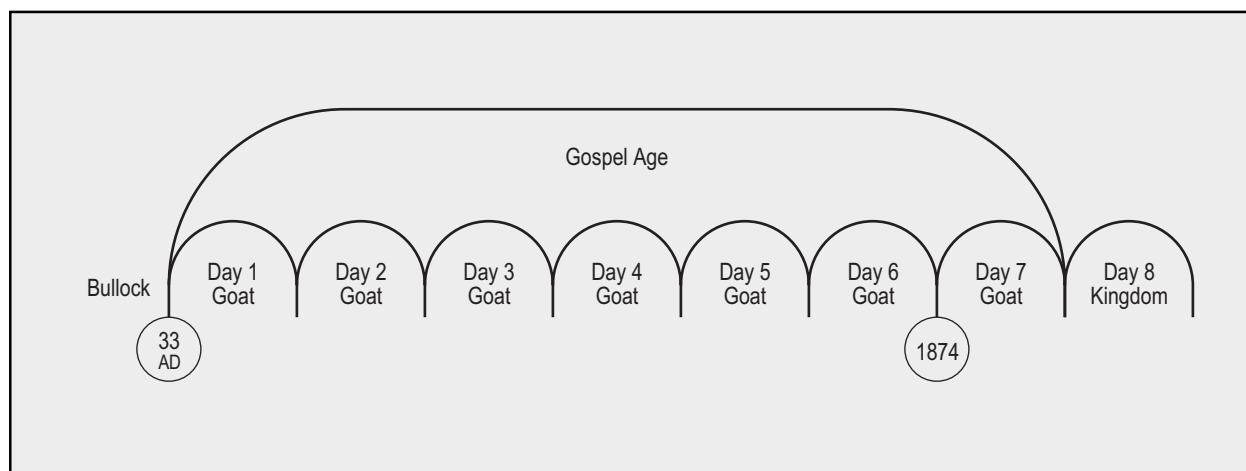
This does not prohibit the seventh stage of the Church beginning with the Seventh Millennium. But it is not affirmed. This passage teaches that the seventh "day," commencing with the Parousia and raising of the saints, is the seventh stage. It says nothing about the Seventh Millennium.



EZEKIEL

Ezekiel 43:18-27 explains how the symbolic altar of the kingdom is dedicated, in order to receive the offerings of mankind in the next age. First there is a young bullock for a sin offering (verse 19). Then, for seven days, each day a kid of the goats is offered for a sin offering (verses 20-26). “Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they [priests] shall consecrate themselves” (verse 26). These seven days represent the Gospel Age when the saints are consecrated to divine service. The bullock is Jesus, and the goats offered for seven days pertain to the church in the seven stages.

The kingdom in this passage is represented by the following day. “When these days are expired, it shall be that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings, and I will accept you (verse 27).” Notice, here the kingdom is not the seventh day, but the eighth. It follows the seven stages of the church. This seventh day is not the Millennium. It is Laodicea.



LEVITICUS

The same thought is carried in Leviticus 8:33, which speaks of the consecration of the priesthood. This symbolizes the consecration of the church to be priests in the Kingdom, and the process consumed seven days, which picture the seven stages of the church. “Ye shall not go out [from] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation seven days ... for seven days shall he consecrate you” (verse 33). The day following they were ready to serve (Leviticus 9:1). Here again, day seven is not the Millennium.

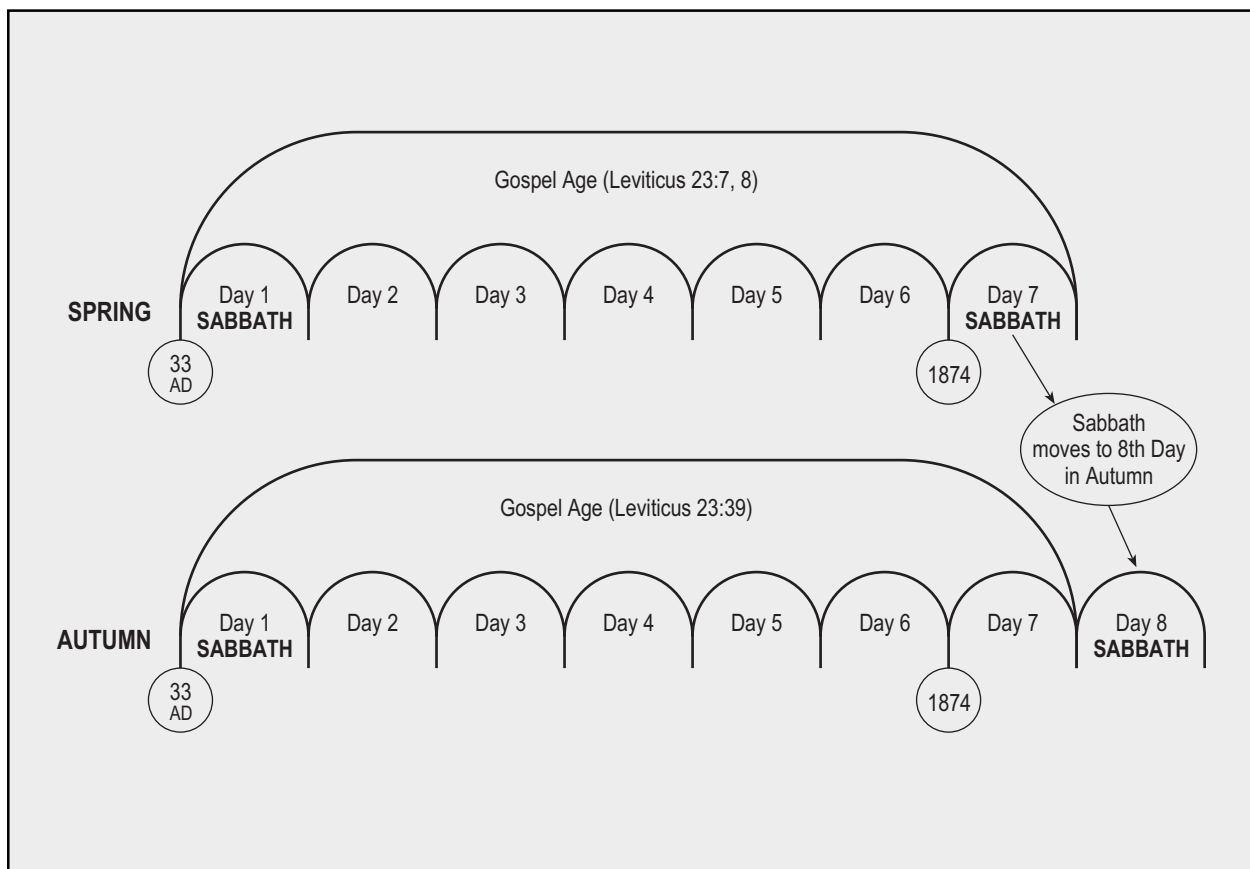
PASSOVER, TABERNACLES

The festivals of the Law were segregated, spring and fall, and in many ways those in the later months paralleled those in the earlier months. The spring festivals were Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost. These pertain chiefly to the church. Events in the autumn were the Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles, and Jubilee. These pertain chiefly to the world. Two seasons ... two ages.

Here we wish to compare the seven day feast in the spring (unleavened bread) with the seven day feast in the autumn (tabernacles). Each one began with a day of “holy convocation.” Each also ended with a “holy convocation,” but on different days. In the spring it was day seven, in the autumn it was day eight. Why this difference?

The seven days in the spring represent the seven stages of the Church, when the saints rejoice for their blessings. The holy convocation on day seven represents our special rejoicing, for this is the stage of our deliverance. It is specially wonderful for us.

The seven days in the autumn represent the world feasting in the Kingdom, remembering all God did in the previous age to prepare such blessings for them. It was called the “feast of tabernacles” because it remembered the temporary dwellings during the 40 years of wilderness wandering (Gospel Age). It was called the “feast of ingathering” because they gave thanks for the bounty of wine (redemption), oil (holy spirit), grain (church), produced in the Gospel Age, which provide the blessings for the Kingdom. These seven days are in memory of the Gospel Age. The world’s blessing actually comes in the eighth day, following the seven churches, and thus in this feast day eight appropriately was the climax of festivities.



Once again day seven pertains to the closing period of the Church, rather than the seventh millennium. Day eight, which follows, pertains to the Kingdom.

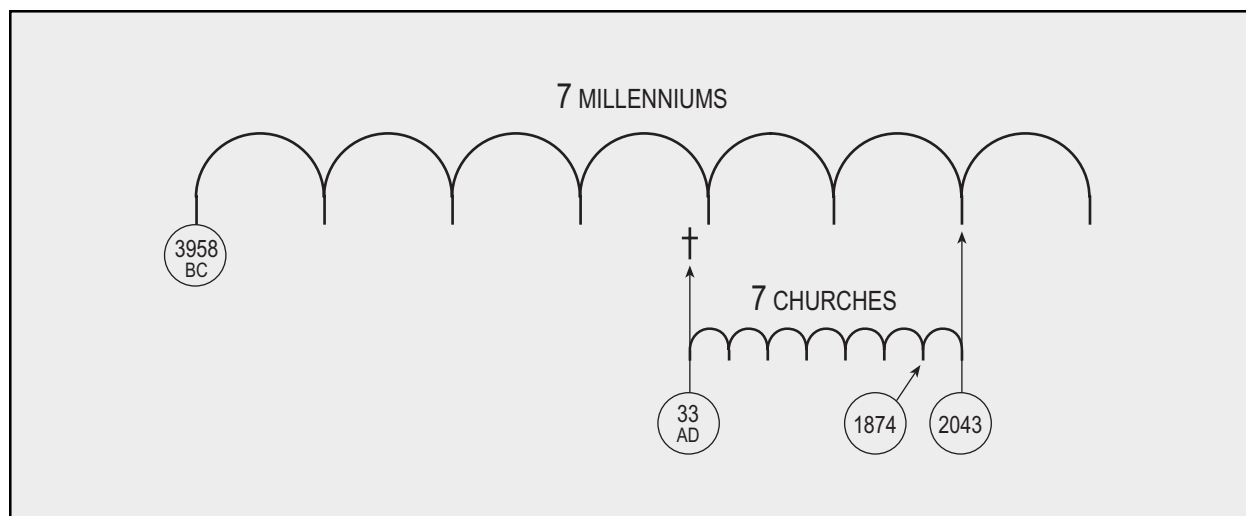
2 Kings 8:2, 3 contains a story about a woman (representing Israel) who was warned of a famine of seven years (Gospel Age, which for Israel has been a time of want). She was preserved, and at the end of the seven years returned, claimed again her possessions, and had all her loss restored. The seven years represent the seven stages of the Gospel Age.

2 Kings 3:9 speaks of a seven day journey through the country of Edom. This also pertains to Israel, wandering weary and thirsty through Christendom during the seven stages of the Gospel Age.

SEVENTH MILLENNIAL DAY

After noting all the examples above, one might wonder whether *any* texts identify the seventh day as the Millennium. Yes, there are several. In types which emphasize the church, day seven is the harvest and day eight is the kingdom (as above). But in types which emphasize the world, day seven is the kingdom.

In these cases the seventh day is the Seventh Millennium, and day eight is the Eighth Millennium, which includes the little season and destruction of the ungodly. It is significant that none of *these* cases connect the beginning of day seven with the beginning of the parousia.



Ezekiel 46:1 — “Thus saith the Lord God; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.”

This pertains to the world, and the six days represent 6000 years of labor under sin and death. “For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past” (Psalms 90:4) is the venerable text which gives us a scriptural foundation for this picture. The sabbath day here is the great Seventh Millennium, when the gate of access to the Heavenly Father will be opened wide. Is that gate now open for the world? Do they now approach Him freely? This implies the Seventh Millennium has not yet opened. The world still is in darkness, laboring under sin. Evidently the six days of labor have not yet expired.²

Sabbath Healings — Our Lord’s healings on the Sabbath day probably represent the blessings of the Millennium. (Matthew 12:10, Luke 13:14, 14:2-4, John 5:9, 9:14).

Leviticus 14:9, Numbers 19:12 — Lepers were cleansed on the 7th day, as mankind will be cleansed from sin in the Millennium. Those unclean through contact with death were cleansed by the ashes of the red heifer on the 7th day, evidently typical of the Millennium.

Matthew 24:20 — “Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter ...” There were two seasons, summer (harvest) and winter. We are to flee Christendom during the harvest, before the winter of trouble which follows. “... Neither on the sabbath day.” Probably this sabbath is not the seventh period of the church

(for that is when we *are* advised to flee, Revelation 18:4), but rather the Seventh Millennium. This suggests the Millennium begins after the harvest proper, parallel to the winter time.³

Revelation 1:10 — Here John represents the harvest saints, in the spirit on the “Lord’s day,” the parousia (1 Thessalonians 5:2). The literal day was Sunday, rather than Saturday, as though to distinguish the harvest from the sabbath millennium.

Circumcision — Circumcision was on the 8th day (Genesis 17:12). As it pertains to the world this represents the 8th millennium, when the world will be collectively “circumcised” in the little season by removing the sinful among mankind. As the “seventh day” is sometimes the Laodicean period, and sometimes the Millennium, so the “eighth day” is sometimes the Kingdom (after the seven stages), but can be the eighth millennium (as here).

THIRD MILLENNIAL DAY

When Abraham set out to offer Isaac, the trip took some days. God was specific that Abraham go to the land of Moriah, for He knew his son Jesus would be sacrificed there many centuries later. This was some distance from Abraham’s residence in the southwest. “Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off” (Genesis 22:4). Abraham lived in the third thousand year day from Adam. This is easy to verify — from Adam to the flood was 1656 years, thence to the covenant with Abraham another 427, making 2083 total. As this exceeds 2000, it brings us into the third millennium, the third day. When Abraham saw the place “afar off,” this represents that by faith Abraham saw the distant atonement to come. “Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad” (John 8:56).

Probably this is the key to the third day reference in Numbers 19:12 also. Of those cleansed by the ashes of the Red Heifer, it says “if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.” The covenants of promise were given to Abraham on the third thousand year day. They bore fruit through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and then the nation of Israel. Were it not for these covenants granted to these Ancient Worthies, and the work it initiated in the Jewish and Gospel ages, the world would not be cleansed on the 7th day. Had the world not received the legacy of these faithful ones, the cleansing of the seventh day would not follow.

TEXTS TO BE EXPLAINED

All of the above is consistent with what the chronology indicates — the Seventh Millennium is not synchronous with the Harvest, but follows it. But several other texts need to be explained which appear to support the other view.

2 Peter 3:10

“The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.” This certainly refers to the second advent. It is like 1 Thessalonians 5:2, “the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” This analogy used by Peter and Paul about the parousia is evidently drawn from our Lord’s teaching in Matthew 24:43 that his return would be thief-like (not dishonest, but stealthy).

The question in Peter about the Millennium comes from verse 8, where the apostle says “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” If Peter means the “day of the Lord” is a thousand years long, it would indeed link the second advent to the Millennium — and this appears to be a powerful argument in the minds of those persuaded that the Millennium has begun.

However, it has not been so with us.⁴ Many years ago we recognized this was not Peter’s point. His comment about the Lord’s estimate of time pertains to verse 9, to which it is immediately connected, rather than to verse 10. Peter is explaining that what seems like a long delay before the coming of Christ is really a brief time to the Lord, because he counts time on a different scale than we. The apparent delay is not slackness, as the scoffers suppose, but the Lord’s longsuffering kindness, allowing opportunity for repentance before the time of judgment. Nevertheless, Peter says, that day will come in due time and consume the ungodly. This occurred shortly after Peter’s passing as regards Jerusalem (compare Matthew 10:23, Mark 13:30), but was delayed another 1800 years as respects the second advent.

The “Day of Judgment” has now arrived. The nations are reeling under its judgments, and the crescendo is impending. Christendom has been rejected, the wind, earthquake and fire of Elijah have appeared. What remains is the “still small voice” of peaceful instruction when the “new heavens and new earth” are established (2 Peter 3:13). That comes in the Seventh Millennium.

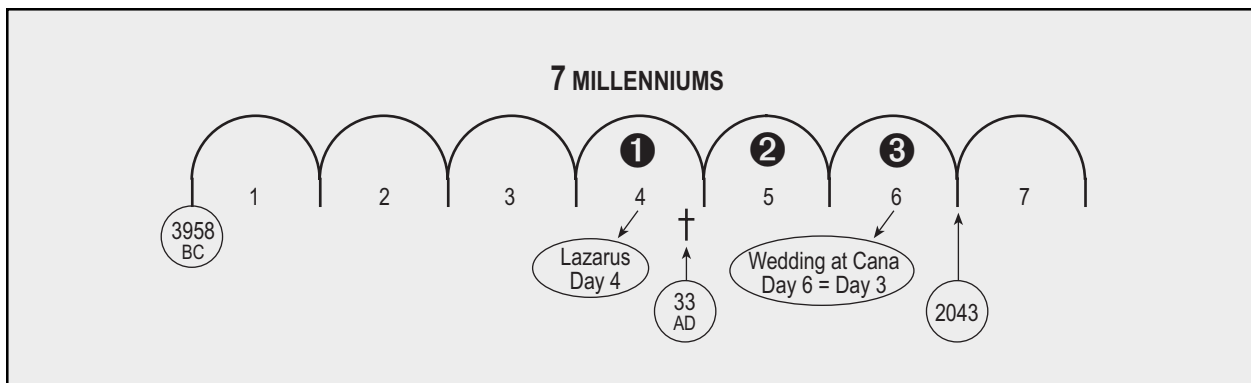
Three Days

John 2:19, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” This referred literally to Jesus’ resurrection on the third day, but symbolically to the raising of his body on the third millennium. In this case the days are 4,5,6 rather than the familiar 5,6,7. Adam was created in 3958 BC, so the fourth millennium closed with the year 43 AD, the fifth with 1043, the sixth with 2043. The body of Christ will evidently be completed near the close, but within, the 6th millennium.⁵ Hosea 6:2 applies the same way — days 4,5,6 rather than 5,6,7.

In support of the 4,5,6 view are two other considerations. (1) The “second eve” being completed at the close of the sixth millennium accords with Eve’s creation at the close of the sixth creative day. (2) Jesus raised Lazarus on the fourth day from his death. Lazarus, a friend and believer, represents those of the dead world who heard “the voice of the son of God” and received life through his ministry (John 5:25, 6:63, Ephesians 5:14). In the time of Lazarus the world was in the fourth millennium of Adamic death.

Wedding in Cana

John 2:1 raises the same issue, “the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee,” which represents the union of Christ and his bride. Either the 4,5,6 or the 5,6,7 view would fit this text. However, the count of days leading to this marriage is telling. John 1:19 begins the narrative, and is day one. Verse 29 begins day two. Verse 35 begins day three. Verse 43 begins day four. The “third day” of 2:1 therefore counts from day four, and the marriage occurred on day six ... consistent with the 4,5,6 view.



MORNING

This section opened referring to Joshua who rose in the morning of day one, and his associates who rose early in the morning of day seven. There are other texts which refer to “morning” where the day is not numbered, but which do apply to the morning for the saints (early in Laodicea), or the morning for the world (early in the Millennium).

Psalms 46:5 is a familiar one about the saints. “God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early” (“when the morning appeareth,” margin). (Psalms 5:3 and 88:13 may apply also.) This pertains to the Church, and applies to the morning of the seventh stage.

Another may be Judges 16:2. Samson and the seven episodes of his narrative represents the Church in the seven stages. Had Samson remained in the city all night, he would have perished by morning. Had the saints not separated during the Reformation, they would not have continued to the morning of Laodicea.

But there is a morning for the world also, which comes later than the morning for the Church. 2 Kings 3:20 is about a crisis faced by Israel of old, representing the crisis modern Israel faces before God delivers them in the Kingdom. “And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered [when the blood of Christ is applied for the world], that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.” The same truths that course through Christendom,⁶ represented by Edom, will then refresh Israel. Clearly this morning is much later than the morning for the saints. This morning begins with the breaking of the Seventh Millennium, as distinguished from the breaking of the Seventh Stage.

It is the same time referred to in Genesis 32:24, when Jacob wrestled with an angel until the break of day, as he faced a confrontation with Esau. The angel said “Let me go, for the day breaketh. And [Jacob] said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me” (verse 26). Jacob received the blessing at the break of day, just as Israel will at the opening of the Millennium. Until that time their trials and jeopardy will continue. The same morning may also be referred to in 2 Kings 19:35, when Israel found deliverance from the Assyrian hosts threatening Jerusalem.

Clearly there is one morning for the Church — the opening of the harvest — and quite a different morning for Israel — the opening of the Kingdom. One introduces the seventh stage, the other the Seventh Millennium.⁷

SUMMARY

The term “day” sometimes represents periods of the Church, and sometimes represents millenniums. The return of Christ synchronizes with the seventh period of the Church.⁸ The Kingdom synchronizes with the Seventh Millennium. Below is a summary of texts which fit each way.

Days as Church Periods	Days as Millenniums from Adam
Joshua 6:12, 15	Ezekiel 46:1
Ezekiel 43:18-27	Matthew 12:10, Luke 13:14, 14:2-4
Leviticus 8:33	John 5:9, 9:14
Leviticus 23:7, 8, 39	Leviticus 14:9
2 Kings 3:9 (cf. 8:2)	Numbers 19:12
Revelation 1:10	Matthew 24:20
(2 Peter 3:10)	Genesis 17:12
(1 Thessalonians 5:2)	John 2:19
	Hosea 6:2
	Genesis 1:27, 31
	John 11:17
	John 2:1
	Genesis 22:4

Significant to our study are four conclusions in particular. (1) Texts which link the “seventh day” to the Lord’s return all refer to the seventh *Church* rather than the seventh *Millennium*. (2) The Lazarus class at the first advent had been under the curse *four* millenniums rather than five. (3) The wedding in Cana was on day *six* rather than seven, suggesting the marriage of Christ and his bride is at the close of the *sixth* millennium. (4) In the same episode, the “third day” coincides with day six, rather than day seven, suggesting the raising of the church on the third day is within the *sixth* millennium.

These conclusions are consistent with the view that the Seventh Millennium is still impending, but not otherwise.

(1) The resurrection of Jesus on the early morning of the first day of the week represents that he was raised early in the morning of the first stage of the church. But by another clever means, the Lord has arranged that his raising also represents the raising of his body members early in the morning of the seventh stage of the church. How? By drawing special attention to the last several days of our Lord's experience, through and including the morning of his resurrection. All four Gospel writers record Jesus riding into Jerusalem during his last week. John 12:1, 12 yields the information that this episode was five days before "the passover," which meant day fifteen of Nisan, which that year was a Saturday. Thus Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Nisan 10 (just as the passover lambs were selected on the 10th of Nisan), which was Monday. Consider that day one of the narration. Day two, as the Mark account makes clear, was the day he cursed the fig tree and cleansed the temple. Day three his disciples observed the withered tree, Jesus was confronted in the temple, and spent the day in lengthy teachings in the temple area. Day four, Thursday, he refrained from going to the temple, but that evening ate his last supper with the disciples. Day five, Friday, he was crucified. Day six he was in the grave, and early Sunday morning — the seventh day of the sequence — he was raised from the dead, just as his body members are raised from the dead beginning early in the morning of the seventh stage of the Church.

In the Jericho picture, the resurrection of both Jesus (Joshua) and the saints ("they") are pictured as early in the morning, on days one and seven respectively. So in the raising of the greater Joshua, Jesus, are shown the resurrection of himself on the first day of the week, and the saints, his body members, on the "seventh" day — both early in the morning.

(2) The "day of the new moon" is another way of representing the kingdom. Israel lost their standing with God when they crucified Jesus at full moon, and their fortunes waned thereafter. In the kingdom their fortunes, which seem so bleak at the outset — as a new moon is dark — will wax and increase during the kingdom. 2 Kings 4:23 pictures the kingdom with the same two symbols as Ezekiel 46:1, namely the sabbath and new moon. The Kings passage shows Israel in despair during the Gospel Age before the advent of the Kingdom.

(3) This raises the question whether some "tribulation saints" will linger into the opening of the Millennium, just before the Ancient Worthies are raised. If so, maybe Song of Solomon 5:8-9 applies then. The warning about fleeing not in the winter time suggests the Great Company may linger a bit into the winter of trouble closing this age. That the final troubles intrude into the Seventh Millennium may be intimated also by Genesis 19:23-25, and 2 Kings 3:20 and following.

(4) Even when we believed the Millennium had begun, which was up to not quite 3 years ago.

(5) One may suppose the 5,6,7 view fits better because that has the saints raised in the morning of the 7th millennium, and Jesus was raised in the morning. But the sword cuts the other way at the beginning. Jesus died near the close of the day, and the 4,5,6 view has the sacrifice of the church beginning near the close of the 4th millennium. In fact neither view can claim much about the time of day, for each view fares worse than the other on one end or the other.

(6) The Truths of the Gospel — Jesus is the Messiah, our redeemer, etc. Of course these truths have been misrepresented and distorted in Christendom, just as the Babylonians profaned the sacred temple vessels (Daniel 5:3, 4). Notice a comparison between Revelation 14:20 and Zechariah 14:20. In the former the blood comes up to the bridles of the horses (doctrines), showing that they will be redirected in more wholesome ways. The latter shows they will produce holiness when properly directed — for "bells" the margin gives "bridles."

(7) In these cases all six periods — whether churches or millenniums — are collectively considered a "night" which is followed by a morning. Psalms 30:5 is like this, "weeping may endure for a night (lasting 6000 years), but joy cometh in the morning." This morning opens an everlasting "day" where night will not fall again (Revelation 21:25). This differs from the Jericho picture, where the morning simply means the beginning of a period, and the morning of day one is distinguished from the morning of day seven. (See also footnote five, next section.)

(8) The seven churches identify the church class with the number seven. Day eight would be the kingdom, which identifies this number with the ancient worthies. Notably, Micah 5:5 likens the church to seven shepherds, and the ancient worthies to eight principal men. (Shepherds is an idiomatic way of saying kings, and the margin for principal men is "princes" of men.)

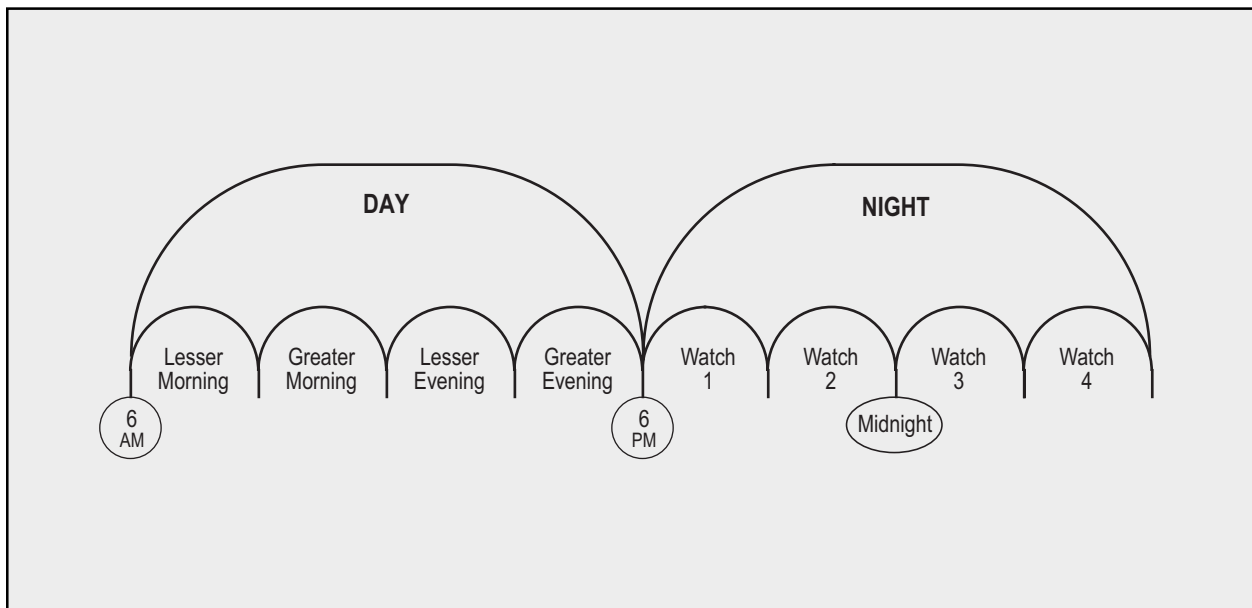
Judges 12:6-15 also uses numbers to represent church stages. The mention of the death of 42,000 rebels reminds us of the retribution after the persecution of 42 months. This retribution pictures the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, which occurred within the sixth church period, indicated by the "six" years of Jephthah's judgeship. He was followed by Ibzan of Bethlehem (reminiscent of Christ). He judged seven years, indicating Christ's second advent during the seventh church. He was followed by the 10 years of Elon, perhaps indicating the earthly kingdom of 1000 years. The same period is indicated also by the eight years of Adbon, as the millennium is the eighth "day," namely the period following the seventh stage of the Church. If this interpretation is correct, it provides an independent evidence that the Millennium follows the seventh stage of the church.

Section Thirteen

Midnight

This Section is related to the last. The text in Psalms 90:4 which compares a day to a thousand years also connects this period to “a watch in the night.” To understand this picture, we should review how the Jewish Day was divided in Jewish culture. The daylight hours were divided into morning (sunrise to noon) and evening (noon to sunset). These parts were each divided again, so that the daylight hours had four parts — the lesser morning and greater morning, the lesser evening and greater evening. (R2953 gives the particulars.)

The hours of darkness were also divided into four parts, termed watches (Psalms 63:6). Mark 6:48 refers explicitly to “the fourth watch of the night.”¹ Thus the four parts of the day, followed by four watches in the night, divide the whole into eight segments.²



But now the essential question — what do each of these periods represent? Psalms 90:4 suggests a “night watch” represents a thousand years, just as a “day” does. But a day can also represent a period of the Gospel Age. Is it the same with night watches?

MIDNIGHT

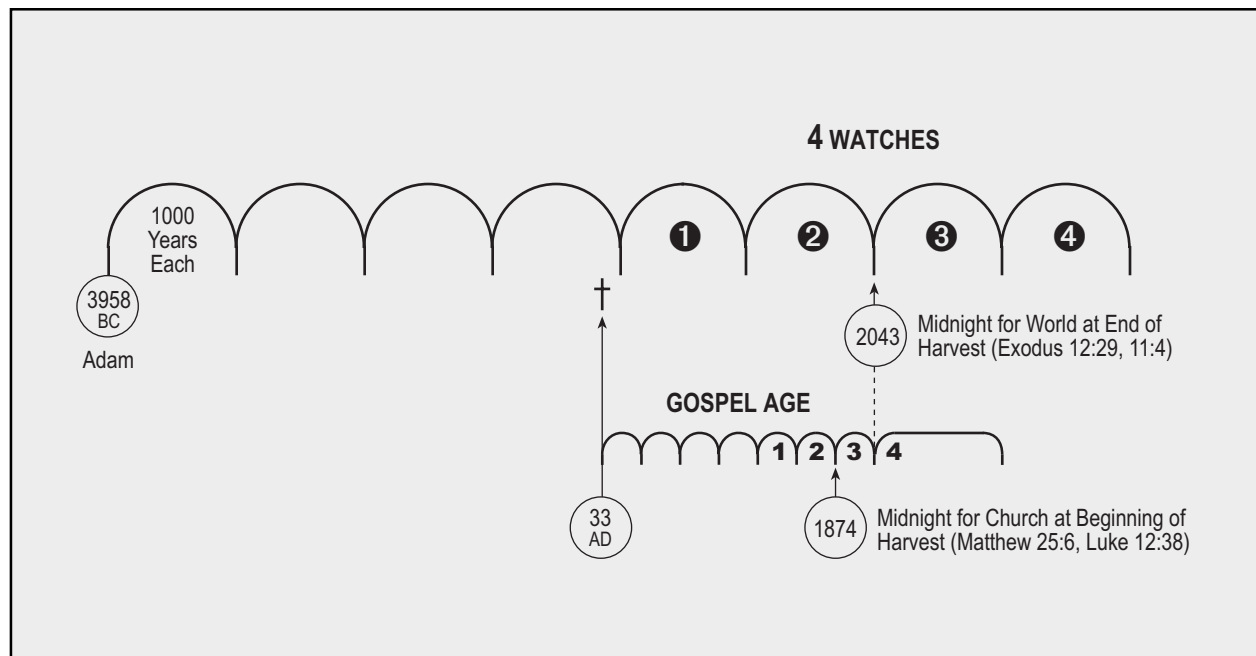
Evidently so, and we can illustrate this with the term “midnight.” In two of the gospel accounts this refers to the time of the second advent. Luke 12:38 says, “If he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.” Between these two falls midnight, and Matthew 25:6 specifies that “at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom” — the return of Christ — at the beginning of the Harvest.

However, “midnight” also appears in Exodus 11:4 and 12:29, as the time the death angel struck at the first passover, during the 10th plague in Egypt. This last plague, which smites the would-be inheritors of Egypt (as though to show the old order coming to an end), is the time of the seventh plague of Revelation. This comes at the end of the Harvest, rather than the beginning. The passing over of the firstborn represents the deliverance of the church in the last troubles closing this age.

In one case the transition between watch two and three is the beginning of the harvest, in the other it is the end of the harvest. There is only one way both can be true — each case is on a different scale. The first one refers to Church periods, and the second refers to Millennial periods. In other words, the beginning of the Harvest marks the opening of the seventh *Church*, and the end of the Harvest marks the opening of the seventh *Millennium*.

Midnight in the Gospels has to do with the harvest church, so it is reasonable that those watches are periods of the Church. That Christ comes at the junction of Churches six and seven is apparent from the messages in Revelation. Christ is still to “come quickly” during Philadelphia (Revelation 3:11), but is present and knocking during Laodicea (Revelation 3:20).

Midnight in Exodus has to do with the judgment of this world introducing the Kingdom, so it is reasonable that those watches are thousand year periods from Adam. That the Kingdom is introduced with the seventh Millennium is consistent with all our findings so far. Just as the firstborn were passed over by the death angel, so the Church is delivered in the final judgments of this world, symbolized also in the fiery chariot and whirlwind which took up Elijah.



THE FOURTH WATCH

The same meaning as in Matthew 25:6 — periods of the church — is used in Matthew 14:25, Mark 6:48, and John 6:21.³ The episode is when Jesus walked on the stormy water to join his disciples in their turbulent ship, stilled the wind, and the ship immediately was at land (John 6:21). This occurred at the approach of the fourth watch.⁴ It is a lovely picture of our Lord coming to receive his saints in the time

of trouble, bringing us into our everlasting rest, and quieting the winds of strife (Psalms 46:10). This episode begins at the close of the 3rd watch — the 7th period from daybreak — and applies to the close of seven stages of the church. The 4th watch which was then about to begin is period eight — the Kingdom.

PSALMS

Psalms 119:62 says, “At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.” Presumably this refers prophetically to the Church. In this case it is compatible with Matthew 25:6, the midnight of the Lord’s return. Verse 105 of the same Psalm says “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,” using the same symbol as Matthew 25:1 (lamp), further connecting this Psalm with Matthew 25.

GIDEON

Gideon’s band of 300 attacked the Midianites “in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands” (Judges 7:19). Gideon represents our Lord, the 300 the redeemed saints, the trumpets represent the announcement of the Truth, and the earthen vessels broken to let their lights shine represent the humanity of the saints, broken in their service. All of this speaks of the Harvest Message going out through the brethren, which is the first front in the onslaught against Christendom, the fray later joined by others. The conflict begins within the middle watch, shortly after it began. Presumably the middle watch here is the watch which began in the middle of the night. It is midnight, at the opening of the seventh Church, the Harvest Church.

MOSES

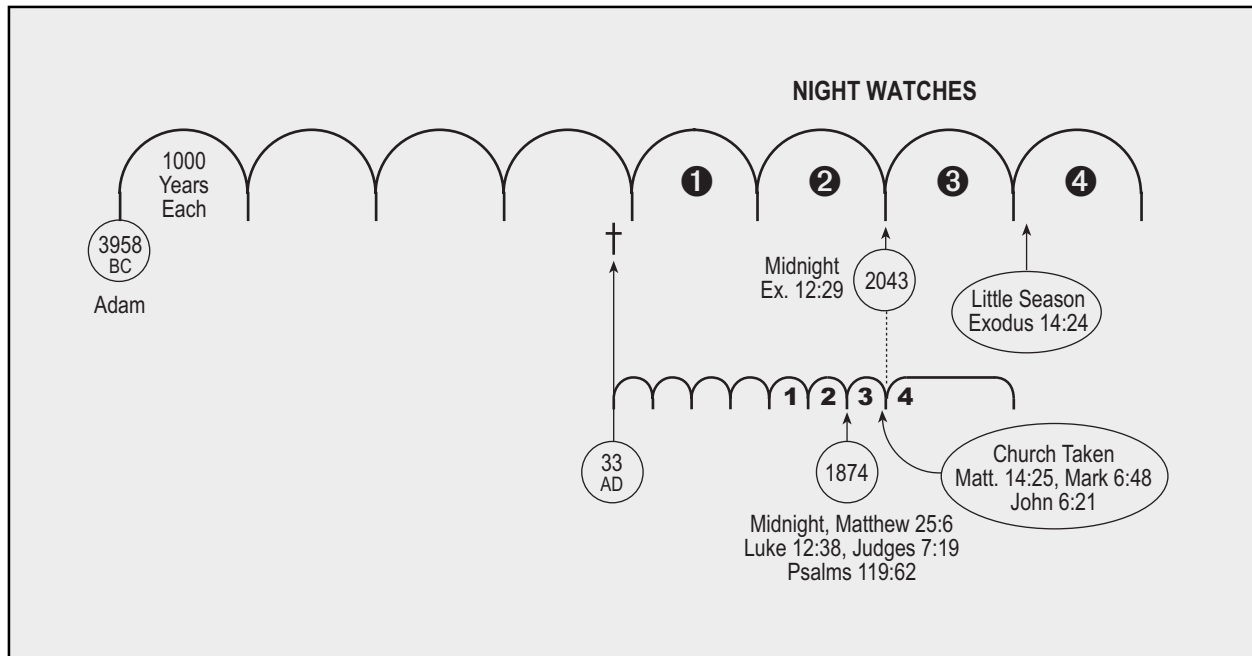
After the Exodus, the Egyptians pursued the Israelites and caught up with them at the Red Sea. The Israelites crossed, but the Egyptians were engulfed. Most brethren see in this a picture of the Little Season, when Satan and the ungodly will be destroyed (F459), and the time of this episode is consistent with this view. The episode occurred “in the morning watch” (Exodus 14:24). Presumably this is the watch which introduces the morning, the fourth watch, the “eighth period.” This pertains to mankind, and therefore the periods represent Millenniums, in this case the eighth millennium. This fits, for the little season follows the thousand year kingdom, and thus is on the eighth millennium. We saw the same thing represented in the previous section as circumcision on the eighth day.

SUMMARY

Night watches, just like days, apply on two scales. For us they are stages of the Church, for the world they are millenniums from Adam. Watch three is period seven from daybreak. For the church this is the harvest, for the world the Millennium. For the church the approach of watch four brings deliverance, for the world it introduces the Little Season.

Midnight is the transition from period six to seven. There are two midnights — one opens the harvest (Matthew 25:6), and one closes the harvest (Exodus 12:29). Therefore these must be on different scales. The first refers to church periods, the second to millennial periods. In other words, the beginning of the Harvest marks the opening of the seventh *Church*, and the end of the Harvest marks the opening of the seventh *Millennium*.⁵

This is valuable, independent testimony that six millenniums close with the end of the harvest ... still impending. This is consistent with the factual testimony of scripture and history that 6000 years will terminate about the year 2043.



(1) Commentaries generally agree there were four watches in the New Testament, but sometimes suggest there were only three in the Old Testament. We have no good evidence for this conclusion. Perhaps it comes from the term “middle watch” in Judges 7:19, suggesting an odd number, so one could be in the middle. We think it more likely the middle watch is the watch which begins in the middle of the night, midnight, which would be the third of four watches.

(2) One might suppose the night should come first, as in the normal Jewish Day. Apparently the type here follows the colloquial concept of a daybreak beginning — because otherwise the pictures do not work. This is consistent with Joshua 6:12, 15, where sunrise represents the beginning of church periods 1 and 7 respectively.

(3) John 6:21 is the same episode, though this passage does not specify “fourth watch.”

(4) Mark 6:48 says “about [peri] the fourth watch,” implying it was at the transition of the watches. Matthew 14:25, King James, “in the fourth watch” does not precisely reflect the Greek text, as the Greek word “en,” often rendered “in,” does not appear in the text. (Compare to Matthew 2:1, for example, where it does appear.) Matthew could have said “in,” but did not.

The words “in the fourth” come from the single Greek word *tetarte*, which is rendered by both the Concordant

Interlinear and New World Interlinear as literally “to fourth.” Moulton’s *Analytical Greek Concordance* says this is the dative, singular, feminine case of *tetartos* (fourth). Dative case, in grammar, denotes “... in many languages, approach toward something” (*Webster’s New 20th Century Dictionary*, Unabridged, Second Edition, 1973). Evidently this episode occurred as the fourth watch approached, not within the fourth watch.

(5) Actually there is another prophetic “midnight,” making three total. As explained in footnote seven of the previous section, there are some texts which consider all six periods (whether of the church or the world) collectively as a “night” to be followed with a blessed morning in period seven. In these cases “midnight” would be, well, in the middle. If the picture is about the Gospel Age, then midnight would be during the dark ages. For example, Samson in Judges 16:3 was said to lay until “midnight” when he arose and triumphantly carried the gates of the city upon his shoulders. This pictures the saints in the city (Christendom) forsaking their consort (Papacy), rising in the darkness and leaving triumphantly in the Reformation. Had they not done so, they would have perished by morning, as Judges 16:2 indicates. Psalms 63:6 and the Song of Solomon 3:1, 2 are consistent with this approach, representing the Gospel Age up until Laodicea collectively as night — the time of night watches — rising to seek their Lord as the end approached.

Section Fourteen

Related Matters

The solution to many concerns respecting the Seventh Day is that there are two separate and distinct such periods, one for the church and one for the world. We have already entered the seventh day for the saints, Laodicea. Thus the lovely truth we all share, having our eyes anointed with spiritual “eyesalve” (Revelation 3:18). As the harvest closes, the Seventh Day for the world will open, hailed as the Golden Age humanity longs for. These findings impact some related matters, and here we briefly consider three of them.

THE RETURN OF CHRIST

Brethren attracted to the non-presence view may have cause to consider the proposition anew. The “two levels” of seven day pictures examined in Section Twelve strongly support the view that there are seven discrete stages of the Gospel Age, represented by the seven churches of Revelation. In this case, who would say that we are not yet in the Laodicean stage?

Notice the strong connection between this church and the presence of Christ. To church four Christ said “hold fast till I come.” To church five, “I will come as a thief.” To church six, “I come quickly.” To church seven, “I stand at the door and knock”! (Revelation 2:25, 3:3, 11, 20).

Does this not strongly indicate that he would be present during the last period? Is this not the very symbol used by Jesus to designate his return in Luke 12:36? “When he *cometh and knocketh* they may open unto him immediately.” In Luke the master serves a wonderful meal to the waiting servants. In Revelation 3:20 he serves a wonderful meal to the waiting saints. Does this not refer to the Divine Plan which has nourished us all? Is this not evidence that our Master has returned and helped us “right early” in this new day?¹

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

As we saw in Section Twelve, the Jericho picture connects these seven periods to the seven trumpet judgments of Revelation 8-11. Since the seventh day of the Church has commenced, the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15 also has commenced, and its effect begun. “The Kingdom [singular] of the world hath become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign unto the ages of ages” (Rotherham). The conquering king has been empowered. The transition has been announced by “great voices in heaven” through the harvest message. The new King has rewarded the sleeping saints, and begun a time of wrath against Christendom. She which “did corrupt the earth with her fornication” is herself being corrupted, destroyed (Revelation 19:2, 11:18, margin).

The chart at the end of this Section shows the seventh church / seventh trumpet period followed by the seventh millennium for the world. Notice the implication, that the seventh trumpet does not run through the Kingdom, but only through the Harvest. Some years ago, without regard to chronology, we came to

the same conclusion, noting that all the activities itemized under the seventh trumpet occur during the harvest. The “prophets” rewarded in verse 18 are not the Old Testament prophets, but the New Testament prophets, God’s spokesmen during the Gospel Age. (See for example Revelation 16:6, 18:24, and Ephesians 3:5.) The destruction of those that defiled the earth is not second death, as for example in the little season, but the destruction of Christendom in the harvest.²

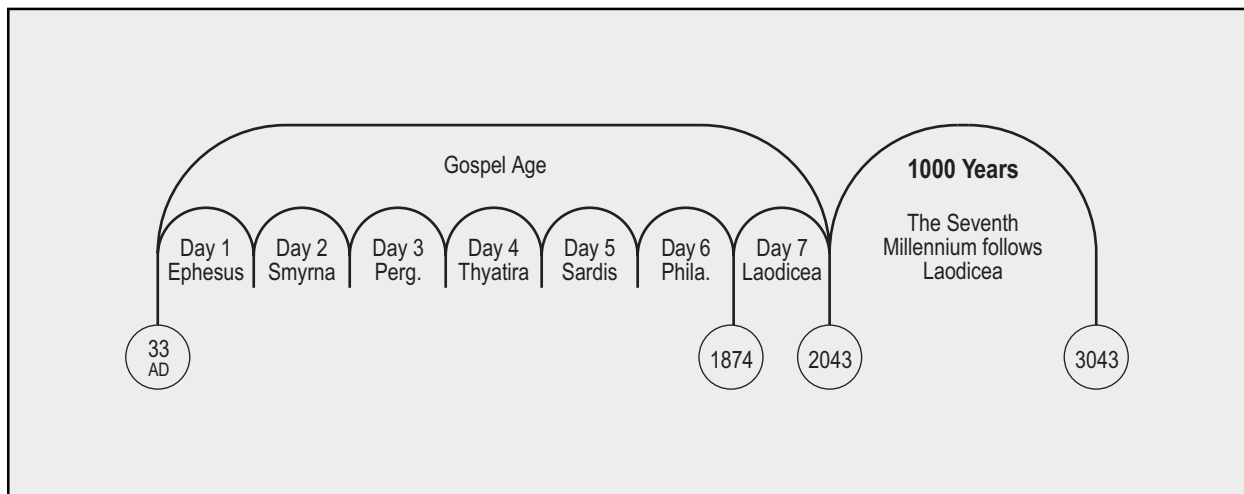
Now we realize a point to all of this which we did not see before. The present arrangement *requires* the seventh trumpet to precede the Seventh Millennium. If the seven days at Jericho represent seven trumpet periods of the Gospel Age *before* the Millennium, then (clearly) the seventh trumpet period *must* fall before the Millennium.

THE SEVENTH MILLENNIUM

The seventh day for the world follows the seventh day for the saints, and is the Seventh Millennium from Adam. It is the thousand year “epoch of Christ’s reign, the great Sabbath Day of restitution to the world” (B39). The “venerable tradition” and its “reasonable foundation” are thus affirmed. But now this view is also reconciled with the other expressly stated view of the Harvest Message. “The Scripture declaration respecting the saints ... is, ‘They lived and reigned a thousand years.’ The reign of the saints [here referred to] cannot be properly said to begin before all the ‘jewels’ have been gathered, nor before the ‘times of the Gentiles’ end” (R2739,40).

The tension between these views, using the customary chronology, has endured throughout the harvest. Pastor Russell frankly acknowledged the problem, and that it had not been resolved. “This matter of when the thousand-year period should be reckoned as fully beginning and fully ending” was “an open question” (R2739). These were not casual remarks or general statements, but his response when put to the question on this specific issue.³

We believe the problem now is resolved. The Kingdom is the Seventh Millennium, and it does follow the glorification of all of the Lord’s jewels. The two views now become one. The resolution is simply the proper chronology. As a concept, this resolution has been suggested before by various ones here and there, but it lacked a specific demonstrated chronology. Only now, because it is timely, do the facts from scripture on one hand, and state records from antiquity on the other, mutually correlate to disclose the solution.⁴



(1) The singular most difficult text for many on this subject is 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them,” the sleeping saints. If it happens all at once, “together,” does this not prove Christ’s descent is still impending? It is important to understand the sense of “together.” It can mean together in time, or it can mean together in experience, not necessarily at the same moment. It is the latter sense that Paul intends, here and elsewhere.

This is clear from his other uses. In the same context, verse 14, he says “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring [back from the dead] with him.” God raised Jesus; he will raise our brethren “with him.” Not at the same moment, in fact many centuries later, but “with” Jesus in the same experience. Colossians 2:13, Ephesians 2:5, both say we were quickened “together with” Christ. Were we enlivened at the same time as Jesus? So with 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. The sleeping saints “shall rise first, afterward [*epeita*] we who ... remain shall be caught up together with them [the same experience] ... into [*eis*] a meeting of the Lord” (composite with Kingdom Interlinear).

(2) In the Jericho picture the seven circlings on the seventh day represent the seven plagues of Revelation 16,

which are limited to the harvest. Also, Joshua 3:15 shows the collapse of Jericho occurred in the harvest season, as the collapse of Christendom is in the harvest.

(3) No wonder many passages in the writings of Pastor Russell are cited by brethren on both sides of the issue ... because there are many comments on both sides of the issue. How apparent it now is that dismissing either point of view, claiming one over the other on the strength of this or that citation, puts half of the answer in jeopardy.

(4) Revelation 20:6 says “they shall be *priests* of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” We think the saints beyond the veil now share our Lord’s regal authority (Revelation 3:21), but evidently the thousand years is a period when they also serve as priests. As regards the thousand year incarceration of Satan, we now respect more deeply that Revelation 16:13 shows the dragon active and unrestrained as late as the sixth plague. Nevertheless, Satan’s power is on the wane. Like a wounded animal becoming more energetic, his influence for evil is still very active. But as Luke 11:21-22 expresses it, a stronger than he has come upon him, and is taking from him “all his armour wherein he trusted.” This referred directly to the first advent, but its parallel applies now in the second advent.

Section Fifteen

Conclusion

This study, connecting scripture with history, provides sound evidence that 6000 years from Adam will close about the year 2043 AD. The calculations are very simple in retrospect.

1656	Adam to the End of the Flood
427	to the Covenant with Abraham
430	to the Exodus
479	to Solomon year four
36	to the end of Solomon
343	to Zedekiah's Fall
587	BC date, Nebuchadnezzar year 18
<hr/>	
3958	BC, Creation of Adam
2043	AD, end of 6000 years

This was verified by the count of jubilees in the time of Ezekiel. We saw that 50 jubilees forward introduced the restoration of Israel in modern times. We observed that Seven Times of Israel's national punishment ran from Babylon's conquest of the promised land to World War I, which freed the land from the Ottoman Empire and opened the way for the modern state of Israel.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks, ending at the cross, have yielded harvest parallels more complete and precise than before. In addition, a set of expanded parallels emerged. Every one of the time prophecies of Daniel is marked by a parallel date 1845 years earlier.

We noticed the center point of the 7000 year plan of God marks the pivotal date 458 BC, counting 70 weeks to the atonement at Calvary, and this is but one instance of a whole pattern of prophetic "weeks." We saw how the 40 and 390 days of Ezekiel apply both backward and forward.

This kind of intertwining harmony, founded on the established facts of history and scripture — facts we neither invented nor manipulated — testifies that we have discerned the mind of the Lord on these issues. Never before has such a system been built upon the bedrock of historical fact. The chronology employed by Bro. Miller was formed to fit around his prophetic expectations. The chronology used by Bro. Barbour was selected because it fit his prophetic expectations.

Here it is altogether different. The chronology at the heart of this study is not simply a choice among several, suited to our wishes. It comes from the established records of world empires, intertwined with the double cord of Hebrew chronology back through the divided kingdom of Israel. Those who established these dates did not conspire with us for the satisfying results which they have produced, nor have we picked and chosen from a variety of options.

THE GREAT SEVENTH DAY

This chronology reconciles all of the scriptural testimony about the Seventh Day, and harmonizes both views of the Millennium found in the Harvest Message. No longer need there be dissension or dispute. The facts, so clearly open for display, are sufficient to ease every concern, and lighten our way through the few remaining years as our journey closes.

The Seventh Day has already dawned upon the saints. It is the seventh stage of the Church, and in it God has helped her, "and that right early" (Psalms 46:5). As shown in Joshua's men at Jericho, the saints rose early in the morning of this day. Those who are "alive and remain" are nourished with present truth. The "day of the Lord" mentioned by Peter has commenced. The John class, "in the spirit on the Lord's day," has a wonderful vision of truth through the seventh angel. In the parallel picture of the night watches, the saints have heard the Midnight Cry and their deliverance approaches as the fourth watch draws near.

Another Seventh Day will shortly open for the World. It will be the grand Seventh Millennium, when the court gate of Ezekiel 46:1 will open wide, enabling the world free access to the "Father of Lights" in his Temple. Then the curse of 6000 years will be rolled back, Jacob's wrestling till the breaking of day will produce a great blessing, the morning light will dissipate the darkness, and a crescendo of voices will respond, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him ... we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation!" (Isaiah 25:9).

FINAL ENTREATY

Some of the dear brethren, vibrant and zealous, may respond before grasping the issues. Some hearers, poorly informed, may suppose the matter answered, and cease their investigation. Do we not all have some experience in this, as we witness to others of the greatest message of hope and truth on the face of the earth, only to have it casually dismissed for the slightest considerations? It happens time and again, on issues of greater importance than here discussed. (See John 7:40-42 for a tragic example.)

The matters at hand merit a closer examination than this. If questions come to mind, pursue the answer. Inquire. Find out the facts. Do not lightly dismiss the resolution of issues which *de facto* have rent the very fabric of the brotherhood. Do not casually suppose that years of controversy are irresolvable. Weigh the scriptures, facts and reason here presented. Let our faith be supple, limber, responsive, and thereby strong, hale, robust. Pursue the issues of faith, read, think, study, ask. Satisfy your mind and intellect, earnest for the things of the Spirit. May not the thunders past yield to a breaking light?

The climax of all our hopes is at hand! Let it enthuse us! Let us welcome it!

Our Hope

Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve, and press with vigor on,
our heavenly call demands such zeal if we would have a crown.
Blest Saviour, thankful for thy call, our race we earnest run,
Stay focussed eye, and single heart, until we hear “well done.”

The time past of our lives now spent suffices to have wrought,
the fleshly will which only ill has to us ever brought.
Forget the steps already trod, and onward urge our way,
Already come the harvest dawn, and soon full light of day.

'Tis God's all animating voice that calls us from on high,
Tis his own hand presents the prize to our aspiring eye.
That prize, and all of heav'n's sweet grace, with thee, O Lord, we'll gain,
When all earth's great ones shall have lost their glory and their fame.

Then shall men see in earth's new day the grandeur so long sought,
the golden age, the kingdom bright, which pain so dearly bought.
What rapture then will stir each heart and joy unbounded move,
When every soul shall kneel in prayer to thank their God above.

Appendix A

Dating Nebuchadnezzar

Dating the reign of Nebuchadnezzar is important, because the scriptures directly link the end of the Judean Kingdom to his 18th year, and the remainder of Old Testament chronology is calculated from this point back.

Nebuchadnezzar is of such stature in history — like Cyrus and Alexander — that fortunately there is ample evidence to secure his position in history. Almost two centuries ago, when the foundations of the views common among the brethren were laid, the matter was very different. Then we had only testimonies from classical historians who wrote centuries after the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and the possibility lingered that they might have misjudged the history of times so much earlier.

Those times of uncertainty are past. In the interim, excavations have uncovered contemporary documents by the thousands, and there is no credible uncertainty respecting the dates of the Babylonian Empire,¹ including Nebuchadnezzar. Here is a summary of the Babylonian Kings. The dates are the beginning of “year one” of each monarch (their year of accession was usually the previous calendar year). The number preceding each name is the number of years this king reigned. This list represents the unified understanding of scholars today.

625 BC	21 Nabopolassar
604 BC	43 Nebuchadnezzar
561 BC	2 Amel-Marduk
559 BC	4 Neriglissar
----	0 Labashi-Marduk (a few months)
555 BC	17 Nabonidus (his son and coregent was Belshazzar of Daniel 5)

From this list it is clear that Nebuchadnezzar’s 18th year began in 587 BC. This was the year he took Zedekiah, and ended the kingdom of Judah. This, rather than 606 BC, is the correct pivotal date to which Bible chronology back to Adam should be attached.

HOW ARE THESE DATES DETERMINED?

There are several ways, all interlocking and mutually supportive. One could begin with Nebuchadnezzar himself, and date him uniquely. From the Seleucid era we have records of lunar eclipses in years 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 30, 31, 32, 41 and 42 of his long reign, which assign these years to the dates 604, 593, 592, 591, 590, 575, 574, 573, 564 and 563 BC. By this means Nebuchadnezzar is fixed in history, independent of any other connection.

Or we can count backward from Cyrus the Persian. His armies took Babylon in October of 539 BC, and his first regnal year began the following Nisan, 538 BC. Counting back 17, 0, 4, 2 and 43 years (from the list above) brings us to 604 BC for the first year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Or we can begin from a solar eclipse on June 15, 763 BC, recorded in the Assyrian records during year 10 of King Assur-Dan in the year Bur-Sagale was eponym, and count through the years of Assyrian history forward. This is facilitated by the practice in Assyria of assigning an official's name to each year, and retaining lists of these "eponyms," which are therefore lists of years. Counting forward we arrive at Assyrian kings such as Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon and Sennacherib (all noted in the Bible), who all ruled Babylon at one time or another. We then count forward through the Babylonian kings who preceded Nebuchadnezzar and arrive at the same result — 604 BC for his year one. (See *Time and Prophecy*, Appendices G and H.)

Thus, using any one of three approaches — Nebuchadnezzar directly, counting back from Cyrus, or forward from a solar eclipse in Assyria — the results are uniform and agreeable. Year 18 of Nebuchadnezzar, which the scriptures link to the fall of Zedekiah, began in the spring of 587 BC.²

HOW MUCH EVIDENCE?

Dispute about the date of Nebuchadnezzar has nothing to do with the amount of evidence available. The evidence detailed in *Time and Prophecy* is more than brethren averse to the conclusion are prone to pursue, and were there double, or triple, the evidence, it would matter little. The fact is that there is more evidence to uniquely assign Nebuchadnezzar in history, than there is, for example, to assign Cyrus the Great in history.

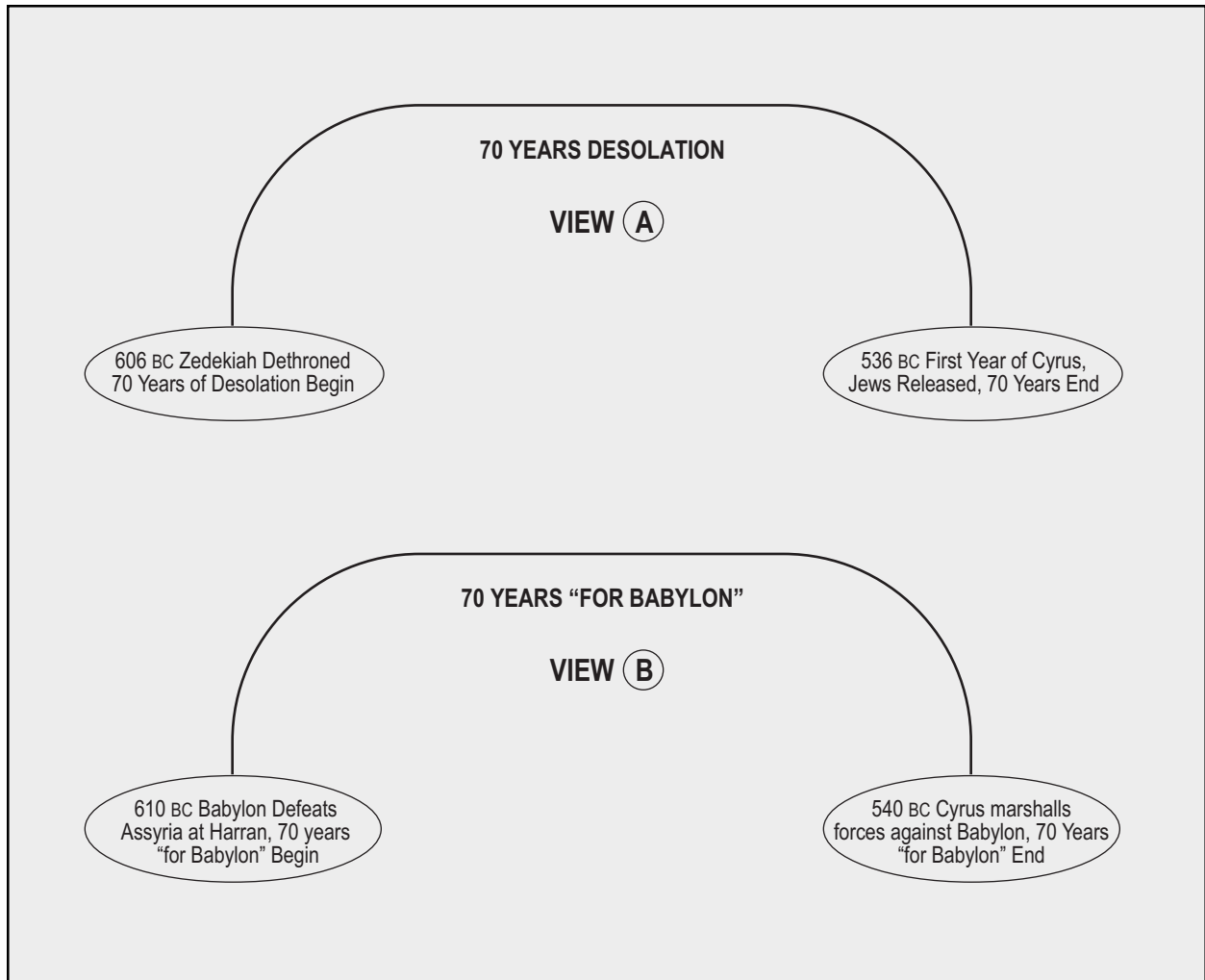
Time and Prophecy draws attention to more than 9000 dated tablets, 25 eclipse records, 2000 records from the "House of Egibi" financial firm, and 10 direct affirmations of reign lengths. Not one monarch, or one year, from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus, is omitted. Nor have we exhausted the evidence. Nor have we simply amassed numbers, but explained the usefulness of each item, and how the various strands criss-cross and document the period, allowing no extraneous or forgotten years. This information is summarized in chart form at the end of this Appendix.

One may of course dismiss anything one wishes.³ Official royal archives, hordes of dated financial transactions, eclipse records, detailed planetary observations, tablet lists of kingly reigns, copious lists of years — all the material by which accurate history is determined — may be dismissed simply by fiat. However, this approach leaves us without *any* foundation, for the history of the ancient world in Assyria, Babylon and Persia is all founded upon the same kinds of evidence.

THE REASON FOR DISPUTE

The reason for disputing the dates of Nebuchadnezzar is because of a competing view of the scriptural testimony. That view is that between the fall of Zedekiah and the return from Babylon is a lapse of 70 years (606 BC to 536 BC), whereas the dates we hold allow but 49 years (587 BC to 538 BC). We hold that the seventy years of Jeremiah are seventy years "for Babylon," rather than seventy years for Judea. They began several years before Zedekiah's fall, and closed shortly before the return from Babylon. Here are the two views, for comparison.

View A is predicated upon two suppositions — (1) That the first year of Cyrus the Persian, who released the Jews from Babylon, began in the spring of 536 BC, (2) That the scriptures speak of "seventy years of desolation" of Judea. The desolation began shortly after the fall of Zedekiah, so these two points combined require Zedekiah's fall to be in 606 BC. This does not accord with the historical evidence, which is therefore dismissed.



The first supposition, that 536 BC was the first year of Cyrus, is *now known to be false*. This supposition appeared frequently in Christian literature in the 1800s, and was therefore used as a “fixed date” long ago (B80). It is no longer. Today it is clear that 538 BC was the first year of Cyrus,⁴ and this is broadly acknowledged among the brethren.

The second supposition, that the scriptures speak of “seventy years of desolation,” is also known to be false. One can easily check any concordance, or search any electronic Bible, and find that the expression nowhere appears in Scripture — notwithstanding the fact that it is cited in quotation marks and italicized for emphasis in some of our Truth literature.⁵

However, the fact that the *expression* “seventy years of desolation” does not appear in scripture does not prove the *concept* incorrect. It is a common view, and deserves examination. What do the scriptures say about the “seventy years”? Let us look at the relevant texts, and compare them to the two views above.

Jeremiah 25:12. “And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.” Notice that the punishment of the king of Babylon comes after the seventy years are completed. The King of Babylon was certainly punished in 539 BC when he was slain

(Daniel 5:30). Clearly, the seventy years must have expired by then or sooner, according to the text above. Chart A does not allow this, for it has the 70 years expiring three years *after* the King of Babylon was slain.⁶ Chart B has no such problem.

Jeremiah 29:10. “For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished *for Babylon*⁷ I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place” (emphasis ours). Notice — these seventy years are “*for Babylon.*” Many things happened during these years, but the defined point of the seventy years has to do with Babylon, *not Judea.*

This text is part of a letter written about the fourth year of Zedekiah (Jeremiah 28:1) to the Jews in Babylon who had been taken in the captivity of Jehoiachin. Jeremiah advised them to settle down, raise families, and prepare for a long stay in Babylon. Clearly the captives receiving this letter understood the seventy years “for Babylon” *had begun* — that is why they were in Babylon as a subject people — several years before Zedekiah fell. This text also fits Chart B, but not Chart A.

Jeremiah 25:11. This is the first time Jeremiah speaks of the seventy years. The date of the prophecy is the fourth year of Jehoiakim (non-accession year reckoning), the same as the third year of Jehoiakim of Daniel 1:1 (accession year reckoning). The year was 605 BC. It was the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar, but when this prophecy was uttered he was still the crown prince of his ailing father Nabopolassar.

The seventy years “for Babylon” had already begun. Babylon had replaced Assyria as the power of the middle east when they took the Assyrian stronghold Harran five years before. Three years later Nebuchadnezzar had led an army across the Euphrates and taken the city of Kimuhu. The following year his father Nabopolassar had taken three more cities west of Euphrates. However, the Babylonian forces had not yet pushed southward, and Palestine was still under the control of Egypt.⁸

Jeremiah 25:6 says Judah had an opportunity for repentance, but none was forthcoming and now God would bring Nebuchadnezzar against them. This he did later the same year. Jeremiah then warns “this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment” (Jeremiah 25:11),⁹ but that part of the judgment was delayed many years. Even after Zedekiah’s fall God said the remnant would be safe in the land (Jeremiah 42:10, 11), but they disregarded this, moved to Egypt, and at last the land was vacated.

Jeremiah then explains that the *servitude of nations* to Babylon would be for seventy years (not the desolation of Judea). “These nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (Jeremiah 25:11). As time passed, one nation after another fell to Babylon, some sooner, some later. Neither Judea nor most of the other nations served Babylon the full period, but within the seventy years allotted for Babylon all of them submitted or were conquered. Assyria fell at the outset of the seventy years. Judea fell five years later. Tyre fell more than 30 years after that, and Egypt even later (Jeremiah 25:19, 22, Ezekiel 29:17-19).

2 Chronicles 36:21. “To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete” (NASB). This desolation fulfilled the prediction of Jeremiah. Once commenced, it continued unabated until the end of Babylon’s seventy years. Thus it endured “until seventy years were complete.” The text does not say the desolation consumed the full seventy years. Nor does the text say the desolation terminated immediately when seventy years closed. (In fact the desolation began 23 years after the seventy began, and continued 2 years after they ended.)

Daniel 9:2. “I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years” (NASB). This text says the same as the previous one — the seventy years must close before the desolation abated. Daniel knew from Jeremiah that Babylon was given seventy years. He knew the desolation of Jerusalem would not abate until they ended. He knew from Jeremiah 29:10 that “when seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will ... bring you back to this place” (NASB). Babylon had fallen. The seventy years were complete. Thus Daniel knew to pray for the release of the Jews.

Zechariah 1:12. “How long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?” This indignation began with Nebuchadnezzar’s sweep through Judea from 589 BC to 587 BC. Seventy years from 589 BC would be 519 BC, and Zechariah 1:7 is dated at the end of year 2 of Darius, the early months of 519 BC, seventy years after the indignation had begun. This is consistent with Chart B, but not Chart A.

Zechariah 7:3. The setting is the fourth year of Darius, the ninth month, near the end of 518 BC. At this time a question arose about fasting in the 5th and 7th months, generally supposed to commemorate the burning of the Temple and the killing of Gedaliah respectively, in 587 BC. However, now that the temple was being reconstructed, perhaps it was time to end those fasts. “Should I [continue to] weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?” Verse five numbers these years as seventy. The people had recently crossed Tishri, entering the 70th year since the burning of the Temple. This is consistent with Chart B, but not Chart A.

Here is a list of all the relevant dates, consistent with the texts above.

- 610 BC — Babylon subdues Assyria at Harran, beginning Babylon’s 70 years.
- 605 BC — Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem (Jer. 25:1, 2 Kings 24:1, 2 Chron. 36:6, Dan. 1:1)
- 597 BC — Nebuchadnezzar takes Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:12, 2 Chronicles 36:10)
- 589 BC — Nebuchadnezzar invades Judea a third time (2 Kings 25:1, Ezekiel 21:14)
- 587 BC — Zedekiah falls, desolation of Judea ensues (2 Kings 25:8-26)
- 540 BC — Babylon’s 70 years close, Cyrus prepares forces to take Babylon.
- 539 BC — Babylon falls to Cyrus.
- 538 BC — Nisan begins Cyrus’ first regnal year — Daniel prays — Cyrus frees the Jews.
- 519 BC — Seventy years from the siege of Jerusalem in 589 BC.
- 518 BC — Seventy years from the burning of the Temple in 587 BC.

PASTOR RUSSELL

The dear brethren who resist historical testimony fail to recognize that Pastor Russell’s approach to history differs from theirs. He lived at a time when the evidence was not so clear as it is today. He wrote before the facts we refer to in this appendix were available. Yet even in his day he gave greater credibility to the thoughts of scholars than some today are inclined to do. Notice, for example, his support for the era of Nabonassar beginning in 747 BC (B36, bottom full paragraph). Is one now to believe Pastor Russell would have simply dismissed the richer and fuller testimony of today, were he yet in the flesh, responsibly searching the mind of the Spirit? This writer is persuaded to the contrary. Respect for his ministry is demonstrated by respect for his principles.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Here is a brief summary of the strands of evidence which give us the length of Babylon's rulers from Nabopolassar through Nabonidus, who lost the empire to Cyrus. Across from each item are the years which this evidence confirms for the kings noted. (The specifics, with references, are detailed in *Time and Prophecy*, Section Five.) We omit Labashi-Marduk who reigned some months after Neriglissar, as his reign did not cross the spring new year, and thus does not augment the count of years.

	Nabopo- lassar	Nebuchad- nezzar	Amel Marduk	Neri- glissar	Nabo- nidus
Scriptures	--	43	--	--	--
Babylonian Chronicles	21	--	--	--	--
Uruk King List	21	43	2	--	--
Adda-Guppi Stele	21	43	2	4	--
Hillah Stele	21	43	2	4	--
Egibi Tablets	21	43	2	4	17
2000 Tablets	21	43	2	4	17
4500 Tablets	21	43	2	4	17
Eclipse Tablets	21	43	2	4	17
VAT 4956	--	43	2	4	17
Nabon. 18	--	--	--	--	17
Dynastic Prophecy	--	--	--	--	17
18 Year List	--	--	--	--	17

(1) Technically the kingdom of Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and forward until Cyrus the Persian, is described as Neo-Babylonia, to distinguish this period from ancient Babylon when kings like Hammurabi were powerful. We use the briefer term because we suppose it is clear which period we are speaking of.

(2) This is abbreviating the issue considerably. We could also start with an 18 year eclipse pattern touching down in years 14 and 32 of Nebuchadnezzar, year 1 of Nabonidus, and year 2 of Cyrus. The latter was 537 BC, thus 1 Nabonidus was 18 years earlier in 555 BC, 32 Nebuchadnezzar was 18 years earlier in 573 BC, which means his first year began in 604 BC.

Or we can lay down a the grid of documented years of the Babylonian empire. Each of the 87 years from Nabopolassar to the end of the empire are documented, with an average of more than 40 tablets per year. These tablets record financial transactions dated to specific regnal

years, and the records continue into the Persian period through Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius and beyond. Therefore any date fixed in the whole spectrum — say in the reign of Cyrus for example — automatically dates every other year in this span.

Or we could fix Nebuchadnezzar uniquely through tablet VAT 4956 which identifies the 37th year of Nebuchadnezzar as 568 BC by recording various observations of Mercury, Mars, Venus, Saturn Jupiter, the moon, and the lunar date of the summer solstice. There is no lack of evidence. (Twelve strands of evidence are explained in *Time and Prophecy*, Section Five, with references cited.)

(3) After all, we rely upon studied scholars and historians to relate this information to us, and who can say what ineptitude or conspiracy may be hidden from our view? So the argument goes, built upon surmise and suspicion. There is no apparent appetite to resolve these concerns, and the simplest omission in any record is cause to dis-

card the lot. The goal of this approach is not to use the evidence, but to dismiss it. Let us not confuse the guesses spawned by fragmentary data (as in the remote history of Egypt) with the clear testimony of thousands of state and business documents (as in Neo-Babylonia). If a legitimate concern does arise in the mind of any reader, kindly email us and we will discuss the specifics.

(4) *Time and Prophecy* (pages 13, 14) cites four examples of this view, all from older works, all predicated on the belief that Darius the Mede interposed for two years between the capture of Babylon and the reign of Cyrus (thus moving his first year from 538 BC to 536 BC). However, documents now available from that time are clear that Cyrus was acclaimed emperor when he rode triumphantly into Babylon two weeks after its fall. (See the paragraph after next. This is also consistent with Isaiah 45:1.)

The prevailing view today is that Darius the Mede was the same person as Cyrus the Persian (his mother was Median, his father Persian), and that Daniel 6:28 should read “Darius, even ... Cyrus” (similarly, 1 Chronicles 5:26, NASB, reads “Pul ... even ... Tilgath-pilneser,” two names for the same person). This is also our view. It is supplemented by the following observation. Herodotus says the wife of Cyrus, Cassandane, “had died while Cyrus was still alive, and he not only bitterly lamented her loss but issued a proclamation that all his subjects should go into mourning for her” (Book Two, first paragraph). In the Nabonidus Chronicle appear these comments about the months following Cyrus’ conquest of Babylon. “In the month [...] the king’s wife died. From the twenty-seventh of the month Adar to the third of the month Nisan [there was] (an official) mourning period in Akkad. All of the people bared their heads” (*Texts from Cuneiform Sources*, Volume V, Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles, Grayson, 1975, page 111). This accords with the claim of Herodotus, assuming the “king” here was Cyrus.

From the same source, pages 109-111, here is the greater narrative of Cyrus’ conquest of Babylon, which makes it apparent that Cyrus was the leader from the beginning. Our comments are in {braces}. “In the month Tishri {of 539 BC} when Cyrus (II) did battle at Opis on the [bank of] the Tigris against the army of Akkad {Babylon}, the people of Akkad retreated. He carried off the plunder (and) slaughtered the people. On the fourteenth day Sippar was captured without a battle. Nabonidus fled. On the sixteenth day Ugbaru, governor of the Gutu, and the army of Cyrus (II) entered Babylon without a battle {consistent with Daniel 5}. Afterwards, after Nabonidus retreated, he was captured in Babylon {...} On the third day of the month Marchesvan Cyrus (II) entered Babylon {...} There was peace in the city while Cyrus (II) spoke (his) greeting to all of Babylon. Gubaru, his district officer, appointed the district officers in Babylon. From the month Kislev to the month Adar the gods of Akkad which Nabonidus had brought down to Babylon returned to their places.

On the night of the eleventh of the month Marchesvan Ugbaru died.”

(5) This expression occurs ten times in Volume 2. Twice it appears in quotation marks (B185, B191). In the latter case it is italicized for emphasis, with the express affirmation that “the seventy years ... is Scripturally styled the ‘seventy years desolation of the land.’ ” These are simple slips. No such expression appears in the Scriptures.

(6) Some brethren change the usual date for ending the 70 years from 536 BC to 537 BC (without acknowledging their difference from Volume 2 and the Reprints), but this does not resolve the problem. Jeremiah 25:12 requires the seventy years to close before the punishment, whereas they have the punishment two years before the close of the seventy years.

(7) We use the term “for” as found in NASB and NIV. The King James rendering “at Babylon” is surely incorrect — check any variety of translations you wish. The preposition “for” comes from the Hebrew prefix, the letter lamed (our “L”), which means pertaining to, or toward. Some of the dear brethren, with zeal overreaching carefulness, have made a clerical error using Strong’s Concordance, and supposed the Hebrew here uses a different word sometimes meaning “at” — but it does not.

(8) Babylon took Palestine following the battle of Carchemish, mentioned in Jeremiah 46:2, while Nebuchadnezzar was still crown prince. The battle of Carchemish was one of the turning points of history. Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Necho, pursued the Egyptian army southward, and took Jerusalem also. This is the capture mentioned in Daniel 1:1, when Daniel and others were taken prisoners to Babylon. During this southern campaign Nebuchadnezzar heard the news from home that his father Nabopolassar had died and raced across the desert with an elite escort to claim the throne. The various prisoners destined for Babylon followed later, less hurried. For the interest of our readers, here is the Babylonian account of this episode (our comments are in {braces}, all other marks are from our source).

“[The twenty-first year {of Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar}]: The king of Akkad {Babylon} stayed home (while) Nebuchadnezzar (II), his eldest son (and) the crown prince, mustered [the army of Akkad]. He took his army’s lead and marched to Carchemish which is on the bank of the Euphrates. He crossed the river [to encounter the army of Egypt] which was encamped at Carchemish. [...] They did battle together. The army of Egypt retreated before him. He inflicted a [defeat] upon them (and) finished them off completely. In the district of Hamath {entrance to Israel in the north} the army of Akkad overtook the remainder of the army of [Egypt which] managed to escape [from] the defeat and which was not overcome. They (the army of Akkad) inflicted a

defeat upon them (so that) a single (Egyptian) man [did not return] home. At that time Nebuchadnezzar (II) conquered all of Ha[ma]th {or possibly to be rendered Hattu, Palestine}. For twenty-one years Nabopolassar ruled Babylon. On the eighth day of the month Ab he died. In the month Elul {month six, just before Tishri} Nebuchadnezzar (II) returned to Babylon {which means he arrived then} and on the first day of the month Elul he ascended the royal throne in Babylon. In (his) accession year {the remainder of the year before the following Nisan} Nebuchadnezzar (II) returned to Hattu {that is, Palestine, which testifies that he had been in “Hattu” before}. Until the month Shebat {month 11} he marched about victoriously {unopposed} in Hatti {Palestine, variant spelling}. In the month Shebat he took the vast booty of Hattu {Palestine} to Babylon. In the month Nisan he took the hand of Bel {a normal spring ritual} (and) cel-

ebrated the Akitu festival” (*Texts from Cuneiform Sources*, Volume V, Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles, A. K. Grayson, 1975, pages 99, 100).

Daniel 1:1 occurred in the “third year” of Jehoiakim (accession year system), or as Jeremiah 46:2 says the “fourth year” (non-accession year system). The capture of Jerusalem must have been before Tishri of Nebuchadnezzar’s year of accession, 605 BC, for that Tishri advanced the count of Jehoiakim’s years by one. Thus Jerusalem fell in Nebuchadnezzar’s campaign before he returned to claim the throne, not during his return to Palestine after his coronation.

(9) A period (punctuation mark) belongs at this point in verse 11, as one can see comparing this verse to Jeremiah 34:7 and Jeremiah 16:9, which do not contain the material in Jeremiah 25:11b.

Appendix B

The Kings of Judah

At the end of this appendix appears a list of all the data for the kings of Judah and Israel. *Time and Prophecy*, Section Nine, contains a rigorous study of this data, explaining in detail how it fixes the length and placement of each king's reign. Here is a less rigorous treatment limited to explaining the specific overlaps in the kings of Judah which abbreviate this period by 50 years as compared to a straight total of the reign length numbers.

The specific adjustments are these. (1) A coregency of Jehoshaphat with his father reduces his sole reign by four years. (2) The reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah and Joash were reckoned by the non-accession year system, which means year one of each reign was the same as the last year of their fathers' reign. This reduces the total by three years. (3) A coregency of Uzziah with his father Amaziah reduces Uzziah's sole reign by 24 years. (4) Jotham's sole reign is reduced eight years. (5) A coregency of Manasseh with his father Hezekiah reduces his sole reign by 11 years. The total reduction is $4 + 3 + 24 + 8 + 11 = 50$ years.

SOME PRELIMINARIES

The Jewish year today, as during the Kingdom of Judah of old, counts months from the spring, but years from the autumn. Thus the odd circumstance that Tishri, month number seven, is the beginning of the new year. However, when Jeroboam secured the rule of 10 tribes following the death of Solomon, he changed the customs of his northern kingdom (Israel) from the customs of the two remaining tribes in the south (Judah). He made centers of worship in Bethel and Dan so his people would not worship at Jerusalem. He began a feast in month eight to supplant the feast of tabernacles in month seven. He began years in the spring rather than the autumn. He changed regnal years to a non-accession year system rather than Judah's accession year system. (This change was abandoned beginning with the reign of Jehoash.)

Meanwhile, in Judah, Rehoboam continued the normal customs. But at the time of Jehoshaphat there was an alliance between the two kings, Jehoshaphat with Ahab, including a marriage of Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram to Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. With the passing of Jehoshaphat the southern kingdom adopted Israel's non-accession year system for Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Joash,^{1, 2} before resuming the old custom with the reign of Amaziah.³

CHART OF THE KINGS

Included in this booklet is a chart of the kings of Judah and Israel, showing each year of the divided kingdom. This chart was inserted between pages as a separate, removable chart, to facilitate the reader referring to it while reading this discussion. Please locate it, unfold it, and follow along as we discuss it.

The chart has three main columns, with 70 years in each column. Each of these has two subcolumns, showing the kings of Judah on the left, and Israel on the right. The years are staggered because the regnal years of Judah were from Tishri to Tishri, but in Israel they were from Nisan to Nisan.

The chart begins with a box representing the last year of Solomon, which was his year number 40. Some time during this year Solomon died and was replaced by his son Rehoboam. However, that year was counted as Rehoboam's accession year, and his official "year one" began with the next New Year Day, namely Tishri first. Therefore we put the name "Rehoboam" — meaning his first regnal year — in the next box. (On this chart, a new king's name always appears in the box which would be "year one" of his reign.) Following that are years 2, 3, 4, etc., through the 17 years of Rehoboam's reign. Abijah's three years follow, then Asa's 41 years.

The little dots which appear near the center vertical line between Judah and Israel represent the approximate time one king died and another replaced him. Do you see the little dot in the box of Solomon's last year? That dot is about the time Solomon died and was replaced by Rehoboam. This was approximately the same time that the northern tribes of Israel split away into a separate kingdom, and Jeroboam became their king. Do you see the little dot in the box of Jeroboam's first year? That is about the time he ascended the throne — somewhere between Tishri beginning Solomon's last year, and the following Nisan.

There are five dates identified on the chart for convenience. The first is 930 BC, in the second year of Jeroboam, and also the year Solomon's last regnal year came to a close. Then, merely for a frame of reference, in a similar place in the next two columns are the dates 70 and 140 years later, namely 860 BC and 790 BC. The last date, near the end of the chart, is 723 BC, the year Hoshea, the last monarch of the northern kingdom, was dethroned. Forty years before this the year 763 BC is identified, the year of a solar eclipse (June 15, Julian calendar) noted in the Assyrian records. The same eclipse was a token of impending judgment upon the northern kingdom predicted in Amos 8:9, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day."

The ten tribe kingdom in the north was known as "Israel" in contrast with the southern two tribe kingdom of "Judah," so when we say Israel in this discussion we mean the northern kingdom. Notice the first king of Israel, namely Jeroboam. The year he ascended the throne is given as his first year (remember, the name of the king identifies "year one" of his reign). Israel used the non-accession year system, which means a king's reign begins with "year one" rather than an accession year.

Then follow the remaining years of Jeroboam's 22 year reign, and the year he died is also given as "year one" of his successor Nadab, who reigned "two years." In fact Nadab reigned for only about one full year of time — but since the year he was enthroned was "year one," and the year of his death was "year two," the official record gives his reign as two years (1 Kings 15:25). His second year is the same as year one of his successor, Baasha. His 24th is the same as his successor Elah, his second is the same year that Zimri reigned for a brief seven days, and the same year Omri took power, etc.

It is easy to see that in the non-accession year system of Israel, the closing year of a king was double counted — once to him, and once to his successor. The "cleaner" method used in Judah means one can simply add the listed years of the reigns of the various kings to determine a correct overall period.

HOW DO WE KNOW?

We say that Judah used an accession-year system, and Israel a non-accession year system. How do we know? Some suppose this is mere assumption. It is not. It is logical inference from the scriptural data, which is quite different. For example, notice the following two lists of years.

Rehoboam	17	Jeroboam	22
Abijah	3	Nadab	2
Asa	41	Baasha	24
	—	Elah	2
	61	Omri	12
		Ahab	5
			—
			67

Rehoboam and Jeroboam began to reign at the same time, and Jehoshaphat succeeded Asa in the fifth year of Ahab (the year Judah numbered as year four of Ahab).⁴ So these two lists span the very same years. Yet one total is 61, the other 67 — six years different. Why? Then we reflect that during this period there were six kings of Israel, and if the first year in each case was double counted (as in a non-accession year system), this would explain the difference.

Then we check the synchronisms. Abijah began to reign in the year Judah called 18 of Jeroboam (which Israel called 19 of Jeroboam). Check. Asa began in the year Judah called 20 of Jeroboam (which Israel called 21 of Jeroboam). Check. Jehoshaphat began in the year Judah called 4 of Ahab (which Israel called 5 of Ahab). Check.

Now we check the synchronism going the other way. Nadab began to reign in the year Israel called 2 of Asa (which Judah called 1 of Asa). Check. Baasha began to reign in the year Israel called 3 of Asa (which Judah called 2 of Asa). Check. Elah began to reign in the year Israel called 26 of Asa, and Zimri in year 27 (which Judah called years 25 and 26 respectively). Check.⁵ Ahab began to reign in the year Israel called 38 of Asa (which Judah called 37 of Asa). Check.

Do you see how these things are reconstructed from the data? Each reign length, and each synchronism, fits. Without recognizing the different regnal systems, and the different calendar years, they would not. The scriptures have preserved all the data correctly that was originally recorded in various annals year by year, as things occurred. It is something like reconstructing transactions from a log of journal entries in an accounting system. The data was preserved by later scribes who incorporated the information into the books of Kings and Chronicles that we have today.

SO FAR, SO GOOD

So far all the data fits, and none of the Judean kings overlap. But with Jehoshaphat matters change a little — first a brief coregency of four years with Asa, and then a change in Judah to the non-accession year system. How do we know this? Please focus now on the first shaded portion of the chart, the 28-year reign of Jehu, king of Israel. His kingdom used the non-accession year system, so his year one is the same as year 12 of his predecessor Joram — notice this on the chart.

In the seventh year of his reign Joash of Judah begins to reign — notice the little dot in the first year of Joash, near the top of seven Jehu. Jehu was replaced by Jehoahaz in the 23rd year of Joash — see the dot in the bottom part of Jehoahaz' first year. Now, considering these two dots, do you see that we could not place Jehu's reign higher in relation to Joash? For example, if we moved Jehu's reign up one year, his last year would no longer synchronize with year 23 of Joash. Likewise, we could not move Jehu's reign down one year, or year seven would no longer synchronize with the first year of Joash.

In other words, Jehu's 28 years, as related to Joash's reign, cannot be moved up or down — it can only fit exactly where it is. But this means that the year Joash came to the throne is the same as “year one” of his reign — which proves that Judah had shifted to the non-accession year system. Experiment as you wish ... this conclusion remains.⁶

Since Joash's reign uses the non-accession year system, his first year was the same as Athaliah's last (seventh) year. Thus, as the chart shows, counting upward from year seven back to year one, her first year overlaps with the top part of Jehu's first year. Athaliah came to power when Jehu killed her son Ahaziah, and Jehu's predecessor Joram, in the same episode. Thus year number one of her reign was the same year she came to power, which means she used the non-accession year system also.

According to 2 Kings 8:25 Ahaziah came to the throne in the 12th year of Joram of Israel, which means his brief reign was contained within that same year — and as his reign length was listed as “one year” (verse 26), evidently he used the non-accession year system also.⁷

This means Jehoram of Judah's last (eighth) year was the same as Ahaziah's first (and only) year. So, following the chart, we can count back to his first year, and see that it overlaps the top of year five of Joram of Israel. According to 2 Kings 8:16 this is the same year he came to the throne — which means Jehoram of Judah's reign also is recorded with the non-accession year system.

Now, let us pause a moment to determine what all this means. The first year of Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah and Joash each overlapped their predecessors. As explained in footnote one, this makes no change to the customary chronology for Athaliah. But it does for Jehoram, Ahaziah and Joash. In each case it reduces the actual length of their reigns by one year. Together it means a change of three years.

This is an important finding. It is a scriptural finding. To avoid this, one would need to disregard the scriptures which require it — not merely one text, but the interlocking and consistent testimony of several. This is factual information from the Lord's word. Should we not equally examine the remainder of the kings, following the leading of the Spirit ... assured it will prove advantageous?

JEHOSHAPHAT

It is clear, from the chart, that if Jehoram of Judah began to reign in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, this means there were only 21 years from the end of Asa's reign to the beginning of Jehoram's — not 25 years as usually allowed. In other words, Jehoshaphat's sole reign lasted 21 years. Therefore the 25 years allotted him in 2 Chronicles 20:31 evidently include four years of coregency with his father Asa. 2 Chronicles 16:12 explains that Asa was diseased in his declining years, which is a likely cause of the coregency.

JEHOASH

Earlier we said Israel abandoned the non-accession year system with the reign of Jehoash. How do we know? 2 Kings 13:10 says Jehoash began to reign in the 37th year of Joash. However, as you can see on the chart, the year he began to reign at the death of his father Jehoahaz would have been the 38th year of Joash (see the little dot in the last year of Jehoahaz?). This difference is explained if Jehoash adopted the accession-year reckoning, for then the scribes of Israel — imputing their system to Judah — would call that year number 37 of Joash.

AMAZIAH

Two years later, at the end of Joash's reign, Amaziah reverted to Judah's customary accession-year system also, as shown on the chart. How do we know this? If not, then year one of Amaziah would be one year earlier than the chart shows ... which means his last year (number 29) would be one year earlier than shown on the chart. But this means Amaziah would have outlived Jehoash of Israel by only 14 years, whereas 2 Chronicles 25:25 gives us the unusual (but very helpful) information that Amaziah outlived Jehoash by 15 years. (Those 15 years are shown in column three, in small bold numbers.)⁸ Therefore we cannot begin Amaziah's 29 years earlier than shown on the chart ... which means Amaziah's year one was not the same as Joash's 40th year ... which means Amaziah used accession year reckoning.

UZZIAH (AZARIAH)

Please direct your attention to the second shaded portion on the chart. It includes 12 years — the 10 years of Menahem, and two predecessors. (Ignore Pekah — we will discuss him later.) According to the synchronism, Menahem's reign began in the 39th year of Uzziah and closed in the 50th year of Uzziah. As you can see on the chart, we cannot begin Menahem's reign earlier, or his 10th year would not reach year 50 of Uzziah. We cannot begin Menahem's reign later, or he could not begin in the 39th year of Uzziah. This means "year one" of Menahem is the year following his ascent to the throne ... which means he used the accession-year system. This is consistent with what we learned above, namely that beginning with Jehoash Israel adopted the accession-year system.

Having fixed Menahem on the chart, we can now also fix his predecessor Shallum who reigned one month, and his predecessor Zachariah who reigned 6 months, beginning in year 38 of Uzziah. This, in turn, fixes the last year of Jeroboam's long reign of 41 years, as we have it on the chart.⁹

Now trace the years of Jeroboam upward to year 27. That is the year Amaziah died, 15 years after the death of Jehoash. Naturally that would also be the time when Amaziah's son Uzziah succeeded him, and 2 Kings 15:1 affirms that was indeed the 27th year of Jeroboam.

But looking on the chart, you see the problem — this occurred in the 24th year of Uzziah! What this means is that Uzziah had already reigned with his father Amaziah for 24 years before he became sole ruler. What was the cause of this lengthy coregency? We have already observed it — the capture of Amaziah by Jehoash in battle (footnote 8). The people of Judah, not knowing what might become of their king, enthroned his young 16-year old son, only to later find that Amaziah was released, and in fact outlived his captor by many years.¹⁰

Meanwhile, before the battle, as an act of prudence, Jehoash evidently elevated his son Jeroboam to a coregency, thereby defining the succession in the event of a personal disaster. As you can see on the chart, Jeroboam's coregency stretched to 12 years, until he became sole regent in the 15th year of Amaziah of Judah (2 Kings 14:23). The reigns of both Uzziah and Jeroboam were unusually long, but now we see a reason for this — a good number of years in each case was absorbed in a coregency with their fathers.

JOTHAM

We have now examined three of the five adjustments to the kings introduced in this appendix. The scriptures show overlaps of 4, 3, and now 24 years — a total of 31. We next consider Jotham. The

numbers regarding his reign are very odd. 2 Chronicles 27:1 says he reigned 16 years, but 2 Kings 15:30 says Hoshea, king of Israel, ascended the throne in the 20th year of Jotham. How could he reign but 16 years, yet mention be made of his 20th year?

In fact what happened, as you can see on the chart, is that Ahaz replaced Jotham in the 17th year of Pekah, after Jotham had reigned 16 years — but Jotham did not die for another four years. (Whether Jotham was replaced for medical reasons, or for political reasons — they pursued very different policies toward dominant Assyria — is not specified.) The sole reign of Ahaz turned out to be another 16 years from the passing of Jotham. Thus the four years Jotham lived past his dethronement are not otherwise counted, which effectively adds four years to the history of Judah.

But Jotham had a coregency of 12 years with his father Uzziah, who was leprous in his later years, while “Jotham his son was over the king’s house, judging the people of the land” (2 Chronicles 26:21).¹¹ That reduction of 12 years, together with the expansion of four years, yields a net reduction of eight years. Our cumulative reduction is now 31 and 8, namely 39 years.

CONFIRMATION

So far we have considered only the data in the Hebrew scriptures. We now wish to cross check these results by comparing the history thus obtained with the history of Israel’s distant but dominant neighbor, Assyria. Here is a list of the relevant kings of Assyria, with the years listed for them in the Assyrian records.

- 35 Shalmaneser III
- 13 Samsi-adad V
- 28 Adad-nerari III
- 10 Shalmaneser IV
- 18 Assur-dan III
- 10 Assur-nerari V
- 18 Tiglath-pileser III
- 5 Shalmaneser V

The last king is the one who brought the northern kingdom of Israel to an end in the days of Hoshea. “Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea ... Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years” (2 Kings 17:3-5). A brief record in the ancient Chronicles¹² says Shalmaneser “ravaged Samaria” — Israel. During the reign of this Shalmaneser, the description in the eponym list for years 2, 3, 4 of his reign are “against ... against ... against ...” The place name for this campaign of three years is broken away, but the place evidently was Samaria, in accord with the record of scripture that he took Samaria after a three year siege.

Therefore we can assign years 2, 3, 4 of this Shalmaneser to years 7, 8, 9 of Hoshea which closed out his kingdom. This we have done on the chart. Do you see the small bold numbers, in long columns, outside main columns two and three on the chart? Those numbers represent the years of the Assyrian kings listed above. (Their names are abbreviated S3, SA, AN, S4, AD, AN, TP, S5, respectively.) Notice that years 2, 3, 4 of Shalmaneser V (S5) are adjacent to years 7, 8, 9 of Hoshea.

NOW THE DOUBLE CHECK

This placement of the Assyrian Kings allows us a double check on our results, because the Assyrian records speak of kings Ahab and Jehu in the reign of an earlier Shalmaneser, namely Shalmaneser III. Here are the connections.

Shalmaneser III, for year six, records that at the battle of Qarqar he encountered among his enemies “Ahab the Israelite.”¹³ Later he records the events of his 18th year and says “At that time I received the tribute of ... Jehu, of the land of Omri.”¹⁴ If you look at the chart for S3 year 6, you will find it matches the last year of Ahab, and year 18 matches the first year of Jehu. Therefore we cannot move Shalmaneser’s reign either up one year or down one year — and we have a perfect match! This is a highly satisfactory evidence that we have understood the Hebrew scriptures correctly, for they exactly match the history of Assyria for the same period of time ... to the very year.¹⁵

Also, 2 Kings 15:19 says Pul (a short form of Tiglath-pileser) took tribute of Menahem. The Assyrian records confirm this.¹⁶ They also say Tiglath-pileser was a contemporary of Hoshea.¹⁷ This means Tiglath-pileser’s 18 year reign touched both Menahem and Hoshea. This is true on our chart. However, if Pekah had not overlapped Menahem, it would not be possible.

FROM AHAZ TO ZEDEKIAH

Other things could be discussed concerning Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. For example, how do we know that Ahaz’ official “16 years” began with his sole reign rather than his elevation in year 16 of Jotham? Also, Hezekiah had a coregency with Ahaz beginning when Hezekiah was age 12, which explains 2 Kings 18:9, 10 (these coregent years appear on the chart in parentheses). How do we know Hezekiah’s official “29 years” began with his sole reign rather than this coregency? The short answer to these questions — (1) by this means the invasion of Sennacherib, in Hezekiah’s 14th year, falls in 701 BC where history locates it, (2) it avoids the implausibility of Hezekiah being born when his father was only eleven years old. All of this, and more, is discussed in *Time and Prophecy*, pages 55 and forward.

But the only remaining overlap to discuss is between Hezekiah and Manasseh, a coregency of 11 years. We can calculate this overlap because of the dates already established — 723 BC for the last year of Hoshea, which synchronizes with the 8th year of Ahaz (see chart), and 587 BC for the last year of Zedekiah. Here are the years given for these kings in the scriptures:

16	Ahaz
29	Hezekiah
55	Manasseh
2	Amon
31	Josiah
11	Jehoiakim
11	Zedekiah
—	
155	years total.

From this we deduct the first eight years of Ahaz, which bring us to 723 BC when the Kingdom of Israel came to an end. This leaves 147 years remaining until the end of the Kingdom of Judah when Zedekiah fell.

However, from 723 BC to 587 BC are only 136 years, a difference of eleven, suggesting an overlap of this amount somewhere between Ahaz and Zedekiah. There is only one place a coregency of this magnitude could occur among these kings, namely between Hezekiah and Manasseh (which also helps explain Manasseh's inordinately long reign).

This also explains the young age of Manasseh — 12 years old — at the beginning of his reign. Hezekiah knew the Lord had given him a 15 year extension of his life. Among other things, he would surely think how to prepare his son for the duties of the throne before his passing. How better than by associating him as coregent at the earliest reasonable time — when he reached the age of responsibility, 12 years old.¹⁸

SUMMARY

Thus all five reductions are confirmed — 4, 3, 24, 8, 11 — totaling 50 years overall. The period of the Kings of Israel and Judah were actually 463 years, rather than 513 years. The period of the divided kingdom was 120 years less, namely 343 years (which is easy to remember, it is the cube of seven).

This Appendix is detailed. But consider that these few pages incorporate the essence of Thiele's 230 page book on the subject, and the reader may appreciate having saved many hours of thought, while gaining an overview of the subject. Some dear brethren, noting the amount of detail in such a study, jump to a grievously wrong conclusion that it is all too complicated, and the Lord would not burden us with such complexity. This is clearly false for several reasons. (1) It is obvious that He has given us these details, because they are in the scriptures. (2) Daniel, Ezekiel and Revelation are filled with details. Does this argue they are not of God? (3) The chronology customary among the brethren requires no less detail than this, but it is merely veiled from the casual reader, who accepts certain historical dates without searching the detail behind those dates.

In fact the Lord, in His own due time, has made the matter very easy and clear. He has arranged scholars like Edwin Thiele to fathom these issues — others of lesser stature to wade through them, verify, update and summarize them — so that the dear brethren can have the fruits of these labors and studies at their convenience. One does not have to research ancient records to know, from historians, that 539 BC is the first year of Cyrus. One does not have to research ancient records to know, from historians, that 930 BC closed the 40th year of Solomon.

The details are available for all who wish to examine them. The conclusions are open to all who wish to build on them. All of this appears at the right time, by the providence of the Lord. Bro. Russell's surmise about Kings and Chronicles, "we may see some day just how they can be harmonized,"¹⁹ has proven correct. It was then premature ... now it is due season.

SCRIPTURAL DATA FOR THE KINGS

KINGS OF JUDAH

17 Rehoboam	succeeded Solomon	2 Chron. 12:13	
3 Abijah	began to reign in 18 Jeroboam	2 Chron. 13:1, 2	1 Kings 15:1
41 Asa	began to reign in 20 Jeroboam	2 Chron. 16:13	1 Kings 15:9
25 Jehoshaphat	began to reign in 4 Ahab	2 Chron. 20:31	1 Kings 22:41
8 Jehoram	began to reign in 5 Jehoram	2 Chron. 21:20	2 Kings 8:16
1 Ahaziah	began to reign in 12, 11 Jehoram	2 Chron. 22:2	2 Kings 8:25, 9:29
7 Athaliah	began with Jehu	2 Chron. 22:8-23:1	
40 Joash	began to reign in 7 Jehu	2 Chron. 24:1	2 Kings 12:1
29 Amaziah	began to reign in 2 Jehoash	2 Chron. 25:1	2 Kings 14:1
52 Uzziah	began to reign in 27 Jeroboam	2 Chron. 26:3	2 Kings 15:1
16 Jotham	began to reign in 2 Pekah	2 Chron. 27:1	2 Kings 15:32
16 Ahaz	began to reign in 17 Pekah	2 Chron. 28:1	2 Kings 16:1
29 Hezekiah	began to reign in 3 Hoshea	2 Chron. 29:1	2 Kings 18:1
55 Manasseh		2 Chron. 33:1	
2 Amon		2 Chron. 33:21	
31 Josiah		2 Chron. 34:1	
11 Jehoiakim		2 Chron. 36:5	
11 Zedekiah		2 Chron. 36:11	

KINGS OF ISRAEL

22 Jeroboam	rebelled from Rehoboam	1 Kings 14:20	
2 Nadab	began to reign in 2 Asa	1 Kings 15:25	
24 Baasha	began to reign in 3 Asa	1 Kings 15:28, 33	
2 Elah	began to reign in 26 Asa	1 Kings 16:8	
Zimri, 7d	began to reign in 27 Asa	1 Kings 16:10, 15	
Tibni	Tibni, Omri were rival rulers	1 Kings 16:21, 22	
12 Omri	began to reign in 31 Asa	1 Kings 16:21-23	
22 Ahab	began to reign in 38 Asa	1 Kings 16:29	
2 Ahaziah	began to reign in 17 Jehoshaphat	1 Kings 22:51	
12 Joram	began to reign in 18 Jehoshaphat	2 Kings 3:1	
Joram	began to reign in 2 Jehoram	2 Kings 1:17	
28 Jehu	began with Athaliah	2 Kings 10:36, 9:24, 27, 11:3	
17 Jehoahaz	began to reign in 23 Joash	2 Kings 13:1	
16 Jehoash	began to reign in 37 Joash	2 Kings 13:10	
41 Jeroboam	began to reign in 15 Amaziah	2 Kings 14:23	
Zachariah, 6m	began to reign in 38 Uzziah	2 Kings 15:8	
Shallum, 1m	began to reign in 39 Uzziah	2 Kings 15:13	
10 Menahem	began to reign in 39 Uzziah	2 Kings 15:17	
2 Pekahiah	began to reign in 50 Uzziah	2 Kings 15:23	
20 Pekah	began to reign in 52 Uzziah	2 Kings 15:27	
9 Hoshea	began to reign in 20 Jotham	2 Kings 17:1, 6, 15:30	
Hoshea	began to reign in 12 Ahaz	2 Kings 17:1	

MISCELLANEOUS

Omri reigned 6 years in Tirzah	1 Kings 16:23
Asa diseased in 39th year	2 Chron. 16:12
Amaziah outlived Jehoash 15 years	2 Chron. 25:25, 2 Kings 14:17
Hezekiah 4 = Hoshea 7	2 Kings 18:9
Hezekiah 6 = Hoshea 9	2 Kings 18:10

(1) It applied to Athaliah also, but in the customary list of kings she is given six years — one year too short because she actually reigned into a seventh year (2 Chronicles 23:1) — but with the non-accession year system her first year overlapped her predecessor. Thus the customary listing of six years gives a correct number of net years.

(2) 2 Kings 8:25 says Ahaziah began in the 12th year of Joram of Israel, but 2 Kings 9:29 says he began in the 11th year of Joram. The first reflects their new non-accession year system, and Joram's reign by this system was then in year 12. The second record reflects the customary accession year system, which reckoned Joram's reign as being in year 11. It is the same year in each case, merely numbered differently. Whichever system a scribe used in one kingdom was imputed to the other kingdom when registering an official synchronism.

(3) This happened at the same time Jehoash in the north abandoned the non-accession year system. Thus both kingdoms adopted the accession year system, which for record keeping is much "cleaner," because there is no double counting of years. Assyria, which was the major kingdom in Mesopotamia at the time, also used the accession year system.

(4) Remember, each kingdom imputes their system to the other. Thus from Rehoboam through Jehoshaphat, when the systems of Judah and Israel differed, the Judean scribes numbered the years of Israel one less than in Israel ... and the Israel scribes numbered the years of Judah one more than in Judah. We saw something similar in Section Two, and Appendix A, about Nebuchadnezzar — the same year is sometimes called year 19, and sometimes year 18. For Jehoiakim, the same year is sometimes called year 3 (Daniel 1:1) and sometimes year 4 (Jeremiah 25:1) — another year is called both year 7 and year 8 (Jeremiah 52:28, 2 Kings 24:12).

(5) Omri is said to begin his reign in year 31 of Asa (which Judah called year 30). Notice on the chart that this year overlaps years 5 and 6 of Omri. This synchronism refers to Omri's sole reign, after he defeated Tibni — a rival ruler as explained in 1 Kings 16:21-23. After Tibni was defeated Omri was able to develop Samaria, and moved his capital there after a reign of six years in Tirzah (1 Kings 16:23).

(6) Assuming we do not begin disputing the scriptural data itself.

(7) As already noted, the unusual second synchronism for this king, in 2 Kings 9:29, says he began in the 11th year of Joram of Israel. It is not a different year, it is merely labeled differently, a scribe in Judah retaining the old accession-year system used by the earlier kings of Judah. It is possible that this itself is the very year of the change of systems in Judah, Ahaziah being under the influence

of his mother Athaliah who was really from the northern kingdom, and that when her husband Jehoram of Judah was killed she instructed the scribes to make his records in the non-accession year system familiar to her.

(8) Why this unusual information about how many years Amaziah outlived Jehoash? Probably it was noteworthy because Amaziah was once captured by Jehoash in battle, at the peril of Amaziah's life, but in the end outlived his captor (2 Kings 14:13-17).

(9) Do not be confused by seeing Zachariah on the same line as year 41 of his predecessor. In this case it does not mean that was "year one" of Zachariah. The scriptures never speak of his "year one," because that would have begun with the following Nisan, which he never lived to see. Thus his reign is given simply as six months (2 Kings 15:8).

(10) The expression, "And all the people of Judah took Azariah, which was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah" (2 Kings 14:21, 2 Chronicles 26:1), speaks of an unusual accession, such as from the sudden and unexpected loss of a king in battle. A similar expression was used after Josiah unexpectedly died in battle (2 Chronicles 36:1).

When one reads the narrative in Kings or Chronicles, the accession of Azariah (Uzziah) is recorded following the narrative of the death of Amaziah. This leads some to question a coregency, regardless that the numbers *require* one. The answer is that the original records were compiled into the present books of Kings and Chronicles after both kingdoms had come to an end, and the authors (reasonably enough) assembled the data into a regular format, so the accession of a new king follows the record of the previous king. This order of compilation does not mean the next accession never overlapped in a coregency. For example, Genesis 5 adopts an order of compilation in giving its genealogy. Adam lived 130 years and begot Seth / afterward he lived 800 years / he begot other sons and daughters / all his days were 930 and he died. Right after that verse six says "And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begot Enos ..." Clearly this happened before the death of Adam, the order of narration notwithstanding.

(11) How do we know this coregency lasted 12 years? According to the synchronisms, the reign of Jotham began in the 2nd year of Pekah and Hoshea replaced Pekah in the 20th year of Jotham. As you can see on the chart, this means Jotham's year one was the same year he began to reign, which violates the accession year system both Judah and Israel were using. The most reasonable explanation is that Jotham's 20 years began with his coregency (an accession year does not normally apply to a coregency). But as Jotham and Pekah are linked, this means Pekah must have had a coregency also ... but when? The reasonable time is when Shallum died and in the

chaos which ensued Pekah began a reign in Gilead as rival of Menahem. This solution is shown on the chart, and as you can see, makes Jotham's coregency 12 years long. (See *Time and Prophecy* for a fuller discussion of these complicated reigns.)

Notice a parallel. After Baasha's long reign, his son Elah succeeded him and after a brief reign fell to a usurper (Zimri) who reigned a few days. In the chaos following two rival leaders emerged, Omri and Tibni. Now, after Jeroboam (the second's) long reign, his son Zachariah succeeded him and after a brief reign fell to a usurper (Shallum) who reigned a few days. In the chaos following two rival leaders emerged, Menahem and Pekah.

(12) *Texts from Cuneiform Sources*, Volume V, Grayson, 1975, page 73). The text says "Samabarain," which many scholars equate with "Samaria," and thus Grayson renders it.

(13) *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, 2nd edition, Robert William Rogers, 1926, pages 295-296.

(14) *Ibid*, pages 293-294.

(15) The Assyrian records independently double check each other, by giving a list of eponyms (names of court officials attached to each year in their history), a list of kings, and interconnecting links between the two. Besides Assyrian king lists, some of their reign lengths also are mentioned in other ancient chronicles.

(16) That Pul and Tiglath-pileser are the same person, see 1 Chronicles 5:26, NASB. That Menahem paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser is also attested in the Assyrian records, which say he took tribute from "Menihimmu of Samerina" (*Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, Volume I, Daniel David Luckenbill, 1968, Section 772).

(17) "Pekaha [Pekah] their king they deposed and I placed Ausi [Hoshea] over them as king." *Ibid*, Section 816. 2 Kings 15:29, 30 refers to the same episode.

(18) Today the age of responsibility of young Jewish boys is 13, but long ago it was 12, no doubt the reason our Lord appeared in the temple at the age of 12 inquiring of his responsibilities. Also, Ahaz had associated Hezekiah as coregent also when Hezekiah was 12 years of age. (See *Time and Prophecy*, pages 55 and forward.)

(19) Question Book, page 42.

Appendix C
The Period of Judges

This appendix has two purposes — (1) to explain how the narrative of Judges and 1 Samuel are harmonious with 1 Kings 6:1, which allows 349 years for the period of Judges, (2) to examine the genealogy of Ruth 4:18-22. Below is a list of 19 periods of time in Judges and 1 Samuel relevant to this period.

1)	8 years	Servitude to King of Mesopotamia	Judges 3:8
2)	40 years	Rest under Othniel	Judges 3:11
3)	18 years	Servitude to Moab	Judges 3:14
4)	80 years	Rest under Ehud	Judges 3:15,30
5)	20 years	Servitude to Jabin	Judges 4:2,3
6)	40 years	Rest under Deborah	Judges 4:4,5:31
7)	7 years	Bondage under Midian	Judges 6:1
8)	40 years	Rest under Gideon	Judges 8:28
9)	3 years	Reign of Abimelech	Judges 9:22
10)	23 years	Tola judged	Judges 10:1,2
11)	22 years	Jair judged	Judges 10:3
12)	18 years	Oppression of Ammon	Judges 10:8
13)	6 years	Jephthah judged	Judges 12:7
14)	7 years	Ibzan judged	Judges 12:8,9
15)	10 years	Elon judged	Judges 12:11
16)	8 years	Abdon judged	Judges 12:13,14
17)	40 years	Oppression of Philistines	Judges 13:1
18)	20 years	Samson judged	Judges 15:20
19)	40 years	Eli judged	1 Samuel 4:18

450 years

The sum of these years, 450, is exactly the number reflected in Acts 13:20. This is not a coincidence. Paul, a “pharisee of the pharisees,” schooled by the famous Gamaliel, knew this sum, and this was the source of his information in Acts 13:20. Paul knew what we all know — that in these periods are both laps and gaps, and a precise knowledge of the years consumed is not reflected by a simple total.

But are these periods consistent with 1 Kings 6:1, which allows but 349 years for the Judges? Can we compress the total above, 450, down to the necessary 349? The answer is yes. The key to it is recognizing the flow of the narrative.

The first 11 periods above recount a series of deflections, oppressions, and deliverances for the Israelites. But thereafter, the continuing sins of the Israelites caused the LORD to permit two oppressions at

the same time — one from the southwest, the Philistines, another from the east, the Ammonites. “The anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon” (Judges 10:7).

The remainder of chapter 10, and all of chapters 11 and 12, are consumed with explaining how the 18-year Ammonite oppression was relieved by Jephthah, and recording the judgeships of Ibzan, Elon and Abdon who followed him. But what of the Philistine oppression?

Chapter 13 takes up that issue, and goes back 49 years to the beginning of that oppression to explain how it was resolved. Judges 13:1 reintroduces the subject as it had been introduced in Judges 6:1. The Philistine oppression proved more intractable than the other, lasting for 40 years. During this period Samson was born, raised, grew to his late teens, and began avenging Israel against the Philistines in various ways. This continued for 20 years (Judges 15:20, 16:31), until he died bringing down the temple of Dagon, with 3000 enemy casualties, among them many Lords of the Philistines.

However, this did not end the oppression. Even the angel who foretold the birth of Samson said “he shall *begin* to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines,” but would not end the oppression (Judges 13:5). The 40 years must have ended soon after, but how? Who delivered them? Where is it narrated? We might expect it in chapter 17, after recording the death of Samson, but instead we are introduced to two unrelated narratives about the tribes of Dan and Benjamin, and then the book closes. The Book of Ruth adds another fascinating narrative, but still no trace of deliverance from the Philistines.¹

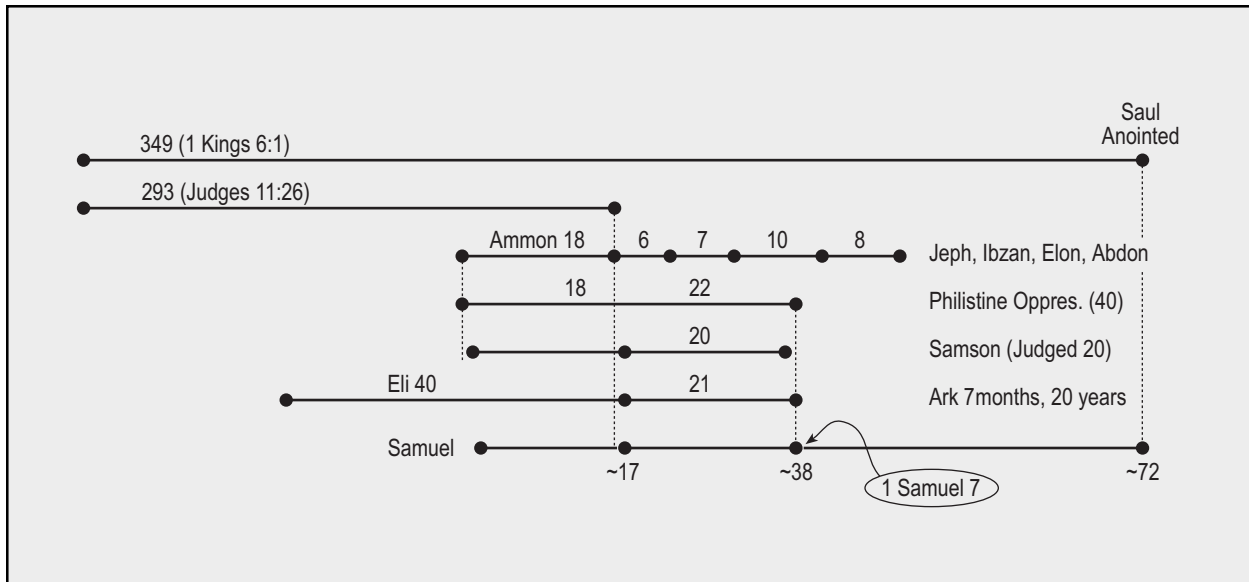
The thread of the narrative continues in 1 Samuel, but first it backs up to give the history of Samuel, who was contemporary with Samson. When we get to chapter seven, at last we read how the Philistine oppression ended. Samuel gathered the Israelites at Mizpeh where they fasted and confessed their sins. The Philistines heard of the gathering and marched to assault them, which filled the Israelites with fear — after all, they had been subject now for 40 years. Samuel prayed to God, and offered a sacrifice. Just as the Philistines approached, God caused a thunder storm to strike them, and in the ensuing melee the Israelites were victorious.

“So the Philistines were subdued, and they came up no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines” (1 Samuel 7:13, 14). Some years later, as Samuel grew old, Israel requested a king and Saul was anointed.

CONNECTING THE YEARS

In Judges 11:26 Jephthah said the Israelites dwelt in the lands disputed by the Ammonite king for 300 years.² That began when Israel crossed the Arnon River seven years before the division of the land. Thus from the division of the land to Judge Jephthah would be 293 years. This leaves 56 years remaining before year one of King Saul.³

The Philistine oppression began 18 years earlier, the same year as the Ammonite oppression. Therefore 22 years remained of the 40 year Philistine oppression. That oppression ended after the ark of the covenant had been at Kirjath-jearim 20 years, before that at Beth-Shemesh briefly, and before that with the Philistines 7 months.⁴ So, in round numbers, the Philistine oppression ended 21 years after Israel lost the ark at the time Eli died (1 Samuel 4:18, 6:1, 19, 7:2). Eli had judged Israel for 40 years, and died at the age of 98. All of this comes together in the following chart.



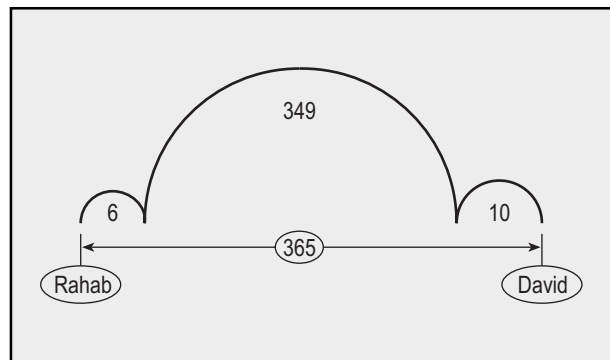
As you look over this chart, it should be apparent that all the episodes fit very easily into the 349 years allotted by 1 Kings 6:1. Indeed, if the period of the Judges was 101 years greater, we would have a large, inexplicable gap between the Philistine oppression and the Kingdom of Saul.

GENEALOGY IN RUTH

The Book of Ruth closes with a genealogy from Pharez (son of Judah) to David.

- Pharez
- Hezron
- Ram
- Amminadab
- Nahshon
- Salmon (husband of Rahab)
- Boaz (husband of Ruth)
- Obed
- Jesse
- David

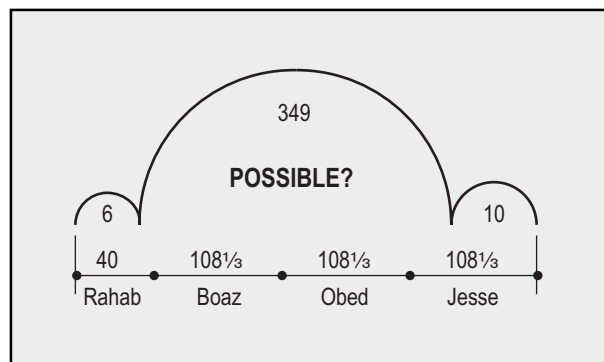
Notice that Salmon married Rahab of Jericho. Presumably this was shortly after the fall of Jericho, about six years before the division of the land. David was born 10 years after Saul became king (since he was 30 at the end of Saul's 40 year reign). Therefore, from the marriage of Salmon to the birth of David would be about 16 years greater than the period of Judges. If the period of Judges was 349 years, then from Salmon's marriage to David's birth would be 365 years.



This is a lot of time for four generations — Salmon (Rahab), Boaz, Obed and Jesse. Each of these persons must have been advanced in years in order to fill out the 365 years with only these four generations. Let us see how it may have been.

Rahab was an adult woman at the time Jericho was taken, but let us assume she was as young as feasible, say 20 years old. Let us assume Boaz was born in her later years, and generously allow 40 years from the fall of Jericho to the birth of Boaz. (People were still living longer then than now, so perhaps Rahab gave birth when she was sixty.) That leaves 325 years to fill for Boaz, Obed and Jesse, until the birth of David. This means that, on the average, these three men were 108 years old at the birth of the next link in the genealogy. That seems inordinately old. Is it possible?

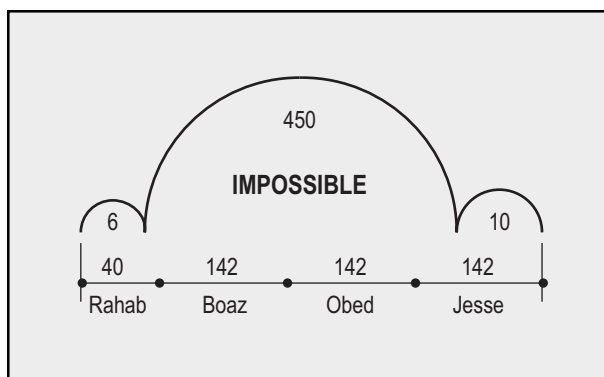
We know Jesse was old, and David was his youngest son. We know Boaz was old when he married Ruth. We do not know about Obed, but (since the facts seem to require it), perhaps he also was very old. How long did these people live? We know of one very old man years later in the period of the kings, namely the priest Jehoiada, who lived to be 130. That must have been extreme, but it allows that earlier generations might have lived old enough to father these children.



Or were there some missing generations which could help out here? We know that Jesse really was the father of David, that Obed really was the son of Boaz, and Matthew 1:5 says Salmon begot Boaz of Rahab. Perhaps missing generations could be posed between Obed and Jesse, but there is no independent evidence of it. 1 Chronicles 2:11-15 agrees with the genealogy in Ruth, and one would suppose for such a person as David the genealogy would be complete.

There is also this. The genealogy above includes 10 names. Pharez was the son of Judah through a sordid affair with Judah’s daughter in law, and probably fell under the proscription of Deuteronomy 23:2, which lasts until the tenth generation.⁵ David would have been that 10th generation, thus the proscription ended, and he was chosen king. Jacob prophesied that the kingdom would be from Judah, but it waited until the 10th generation, with Saul of Benjamin serving meanwhile.

If there are no absent generations in this genealogy, and the period of Judges was 101 years greater, then the average age of Boaz, Obed and Jesse at the birth of the next link would be 142 years. This is not credible. *If* the genealogy is as recorded, it proves the period of Judges was not 450 years long.



SUMMARY

1 Kings 6:1 is entirely compatible with the narrative of Judges and 1 Samuel. In fact, it would be difficult to expand the period 101 years greater, and accommodate the narrative. It could be done by supposing multiple lengthy oppressions by the Philistines. But it would leave us without a record of how each oppression ended. Also, if the genealogy of Ruth chapter four is complete, then it is not credible to expand the period of the Judges.

(1) Evidently all three of these narratives occurred earlier in the period of the Judges, before the time of Samson. They are important to the history of Israel, and all are connected in some way to Bethlehem, the future home of King David who would later found the royal dynasty. They can be deferred no longer, and hence are intruded into the narrative at this point.

(2) Perhaps this is just a round number, but we will take it at face value and let the reader make any mental adjustments he or she wishes.

(3) If the 300 years ended 18 years earlier when Ammon began its offensive, then only 38 years would remain. This would affect the chart (page 109, top) in the following ways. (1) The 293 years would end where the 18 years begin. (2) Between the end of the Philistine oppression and King Saul would be 17 years (rather than 35). (3) Samuel's birth might be, say, 10 years earlier, making him perhaps 65 at the first year of Saul.

Saul reigned 40 years, and David began to reign when he was 30 years old. Thus David was born 10 years into the reign of Saul. Samuel lived to see David leading a band of

men, so David must have been at least in his early 20s when Samuel died. Therefore Samuel lived after Saul became king 30 plus years. This means Samuel would have died at over 100 in one scenario, or in his 90s in the other. He must have lived to an advanced age, because he was already described as "old" when Saul became king (1 Samuel 8:1, 5).

(4) Evidently the ark remained at Kirjath-Jearim for many years after this also. After the judgeship of Samuel and the kingship of Saul, King David brought ark out of Kirjath-Jearim in the episode which took the life of Uzza (1 Chronicles 13:5-10).

(5) The scripture says "even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation." Rotherham says "shall none of his enter into the convocation of Yahweh, even to the tenth generation." Our opinion is that this means none can enter who have not yet reached "to the tenth generation," and the 10th generation is allowed. We acknowledge, however, that the example of David — the very example under consideration — is a factor in our reading the text this way.

