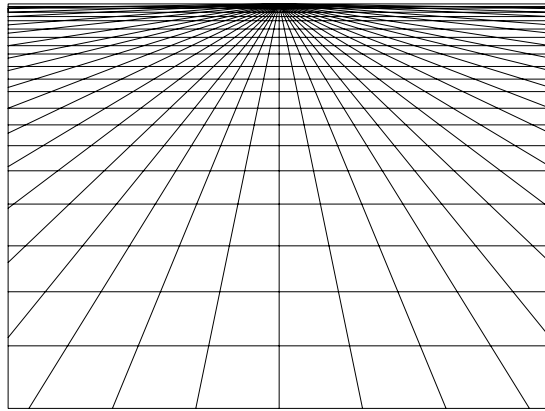


# Marking

# Time



(Chronology for Bible Students)



Discerning Between Sacred and Profane History



HISTORY in general may not improperly be compared to a rich and copious repository, in which are stored, for the example and benefit of posterity, all the various “knowledge of things” and events, of customs and manners, virtues and vices, arts and sciences, which have contributed to the rise and fall of states, to the happiness and misery of mankind, individually and collectively. But all these precious materials, unless they be arranged in order, and digested according to the times, are no better than a rude and confused mass. Without *Chronology*, History would lose its most valuable characters of *truth* and consistency, and scarcely rise above the level of *romance*: for, as it is well observed by an ancient chronologer, *Tatian*:—

Παρ' οἷς ασυναρτητος εστιν ἡ τον χρονων αναγραφη,

Παρα τουτοις ουδε τα της ιστοριας αληθειν δυναται.

*“With those to whom the computation of the times is unconnected,  
not even the facts of history can be verified.”*

~ William Hales, 1830

The history contained in the Hebrew Scriptures presents a remarkable and pleasing contrast to the early accounts of the Greeks. In the latter we trace with difficulty a few obscure facts preserved to us by the poets, who transmitted with all the embellishments of poetry and fable what they had received from oral tradition. In the annals of the Hebrew nation we have the authentic narratives written by contemporaries, and these writing under the guidance of inspiration... For these reasons the history of the Hebrews cannot be treated like the history of any other nation; and he who should attempt to write their history, divesting it of its miraculous character, would find himself without materials.

~ Henry Fynes Clinton, 1834

“Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God hath so made it, that men should fear before Him. That which is hath been long ago, and that which is to be hath already been; and God seeketh that which is pursued.”

~ Ecclesiastes 3:14-15 (Masoretic)

The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; And he that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What hath the straw to do with the wheat? Saith the LORD.

~ Jeremiah 23:28 (Masoretic)

“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

~ Romans 15:4 (New American Standard)



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## INTRODUCTION

Bible Students have published a number of treatises to explain Bible chronology and prophetic interpretations. Others produced additional support for the chronology such as John and Morton Edgar in *Great Pyramid Passages*,<sup>100</sup> *Which is the True Chronology*<sup>101</sup> by Julian Gray and other timely compositions. These added evidence and confirmation for Bible Student's understanding of the 6000-year Biblical time line as presented by Pastor Charles Taze Russell (1852 -1916).

Others suggest that Pastor Russell either drew from the superficial historical consensus of his day or borrowed and adopted Adventist studies without thorough validation of his own. Except for an occasional reference to historical sources in *Studies in the Scriptures*, we have little information as to the body of Biblical research available to Pastor Russell or the deliberation in finding truth among the labyrinth of human theories.

One may contend that history and Biblical scholarship have become clearer and more absolute since those days and requires updating with contemporary material. Otherwise we may conclude that our returned Lord used a faithful and wise servant to assemble the rays of light from Scripture. This servant used some of the keenest Christian minds of the Philadelphia period of the Church and previous centuries to focus on present truth. The latter is our understanding. The Laodicean messenger was used to deliver the sanctifying message for the last stage of the Church. Present truth was analyzed, synthesized and harmonized from the Word, the holy spirit and light of truth from the "brightness of his *parousia*." The things "new and old" from the Lord's storehouse had a sound frame of reference.

We do not presume that those who concur with this chronology need additional testimony nor that others will be persuaded. However, a record of the evidence serves those who are searching.

With this consideration, we will not simply reiterate the chronological links and time prophecies. Nor will we offer new proofs or explanations for the chronology generally accepted by Bible Students. However, we will present the basis and some source material that were available to Pastor Russell and since. Seeing that he only occasionally cited the sources and seldom gave extensive quotes, we believe it is helpful to document the scholarship that contributed to the harvest message.

It is apparent that not all these writers applied doctrine and prophecy as arranged by Pastor Russell. Even the account we have in the second volume of *Studies in the Scriptures* differs in some details from some of these. However, these various sources were available to assemble the harmonious and scriptural whole plan of salvation for all humanity. The result has the distinctive mark of divine providence. No other alternative or system of doctrine, prophecy or chronology has brought a greater harmony of sacred Scripture:

THE TITLE of this series of Studies—"The Divine Plan of the Ages," suggests a progression in the Divine arrangement, foreknown to our God and orderly. We believe the teachings of Divine revelation can be seen to be both beautiful and harmonious from this standpoint and from no other.

It is the light from the Sun of Righteousness in this dawning of the Millennial Day that reveals these things as "present truth," now due to be appreciated by the sincere—the pure in heart. (A:9,10)<sup>102</sup>

As we transcribed the text from various authors along with their own page-notes, we left our own notes and references for the "End Notes." Our notes are differentiated from an author's page-note references with numbers beginning with 100. Brackets [ ] within a quote also indicate our notes and underlining is added for attention. All other italics, parentheses and emphases belong to the authors.

I want to acknowledge the assistance of many keen Bible Students in assembling this material and also divine providence by which so much of the source material came into our hands.

— Jerry Leslie, September 2021

## MEASURING TIME

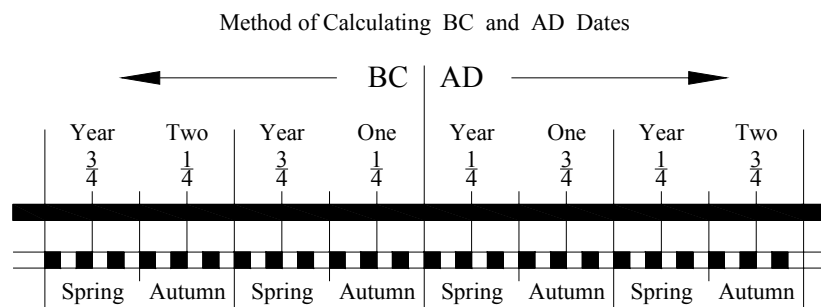
Our use and reference to time have both a general or accommodative framework, as well as a level of very precise meaning. The expression, “*Arrival will be at 6pm when the sun sets,*” may be understood quite differently for a meal invitation, a train schedule or for an astronomer. A child may say, “*I am five and a half,*” when by common usage he is regarded as five. An aged man may say, “*I have seen ninety-six years,*” when he means he has passed ninety-five years and is now in his ninety sixth year. In these matters we understand both the precision and the accommodative language intended in these expressions. We understand their meaning and don’t contest their intent. A similar standard of language is found in the expression “*the nineteenth century,*” which implies all the dates beginning with 1801 and ending with 1900, and “*the twentieth century,*” meaning all dates beginning with 1901 and ending with 2000.

Furthermore, we understand that age is measured from the month of birth to the current month and not from the beginning of a calendar year. Therefore, if I were born on July 1, 1942, then on April 1, 2002, I can only say I am 59 (otherwise  $59\frac{3}{4}$ ). Yet on October 1, 2002, I can say I am 60 years of age (otherwise  $60\frac{1}{4}$ ). It is not so simple as subtracting  $2002 - 1942 = 60$ . However, if the beginning and ending months are inclusive, it is perfectly legitimate to do the subtraction as in:  $1874 - 539 = 1335$ , for the blessed prophecy of Daniel 12:12.

Different calendar systems in various regions and cultures have complicated the reckoning of historical events. It was so for Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Israel. There were different beginnings for the year, months and days in a month. Historians might date an event in reference to their own calendar system or in reference to the position of stars, planets or an eclipse. Otherwise reference might be made to the years of a reigning monarch. Yet even the years of a monarch were counted differently as either from the year of his ascending the throne or from his first full year of reign. In any case the reliability of such references and consistency of the records are not uniform.

After using the Julian calendar based on 365.25 days first established by Julius Caesar, it was determined that this was inconsistent with the solar tropical year of nearly 365.2422 days. In the year 1582 our current Gregorian calendar was adopted to more accurately count the days in a year. This calendar has been adopted by all modern historians to assign dates before and after a point reckoned as January A.D. 1. It was determined that the first Greek Olympic game was held in 776 B.C. with this reckoning, and held every four years thereafter. If any historical reference could be correlated with any Olympic year, then that year could be noted on a Gregorian calendar accordingly.

The means of counting time has a special consideration when some periods span what is commonly called the B.C./A.D. eras. Historically speaking, this is simply a point designated for counting our common form of marking years. For reference purposes, the first and all subsequent years of this era begin with January and end with December. The year just before this era has the same length and is designated 1 B.C. Brother Morton Edgar picks up this subject in *Great Pyramid Passages*, volume II, Page 34 with the following chart:



Measuring across this line has been illustrated by a carpenter with his rule, who simply measures from one side of a wall and adds the measure from the other side, including fractions. Pastor Russell used this same method in *B:54-62* with the birth of Jesus. His point is that Jesus was born in the Autumn of 2 B.C. and was 30 years old in 29 A.D. But one cannot simply add  $2 + 29 = 30$ . As with the carpenter's rule, Jesus was born in the B.C. era  $1\frac{1}{4}$  years +  $28\frac{3}{4}$  in the A.D. era = 30. Actually the main portion of Jesus' first year was in 1 B.C. and the main portion of his 30<sup>th</sup> year was in 29 A.D. Notice Edgar's chart in *GPPII:50*<sup>100</sup> and reproduced in *Appendix E*.

This precision was clearly understood by Pastor Russell, as in *B:51* he counts 4128 whole years of human history *before the Christian era*. Then on pages 53-54 he reckons A.D. 1 as 4129 from creation of Adam. Creation was obviously considered as in the Autumn of 4129 B.C., for he notes October 1872 A.D. as ending the 6000<sup>th</sup> year.  $4128.25 + 1871.75 = 6000$ . (*C:127, B:363,33,54,242*)

In this regard, 2000 years have transpired in the A.D. era only on December 31, 2000 and  $1913\frac{3}{4}$  years transpired on October 1, 1914. It has become customary to simply add the first whole (rounded) year in a B.C. era and the last year in the A.D. era together for the sum of a period, even though we recognize the events marking the first year may have begun some months earlier and the corresponding ending point may not reach the end of a calendar year. Such are the reckonings in volumes two and three of *Studies in the Scriptures*. See *Appendix B and E*. Thus, certain prophecies are counted as:

$$\begin{aligned} 1813 + 32 &= 1845 \\ 454 + 36 &= 490 \\ 454 + 1846 &= 2300 \\ 4128 + 1872 &= 6000 \\ 626 + 1874 &= 2500 \\ 606 + 1914 &= 2520 \end{aligned}$$

However, it can be readily seen that each prophecy did not measure from January 1 until December 31. The first and last year of a period may be given as the year that saw its beginning. However, the event marking the exact beginning of the period may have its inception a few months before or after January of a given year.

Both Pastor Russell and Morton Edgar connect the prophecy of Dan. 9:25 as beginning with the extraordinary events recorded in Nehemiah chapters 2-7. Thus Edgar (*GPPII:295-306*),<sup>100</sup> marks the precision of the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes in the Autumn of 455 B.C., while the first full year of counting the 70 weeks is reckoned from 454. The same prophecy is regarded as ending in the Autumn of 36 A.D. Thus:  $454\frac{1}{4} + 35\frac{3}{4} = 490$  years of the 70-week prophecy. Yet by common usage and ease of reference 454 B.C. and 36 A.D. are the reference points used in *Studies in the Scriptures*.

With similar precision, Edgar notes the Autumn of 607 B.C. for the inception of the Gentile Times extending to the Autumn of 1914 (*GPPII:32,130,225*).<sup>100</sup> The years 607, 537 and 455 B.C. for these events and prophecies were also affirmed by Paul S. L. Johnson in a 1914 letter, to which Pastor Russell concurred.<sup>103</sup>

The Hebrew civil New Year is reckoned from the Autumn. This should cause no concern for a discrepancy in the harvest message as designating 606 as the first year of the period of 2520 years and 1914 as the last, as these marked the whole rounded years beginning and ending of the prophecy. However, we see additional distinction and confirmation by looking to the Hebrew reckoning of the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month *Av* on either end of the prophecy (Jer. 52:12).

So it is with other periods spanning the B.C./A.D. point. For average readers, it was sufficient to reference whole years on each end of a time span. Some may read or interpret the events of history differently, but we do not regard the treatises by Pastor Russell as inaccurate or inconsistent. The simplicity, harmony and beauty of the Plan of the Ages brings the rewarded of Hab. 2:2-3 (NAS).

*“Record the vision and inscribe it on tablets, that the one who reads it may run. For the vision is yet for the appointed time; hastens toward the goal, and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it. For it will certainly come, it will not delay.”*

## A RELIABLE LINE OF BIBLE CHRONOLOGY

Time is the backbone of history and prophecy. Without a reliable chronology line, we have no structure; we don't know where we have been and where we are going. Volume two of *Studies in the Scriptures* was written in 1889. The forewords to volumes two and three, affirming the correctness of the chronology and prophecies, were written scarcely four weeks before Pastor Russell's death in 1916. In this regard, it is timely to quote from his affirmation in response to a question regarding the chronology which was written midway between the original manuscript and his death: *Tower*, Oct. 1, 1907 page 294-295:

We answer, as we have frequently done before in the DAWNS and TOWERS and orally and by letter, that we have never claimed our calculations to be infallibly correct; we have never claimed that they were *knowledge*, nor based upon indisputable evidence, facts, knowledge; our claim has always been that they are based on *faith*. We have set forth the evidences as plainly as possible and stated the conclusions of faith we draw from them, and have invited others to accept as much or as little of them as their hearts and heads could endorse...

It is those who differ who smite us and speak evil of us, because we do not welcome them as, with hammer and tongs, they seek to remove a mote which they think they see in our eye of understanding. They are our critics who always claim the infallibility. We go humbly onward, following the Apostle's example and words, "We believe and therefore speak"; – whether others hear or forbear to hear. Is not this in accord with the Spirit of Christ?...

Recurring again to the query on Chronology we quote from DAWN-STUDIES, Vol. II [*Studies in the Scriptures*], Page 38, last paragraph, as follows: –

"In starting with the question, How long is it since man's creation? we should and do feel confident that he who gave the prophecies, and said that in the time of the end they should be understood, has provided in his Word the data necessary to enable us accurately to locate those prophecies. However, any who expect to find these matters so plainly stated as to be convincing to the mere surface reader, or the insincere skeptic, will be disappointed. God's times and seasons are given in such a way as to be convincing only to those who, by acquaintance with God, are able to recognize his characteristic methods. The evidence is given "that *the man of God* may be thoroughly furnished." (2 Tim. 3:17) These well know that in all the paths by which the Father leads they must walk by faith and not by sight. To all who are prepared to walk thus, we expect to be able to point out, at every step, solid statements of God's Word—a sure foundation for reasonable faith."

In the same chapter we proceed to point out that many of the links of chronology in sacred and profane history are "*broken, lapped and tangled so much that we could arrive at no definite conclusion from them*", and should be obliged to conclude, as others have done, that nothing positive could be known on the subject, were it not that the New Testament supplies the deficiency." (Page 49, first paragraph.) Thus we sought to prove that chronology cannot be built on facts, but can be received only on faith. But again we urge a fresh reading of Vol. II. entire. If with these suggestions some shall lose their faith in our chronology, others and many more we believe will have their faith in it strengthened greatly.

We remind you again that the weak points of chronology are supplemented by the various prophecies which interlace with it in so remarkable a manner that faith in the chronology almost becomes knowledge that it is correct. The changing of a single year would throw the beautiful parallels out of accord; because some of the prophecies measure from B.C., some from A.D., and some depend upon both. We believe that God meant those prophecies to be understood "in due time"; we believe that we do understand them now—and they speak to us through this chronology. Do they not thereby seal the chronology? They do to *faith*, but not otherwise. ... It is this chronology and none other which awakened us to trim our lamps, in harmony with the Lord's promise through the Apostle, "Ye brethren are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." If our chronology is not reliable we have no idea where we are nor when the morning will come. Bishop Usher's <sup>104</sup>

chronology, as we have pointed out (DAWN II., p.51) puts the end of six thousand years nearly a century future and would destroy every prophetic application as we have seen and profited by it. And when we say “our” chronology we merely mean the one we use, the Bible chronology, which belongs to all of God’s people who approve it. As a matter of fact it was used in practically the form we present it long before our day, just as various prophecies we use were used to a different purpose by Adventists, and just as various doctrines we hold and which seem so new and fresh and different were held in some form long ago: for instance—Election, Free Grace, Restitution, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, Resurrection. (R:4067)

Some regard the chronology in volume two of *Studies in the Scriptures* and the *Tower* of May 15, 1896 (R:1980) as a product of the Adventist movement. Pastor Russell did give credit to Reverend C. Bowen of England for the basic outline. This was submitted to Pastor Russell by Nelson H. Barbour. However, the time line originated beyond the Adventist movement. While in a London England library, Barbour discovered Edward Bishop Elliott’s *Horae Apocalypticæ*.<sup>105</sup> In this treatise, Elliott printed a table of THE SCRIPTURE CHRONOLOGY OF THE WORLD. [Appendix G] He appends this note:

On the fly-leaf is appended in illustration a Tabular Scheme of the Scripture Chronology, with the scriptural authorities in brief; drawn up by my friend and brother, the Rev. C. Bowen, Rector of St. Thomas, Winchester. (Elliott, volume IV:259)

Christopher Bowen published his thoughts on the Kingdom, the coming of Christ and the general resurrection in *Things to Come*, 1849, published in London. This did not include a chronology. Elliott recognized and referenced the earlier work of Henry Fynes Clinton, *Fasti Hellenici*,<sup>110</sup> 1841, and the various adjustments he made to Clinton’s work. The chronology table was presented by Elliott with composition assistance of Bowen and later was also used by H.G. Guinness.<sup>106</sup> This table was then evaluated and synthesized with the broader prophetic chain by Pastor Russell. It was a clear scriptural presentation that avoided secular records, including hieroglyphic, cuneiform or Chaldean records. After quoting from H.F. Clinton, Pastor Russell states this appealing aspect:

The Bible, our God-provided history of the first three thousand years, is the only work in the world which—beginning with Adam, the first man mentioned in history, monument or inscription, whose name, the time of his creation and death are recorded, and from whom his descendants can be traced by name and age in successive links for nearly four thousand years—furnishes us a clear and connected history down to a period where secular history is well authenticated...

In the Bible alone, therefore, we may expect to find a record which will order aright the inharmonious periods and chronological irregularities which the annals of human history at first sight present—into harmony with each other and with the periods of nature. (B:37-38)

Furthermore, the time line avoided common suppositions and irregularities in projecting the time between the covenant with Abraham to the Law Covenant and the period of the Judges with clear statements and blocks of time stated in Scripture. The Kings of Judah were a continuous link reaching to Zedekiah and were used in the lineage of Jesus according to Matthew. Pastor Russell sought to reconcile small differences by accepting the clear and concise statements of Scripture and letting the vague, symbolical or doubtful rendering of texts bend to the former. This prevented building a predisposed case with obscure texts, by simply taking the stronger, clearer and multiple testimonies of Scripture at face value.

These bridge statements seem providentially arranged to avoid contention over every possible co-regency, accession, regnal or partial year accounting, or even reconciling various calendar year systems. So we find these comments in a footnote in B:48:

We take account of only the complete years, more accurate account being impossible... We believe that these fractional parts of years counterbalance themselves; and that the Lord has thus overruled and arranged the matter is our confidence, supported by the outcome and the results deducible from it, and the accuracy to a day, even in large periods, already noticed.

Pastor Russell also used the strength of the end event in a prophecy to ascertain the beginning event and date. While this may seem like backward reasoning, yet it let the clarity and intent of a prophecy determine the beginning point, which may otherwise be obscure or have various options. In this, Pastor Russell let the Lord lay out the time line and history to produce a harmonious whole. He avoided the hazard of finding all sorts of possible beginnings and inventing a result. This method is evident in his search for the 1260 days of Daniel.

Since the close of the times of Papal power are not only thus clearly fixed, as occurring during the French Revolution, but also by the events of chapter 11:40-44, which mark the very year 1799, we can readily measure backward 1260 years to note whether Papal power had its beginning there. If we find that it had, we have our evidence as clear and strong as faith could ask. Let us thus verify.

Measuring back 1260 years from 1799 would bring us to A.D. 539, where we shall show the Papal power began...

Now, knowing that the 1260 years began at A.D. 539, we are enabled to find what would not before have been recognized. Papists themselves are more inclined to date their beginning of power either at the conversion of Constantine and the nominal Christianizing of the Roman empire in A.D. 328, or from the presentation of the Papal states to the church by Charlemagne in A.D. 800... The date A.D. 539, shown by the prophetic measuring rod of 1260 years, is nearly mid-way between this union of church and empire, in A.D. 328, and its full, complete recognition by Charlemagne, as the head of all authority—the dispenser of civil as well as religious authority—A.D. 800. (C:68-70)

This also appears to be the case in the application of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9:24-27, for he saw the clarity of the end events of the prophecy and the dating for them. Hence, it was a simple matter to count back to the beginning of the prophecy, noting carefully the event to “restore and build Jerusalem.” Noting that only Artaxerxes decreed this in his 20<sup>th</sup> year (Neh. 2:1-8), he was able to resolve a point of contention among historians whether this was 454 B.C. or 445 B.C. This resolved a matter and prevented the need to move beginning events, reinterpreting or stretching of prophecy.

All such methods were prayerfully sought and divinely directed. Elliott refined and tabulated Clinton’s work with some changes to conform more closely with Scripture. Barbour built a number of prophetic links on the Elliott/Bowen chronology. H.G. Guinness also used the credibility of the Elliott/Bowen Chronology table, and printed the same in *The Approaching End of the Age*.<sup>106</sup> Pastor Russell refined some details in the table and realigned the prophecies according to the object and manner features of the divine plan. The result was a truly harmonious working model that invites close attention and correlation with Scripture. [Appendix B]

This was not simply working with hypothetical numbers. Pastor Russell had at his disposal the writings of Christian scholarship of nearly 2000 years. Material was available to check every turn of history and prophecy. Let us consider if the resources are as credible today as when compiled.

The first few segments of chronology have a broad basis of consensus and agreement. Almost no one questions the 1656 years from Adam to the Flood. There is no reason to presume overlaps or gaps in the record. The Scriptural testimony is so clear and connected in contrast to secular records, which fade into mythology in such early generations.

The same can be said for the next period of 427 years to the covenant with Abraham. Nothing could be more clear than the second volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*.

The next period of 430 years to the Exodus is nearly uncontested. The texts are Gal. 3:17 and Exodus 12:40. Pastor Russell answers a single weak objection. This is whether the “sojourning” of 430 years all occurred in Egypt, or as he contends, began with Abraham. The latter is the consensus of many Biblical students. With very little deduction from Scripture, one can also clearly see that after the Exodus and 40 years in the wilderness, there followed 6 years to the dividing of the land.<sup>107</sup>

Yet the next three periods have come under careful scrutiny. Some hold that Pastor Russell was unaware of the most critical rendering of certain texts and lived before the overwhelming historical and archaeological evidence of the last century. So let us examine the record.

## THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES

*And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan [Canaan], he divided their land to them by lot. After that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. (Acts 13:19-21)*

*And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD. (1 Kings 6:1)*

The difficulty to reconcile these two texts has troubled many students of Scripture. Here is the conflict: Apostle Paul says the period of the Judges is 450 years, after which they had Kings beginning with Saul. On the other hand, the record in Kings is that the period from the Exodus to the fourth year of Solomon is only 480 years. If we deduct the years before and after the Judges from the Kings account, we have: 40 (in the wilderness), 6 (in dividing the land), 40 (Saul), 40 (David), 4 (Solomon) = 130 years, leaving only 350 for the Judges; whereas Paul says it was 450. Numerous writers have proposed explanations for the words of Paul to accord with that of Kings. However, Pastor Russell suggested there must be an error in Kings, being short by 100 years, leaving Paul's statement correct as 450 years for the Judges plus the other 130 years for a total of 580 from the Exodus to the fourth year of Solomon. (See B:49,53 and the chart in *Appendix C*.)

If the account of Kings is correct as read, our chronology has an extra hundred years that should be shortened. Those who hold this view contend that there were numerous overlaps or concurrent Judges and captivities, and the Judges cannot nearly be considered as consecutive. They propose various explanations for the reading of Acts. These include the suggestion that Paul simply made a counting of the years without allowing for such overlaps. Another is that use of the word “*about*” intended his figure as only generalization. Another is that the Greek might support a reading that the 450 years preceded the period of the Judges and afterward Israel was given Judges. Some Hebrew scholars accept the reading of 480 in Kings and defer to Greek rationalizations of Paul's words.

However, there are problems in leaving the matter to those who revise the Acts account. First, Greek linguistics do not support a grammatical construction of 450 years preceding the Judges. Secondly, Paul's use of “*about*” does not allow for a 100-year error. Paul is precise in the same context to give us the 40 years in the wilderness and Saul's space of 40 years. He places the 450 years specifically after dividing the land by lot. How is it that he missed the Judges by 100 years? We know that Paul could have added the Judges and periods of oppression just as Morton Edgar does in his 1948 study transcribed in *Appendix A*. Each Judge is recorded to rule over “*Israel*” with no indication that “*Israel*” is to be understood in a partial or limited sense or concurrent with other Judges for major periods of time. To accommodate 1 Kings 6:1, we would need to accept 100 years of contemporary Judges. Furthermore, Judges 11:13-15,25-26 indicates the period from entering Canaan to the Judge Jephthah was 300 years, all of which can be deduced without overlaps. The remaining seven Judges, occupying 156 years, would have to be reduced to nearly 50 years for the Kings account to be correct. [*Appendix C*]

Pastor Russell says the period of the Judges is “disconnected, broken, lapped and tangled.” So, he rests his case with Paul's accounting in Acts. However, he was not the only one who accepted Paul's use of 450 years for the Judges and questioned the credibility of the Kings account.

Dean Alford, one of the foremost Greek scholars of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, footnotes his *Greek New Testament* on Acts 13:20 as follows:<sup>108</sup>

Treating the reading of ABCx (variant Greek texts) as an attempt at correcting the difficult chronology of our verse, and taking the words as they stand, *no other sense* can be given to them, than that the time of the judges lasted 450 years. The dative ἔτεσιν [years] implies the duration of the period between ταῦτα [these things] and Samuel the prophet, inclusive... That this chronology differs widely from 1 Kings vi.1, is most evident,—where we read that Solomon began his temple in the four hundred and eightieth year after the Exodus. All attempts to reconcile the two are arbitrary and forced.... It seems then that Paul followed a chronology current among the Jews, and agreeing with the book of Judges itself (the spaces of time in which, added together = exactly 450), and that adopted by Josephus, but not with that of our present Hebrew text of 1 Kings vi.1 ... Σαμουήλ [Samuel] mentioned as the terminus of the period of the Judges, also as having been so nearly concerned in the setting up over them of Saul and David. It may be not altogether irrelevant to notice that *Saul, a man of the tribe of Benjamin*, was speaking; and to trace in this minute specification something characteristic and natural. (Alford, volume II:174-175)

*The Authorized Version Bible*, with an explanatory and critical commentary edited by F.C. Cook and other clergy of the Anglican Church,<sup>109</sup> has the following footnote 1 Kings 6:1.

*In the four hundred and eightieth year.* It is upon this statement that all the earlier portions of what is called the “received chronology” depends. The year of the foundation of the temple can be approximately fixed by adding the remaining years of Solomon’s reign, the years of the kings of Judah, and the seventy years of the captivity, to the received date for the accession of Cyrus to the throne of Babylon... Apart from the present statement, the chronological data of the Old Testament are insufficient to fix the interval between Solomon’s accession and the Exodus, since several of the periods which make it up are unestimated. The duration of Joshua’s judgeship, the interval between his death and the servitude of Chushan-Rishathaim, and the duration of the judgeships of Shamgar and Samuel, are not mentioned in Scripture... Under these circumstances chronologists have found in the present verse their sole means of extrication from the difficulties which beset this portion of the inquiry; and the “received chronology,” in its earlier portion, is based entirely upon it. But the text itself is not free from suspicion.

1. It is the sole passage in the Old Testament which contains the idea of dating events from the era—an idea which did not occur to Greeks till the time of Thucydides.
2. It is quoted by Origen without the words, “in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt” (‘Comment in S. Johann.’ ii.20).
3. It seems to have been known only in this shape [without the words] to Josephus, to Theophilus of Antioch, and to Clement of Alexandria, who would all naturally have referred to the date, had it formed a portion of the passage in their day.
4. Though the Books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel furnish us with no exact chronology, they still supply important chronological data—which seem to indicate for the interval between the Exodus and Solomon, a period considerably exceeding 480 years... Therefore, seems probable that the words “in the four hundred and eightieth year...” are an interpolation into the sacred text, which did not prevail generally before the third century of our era.

*McClintock & Strong Cyclopedia*, Book of Judges, Vol. IV:1078.

A difficulty is created by 1 Kings 6:1, where the whole period from the exodus to the building of the Temple is stated at 480 years. One solution questions the genuineness of the date in 1 Kings. Kennicott pronounces against it (*Diss. Gen.* 80, § 3) because it is omitted by Origen when quoting the rest of the verse. It is also urged that Josephus would not have reckoned 592 years for the same period if the present reading had existed in his time.



H.F. Clinton, who was referenced by Pastor Russell (B:37), regarded Paul as precise in volume one of *Fasti Helenici*:<sup>110</sup>

St. Paul gives<sup>g</sup> the outline of the Period:

Forty years in the wilderness	40
The division of the lands (in the 6 <sup>th</sup> year)	6
The judges to Samuel, or the whole time between the division of the lands and Samuel the prophet	450
Administration of Samuel (no years)	----
Saul	40
	536
Add David <sup>h</sup>	40
Solomon	3
	579

We have the authority, then, of St. Paul for 579 years exclusive of the years of *Samuel*. The 450 years of the Apostle commence at the division of the lands in the 47<sup>th</sup> year after the exode.<sup>i</sup> [Acts 13:19-20] But it is not clear when they terminate; whether at the call of the child *Samuel* in the last years of *Eli*, or whether at the administration of *Samuel* after the death of *Eli*. Now as we have seen already that there were 430 years from the first servitude inclusive to the death of *Eli*<sup>k</sup>, if these 450 years terminate at that point, they will leave 20 years for Joshua and the elders, and, 32 years being assumed between *Eli* and *Saul*, the whole period will be 611 or 612 years. [He is trying to account for the statements of Josephus as 612 years for the period from the Exodus to the temple.<sup>111</sup> But this is not necessary to accommodate, except to note that he uses a larger rather than a smaller figure]... I think the interpretation is most probable, that the 450 years extend to the death of *Eli*. [We would say it includes Samuel, for “*afterward they desired a king and God gave unto them Saul ... by the space of forty years.*”]

The period, then, from the exode to the temple, founded on the testimony of St. Paul and on the Old Testament narrative, fluctuates between the 600 years of Eusebius and the 628 years arising out of the corrected numbers of Josephus. The truth lies somewhere between these points. [We say 580 years.]

This extended term of 612 years is inconsistent with the date in the book of Kings<sup>o</sup>, which reckons the foundation of the temple in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of *Solomon* to be in the 480<sup>th</sup> year *after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt*. But the computation of St. Paul delivered in a solemn argument before a Jewish audience, and confirmed by the whole tenour of the history in the book of Judges, outweighs the authority of that date; and we may agree with Jackson and Hales in rejecting it.<sup>p</sup> (Clinton, volume I:312-314)

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<sup>g</sup> Acts xiii. 18-21.

<sup>h</sup> *David* in reality reigned 40 years and 6 months; namely, 7 years and 6 months in Hebron, and 33 years in Jerusalem: 2 Sam. ii. 11; v. 5. Joseph. Ant. VII. 15, 2. But his reign is called 40 years: 2 Sam. v. 4; 1 Kings ii. 11, because *Solomon* began to reign before the death of *David*: 1 Kings i. 32-40.

<sup>i</sup> This passage, and especially the expression μετὰ ταῦτα [after these things], refutes those who have supposed that the 450 years of the Apostle are to be dated from the Exodus.

<sup>k</sup> That is, 390 years of the Judges and 40 years of *Eli*. See p.303.

<sup>o</sup> 1 Kings vi. 1.

<sup>p</sup> See Jackson vol. I. p.163. Hales vol. I. p.17. Vol. II. p.287. Considers that the number 480 as spurious. Petavius reckoned the 480 years current from the death of *Moses*: whence he obtained 480 + 40 = 520 years current. Mr. Greswell vol. I. p.400 endeavours to reconcile that date with the true history by computing its beginning from a still lower point. The opinion of Hales seems the most probable, that “the period of 480 years is a forgery, foisted into the text.”

Following this last footnote, item ( <sup>p</sup> ), we turn to Hales. Pastor Russell also cites the research of Hales in B:67. Hales regards 1 Kings 6:1 as spurious. The following is from *A New Analysis of Chronology and Geography, History and Prophecy*.<sup>112</sup>

*An irrational chronology is indeed the parent of Scepticism and Infidelity. The period of 480 years, from the Exode to the foundation of Solomon's Temple, is also too short, and is plainly repugnant to the tenor of Scripture, as will appear from the detail of particulars, collected from Ganz.*

Here follows a list of the Judges that is quite divergent from Scripture, construed to be 480 years. To refute such irrational schemes, Hales continues:

The Jewish chronologers were hard set to make out this detail, as *Ganz* honestly confesses. For,

1. By a curious invention, they included the first four servitudes in the years of the Judges who put an end to them, contrary to the express declarations of Scripture, representing their administrations not as synchronizing with, but as succeeding the servitudes. Judges ii. 18.

2. They were forced to allow the fifth servitude distinct from the administration of *Jephtha*, because it was too long to be included therein, but they curtailed a year from the Scripture account, 18 years; and they curtailed a year more from *Ibzan*'s administration.

3. They sunk entirely the sixth servitude to the *Philistines*, of 40 years, because it was too long to be contained in *Sampson*'s administration. And to crown all,

4. They reduced *Saul*'s reign of 40 years (Acts xiii. 21) to two years only! The dishonesty of the whole fabrication could be equaled only by its absurdity; furnishing internal evidence, that the period of 480 years is itself a forgery, foisted into the Hebrew text of 1 Kings vi. 1. (*Hales*, volume I:221-222)

1 Kings vi. 1. The number in the Hebrew text, 480 years, is also spurious, as was proved in the review of the *Jewish* chronology. (*Hales*, volume I:298)

Furthermore we have this excerpt from *Hales's Chronology* volume two:

*Josephus* has omitted the date of *Samuel*'s call to be a prophet, 1 Sam. iii. 1-19, which *St. Paul* reckons 450 years after the first division of the lands, Act. xiii. 19, 20, and which, therefore, commenced with the 10 last years of *Eli*'s administration of 40 years. This last most important chronological character from the New Testament, verifies the whole of this rectification, while it demonstrates the spuriousness of the period of 480 years in the present Masorete text of 1 Kings vi. 1, from the *exode* to the foundation of *Solomon*'s temple, which was also proved in detail, Vol. I. p. 221, 222. (*Hales*, volume II:258-259)

The spurious phrase regarding 480 years in 1 Kings 6:1 appears in none of the writings of the early Church fathers when quoting the text or accounting for the years between the Exodus and the temple. Theophilus of Antioch<sup>113</sup> was a Christian elder who wrote about the year 170. He gives the period as 566 years. Clement of Alexandria,<sup>114</sup> writing about the year 190, observed that the majority of chronologers he knew of recorded this period between 576 and 595 years. Origen,<sup>115</sup> a Christian writer in the year 240 simply renders the text of 1 Kings 6:1 without the spurious portion as noted by F.C. Cook above. Though each had different estimates, all regarded the duration between the Exodus and the temple considerably more than 500 years. None used the reading of our common version of 480 years, nor the 440 years in the Septuagint. They certainly would have regarded it, had it been in the original Hebrew text.

## Conclusion:

We understand the period from the Exodus to the foundation of the temple to be:

Wilderness .....	40
Division of the land .....	6
Period of Judges through Samuel (Acts 13:19-20) .....	450
Saul .....	40
David .....	40
Solomon .....	<u>4</u>
Total .....	580

[Appendix C]

So portions of 1 Kings 6:1 appear to be spurious or a corruption of the Hebrew text. This was Pastor Russell's conclusion as he simply states in *B:53*. However, there are various opinions as to just how the error crept into the text.

The comment that 1 Kings 6:1 may have been the result of a scribal error in the similarity of the Hebrew letters values for (daleth,  $\daleth=4$ ) and (he,  $\he=5$ ), noted by Shimeall, *Our Bible Chronology*, 1859, pages 88-96 and picked up in the footnote in Benjamin Wilson's *Diagolott* on Acts 13:20. This premise is questioned in that the Masoretic text (between the seventh and tenth centuries A.D.) spelled out the numbers completely to prevent just such errors.

The objection regarding the Jewish custom of spelling numerals may be valid enough. Nevertheless, there are other corroborations of Paul and vindication of Pastor Russell's support of Paul's accuracy. First, let us not be too hasty to generalize the word "about."

1. One hundred years is a very big "about" to be in error.
2. The Greek word "about" has the meaning of "during the space of."
3. Paul used the same word "about" in verse 18 in regard to the 40 years in the wilderness. He did not mean 39 or 41. He meant exactly the space of 40 years.
4. Now for the use of Hebrew numerals in 1 Kings 6:1, there is evidence that numerals were used in the earliest manuscripts. (See *McClintock & Strong Cyclopedic: Number*) The protective measure of spelling out the numbers was added later. So the possibility of an earlier corrupt confounding numbers may still be correct.
5. Not all the foregoing Bible Scholars used the same accounting of chronology. But all accepted Paul's correct account of 450 years for the Judges, and saw serious reasons to question the reading of 1 Kings 6:1
6. But the strongest testimony is that the crucial words of 1 Kings 6:1 were a corrupt, spurious insertion into the text sometime in the fourth century A.D. It is the sole passage in the Old Testament which contains the idea of dating events from an era. The spurious words are: "*in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt.*" Without those words, the text loses all relevance as a chronological link, yet flows perfectly onward from the theme of chapter 5. Had they been there in Paul's day, there is not the least possibility that he would have missed it. Biblical scholars from Origen in 240 A.D. either omitted the key words or as Albert Barnes in 1847 or Dean Alford in 1871 considered this a corrupted text.

Without those words in 1 Kings 6:1 we have no basis to remove 100 years from the period of the Judges. So let us not build a time line with anything less than 450 years for the Judges.



## THE PERIOD OF THE KINGS

Now following the Judges, why would the period of the Kings also be questioned? Pastor Russell has such a clean and direct list in *B:50*, of 513 years. He exclusively uses the Kings of Judah from the Chronicles accounting and not of the divided kingdom of Israel in the Book of kings, who defected and set up their own capital in Samaria. As Israel went into captivity first, their chain of Kings also ends about 130 years prior to that of Judah.

It should be noticed that we have a double confirmation of the reigns of the Kings of Judah in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, while there is no listing at all of Israel's Kings in Chronicles.

### Kings of Judah

Saul
David
Solomon
Rehoboam
Abijah
Asa
Jehoshaphat
Jehoram
Ahaziah
Athaliah
Jehoash
Amaziah
Uzziah
Jotham
Ahaz
Hezekiah
Manasseh
Amon
Josiah
Jehoiakim
Zedekiah

### Chronicles

Acts 13:21	40
1 Chron. 29:27	40
2 Chron. 9:30	40
2 Chron. 12:13	17
2 Chron. 13:2	3
2 Chron. 16:13	41
2 Chron. 20:31	25
2 Chron. 21:20	8
2 Chron. 22:2	1
2 Chron. 22:12	6
2 Chron. 24:1	40
2 Chron. 25:1	29
2 Chron. 26:3	52
2 Chron. 27:1	16
2 Chron. 28:1	16
2 Chron. 29:1	29
2 Chron. 33:1	55
2 Chron. 33:21	2
2 Chron. 34:1	31
2 Chron. 36:5	11
2 Chron 36:11	11
<b>TOTAL =</b>	<b>513</b>

### Kings

Acts 13:21	40
1 Kings 2:11	40
1 Kings 11:42	40
1 Kings 14:21	17
1 Kings 15:2	3
1 Kings 15:10	41
1 Kings 22:42	25
2 Kings 8:17	8
2 Kings 8:26	1
2 Kings 11:3	6
2 Kings 12:1	40
2 Kings 14:2	29
2 Kings 15:2	52
2 Kings 15:33	16
2 Kings 16:2	16
2 Kings 18:2	29
2 Kings 21:1	55
2 Kings 21:19	2
2 Kings 22:1	31
2 Kings 23:36	11
2 Kings 24:18	11
<b>TOTAL =</b>	<b>513</b>

Yet because the Book of Kings also lists the reigns of the 10 tribe kingdom from Samaria with corresponding years of Judah's Kings from Jerusalem, some attempt to synchronize the two accounts. In so doing, they presume to regard the Kings of Judah as having various concurrent or overlapping reigns, such as when a King would appoint his son before his death. Those who seek to conform Scripture to secular history attempt to synchronize the defecting 10 northern tribes of Israel and revise the 513 years by removing about 50 years from the Kings of Judah.

How then are we to regard the time tables in the Books of Kings and are we right in regarding the record of Judah as consecutive reigns? If we are looking for confirmation, what can be said?

The Book of Kings was composed before Chronicles, apparently while in Babylon by Jewish priests, yet surrounded by Chaldean history and culture. Though the author sites his sources about 30 times, some of these are no longer extant. Reigns for Judah's Kings are in perfect accord in both Kings and Chronicles. But the Kings of Israel are not consistent with the Judah record.

The Book of Chronicles was composed after the return to Jerusalem in the time of Ezra and records Judah's history from Adam to the return under Cyrus. Its whole format is a chronicle beginning with Adam, whereas the Book of Kings begins with David and deals largely with issues of waywardness. The numbers and years in the Book of Kings are not seen as the central purpose of that record.

Pastor Russell and Morton Edgar were right in not attempting to adjust the Judean King list by the records of the apostatizing ten tribes. That would regard the ten tribes as the standard to which others should bend. Genesis 49:10 sanctifies the scepter of Judah. Furthermore, Morton Edgar has this note:

It is now generally agreed that these synchronisms were added to the Book of Kings by a later hand, and are not to be considered as original independent chronological data. The fact that the writer of Chronicles (which is held to be the last written of the books of the Old Testament) *ignored* the lengths of the reigns of the kings of Israel (the ten tribes which broke away from Judah into idolatry after the death of Solomon), and confines himself entirely to the line of the kings of Judah, should give us confidence that the Lord intends us to continue the chronological chain through the kings of Judah. (GPPII:26)<sup>100</sup>

We first notice the use of these 513 years of the Kings of Judah in the writings of William Hales<sup>112</sup> in England. After a table of the Kings of Judah, which is essentially the same as B:50, we read:

The difficulty of harmonizing the reigns of the kings of *Judah* and *Israel* together, has principally arisen; 1. from the discordance of some of the correspondences in the years of their respective reigns, with the direct length of those reigns; and 2. from not critically determining the duration of the two *interregnums* or vacancies, in the succession of the latter kings [Israel], so as to make them correspond with the former [Judah] throughout.

The whole is here adjusted and harmonized, and it is hoped, satisfactorily, upon the following principles:—The standard of the reigns of Judah is considered as correct; for it is verified by the concurrence of the books of Kings and Chronicles, (the latter relating especially to the Kings of *Judah*,) and of *Josephus*, *Abulfaragi*, and *Eutychius*. (Hales, volume II:372-373)

A few years later, Clinton reproduced Hales' table with a few notations of his own in *Fasti Hellenici* (volume I:316).<sup>110</sup> Then in Edward Bishop Elliott's work, *Horae Apocalypticæ*,<sup>105</sup> the same listing of the Kings of Judah appeared in the second edition of 1846. As noted previously, this list was also used by H.G. Guinness in England and Barbour in the 1880s. Its appeal and consistency were then brought into volume two of *Studies in the Scriptures*.

If we are looking for endorsement, we will find a prophecy in Ezek. 4:1-6. It is the prophetic sign that Ezekiel gave by lying on his left side for 390 days and his right side for 40 days. The same text gives us the rule of "*a day for a year*." It was to terminate with the siege of Jerusalem to portray the years of iniquity and the judgments coming on the city.

Pastor Russell was well aware of this prophecy and refers to it as beginning with the division between the ten and the two tribes under Rehoboam:

Some suppose the lesson taught to be that God's wrath against the ten tribes dated from the time of the revolt, when they went into idolatry, about 390 years before the desolation of Jerusalem, and that the wrath against the two tribes dated from the forty years before the desolation, when, under King Manasseh, the two tribes became idolaters... (C:295)

This becomes another confirming “bridge” of time that covers all the Kings of Judah wherein could be a question concerning their reigns. 390 years began with the third year of Rehoboam till the siege of Jerusalem in 607-606. What iniquities and judgments began then?

*The Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD: And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made. And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon. (2 Chron. 11:14-17)*

Here is the point of division: It was the departure of the ten tribe kingdom of Israel from the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Neither kingdom was free from idolatry or guiltless when they turned from the ways of David and Solomon. However, the scepter remained with Judah.

Edward B. Elliott supports this same application in *Horae Apocalypticae*:<sup>105</sup>

He [Ezekiel] was on one occasion commanded by God to lie 390 *days* on his left side before the people; thereby to typify, in the symbolic character of their representative, the 390 *years* of the iniquity and concomitant debasement of the nation of Israel; on another, to lie 40 *days* on his right side, thereby the 40 last *years* of Judah's iniquity.

The 390 years is dated from Jeroboam's setting up the calves, to the final sacking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar's army. So Archbishop Newcomb. The 40 years includes, according to the same expositor, 15½ years of Manasseh's reign, 2 of Amon's, 11 of Jehoiakim's, 3 months of Jehoiachin's, and 11 years of Zedekiah's; in all 40, during which gross idolatry had prevailed. (Elliott, volume III, part IV, chapter IX: 223)

This use of 390 years covering most of the period of the Kings beginning with Jeroboam's rebellion was supported by many others, including: Patrick Fairbairn, *Ezekiel*, 1863; William Galloway,<sup>125</sup> *The Chain of Ages*, 1881; Henry Redpath, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 1907; Lang's *Commentary*, 1873. Regarding Ezekiel 4:4-8, Lang says:<sup>116</sup>

Hengstenberg understands Israel as collective Israel, begins with 2 Chron. xii.1 (comp. 2 Chron. xi.17), *i.e.* from the fourth year of Rehoboam, “the year of the falling into sin of the whole nation,” and supports himself in this view by Vitranga's [1659-1722] reckoning of 430 years 6 months from the founding of the temple to the destruction of the state; and deducting 37 years of Solomon's and 3 of Rehoboam's, there remain 390 years.

Sir Isaac Newton wrote extensively on chronology. Many of his papers and notes are yet unpublished. However, we found the following in a book by Frank E. Manuel who printed Newton's treatise *The Original of Monarchies* drafted in 1701-2, from King's College Library, Cambridge. Considering secular history's inaccuracies, Newton comments on Judah's monarchy of 390 years:

Now all nations before they began to keep exact accounts of time have been prone to raise their antiquities and make the lives of their first fathers longer than they really were... Whereas according to the ordinary course of nature kings reign one with another but about 20 years a piece. So the 18 Kings of Judah who succeeded Solomon reigned 390 years which is one with another [average] 22 years a piece.<sup>117</sup>

## Conclusion:

With this bridge, we have: 40 + 40 + 40 + 3 + 390 = 513. While the prophecy foretold the death of the city, it is just like the Lord to give us a validation for faith in the times and seasons. This bridge which confirms our use of the consecutive reigns of the Kings of Judah, as noted in B:50, is correct. We have here the testimony of the Law and Prophets to guide and guard us against minimizing the years of the Kings of Judah. As the years of Judah's Kings are consistently stated in both the Books of Kings and Chronicles, let those who wish to attempt a synchronization of Israel and Judah, make the rationale and adjustments in the Kings of Israel and leave Judah intact with the two witnesses. [Appendix C]

## THE DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM

Here is another turning point and dark chapter in Jewish history. Certainly this is one of the most notable events in their history. This continues to be commemorated annually as *Tisha B'Av*: Fasting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of the month Av, observes the loss of the Judaic kingdom. In this regard, it is well to consider the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* on this momentous event:<sup>118</sup>

The First Temple, built by King Solomon, was destroyed by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E. on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Av, according to Jeremiah 52:12, whereas in the corresponding record in II Kings 25:8–9, the date is given as the 7<sup>th</sup> of Av. The Tosefta [a collection of teachings and traditions closely related to the Mishneh] Ta'anit 4:10 (also Ta'an. 29a) explains this discrepancy by stating that the destruction of the outer walls and of the courtyard started on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Av while the whole edifice was destroyed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Av. R. Johanan declared that he would have fixed the fast on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Av because it was on that day the greater part of the calamity happened. The rabbis, however, decided that it is more fitting to commemorate the "beginning of the calamity."

The Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E., on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Av, according to the historian Josephus (Wars, 6:249–50). This day is still observed as a day of mourning by the Karaites. The Talmud (Ta'an. 29a), however, gives the date as the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av, which became accepted as the anniversary of both destructions.

The Talmud justifies the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av as the major day of mourning because a series of calamities occurred on this day throughout Jewish history. The Mishnah (Ta'an. 4:6) enumerates five disasters:

- (1) On the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av it was decreed that the Children of Israel, after the Exodus from Egypt, should not enter the Promised Land;
- (2) the First and
- (3) the Second Temples were destroyed;
- (4) The last stronghold of the leaders of the Bar Kokhba war, was captured in 135 C.E.
- (5) One year later, in 136, the Roman emperor Hadrian established a heathen temple on the site of the Temple and rebuilt Jerusalem as a pagan city which was renamed Aelia Capitolina and which the Jews were forbidden to enter.

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 is said also to have occurred on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av. [World War I broke out on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av in 1914 when Russia declared war on Germany.]

The 9<sup>th</sup> of Av thus became a symbol for all the persecutions and misfortunes of the Jewish people, for the loss of national independence and the sufferings in exile. The massacres of whole communities during the Crusades intensified this association.

Here we notice, as in most histories, the date for burning the temple is designated the Jewish year spanning 587-586 B.C., whereas Bible Students generally use the year beginning 607-606. This is a 20 year difference in our chronology. The historical reference to the 586 date is based on acceptance of Ptolemy, the Chaldean and Babylonian records as authoritative.<sup>119</sup> Once this assumption was made, this became the point of connecting the Biblical record and synchronizing the Biblical events backward and forward from this event. Because secular history accounts for only 50 years between the burning of Jerusalem and Cyrus, some Bible commentators saw the need to reckon Jeremiah's 70-year judgment prophecy as beginning before the fall of Jerusalem. [Appendix D]

However, our concern is not only for the inception of the 70-year prophecy and how it links into the 6000 years of human history. The dating of this event determines how we reckon the Gentile Times (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28; Dan. 4:16, 23, 25, 32; Luke 21:24). Furthermore, Bible Students have understood Ezek. 21:25-27 to measure from the removal of the crown from Zedekiah and the destruction of Jerusalem. So either our measuring from the 606 B.C. event and date is incorrect or secular history is not correct. Secular history is largely based on archaeological and pagan records.

Some consider that Pastor Russell overlooked some credible evidence in appending the 70-year prophecy from the burning of Jerusalem. However, just the opposite is the case. He was well aware of the records of nations who were not guided by divine providence. And today, there are thousands of more documents that would contend for a different scenario. Yet he chose to disregard all such material, as long as the Bible carries the record and esteem the Scriptures at face value. We may consider whether we are guided by the same principle. We cite the following for the basis of weighing Scripture against the secular record:

Usher dates the seventy years desolation *eighteen years* earlier than shown above—i.e., before the dethronement of Zedekiah, Judah's last king—because he figured the king of Babylon took many of the people captive at that time. [\*Note, however, this partial captivity occurred *eleven*, not *eighteen*, years before the dethronement of King Zedekiah.] (2 Chron. 36:9,10,17; 2 Kings 24:8-16.) He evidently makes the not uncommon mistake of regarding those seventy years as the period of *captivity*, whereas the Lord expressly declares them to be seventy years of *desolation* of the land, that the land should lie “desolate, without an inhabitant.” Such was not the case prior to Zedekiah's dethronement. (2 Kings 24:14.) But the desolation which followed Zedekiah's overthrow was complete; for, though some of the poor of the land were left to be vine-dressers and husbandmen (2 Kings 25:12), shortly even these—“all people, both small and great”—fled to Egypt for fear of the Chaldees. (Verse 26.) There can be no doubt here: and therefore in reckoning the time to the *desolation of the land*, all periods up to the close of Zedekiah's reign should be counted in, as we have done. (B:52)

From the foregoing it is evident that the time of writing DAWN II. we were fully aware that “Ptolemy's Canon” and “Usher's Chronology” cut short the “*seventy years*” “desolation of the land,” and counted them as but *fifty-one* years, Usher endeavoring to make the Bible account agree with “Ptolemy's Canon.” We, however, have followed the Bible record exactly and persistently, and took secular history only where Bible history ended. We cannot make seventy years' *desolation of the land* into fifty-one years' desolation for the sake of harmony with Ptolemy. (Dan. 9:2; 2 Chron. 36:21) Indeed we reject all of Ptolemy's Canon back of the first year of Cyrus, 536 B.C.—the farther back it goes, the greater its errors. (R:3437)

If then, we rely upon the Bible as an inspired declaration on the subject, why should we not use it *as far as it goes*;—to the “seventy years desolation of the land,” and thus to Cyrus. Why not believe that God intended thus to provide a chronology as long as it was needed?...

But did not Messrs. Totten, Dimbleby and Usher pursue this safe plan, and make use of the inspired chronology of the Bible as far as it will go,—down to the first year of Cyrus?

No, they did not. They admit that the first year of Cyrus was the end of the “seventy years desolation of the land;” and that that date is well established as B.C. 536; but instead of *following* the Bible line of chronology back of that, and making the uncertain dates of secular history conform to the positive statements of the Bible, they reverse the matter, and attempt to make the Bible record agree with the secular dates, admitted to be quite obscure and uncertain. For instance, they adopt the uncertain secular date for the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; and then referring to Dan. 1:1, they *thus fix* the date of Jehoiakim's reign and alter other matters to suit. Then again, they apply the “seventy years” as years of *captivity* and begin them in the third year of Jehoiakim; whereas the Scriptures unequivocally declare, repeatedly, that those were years of “desolation of the land,” “without an inhabitant.” (Jer. 25:11,12; 29:10; 2 Chron. 36:21; Dan. 9:2.) In this manner the remainder of the reign of Jehoiakim and all of the reign of Zedekiah (18 years) are reckoned in as part of the “seventy,” whereas Scripturally they were previous and, therefore, additional years. (R:1975-6)

Clearly there was an intelligent decision regarding this matter of reckoning the prophecy from the destruction of Jerusalem (R:4892-3). The 70 years desolation has been explored and corroborated in other Bible Student treatises, and we will not go into extended details here.<sup>120</sup>



Placing the 70 years between the burning of Jerusalem and the decree of Cyrus may be thought to be a leap of faith, yet it has a sound basis in Scripture if read without wading through the mountain of secular records. There were notable events preceding the burning of Jerusalem in which alliances ranged between Egypt, Assyria and Babylon. Nevertheless, there was no desolating of the city.<sup>121</sup>

*And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, declares the LORD, for their iniquity and the land of the Chaldeans. (Jer. 25:11-12 NAS)*

*Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon...For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for [variously translated: to/at] Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill my good word to you, to bring you back to this place. (Jer. 29:1,10 NAS)*

*In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—In the first year of his reign, I Daniel searched the books for understanding concerning the number of the years whereof the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would let pass full seventy years over the ruins of Jerusalem. (Dan. 9:1-2 Leeser)*

*All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought them all to Babylon. Then they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its fortified buildings with fire, and destroyed all its valuable articles. And those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him [Nebuchadnezzar] and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the day of its desolation it kept Sabbath until seventy years were complete. Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia—In order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah—the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also put it in writing. (2 Chron. 36:18-22 NAS)*

Furthermore, we read in Ezra 1:1-8 that Cyrus then decreed a return of Jews to Jerusalem, to release the treasures of gold and silver taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and to rebuild the temple, “in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah.” The end of Jeremiah’s prophecy being clearly defined, we now find the beginning is identified by Zechariah:

*O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou has had indignation these threescore and ten years? (Zech. 1:12)<sup>122</sup>*

*When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth [month – 2 Kings 25:8,9; Jer. 52:12, Temple burned] and the seventh month [2 Kings 25:25; Jer. 41:1, Gedaliah murdered], even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. (Zech. 7:5,14)*

## **Conclusion:**

Daniel and the Chronicler understood the 70 years to be a prophecy of the exile, desolation and the ruins of Jerusalem. Both were familiar with the prophetic oracle and also observed and noted the fulfilment. Their words are clear and unambiguous.

The fall of Jerusalem fits all the requirements for the beginning of the prophecy and is confirmed by Zechariah’s reference to Gedaliah. The end of the seventy years is just as clearly marked. 2 Chron. 36:18-22 marks the burning of the Jerusalem temple to fulfil the words of Jeremiah for the land to keep sabbath for 70 years. Then the record of Cyrus’ decree for the people to return to Jerusalem is marked as completing the prophecy of Jeremiah. Clearly the Biblical testimony is that the seventy years extend from the burning of Jerusalem until the decree of Cyrus.

## CYRUS AND 536 B.C.

Cyrus occupies a central and prophetic place on the stage of history and is specially considered in the harvest message. We will consider the first year of Cyrus because of the difference in secular and Biblical reckoning. Scripture regards the first year of Cyrus as the year of his decree for releasing Jewish captivity (2 Chron. 36:22; Ezra 1:1). History counts his first year differently. This is also the point beyond which the Scriptures record no further chronological chain. So we will examine the accuracy of the time and date factors presented by the pen of the Laodicean Messenger.

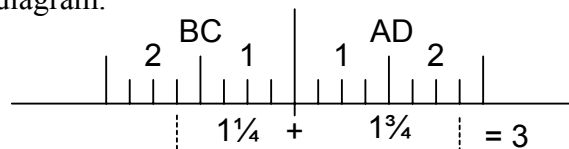
Pastor Russell states a profound principle:

As we shall see, the Bible record extends to the first year of Cyrus, B.C. 536, a well established and generally accepted date. There the thread of Bible chronology is dropped—at a point where secular history is reliable. God has thus provided for his children a clear and connected record down to the present time. (*B*:38)

Here we are offered the idea that as long as the Bible provides connecting links, we need not be concerned with the secular records, histories or opinions. The Word of God is sufficient, while the records of nations and peoples, not touched with His spirit in these ages of antiquity, may be obscure, conflicting or inaccurate. For this reason there is sufficient information in the Scriptures to carry us to where secular records become reliable (2 Peter 1:19-21).

With the information in *B*:42, we are given 3592 years of Biblical history plus 536 years B.C. and 1872 years A.D. for a total of 6000 years of human history. The 6001<sup>st</sup> began in 1873. Various reiterations of this formula are found on pages 51, 54 and 80. The year 536 B.C. also figures essentially into the Gentile Times reaching to A.D. 1914. The 70-year desolation is simply extended *back* from the year of release, 536 B.C. to 606 B.C. From here the 2520 years are counted *forward*, made up of 606 and 1914. These points are necessary in counting prophetic junctures and 6000 years of chronology. [*Appendix B*]

The counting of total years from before and after the B.C./A.D. line also requires a little attention. Historians count and record years as in our calendar format from January to December, and then make note of various calendar systems used among different nations. Therefore, 1 B.C. and A.D. 1 both indicate January years. Furthermore, the Autumn of A.D. 2 indicates 1¾ years into the new era. And the Autumn of 2 B.C. indicates 1¾ years *prior* to the new era, or a total of just 3 years between the points. One cannot simply add 2 B.C. and A.D. 2 together with a result of 4 years. This is illustrated with this little diagram.



The total years between a B.C. and A.D. date are sometimes stated as the year B.C. + A.D. year – 1. Otherwise: 2 + 2 – 1 = 3. Pastor Russell understood this when he says Jesus was born October 2 B.C. and was 30-years old in October A.D. 29, not 31-years old (*B*:55-62). [*Appendix E*]

Pastor Russell generally dealt with whole years for a simple and direct presentation. Historical dates refer to the common era Gregorian years marked from January, while reckoning from Autumn Jewish years offers the most concise results (*B*:363, *C*:127). Reckoning from the Jewish civil year, he consistently identifies October or Autumn of 1872 for the 6000 years and October of 1874 for the Jubilee and 1914 for the Gentile Times of 2520 years. One can see that from October of 607 B.C. to October of A.D. 1914 is 2520 years (606¼ + 1913¾, otherwise stated as 607 + 1914 – 1 = 2520).

Some confusion arises in that history and chronology are counted in this manner, yet astronomers *do count an extra year* called zero (0) for the sake of designating and calculating movement of stars, planets and eclipses. Pastor Russell briefly considered this technicality in 1912 on Reprint page 5141.

There he says if we count historical dates as the astronomers with an extra zero year, then the year designated 536 B.C. for Cyrus meant there was 536¼ years before the Christian era, plus the 70-year desolation, plus 1913¼ reaching to October 1914, which would be the correct date. He then observes that if we assume the historical designation of 536 B.C. was *without* the zero year, then we have only 535¼ years prior to our era and so might project October 1915 for the Gentile times.<sup>123</sup>

Pastor Russell never advocated this alternative for counting the 6000 years nor adjusted the prophetic points for the Jubilees or Gentile Times. During the years 1913-1916 and in the 1916 forewords to volumes II and III of *Studies in the Scriptures*, wherein no zero year is reckoned, Pastor Russell carefully reviewed and reaffirmed his confidence in the 6000 chronology ending in 1872 and marking 1874, 1878, 1914, etc.<sup>103</sup> While he urges us not to build expectations for events on chronology alone, the events of 1914, in retrospect, do in turn confirm the validity of the chronology presented.

Historians account for no zero year and our reckoning of 2 B.C. and A.D. 29 for Jesus' age, does not use such a year. Morton Edgar considers this for the Cyrus dating in *GPPII*, page 32 (and footnote), page 130 (footnote) and page 225.<sup>100</sup> While he identifies the Autumn of 607 B.C. for the burning of Jerusalem and Autumn 537 B.C. for the decree of Cyrus, yet it is apparent that the *first year* from these profound events span most of the following year which we mark as 606 and 536 B.C.

The following treatises consider the historical and Biblical evidence that if Babylon fell at the hands of the Medes and Persians in 538 or 539 B.C., there could have been no less than one year or more than two before the decree and what is regarded in Scripture as the first year of Cyrus.

Again we turn to Clinton in *Fasti Hellenici*:<sup>110</sup>

#### **Appendix XVIII: KINGS OF PERSIA.**

When it is said in the Introduction<sup>a</sup> that the reign of CYRUS coincides with that point of time at which sacred history first touches upon profane, the reader will of course understand that this is intended in a chronological sense. There are doubtless many occasional facts in early profane history, in which the obscure and uncertain traditions preserved to us by the Greeks derive light and confirmation from the authentic narrative of Scripture. But the reign of Cyrus at Babylon is the point at which the chain of sacred chronology is taken up and continued by profane history. In the fourth year of *Jehoiakim* king of Judah we arrive at the epoch at which sacred history is met by profane testimony. The fourth year of *Jehoiakim*, in which the captivity commenced<sup>b</sup> [We do not agree with this footnote as there was not a captivity that year and Jeremiah was *forecasting* the 70 years. See *Beauties of the Truth*, Volume 11, Number 2, pages 4-5.], was the seventieth year before the first of *Cyrus* at Babylon. At the termination, then, of the captivity, in the first year of *Cyrus*, Scripture chronology is measured with profane. By determining the position of this date we determine all the preceding epochs; the revolt of the ten tribes; the election of *Saul*; the division of the lands of Canaan; from whence we ascend to the birth of *Abraham* and the patriarchal genealogies.

The adjustment of this period of seventy years to the reigns of the Babylonian kings is perplexed and embarrassed with many difficulties, and has been made the subject of much controversy and dispute... These Babylonian reigns are thus delivered in the Astronomical Canon.

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<sup>a</sup> Page i: The government of *Pisistratus* at Athens was a remarkable epoch, distinguished by many peculiar characters. In a chronological view, it is marked as being the first date in Grecian history from which an unbroken series of dates can be deduced in regular succession. It coincides with the reign of *Cyrus* and the rise of the Persian empire; and consequently coincides with that point of time at which sacred history first touches upon profane.

<sup>b</sup> The commencement of the captivity is clearly marked: Jerem. XXV. 1-11. The first of *Nebuchadnezzar* is therefore "coincident with the end of the third, and the beginning of the fourth year of *Jehoiakim*." W. Lowth on Jerem. XXV. 1. The *first* year, then, of the captivity (which was the twenty-third from the thirteenth of *Josiah*: Jerem. XXV. 3) was connumerary with the fourth year of *Jehoiakim*. The *last* year of the captivity was the first of *Cyrus* at Babylon: Ezra V. 13. *In the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, the same king Cyrus made a decree, &c.*

	Y.	N.E.	B.C.
1. Nabucalassar (Nebuchadnezzar) . . . . .	43.	144.	604.
2. Ilvarodamus (Evil Merodach) . . . . .	2.	187.	561.
3. Nericassolassar . . . . .	4.	189.	559.
4. Nabonadius . . . . .	<u>17.</u>	193.	555.
	66.		
Cyrus . . . . .	9.	210.	538.

An obvious difference presents itself between the numbers in the Canon and the amount of years expressed in Scripture. The first of Cyrus at Babylon is the sixty-seventh year from the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign instead of the seventieth, a deficiency of three complete years in the term of the captivity. The reign of Nebuchadnezzar is stated at forty three years by all the copies of the Canon;<sup>c</sup> and that number is assigned to him by Berosus<sup>d</sup>. Something more than that amount may be collected from Scripture, which antedates the years of this Babylonian king; computing to his reign the last year of his father, and placing the fourth of Jehoiakim and the beginning of the captivity in the year of Nabonassar 143, equivalent to B.C. 605<sup>e</sup>. The first year, then, of the seventy preceded the 43 years of Nebuchadnezzar, and the year of Nabonassar 144 (B.C. 604) was conumerary with the second year of the captivity. There still remain two deficient years. Between Nebuchadnezzar and the first of Cyrus are required twenty-five years, and the Canon only expresses twenty-three. (*Clinton*, volume II:366-368)

Though computing the 70 years differently, and with some attempts to reconcile secular records, Clinton continues to correctly establish the Scriptural date for the first year of Cyrus:

The preceding inquiry leads us to the conclusions: that the term of sixty-six years from *Nebuchadnezzar* to the first of *Cyrus* is rightly numbered in the Canon; that the seventy years' captivity commenced B.C. 605, in the year before the sole reign of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and terminated with the third year of *Cyrus*, according to the Canon; that the capture of Babylon is rightly placed in B.C. 538; and that the edict for the return of the Jews, at the end of B.C. 536, was the first year of *Cyrus*, computed from the death of *Darius the Mede*. (*Clinton*, volume II:378)

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<sup>c</sup> Both the correct copy of Dodwell, and the two corrupted copies given by Syncellus p.207,208. When it is said that both the copies are corrupted, this description is to be understood of the period between Nabonassar and Cyrus, the period with which we are now engaged. The subsequent reigns of the Persian kings, with the exception of Darius III., are accurately given by Syncellus in his first list p.208.

<sup>d</sup> Josephus Ant. X.11,1. ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ναβουχοδονόσορος ἔτη τεσσαράκοντα τρία βασιλεύσας τελευτᾷ τὸν βίον. He had these numbers from Berosus: λέγει γὰρ οὕτω Βηρωσσοῦς διὰ τῆς τρίτης· Ναβουχοδονόσορος μὲν οὖν – μετηλλάξατο τὸν βίον βεβασιλευκῶς ἔτη τεσσαρκοντατρία. In Apion. I.20. p.1176.

<sup>e</sup> Jackson asserts that only forty-three years are given to Nebuchadnezzar in Scripture. He collects the numbers thus: "Nebuchadnezzar reigned 36 (37 current) (2 Kings XXV.27) + 7 (8 current) (2 Kings XXIV.12)=43, which agrees with the Astronomical Canon." He had been preceded by Perizonius Orig. Babylon. p.358... This is more specious than accurate. Usher with better reason concluded that this king, in Scripture computation, reigned about twenty months with his father, and forty-three by himself. The basis of our computation of this reign is 2 Kings XXV.27. *In the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiakin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, (twenty-fifth day: Jerem.LII.31.) Evil Merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiakin out of prison.* Jehoiakim reigned more than ten years, because he reached the eleventh year current. At the accession of Nebuchadnezzar less than three years had elapsed, for the third year was current. From this point then to the end of his reign are considerably more than seven. To these are to be added the three months and ten days of Jehoiakin. The eighth year then of Nebuchadnezzar was nearly completed at the captivity of Jehoiakin: and 8+36 will give the 44<sup>th</sup> year nearly completed. To this we must add some portion of the 37<sup>th</sup> of Jehoiakin, will give the full term of 44 years.

Clinton concludes that Babylon fell to Cyrus in 538 B.C. and his first year counted only after the death of Darius in 536 B.C. To further establish this point we must now go to Rollin and Hales. Consider first the comments from Charles Rollin, *Ancient History*:<sup>124</sup>

When Cyrus judged he had sufficiently regulated his affairs at Babylon, he thought proper to take a journey into Persia. In his way thither he went through Media to visit his uncle Cyaxares, to whom he carried very magnificent presents, telling him at the same time that he would find a noble palace at Babylon, already prepared for him, whenever he would please to go thither; and that he was to look upon that city as his own. Indeed, Cyrus, as long as his uncle lived, held the empire only in co-partnership with him, though he had entirely conquered and acquired it by his own valour.—(Ant. J.C. 538.)—Nay, so far did he carry his complaisance, that he let his uncle enjoy the first rank. It is Cyaxares who is called in Scripture, Darius the Mede; and we shall find, that under his reign, which lasted but two years, Daniel had several revelations. (*Rollin*: 63)

Towards the end of the same year, which was reckoned the first of Darius the Mede, Daniel knowing by the computation he made, that the seventy years of Judah's captivity determined by the prophet Jeremiah, were drawing toward an end, prayed earnestly to God that he would vouchsafe to remember his people, rebuild Jerusalem, and look with an eye of mercy upon his holy city.

*The beginning of the United Empire of the Persians and Medes. The famous Edict of Cyrus.*

Here, properly speaking begins the empire of the Persians and the Medes united under one and the same authority. This empire, from Cyrus, the first king and founder of it, to Darius Codomannus, who was vanquished by Alexander the Great, lasted for upwards of 200 years.

Ant. J.C. 536.—CYRUS. Cyaxares dying at the end of two years, and Cambyses likewise ending his days in Persia, Cyrus returned to Babylon, and took upon him the government of the empire.

The years of Cyrus's reign are computed differently. Some make it thirty years, beginning from his first setting out from Persia, at the head of an army, to succour his uncle Cyaxares; others make it to be but seven years, because they date it only from the time, when, by the death of Cyaxares and Cambyses he became sole monarch of the whole empire.

In the first of these seven years Cyrus published the famous edict whereby the Jews were permitted to return to Jerusalem. There is no question but this edict was obtained by the care and solicitations of Daniel, who possessed great influence at court. That he might the more effectually induce the king to grant him this request, he showed him undoubtedly the prophecies of Isaiah, wherein above 200 years before his birth, he was marked out by name as a prince appointed by God to be a great conqueror, and to reduce a multitude of nations under his dominion. (*Rollin*: 64)

Seven years being spent in this state of tranquility, Cyrus returned into Persia, for the seventh time after his accession to the whole monarchy; and this shows that he used to go regularly into Persia once a year. Cambyses had been now dead for some time, and Cyrus himself was grown old, being at this time about seventy years of age; thirty of which had elapsed since his being first made general of the Persian forces, nine from the taking of Babylon, and seven from his beginning to reign alone after the death of Cyaxares. (*Rollin*: 65)

Now we turn to Hales to find the source documents for these two years between 538 and 536 B.C.  
*A New Analysis of Chronology*:<sup>112</sup>

In like manner the [Ptolemy] Canon dates the accession of *Cyrus*, not from the capture of *Babylon* itself, B.C. 536, but from his decisive victory over the rebellious king of *Babylon*, who is called *Nabonadius*, about two years before, B.C. 538, when he defeated him in a pitched battle, and drove the *Babylonians* into the city, which he afterwards besieged, and, at length, took by a stratagem, noticed both by *Herodotus* and *Xenophon*, of turning the waters of the *Euphrates* into a lake, or canal, above the town, and sending parties of troops to enter the channel of the river, above and below the town, as soon as it became fordable; by which means the city was taken “*at each end*” by surprise, Jer. li.31, during the drunken festival of the *Sakea*, Jer.li.41.

And, indeed, that the siege of *Babylon* could not have lasted much less than two years, may fairly be collected from the accounts of *Herodotus* and *Xenophon*. [Documenting the length of the siege may not be important, but the testimony of *Xenophon* is crucial in identifying the term of *Cyrus*’ sovereignty.] (*Hales*, volume I:168)

That *Cyrus* did not survive the capture of *Babylon* above seven years, may also be collected from *Xenophon*. This historian, the basis of whose *Cyropaedia* is true, though the work be embellished with some fictitious ornaments, and who served in Asia under *Cyrus* the younger, and therefore had an opportunity of learning many particulars of the life of *Cyrus* the Great, unknown to the Greeks, relates, that “*Cyrus* usually spent seven months in the year at *Babylon*, during the winter season, because the climate was warm; three months at *Susa* in spring; and two months at *Ecbatana* during the heat of summer; that he might enjoy an equal temperature throughout his extensive domains.” Lib.vii.p.498. Hutchinson. Shortly after, he observes, that “*Cyrus*, in process of time, being now very elderly, comes from (these his usual places of residence) to the Persians, the seventh (year) in the course of his sovereignty,” \* and shortly after dies. Lib.viii.p.499.

And that *Cyrus* actually died, and was succeeded by his son *Cambyses*, B.C. 529, according to the Canon, is demonstrated by a lunar eclipse, recorded by Ptolemy as happening in the seventh year of *Cambyses*, N.E.225 or B.C. 523; for B.C. 523+6 = B.C. 529.

We are therefore abundantly warranted to deduct two years from the nine assigned by the Canon to the reign of *Cyrus*, reckoning from his decisive victory over the *Babylonians*, in order to reduce the commencement of his sovereignty to the actual capture of *Babylon*... For though the *Chaldeans* might date the sovereignty of *Cyrus* from that decisive victory, which put an end to the independence of the *Babylonians*, yet the sacred historians would naturally date the sovereignty from the capture of *Babylon*, the year of their own deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. (*Hales*, volume I:169)

The duration of this captivity for seventy years, to the *Jews* and all the surrounding nations, was foretold by the prophet *Jeremiah*, xxv.11, xxix.10, 2 Chron.xxxvi.21-23. It expired B.C. 536, the year that *Cyrus* took *Babylon*,\*\* and issued a decree for the return of such of the *Jews* as chose, throughout his dominions, to their own land, Ezra i.1-3, which was effected “in the seventh month of the first year of *Cyrus* king of *Babylon*,” Ezra iii.1, v.13;

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\* The original is, Οὕτω δὲ τοῦ αἰῶνος προκεχωρηκότος, μάλα δὲ πρεσβύτης ὢν ὁ Κῦρος ἀφικνεῖται εἰς Πέρσας το ἑβδομον ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀρχῆς. Here Hutchinson, in his note (a) contends that το ἑβδομον ἐπὶ should be taken adverbially for “the seventh time,” like the Latin *septimum*. But the *seventh time* is equivalent to the *seventh year*, since he went thither only once a year. [The translation of *Xenophon*, *Cyropaedia*, Walter Miller, Harvard University Press, reads: “When his life was far spent amid such activities and *Cyrus* was now a very old man, he came back for the seventh time in his reign to Persia.”]

\*\* *Ptolemy*’s canon dates the first year of *Cyrus*, B.C. 538, two years earlier; reckoning from the decisive defeat of *Nabonadius*, and commencement of the siege, which lasted two years, as proved, Vol.I. p.168,169.

and this corresponds with the account of *Josephus*, “in the first year of Cyrus, which was the seventieth (το εβδομηκοστν,) from the day of the removal of our people from their native land to Babylon,” &c. Ant. XI.1,1. For from B.C. 605, to B.C. 536, was 69 years complete, or 70 years current. –This, it is hoped, will be found a satisfactory adjustment of the chronology of this most intricate and disputed period of the captivity; in which all the varying reports of sacred and profane history are reconciled, and brought to harmonize with each other. (*Hales*, volume II:440)

Again, it is not necessary to confirm the siege lasted two years or if the two years were occupied by his uncle Cyaxares (Darius) until his death. In either case Cyrus assumed the sovereignty and began to make yearly visits to Persia *only two years after laying siege to Babylon*. These are clearly numbered as seven by Xenophon ending in 529 B.C. Therefore the first circuit as sovereign was in 536 B.C. From the Jewish standpoint, this was considered the first year of Cyrus.

William Galloway uses the same evidence to record the transition years beginning from 539 B.C. *The Chain of Ages*.<sup>125</sup>

B.C. 539: DARIUS CYAXARES, THE MEDE, THE SON OF THE AHASUERUS, assumes the sovereignty of Babylon, “being about threescore and two years old,” or beginning his sixty-second year, a mark of time important in relation to his mother, Queen Esther. The character of this prince, as it is depicted by Xenophon, was by no means equal to the situation. Given to excessive indulgence in wine, capricious, jealous, cruel and arbitrary, passionate even to fury on slight provocations,<sup>1</sup> he did not possess the capacity, or the self-command necessary for governing a vast empire; and the splendour of luxuriousness of Babylon were not calculated to improve him. The virtues and generalship of his nephew Cyrus had placed him there, not his own merits or exploits. He emulated the style of the Nebuchadnezzars, and it is probable that on his solemn deification, he assumed that customary title of the kings of Babylon, since he appears to be confounded by Berosus, all in one with the last Nabonnēdus. He reigned at Babylon two years. The narrative of Xenophon accords with the fact that he had his palace and imperial court (οἶκος καὶ ἀρχεῖα) at Babylon, after the capture of the city by Cyrus; who had, at an earlier period, on his succession to the throne of Persia, received in marriage his cousin Amytis, the daughter of Darius, the Mede.<sup>2</sup>

Darius sets over the kingdom 120 princes, and over these three presidents, of whom Daniel is first, that the princes might give accounts to them. This high position of the prophet provoking the jealousy of the princes and other presidents, they consulted for his destruction, and with that view employing impious flatteries, they persuaded Darius to assume to himself divine honours, and to pass an insane decree forbidding supplications to be made to any other god or man for thirty days, under penalty of being cast into the den of lions. It may have been the approved form of monarchical apotheosis... The incident in all its parts is strikingly illustrative of the character of the king, as well as the mercy and power of God in delivering His servant. (Dan. vi.)

B.C. 539: In the first year of Darius, Daniel understanding from the prophecies of Jeremiah that God would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem, sets his heart, by prayer and supplications, with fasting, to seek of God the restoration of the Jews, and is answered, by the message of an angel, “At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth.” And from this going forth of the commandment from the upper source the fiat of the Lord, a measure of time is given. (*Galloway*, chapter VIII:341-342)

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<sup>1</sup> Cyropaedia lib. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Cyropaedia lib. vii. Obviously this marriage could not have taken place after the taking of Babylon, if Cambyses was its offspring.

B.C. 538: In the second year of Darius, who, having been duly deified at Babylon (Dan. vi. 7), was now known to the Babylonians as the reigning NABONNĒDUS, it is probable that his tyranny, dissipation, and incompetence both rendered his reign intolerable, and occasioned causes of quarrel with Cyrus. The latter marched against him. Babylon was not now so defensible as formerly, because Cyrus at his first occupation of it had broken down a portion of the city wall. Darius led out the army, gave battle to Cyrus in the open field, was defeated, and instead of retreating into Babylon, fled to Borsippa, lower down the Euphrates. There he was immediately besieged, but surrendered. He was spared, but sent away from Babylonia, and appointed to reside in Carmania, where he remained till his death. I do not doubt that he is the person of whom, under the name of Nabonnēdus, these circumstances are related by Berosus,<sup>7</sup> though confused by him and my Megasthenes,<sup>8</sup> with the reign of Nabonadius or Belshazzar. Arrian<sup>9</sup> also alludes to Cyrus, as having wrested the dominion from the Medes by force. (*Galloway*, chapter VIII:345)

B.C. 537 CYRUS THE GREAT, KING OF PERSIA, now sole and supreme over the whole empire. The duration of the reign of Cyrus is differently reckoned. If counted from his accession to the throne as second in imperial rank, with the title of “Cy-Rosh,” it was of twenty-nine or thirty years; but if estimated from his now coming to the sole supreme imperial power, it was only about seven years. The canon of Ptolemy makes it nine years; but these are inclusive of the two years of Darius, whom he leaves out entirely, and reckons the reign of Cyrus from his capture of Babylon. Xenophon mentions that he used to spend the seven winter months at Babylon, the three spring months at Susa, and two month in the height of summer at Ecbatane, and that in this rotation he came to the Persians for the seventh time during his reign. This is in accordance with the duration of his reign in succession to Darius having been seven years. But the various writers, losing sight of this double commencement of his reign, have been led into confusion and contradictions.<sup>1</sup>

B.C. 537 In the first year of his reign in succession to Darius, CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA, makes a proclamation throughout all his dominions and also puts it into writing, for the return of the children of Israel to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple. The written decree was found engrossed in the records of the kingdom, in the palace at Ecbatane; and it was therefore probably issued in July or August, as that was the time of year which Cyrus ordinarily spent in that northern capital (Ezra i. 1; vi. 2–5. Xen. Cyrop.). It was without doubt that the influence of Daniel, which was great under both Darius and Cyrus, contributed much to the obtaining of this decree, and was exerted for that purpose in conformity with his own prayer to God (Dan. ix.). The decree was not limited to members of the tribe of Judah; it was published also throughout Media, and was acted on by some out of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (1 Chron. ix. 3).<sup>2</sup>

In the seventh month (October), the children of Israel gather themselves together to Jerusalem. The altar for burnt offering is built by JOSHUA, the son of Josedek, and ZURUBBABEL, the son of Shealtiel; and the morning and evening sacrifice resumed. The Feast of Trumpets is kept on the first day of the month (Ezra iii. 6. Levit. xxiii. 24, Num. xxix. 1); and on the fourteenth day of the month the Feast of Tabernacles is kept (Ezra iii. 1–4. Levit. xxiii. 34). (*Galloway*, chapter IX:346-347)

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<sup>7</sup> Apud. Josephus cont. Apion, lib. i.

<sup>8</sup> Ap. Eusebius Praep. Evang. ix. 41.

<sup>9</sup> De Expeditione Alex. ii. 6, v. 4.

<sup>1</sup> See more fully on this subject in the Appendix to “Isaiah’s Testimony for Jesus,” p. 431.

<sup>2</sup> Compare also the decree of Artaxerxes, Ezra vii. 13.



Keil and Delitzsch affirm a delay in Cyrus assuming the throne.

*Biblical Commentary on The Old Testament:*<sup>126</sup>

Cyrus conquered Babylon by the permission of Cyaxares, and after its overthrow not only offered him a “residence” there, but went to Media, presented himself before Cyaxares, and showed him that he had appointed for him in Babylon οἶκος καὶ ἀρχεῖα [a palace and official headquarters], in order that when he went thither εἰς οἰκεῖα κατὰγεσθαι [occupy a residence of his own], *i.e.* in order that when, according to Eastern custom, he changed his residence [so] he might have a royal palace there, so, according to Daniel, Darius did not overthrow the Chaldean kingdom but received it (ch. vi.1 [Dan. 5:31]), and was made king (דָּרְיָוֹשׁ, ch. ix.1), namely, by Cyrus, who, according to the prophecies of Isaiah, was to overthrow Babylon, and, according to Dan. vi. 29 [6:28], succeeded Darius on the throne. The statement, also, that Darius was about sixty-two years old when he ascended the throne of the Chaldean kingdom, harmonizes with the report given by Xenophon, that when Cyaxares gave his daughter to Cyrus, he gave him along with her the kingdom of Media, because he had no male heir, and was so far advanced in years that he could not hope to have now any son. Finally, even in respect of character the Cyaxares of Xenophon resembles the Darius of Daniel...

After all this, there can be no reason to doubt the reign of Darius the Mede. But how long it lasted cannot be determined either from the book of Daniel, in which (ch. ix.1) only the first year of his reign is named, or from any other direct sources. Ptolemy, in his Canon, places after Nabonadius the reign of Cyrus the Persian for nine years. With this, the words of Xenophon, Πέρσας τὸ ἑβδομὸν ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀρχῆς [he came back for the seventh time in his reign to Persia], which by supplying ἔτος [year] after ἑβδομὸν [seventh] are understood of seven years' reign, are combined, and thence it is concluded that Cyaxares reigned two years. But the supplement of ἔτος is not warranted by the context. The supposition, however, that Darius reigned for two years over Babylon is correct. For the Babylonian kingdom was destroyed sixty-eight years after the commencement of the Exile. Since, then, the seventy years of the Exile were completed in the first year of the reign of Cyrus (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22 f.; Ezra i. 1), it follows that Cyrus became king two years after the overthrow of Babylon, and thus after Darius had reigned two years. See at ch. ix.1,2.

Although Cyrus only as commander-in-chief of the army of Cyaxares had with a Medo-Persian host taken Babylon, yet the tradition might speak of the conquering Persian as the lord of the Chaldean kingdom, without taking at all into account the Median chief king, whom in a brief time Cyrus the conqueror succeeded on the throne. In the later tradition of the Persians,<sup>1</sup> from which all the historians known to us, with the exception of Berosus, have constructed their narrative, the Median rule over the Chaldean kingdom naturally sinks down into the insignificant place in relation to the independent government of the conqueror Cyrus and his people which was so soon to follow. The absence of all notice by Berosus, Herodotus, and Ctesias of the short Median reign can furnish no substantial ground for calling in question the statement of Xenophon regarding Cyaxares, and of Daniel regarding the Median Darius, although all other witnesses for this were altogether of no force, which is indeed asserted, but has been proved by no one. (Keil, Book of Daniel: 198)

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<sup>1</sup> “In the Babylonian tradition,” Kranichfeld well remarks, “the memorable catastrophe of the overthrow of Babylon would, at all events, be joined to the warlike operations of Cyrus the conquering Persian, who, according to Xenophon, conducted himself in Babylon as a king (cf. *Cyrop.* vii. 5.37), and it might be very indifferent to the question for whom he specially undertook the siege. The Persian tradition had in the national interest a reason for ignoring altogether the brief Median feudal sovereignty over Babylon, which, besides, was only brought about by the successful war of a Persian prince.”

Darius did not become king over the Chaldean kingdom by virtue of a hereditary right to it, nor gained the kingdom by means of conquest, but he received it (קָבַל, ch. vi.1 [Dan. 5:31]) from the conqueror of Babylon, Cyrus, the general of the army. The first year of the reign of Darius the Mede over the Chaldean kingdom is the year 538 B.C., since Babylon was taken by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus in the year 539-538 B.C.. According to Ptolemy, Cyrus the Persian reigned nine years after Nabonadius. But the death of Cyrus as is acknowledged, occurred in the year 529 B.C. From the nine years of the reign of Cyrus, according to our exposition, two years are to be deducted for Darius the Mede, so that the reign of Cyrus by himself over the kingdom which he founded begins in the year 536, in which year the seventy years of the Babylonish exile of the Jews were completed...

The statement as to the time, ver. 1 [Daniel 9:1], is again repeated in the beginning of ver. 2, on account of the relative sentence coming between, so as to connect that which follows with it. We translate (in ver. 2), “I marked, or gave heed, in the Scriptures to the number of the years,” so that מִסְפָּר (*number*) forms the object to בִּינֵהּ (*I understood*); cf. Prov. vii.7... The passage contains two statements, viz. that Daniel studied the Scriptures, and that his study was directed to number the years, etc. (*Keil*, Book of Daniel: 320)

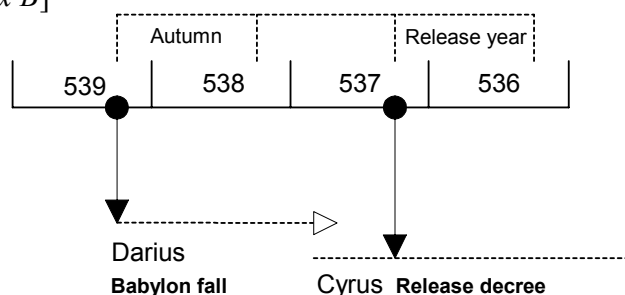
## Conclusion:

[1.] Daniel chapters 6, 9 and 11 refer to the events from the first year of Darius’ reign. Xenophon notes Darius’ reign and counts Cyrus reign over Babylon as seven years. Ptolemy omits Darius and marks Cyrus reign as nine years. It is reasonable that Darius reigned two years followed by Cyrus. Why should we omit a two year reign preceding the counting of Cyrus’ first year?

[2.] After the fall of Babylon, it was necessary for Darius to establish his court and set up his princes. In Daniel chapter 6, Darius issued a kingdom-wide decree concerning approved worship. This precipitated Daniel’s incarceration with the lions. Afterward, Darius rescinded the decree and promoted Daniel. Subsequently (Dan. 11:1-2), Daniel foresaw the successors to Darius. There is then some time necessary for Cyrus to depose and replace the authority of Darius. Something more than a few months is surely required for all these events. As the first year of Darius is recorded in Scripture, it may safely be inferred that the scribe understood his reign extended into a second year.

[3.] Cyrus is said to have issued the decree for the liberation and return of the Jews in his first year (2 Chron. 36:22; Ezra 1:1). It is inconceivable that the decree and restrictions issued by Darius would be concurrent in the same year as the liberating decree of Cyrus. We conclude that the Scripture reference to the first year of Cyrus is his first year of sole regency subsequent to a two year rule of Darius.

[4.] If the first year of Cyrus is counted from the Spring of 538 B.C., this would leave only six months for the preceding rule of Darius. This is hardly sufficient for the above events and for whom Daniel accords the title “*King Darius*” and “*the first year of Darius the Mede*” and “*King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell on the earth*” and whom the princes and presidents acclaim, “*King Darius, live for ever*” (Dan. 6:6,25; 11:1). These expressions imply a rule beyond his first year.<sup>127</sup> To our mind, while Babylon fell at the hands of Cyrus in the Autumn 539 B.C., there were then parts of two years of feeble rule by Darius, reaching to 537 B.C., before Cyrus assumed the sole regency and issued his famous decree in the Autumn of 537 B.C. Now with the preceding 70 years of desolation, followed by 536.25 B.C. years and thence to the Autumn of A.D. 1914, encompasses a full 2,520 years. [*Appendix B*]



## 70 WEEKS FROM THE COMMANDMENT TO RESTORE AND BUILD JERUSALEM DANIEL 9:24-25

Pastor Russell tells us Bible chronology carries from creation to the decree of Cyrus and thence we must rely on secular chronology after 536 B.C. Yet here also, conventional history differs somewhat from the presentation in *Studies in the Scriptures*.

After Cyrus and 536 we have two prophecies beginning with the command to restore and build Jerusalem. These are the 2300 days and the 70 weeks, Dan. 8:14; 9:24. This command was not that of Cyrus for release and commission to rebuild the temple, Ezra 1:1-3. Neither was it the decree in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes commissioning the restoration of temple articles and services, Ezra 7:7-26.

Pastor Russell assigns 454 B.C. as the year beginning these prophecies. When we indicate the year 454 as beginning the 70-week prophecy, we refer to the civil year beginning in the Autumn of 455 extending to the Autumn of 454 B.C. [Appendix E] We are confident that in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1-8), he issued letters for Nehemiah to build the gates and wall of Jerusalem and was completed in the Autumn of 455 B.C. (Neh. 6:15). This marked the year 454 as the first full year beginning the prophecies of Dan. 8:14 and 9:24-27.

The precise dating in Luke 3:1 provides a singular anchor for marking the year A.D. 29 in prophecy for beginning the 70<sup>th</sup> week which is to count back to 454 B.C. As secular history is not consistent for this date of Artaxerxes, some look for another event and date and also redefine the events of the 70<sup>th</sup> week.

Much of secular history accounts for two Persian kings: Xerxes (21 years) and Artaxerxes (41 years). The 21 years for Xerxes comes from Ptolemy, and we have no earlier evidence for it. Pastor Russell says in B:67 that Ptolemy projects the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes to be 9 years after our beginning point. He references Hales and Priestley to show that Xerxes' reign may be shorter and Artaxerxes beginning his reign earlier and his 20<sup>th</sup> year in 454 B.C. To these we can add Ethelbert Bullinger, *Companion Bible*- 1910; John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Bible*, 1880; Benjamin Newton, *The Ten Kingdoms*- 1873; Hengstenberg,<sup>132</sup> *Christology of the Old Testament*- 1857; Samuel Tregelles,<sup>136</sup> *Prophetic Visions*- 1847; Charles Rollin,<sup>124</sup> *Ancient History*- 1838; Philippe Labbe, *Sacrosancta Concilia*- 1671; James Usher,<sup>128</sup> *Annales*- 1654; Dionysius Petavius, *Rationale Temporum*- 1633; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Chronicon*- 325; Cornelius Nepos,<sup>138</sup> *Chronica*- 50 B.C.

All these used the same date for Artaxerxes or within a year or two. How did they compute? Well, most account for a discrepancy in Ptolemy's Canon.

- Most saw a shorter reign for Xerxes, and a longer reign for Artaxerxes, beginning in 474 or 475.
- Others synchronized records of the Olympiads with Persian records to account for the year.
- Others coordinated the Greek records of the exile flight of Themistocles from Greece to Persia just at the death of Xerxes in 475 B.C.
- Others conclude a co-regency of Xerxes with his father Darius or his son Artaxerxes. Hengstenberg was the most prolific expositor of this latter view, of which Morton Edgar summarizes in *GPPH*:295-306.<sup>100</sup> He concludes that Xerxes reigned only 11 years and Artaxerxes for 51 years.

Here is the case: 62 years are accounted for two Persian kings in Ptolemy's Canon [Appendix F]: Xerxes and Artaxerxes. Xerxes' first year in 485 B.C. is noted in history as is Artaxerxes' death in the winter of 424 and beginning 423 B.C. Because Ptolemy gave an unverified 21 years for Xerxes, it left by deduction only 41 for Artaxerxes, *assuming his reign began in 464 B.C.* Most historians followed Ptolemy's notation. On the other hand, if Ptolemy's numbers should have been 11 for Xerxes, then Artaxerxes would have reigned 51 years beginning in 474 B.C. The total duration of the father and son would be the same.

As Pastor Russell references Priestley and Hales in adjusting the Xerxes years designated by Ptolemy (B:67), we want to examine their treatises. We note that these two authors applied the prophecies differently; however, they saw the flaw in Ptolemy. This opened the way to correctly understand the prophetic application for the 70 weeks. Now we glean a few comments from Joseph Priestley supporting a ten-year reduction from the reign of Xerxes, from 21 to 11 years.

*A Harmony of the Evangelists:*<sup>129</sup>

In the preceding computation I suppose an error of ten years in the time allotted by all chronologers to the reign of Xerxes. But this I think has been sufficiently proved by Mr. Lauchlan Taylor, in his Essay on the Revelation, viz. that in reality, he did not reign more than eleven years, though the canon of Ptolemy gives him twenty one. This appears to me to be a discovery of so much consequence in chronology, and especially for the interpretation of prophecy, that I shall subjoin all that he has said upon this subject. (Priestley: 19)

The reader will please to take notice that in the preceding computations, I have made use of Prideaux's chronological tables, subjoined to his *Connexion*, than which nothing can be more unexceptionable. For yet greater distinctness, I shall subjoin a chronological table of all the dates referred to in the preceding interpretation (corrected by deducting ten years from the reign of Xerxes) and a view of all the periods. (Priestley: 22)

Mr. Lauchlan Taylor's *Observations concerning the Length of the Reign of Xerxes, from his Essay on some Passages in the Revelation, p. 191*

There are considerable differences among chronologers concerning the length of the reign of Xerxes. Diodorus,<sup>130</sup> and the chronologers who have followed him, affirming that Xerxes reigned twenty years before the reign of his son Artaxerxes commenced; whereas Petavius hath offered a proof from the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, that Artaxerxes began his reign in the twelfth year of the reign of his father Xerxes. (Priestley: 24)

For the next six pages he quotes Mr. Taylor's historical testimony for Xerxes having only an eleven year reign. He mainly draws on ancient Greek records including Thucydides' account of Themistocles' flight from Greece to Persia. [Appendix E] Then Priestley continues:

To what Mr. Taylor has advanced in support of his opinion that Xerxes reigned only eleven years, and against Artaxerxes having been associated in the empire with him during the ten last years of his reign, according to Petavius, I would add: First, that it appears from the history of Persia at the death of Xerxes, who was assassinated by Artabanus, that Artaxerxes was at that time but a youth; so that if he had been associated with this father in the empire ten years before his death, he must have been a mere child; and yet, according to Thucydides, it was to Artaxerxes, and not to Xerxes, that Themistocles was introduced, at the very beginning of those ten years. (Priestley: 31)

Six pages follow with additional historical and astronomical records gleaned from Thucydides, Herodotus, Isaac Newton and the Olympiads concerning eclipse data. Then Priestley concludes:

If my deductions from this eclipse, concurring with Mr. Taylor's historical observations, be just, we must take ten years from the whole period of time preceding the reign of Xerxes; and I do not know of any historical or astronomical reason to the contrary...

But it appears to me that this foundation of Ptolemy's chronology is a very weak one; since there is no proper *historical evidence*, that those eclipses were connected with any events in the corresponding years of those reigns. For anything that appears to the contrary, Ptolemy has only annexed to the table of eclipses, originally adjusted to a table of the Nabonassarian era only, the years of the kings, according to his own ideas of their correspondence. This table of eclipses Montucla says (*Histoire des Mathematiques*, vol. 1. p. 60) Ptolemy, no doubt, had from Hipparchus, who collected everything he could of that kind; and Hipparchus, being merely an astronomer, it is the more probable that he was not solicitous about the adjustment of the years of the kings reigns to those of the eclipses; and therefore that the years of the kings were added by Ptolemy himself. But whenever these years were added, there is no proof of their having been connected from the beginning; and without this, their proper correspondence ought not to be admitted. (Priestley: 36-37)

William Hales also computes the 70 weeks from another date and event, and consequently projects a different ending date than Pastor Russell. However, he regards the prophecy of great importance. Furthermore he sees the need to reduce the reign of Xerxes as noted by Ptolemy.

*A New Analysis of Chronology:*<sup>112</sup>

This illustrious prophecy Sir Isaac Newton justly represents as “*The foundation of the Christian religion;*” for “We have, in this short prophecy, a prediction of all the main periods relating to the coming of THE MESSIAH; the time of his *birth*, that of his *death*, that of the *rejection* of the Jews, the duration of the *Jewish* war, whereby he caused the city and sanctuary to be destroyed, and the time of his *second coming*,” – “for it is not to be restrained to his *first coming* only.” Newton on Daniel, p. 25, 137. (*Hales*, volume II:514)

The times of the *Jewish* high priests, are taken from the *Chronicon Alexandrinum*, according to *Prideaux*. In adjusting the reigns of the Persian kings from Xerxes downwards, according to Ptolemy’s Canon of Chaldean or Nabonassarean years, I have retained the *conumerary Julian* years, before the Christian era, in preference to the *incipient*, or those in which the reigns strictly began; because the *conumerary* correspond more exactly to the *Greek* chronology of the Olympiads, and to the leading transactions of their reigns, their wars, etc. in the *spring* and *summer* months. (*Hales*, volume II:449)

On pages 529-531 Hales lists Jewish high priests “*From Nehemiah’s Reform To The Birth Of John The Baptist.*” He then lists the Jewish High Priests, during the Persian and Macedo-Greecian dynasties, the Hasmonean Princes, the Roman Dynasty and the Idumaeen Kings. He uses the Maccabees, Josephus, the *Chronicon Alexandrinum* and *Prideaux’s* chronological tables.<sup>131</sup> Hales then notes three corrections to the accepted chronology after Nehemiah. These include changes to the regency of one priest by 5 years, another by 3 years and another by 1 year.

Priestley, in *A Harmony of the Evangelists* pages 24-28, validates evidence that Xerxes ascended the throne for 9 years before the death of Darius Hystaspes, and counted as his own. This leaves only 12 more years of Xerxes before the reign of Artaxerxes.<sup>129</sup> *Prideaux* regarded the co-regency as 10 years. These and other sources were available to Pastor Russell for validating the date of Nehemiah’s commission, and confirmed by more recent evidence.\* B:67 [Appendix E]

Charles Rollin reduced Ptolemy’s reference of Xerxes to 12 years and concluded 454 B.C. for the 20<sup>th</sup> of Artaxerxes. *Ancient History:*<sup>124</sup>

THE HISTORY OF XERXES, CONNECTED WITH THAT OF THE GREEKS.

Ant.J.C.485. [means Antidate Jesus Christ or B.C. date] –Xerxes having ascended the throne, employed the first year of his reign in carrying on the preparations begun by his father for the reduction of Egypt. Also confirmed to the Jews at Jerusalem all the privileges granted them by his father, and particularly that which assigned to them the tribute of Samaria, for the supplying them with victims for the service of the temple of God. (*Rollin*: 101)

After a long treatment of Xerxes’ life, Rollin continues:

Xerxes gave the government of Bactriana to his second son Hystaspes, who being by that means obliged to live at a distance from the court, gave his youngest brother Artaxerxes the opportunity of ascending the throne to his disadvantage, after the death of their father, as will be seen in the sequel. Here ends Herodotus’s history, viz. at the battle of Mycale and the siege of the city of Sestos by the Athenians.

DEATH OF XERXES, WHO IS KILLED BY ARTABANUS.

Ant.J.C.473–The ill success of Xerxes, in his expedition against the Greeks, and which continued afterwards, at length discouraged him. Renouncing all thoughts of war and conquest, he abandoned himself entirely to luxury and ease.

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\* Herodotus, *The Histories*, book VII:2,3,4. E.M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, page 193.

Artabanus, a native of Hyrcania, captain of his guards, who had long been one of his chief favourites, found that his dissolute conduct had drawn upon him the contempt of his subjects... Accordingly he prevailed upon Mithridates, one of the eunuchs of the palace, and high-chamberlain, to engage in his conspiracy; and ... entered the chamber where the king lay, and murdered him in his sleep. He then went immediately to Artaxerxes, the third son of Xerxes. He informed him of the murder, charging Darius his eldest brother with it. Thus we have seen the end of Xerxes, who was one of the most powerful princes that ever lived.

Ant.J.C.473–The Greek historians give Artaxerxes the surname of Longimanus. Strobe says, it was because his hands were so long ... but according to Plutarch, it was because his right hand was longer than his left.

Ant.J.C.473–According to Thucydides, Themistocles fled to this prince in the beginning of his reign: but other authors, as Strobe, Plutarch, Diodorus, fix this incident under Xerxes his predecessor. (*Rollin*: 120-121)

Ant.J.C.467–In the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, Ezra obtained of the king and his seven counsellors an ample commission, empowering him to return to Jerusalem with all such Jews as would follow him thither, in order to reestablish the Jewish government and religion, and to regulate both agreeable to their own laws. This commission, empowered him to settle the religion and government of the Jews, pursuant to the law of Moses... Such was the power with which Ezra was invested, and which exercised faithfully during thirteen years, till Nehemiah brought a new commission from the Persian court.–Ant.J.C.454.

Nehemiah was also a Jew, of distinguished merit and piety, and one of the cup-bearers to King Artaxerxes... Some Jews who were come from Jerusalem having informed him of the sad state of that city, that its walls lay in ruin, its gates were burnt down.... One day he was waiting upon the king, the latter observing an unusual air of melancholy in Nehemiah's countenance, asked him the cause of it. Nehemiah took this opportunity to acquaint him with the calamitous state of his country ... and humbly entreated that leave might be given him to go to Jerusalem in order to repair the fortification. The Kings of Persia, his predecessors, had permitted the Jews to rebuild the temple, but not the walls of Jerusalem. But Artaxerxes immediately caused a decree to be drawn up, that the walls and gates of Jerusalem should be rebuilt; and Nehemiah, as governor of Judea, was appointed to put this decree in execution... He likewise writ to all the governors of the provinces on this side the Euphrates, to give him all the assistance possible in forwarding the work for which he was sent.

It is from this decree, enacted by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign, for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, that we date the beginning of the seventy weeks mentioned in the famous prophecy of Daniel, after which Messiah was to appear, and to be put to death. (*Rollin*: 126)

Hengstenberg corrects Xerxes' reign and determines the date for the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes. *Christology of the Old Testament*.<sup>132</sup>

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS. We have already shown in our exposition, that we are not to look for this at the commencement of the rebuilding of the city generally; but rather at the time when the work of restoring the city in its former extent and grandeur was first taken in hand. We have now to determine, by the light of history, in what year this actually occurred.

But clearly defined as the starting point is the prophecy, it can neither be assigned to the first year of Cyrus, as it is by one; nor to the second year of Darius Hystaspes, as it is by another; nor to the seventh year of Artaxerxes, as it is by a third. Up to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, what had once been the city of Jerusalem was an open village, thinly populated, and exposed to injury of every kind from those who dwelt around. (*Hengstenberg*: 884)

It is with great truth that *Schultz* has said: “the hands of Ezra the priest were only loosed in matters connected with the temple; in every other respect they were still firmly bound. And Nehemiah was the first to receive permission to build the city and its walls, which Artachshasta [Artaxerxes], in his unfavorable edict, had not indeed represented as impossible, but which he had hitherto withheld. (*Hengstenberg*: 885)

With this enquiry as to the point of the commencement, we now connect an examination of the historical confirmation of the account, here give, of the peculiar characteristics of the first period, that is, the first seven weeks, dating from that point. The restoration of the city is said to occupy the whole seven weeks, and to be completed when they close. Now, the twentieth year of Artaxerxes’ reign, as we shall prove by and by, was the year 455 B.C. (*Hengstenberg*: 894)

There is no necessity to thread our way through a labyrinth of chronological researches. Chronological authorities are all agreed in this, that Xerxes began to reign in the year 485 B.C., and that the death of Artaxerxes occurred in the year 423. The only point in which they differ has respect to the commencement of Artaxerxes’ reign. Our task, therefore, will be accomplished, if we can prove that he began to reign in the year 474 B.C. For, in this case, the twentieth year of Artaxerxes would be the year 455 B.C. according to the ordinary reckoning, or 299 from the foundation of Rome.

We should have probably been spared the trouble of this enquiry altogether, had not the error of an acute writer [Ptolemy], and the want of independence on the part of those who succeeded him, involved the question of obscurity. According to *Thucydides*, Artaxerxes began to reign a short time before the flight of Themistocles to Asia. (*Hengstenberg*: 899)

Hengstenberg explores records from the Greek historian Thucydides, that Themistocles fled for refuge from Greece to Xerxes in Persia. But upon arrival, he found Xerxes had died and was already succeeded by Artaxerxes. Comparing the historian, Diodorus’ reference to Greek Olympiads,<sup>133</sup> gives his arrival in Persia with Artaxerxes in 474-473 B.C. and the death of Xerxes before that. This is the same rationale produced by Lauchlan Taylor, quoted by Priestley and others detailed by Morton Edgar in *GPPII*:295-306.<sup>100</sup>

After reviewing the evidence for the flight of Themistocles, Hengstenberg continues:

According to this, Xerxes can only have reigned eleven years; and Artaxerxes, on the other hand, fifty-one. But such a supposition is at variance with the account, given in the Canon Ptolemy, where Xerxes is said to have reigned twenty-one years, and Artaxerxes forty-one... The Canon, again, has not much weight, except where it is based upon astronomical observations, to which there is no allusion here. Apart from these, it takes its place with all the other historical sources.<sup>2</sup> The whole error was committed, when a single *ι* [numeral 10] had been mistaken for *κ* [numeral 20] in one of the earlier documents. For when once the reign of Xerxes had been set down at twenty-one years in consequence of this mistake, the reign of Artaxerxes would be shortened to forty-one as a necessary consequence. (*Hengstenberg*: 901)

Some assume that the *Ahasuerus* of Esther 1:1 is the same as *Xerxes*, and object to him having only an 11 year reign, as Esther 3:7 references his 12<sup>th</sup> year. Much could be said in reference to the rendering and identification of Hebrew and Persian names in history.<sup>134</sup> This is a study in itself. We will only reference Clarke’s opinion on Esther 1:1, that this Ahasuerus was the same as Artaxerxes.

Adam Clarke, *Clarke’s Commentary*:<sup>135</sup>

The *Ahasuerus* of the *Romans*, the *Artaxerxes* of the *Greeks*, and *Ardsheer* of the *Persians*, are the same. Some think that this *Ahasuerus* was *Darius* [Xerxes], the son of *Hystaspes*; but *Prideaux* and others maintain that he was *Artaxerxes Longimanus*.

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<sup>2</sup> Even the astronomical data of Ptolemaeus cannot be relied upon without reserve. Biot the astronomer says, that, after examining his catalogue of stars, he has lost all that still remained of his high esteem for this author. Zech found the notices of eclipses in Ptolemaeus incorrect in many respects; compare *Seyffarth*, who also expresses a very unfavourable opinion as to his historical canon.

Samuel P. Tregelles confirms 454 B.C., and discloses a misrepresentation of Usher's Chronology. Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel.<sup>136</sup>

On the 20th of Artaxerxes.—Some have found a difficulty in making out the chronology of the seventy weeks, because they have thought that the time from the 20th of Artaxerxes to the crucifixion of our Lord would not fully accord with that marked out in the prophecy. If it had been so, it need have surprised no one; whatever be the result of the chronological calculations, the word of God is the same; we know that it is certain, and everything else must bend to it. But here I believe the difficulty to be wholly imaginary. It is true that we may find some from the date printed in the margin of our Bibles; but the history of this date, as it here stands, is rather curious. Archbishop Usher drew up a scheme of Chronology which is commonly followed, rather from convenience than from its absolute correctness being supposed. About a hundred and fifty years ago Bishop Lloyd undertook to affix Archbishop Usher's dates to our English Bibles; but in this instance, he made a considerable alteration and substituted another date of his own, so as to adapt the reign of Artaxerxes to his own theory.

The date which stands in our Bibles for the 20th year of Artaxerxes is 446 B.C. This makes the commencement of his reign 465 B.C.; but the authority of the best and most nearly contemporary historian will put the matter in a very different light. Thucydides mentions that the accession of Artaxerxes had taken place before the flight of Themistocles. This authorizes us to adopt Usher's date and place the commencement of the reign 473 or 474 B.C. This would give the date of 454 or 455 B.C. as his twentieth year and the date of the commission.

It is a great pity that Archbishop Usher's date should in this particular case have been misrepresented: it was a point to which he had paid particular attention. About the year 1613 he lectured on the subject at Trinity College, Dublin, resting on the testimony of Thucydides. He then discussed difficulties connected with the supposed length of the reigns of Darius and Xerxes so as to adapt other events to this certain date. From October 1615 he corresponded at various times on the point with Thomas Lydiat (the scholar most familiar with such subjects of any in England), until 1643; and in 1650, after thirty-seven years of minute consideration, he published the result in his '*Annales Veritatis Testamenti*'... This answers in Usher's "*Collatio Annorum*" to 474 B.C., or the third year of the seventy-sixth Olympiad... In 1617 he says, 'These things being laid together do show, that the expulsion of Themistocles from Athens fell no later than the beginning of the fourth year of the seventy-sixth Olympiad; to which time you (i.e. Lydiat) doubtfully refer the beginning of his troubles... At that time Themistocles fled into Persia, as Eusebius noteth, whose testimony I have no reason to discredit, unless I have some better testimony or reason to oppose against it. The year before that, which is the third of the seventy-sixth Olympiad [474 B.C.], I suppose Artaxerxes Longimanus to have begun his reign: to whom as yet 'neosti basileuonta' [the new king/ruler], Themistocles fled, as Thucydides sufficiently proveth.' (Works, 15, p. 11). Usher in thus laying down this date had no [ulterior] motive for bringing the space of 483 years from the 20th of Artaxerxes to A.D. 29. (Tregelles: 100)

Martin Anstey states that Ptolemy's canon is contradicted by competent witnesses at various points and credits the record of Thucydides for identifying the first year of Artaxerxes.

*The Romance of Bible Chronology.*<sup>137</sup>

The one event which Thucydides does mention is the flight of Themistocles, and just here at this very point which he does touch the chronology of this period, he is in flat contradiction to Ptolemy's Canon. Writing of the year 471 B.C. [with Artaxerxes], Thucydides says, Themistocles had been ostracized and was living at Argos. Lacedaemonians and Athenians sent officers to arrest him. He fled to the Corcyreans. They conveyed him to the neighboring continent... There he found a merchant vessel sailing to Ionia, in which he embarked. It was driven by a storm to Naxos, but at length he arrived at Ephesus. Themistocles then went up the country with one of the Persians who dwelt in the coast, and sent a letter to Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes, who had just succeeded to the throne. (Anstey: 291)



Some of the earliest records of those who lived much closer to the events, confirm the reckoning for the first and twentieth year of Artaxerxes. We are not inclined to discount the basis and credibility of their testimony.

Charon of Lampsacus was born 554 B.C., and was still writing history in 464 B.C. He lived contemporaneous with Xerxes and Artaxerxes and compiled a record of Spartan magistrates. Charon wrote two books: his *Persica* on Persian history, and another four volumes with the title *Horoï of the people of Lampsacus*. Some scholars believe that these were based on annals of an earlier date. His accounting is according to the Olympic games, thus laying the ground work for marking history according to Olympiad years.<sup>133</sup>

Charon, like Thucydides, said that the flight of Themistocles to the court of Artaxerxes Longimanus began in 471 B.C. He states that Xerxes was dead by 474 B.C. and was succeeded by his son, Artaxerxes Longimanus. This speaks for a shorter reign of Xerxes. These testimonies of the earliest accounts cannot be reconciled with the later record of Ptolemy.

Cornelius Nepos was a Roman historian who lived about 100-25 B.C. He was a friend of Cicero and Catullus. Twenty five of his short lives of statesmen and warriors have survived in his *De Viris Illustribus*. He deals mainly with Greek history using Olympiad dating. Nepos supported the date connecting Themistocles with Artaxerxes:<sup>138</sup>

I know that most historians have related that Themistocles went over into Asia in the reign of Xerxes, but I give credence to Thucydides in preference to others, because he, of all those who have left records of that period, was nearest in point of time to Themistocles, and was of the same city. Thucydides says that he went to Artaxerxes, and sent him a letter in these words: "I, Themistocles, am come to you, a man, who, of all the Greeks, brought most evil upon your house, when I was obliged to war against your father [Xerxes], and to defend my own country. I also did your father still greater service, after I myself was in safety, and he began to be in danger; for when he wished, after the battle fought at Salamis, to return into Asia, I informed him by letter that it was in contemplation that the bridge, which he had constructed over the Hellespont, should be broken up, and that he should be surrounded by enemies; by which information he was rescued from danger. But now, pursued by all Greece, I have fled to you [Artaxerxes], soliciting your favour, and if I shall obtain it, you will find me no less deserving as a friend than your father found me resolute as an enemy.

(Nepos: 321)

Plutarch, the Greek historian and philosopher (A.D. 46 to 120), is famous for the literary beauty of his parallel biographies of great Greeks and Romans, in which he matched one against the other. Plutarch writes in *Lives and Essays*:<sup>139</sup>

Thucydides and Charon of Lampsacus say that Xerxes was dead, and that Themistocles had an interview with his son [Artaxerxes]; but Ephorus, Dinon, Clitarchus, Heraclides, and many others, write that he came to Xerxes. The chronological tables better agree with the account of Thucydides, and yet neither can their statements be said to be quite set at rest.

When Themistocles was brought into the king's presence and was asked why he fled Greece, he made a detailed speech concerning his reason for seeking exile. Plutarch then specifically identifies this king as Artaxerxes:

To this speech Artaxerxes made no answer at the time, although he was full of admiration at such boldness of spirit. (Plutarch, Themistocles: 27-28)

Eusebius was one of the early Christian fathers living about 325 A.D.. Jerome (A.D. 340 to 420) translated into Latin the Greek *Chronicon* of Eusebius. Only fragments of the Greek manuscript exist, but Jerome's translation is still extant. Eusebius was the first one to adopt a reckoning of chronological events by the era of Greek Olympiads (4-year periods beginning in 776 B.C.).<sup>133</sup> The Chronology of Eusebius has been followed by many authors and has determined the Chronology in Western Europe, till the time of Bede, and since, up to almost the present day.

Eusebius gives this specific date: Themistocles fled in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 76<sup>th</sup> Olympiad ( $76 \times 4 = 304$ . Therefore  $777 - 304 = 474/3$  B.C.). He says Artaxerxes had “*just recently ascended the throne.*” As Themistocles fled Greece with the object of finding refuge in Persia with Xerxes, but finding Artaxerxes on the throne, his ascension could not have been more than a year preceding this arrival. Thus we are perfectly justified as reckoning his ascension in 475/4 B.C.). This clearly indicates his 20<sup>th</sup> year ended in 455 B.C. This concurs exactly with Tregelles’ explanation.

Archaeology is not without its own testimony. While it is necessary to look to the historical record where Biblical chronology ends, we also note where archeology concurs. Cuneiform texts dated from the reign of Artaxerxes cover all the years of the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 41<sup>st</sup> year, except the 18<sup>th</sup>. But, there are two records after the 41<sup>st</sup>. The first, a commercial document coming from Borsippa is dated with the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes (BM 65494).<sup>140</sup> The second, which establishes the link between the end of the reign of Artaxerxes and the beginning of the reign of Darius II, carries the following date: “51<sup>st</sup> year, year of accession, 12th month, day 20, Darius king of the countries...” (CBM 12803).<sup>141</sup> Accordingly Darius II would have succeeded Artaxerxes to the throne in Artaxerxes’ 51<sup>st</sup> year.

Rolf Furuli explains that a portion of Xerxes’ 21 years may have been co-regent with his father is also indicated in the archeological record. There are at least eight tablets from the accession year of Xerxes, which are dated before the last dated tablet from the 36<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I.<sup>142</sup> Archaeologist E.E. Herzfeld unearthed much Persian material in the 1930s. At Persepolis was uncovered a bas-relief depicting Xerxes standing behind his father’s throne, being the same size and on the same royal platform as him, bearing the same royal lotus flower. [Appendix E]

According to an inscription, “says Xerxes the king: Darius my father made me the greatest after himself.” Darius is represented, wearing all the royal attributes, enthroned on a high couch-platform supported by representatives of the various nations of his empire. Behind him in the relief, that is, in reality at his right, stands Xerxes with the same royal attributes, his right hand resting on the high back of the throne. That is a gesture that speaks clearly of more than mere successorship; it means co-regency.<sup>143</sup>

On the throne sits Darius, clad in his robe of state and prepared to hold a public audience. Behind him on the same platform of royal majesty stands Xerxes, as the recognized heir-apparent wearing the same rich garments and sporting the same long, square-cut beard.<sup>144</sup>

## Conclusion:

There are grounds for a co-regency of Xerxes with Darius Hystaspes, else a shorter reign after his father’s death, resulting in a longer reign for Artaxerxes. These accounts are consistent with the conclusion that Artaxerxes reigned 51 years, the 20<sup>th</sup> of which ended in the Gregorian calendar year of 455 B.C. The 70-week prophecy commenced thence forward to 36 A.D. Critics regard these documents as scribal errors or ignore them altogether. We regard the documents to be authentic which concur with the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes as the year of the decree to “restore and build Jerusalem” (Daniel 9:25; Neh. 2:1-8), and others in error.

The evidence supports Pastor Russell’s conclusion that “*the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem*”—was not the *temple* under Ezra. Permission to rebuild the *temple*, and permission to rebuild the *city*, were quite different, and were separately granted by different sovereigns, and the work was executed by different persons. The edict to rebuild the city and its walls was issued by Artaxerxes Longimanus, in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. The *Royal Letters* authorizing restoration of the city and walls, were given to Nehemiah.

We understand the following table to represent the years for these scriptural events, and further detailed in *Appendix E*.

Decree for Jewish release	= 537 B.C.	(Ezra 1:1; 6:3)
Decree to restore Temple services	= 468 B.C.	(Ezra 7:7-26)
Decree to rebuild the wall and gates	= 455 B.C.	(Neh. 2:1-8)

## EPILOGUE

If the reader has reached this page, having considered the forgoing, several things are apparent. There is great diversity of opinion among those that mark the time tables of history. Historians are notorious for presenting their own agenda and bias of events, sometimes beclouded by ambivalent opinions, inaccuracies and voids. The secular record is a compendium of cuneiform, Chaldean, hieroglyphic and ancient texts. The compilation, rendering and deduction from these were largely made without a spiritual heart or eye. Still, a few students dared to venture beyond conventional wisdom to discern inherent truth between history and Scripture.

We turn to those who regard the Bible as self-sufficient and self-contained, with little recourse to the secular historian, except where corroboration of Scripture is found. Some Biblical students claim to be independent of profane history and not influenced by conflicts with Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian or Persian history. Yet even these find it hard to resist the urge to interpret texts to conform to secular chronology. Otherwise, those texts might be read quite differently without the external record. The wisdom of the wise (of this world) shall perish (Isa. 29:14; 1 Cor. 1:25; 3:19). *“But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”* (Isa. 66:2).

It takes great courage to regard Biblical statements in a light that does not conform to the scholars of this world, who depend largely on secular history and archaeology. It was not due to lack of scholarship or consensus that Pastor Russell laid down a line of chronology that differs from the norm. He simply saw a message from the Word that differed from worldly wisdom. Today we are asked to consider the growing mountain of archaeological and material evidence outside the Bible, indicating our Biblical reckonings were inaccurate. Yet the principle is the same: *“In thy light shall we see light”* (Psa. 36:9). This will not be so with the use of any other lamp, regardless of its intensity. This is not to say we disregard the records and lessons of history. For in many cases they confirm the divine testimony, but not always.

These pages share the conclusion that Pastor Russell was not alone among earlier Christians who chose to see beyond conventional wisdom. There is a record of prophetic and dispensational watchers down through the ages. Yet, even these were few among the masses of nominal Christians. And even these did not see clearly until the Lion of the tribe of Judah came and prevailed to open the book, including its last seal (Rev. 5:5). With the flood of contemporary material, let us not readily abandon the chronicle revealed at the second advent.

We have not only testimony and precedence, we have the words of the angel who holds the open book in his hand:

“There shall be no more delay; in the days of the seventh angel’s voice, when he now blows his blast, then shall the secret purpose of God be fulfilled, as he assured his servants the prophets.” Then the voice I had heard from heaven again talked to me, saying, “go and take the small scroll which lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the earth.” (Rev. 10:7-8 Moffatt)

So we also have the open book in the hand of the “mighty angel” and the “voice of the seventh angel.” They tell us “Take it, and eat it.” Each must determine if voices from the past gave a certain sound or if the evidence requires new exposition. Times and seasons are integral parts of the glorious divine tablet that the Church of God are privileged to examine. Praise God for the view from Pisgah’s mountain! Time will tell that the vision was sure (Hab. 2:1-3).



SUPPLEMENTAL ANALOGY to TRUE BIBLE CHRONOLOGY CONFIRMED

**THE 450-YEAR PERIOD OF THE JUDGES**

A study By Brother Morton Edgar

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3 Dec 1948

Here is a problem in Bible chronology which, in some measure, should exercise the minds of all students. The Apostle Paul declares that God gave judges to Israel:

“...He gave unto them judges about (during) the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet... And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul... forty years” (Acts 13:20,21).

Did the Apostle speak solely by inspiration when he gave us this important chronological information? Or could he also have been guided by the records of the Old Testament? In other words, is it possible to find in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures the chronological records which prove that judges ruled Israel during 450 years?

It is possible. And this fact shows that the inspired Apostle Paul spoke according to the Scriptures in this matter of the period of the judges, and of the reign of Saul, as he did in his preaching the doctrine of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). But we shall not find in the Old Testament, a statement such as that of the Apostle, that the judges ruled during 450 years. Close study is necessary, also attention to the original Hebrew text in some important passages.

We have been much helped in this study by our dear Brother in the Lord, Hugo Karlen, whom we mention in our booklet, “The Great Pyramid, Its Scientific Features,”—page 37, second paragraph. What follows is largely the result of his investigations, made some years ago.

In connection with this period of the judges, Brother Russell wrote in Volume II, page 49,

“The record given in the books of Judges and 1 Samuel mentions 19 periods, approximating a total of 450.”

He adds, however,

“that they are disconnected, broken, lapped and tangled so much that we could arrive at no definite conclusion from them, and should be obliged to conclude as others have done, that nothing positive could be known on the subject, were it not that the New Testament supplies the deficiency... (Acts 13:19-21).”

Brother Russell did not attempt to define the 19 periods to which he calls attention. But other students of the Word have made the attempt. We recently presented a list of 19 periods, with scriptural texts for reference which add up to 450 years. This list appeared to be conclusive, but we invited examination and comments. Most of those who received the list expressed themselves as satisfied. But a few were critical and pointed out certain scriptural statements which seemed to be irreconcilable with the list, even though the nineteen periods summed up to the desired 450 years.

Let us repeat the list as given, and then we can consider the irreconcilable Scriptures referred to:

Period	Years	Period Identity	Scripture Reference
1	8	Servitude to Mesopotamia	Judges 3:8
2	40	Judgeship of Othniel	“ 3:9-11
3	18	Servitude to Moab	“ 3:14
4	80	Rest under Ehud	“ 3:15-30
5	20	Servitude to Jabin	“ 4:1-3
6	40	Rest under Deborah	“ 5:31
7	7	Bondage under Midian	“ 6:1
8	40	Rest under Gideon	“ 8:28
9	3	Reign of Abimelech	“ 9:1-22
10	23	Judgeship of Tola	“ 10:1,2
11	22	Judgeship of Jair	“ 10:3
<b>301</b>		(sub-total) Judges 11:26	
12	18	Oppression of Ammon	“ 10:8
13	6	Judgeship of Jephthah	“ 12:7
14	7	Judgeship of Ibzan	“ 12:8,9
15	10	Judgeship of Elon	“ 12:10,11
16	8	Judgeship of Abdon	“ 12:12-15
17*	40	Oppression of Philistines	“ 13:1
18	40	Judgeship of Eli	1Sam. 4:12-18
19**	20	Judgeship of Samuel	“ 8:5
<b>450</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	Acts 13:20,21

NOTES:

\* During the last 20 of this 40 years Samson judges Israel...Judges 15:20; 16:30-31.

\*\* Until Israel asked for a king. It was during Samuel's judgeship that the ark remained in Kirjath-jerim...1 Sam 7:2

The above nineteen periods appear to be the identical list which Brother Russell had in mind when he wrote page 49 of his 2nd volume of “Studies in the Scriptures.” Nevertheless, we can quote Scriptures which prove that the list cannot be accepted as it stands.

For instance the 8 years of servitude to Mesopotamia is the first period of the list. But a punishment of servitude could not follow immediately after the end of the wilderness journey when Joshua led the people into the land of promise. For the Scripture declares:

“And the people served the LORD (not the king of Mesopotamia) all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel” (Judges 2:7).

Before the punishment of servitude because of unfaithfulness could be due, that faithful generation which served the Lord under the elders that outlived Joshua must have died out, and an unbelieving generation have taken its place. On this evil generation would come the punishment of servitude. This is what we read:

“And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old... and also that [faithful] generation were gathered unto their fathers: And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel” (Judges 2:8,10).

To allow for the passing away of a generation which served the LORD, and the rising of another, evil generation which merited the punishment of servitude to the king of Mesopotamia, an interval of many years was required. (We shall speak of this interval presently).

Jephthah, a prominent judge in Israel, speaks of a period of 300 years (see Judges 11:26). The Scriptures show that this period of 300 years began to count from the end of the wilderness journey, and terminated when Jephthah began his judgeship. Jephthah was that judge who vowed a vow unto the LORD and said:

“...If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD’S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering...” (Judges 11:30-40)

And it was his only daughter who came out to meet him. Note: It is pointed out in the Emphatic Diaglott that the Authorized Version gives a faulty translation of the original Hebrew – see the Alphabetical Appendix under the heading of Jephthah, page 22 [1864 edition], for the correct understanding of the text.

It was during his contention with the king of the children of Ammon, that Jephthah made mention of the period 300 years. When Judge Jair died and Jephthah took over the judgeship of Israel, the Ammonites determined to “crush” into complete subjection the children of Israel. (See marginal reading of Judges 10:8).

Jephthah tried to reason with the Ammonite king, and asked him why he fought against Israel. The king replied:

“...Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt...” (Judges 11:12-13).

Jephthah then reminded the king that for 300 years the children of Ammon had made no attempt to regain their lost land, saying:

“While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years? why therefore did ye not recover them within that time?” (Judges 11:26)

The terminal of the 300 years spoken of by Jephthah, which coincides with the death of Judge Jair and the beginning of the judgeship of Jephthah, is a definite “time point” in the history of Israel. From this time point, we can then reckon backward to the days of Joshua, and forward to the time when Samuel the prophet anointed Saul as king over Israel.

First, let us reckon backward: From the list on page 2 [p.37], we note that Jair judged Israel for 22 years, and Tola before him for 23 years. Abimelech had a brief reign of 3 years, after Israel had enjoyed a rest of 40 years under Gideon. Before Gideon’s deliverance, Israel had suffered bondage to Midian for a period of 7 years. These five periods total 95 years, and all are easily to be followed in the scriptural record.

But the preceding times of Deborah, Jabin, and Ehud call for careful consideration. For it was a mistake to assume that 80 years referred to in Judges 3:30 were entirely under the deliverer Ehud. Ehud delivered Israel after their 18 years servitude to Moab (Judges 3:14-29). But the Scriptures neither say nor imply that the 80 years rest which the land then enjoyed were all under the deliverer Ehud. The judgeship of Shamgar who followed on the death of Ehud, and of Deborah the prophetess who judged after Shamgar, are included in this 80 year period. Also, the oppressor Jabin, with his captain Sisera, were conquered within this time period.

The Philistines tried to break the rest which Ehud had won for the land, but they were immediately overthrown by Shamgar (Judges 3:31).

The “20 years” spoken of in Judges 4:3 can also be read “twentieth” year, according to the Hebrew original, for there are no ordinals in the Hebrew above 10, and the context and the sense of the passage must determine which is correct in any particular text. (Ordinals are: first, second, third, etc. Cardinals are: one, two, three).

After the death of Ehud, during the time of Shamgar, the children of Israel again did evil in the LORD’S sight (Judges 4:1), and in punishment “...the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.” (Judges 4:1-3).

But as we pointed out, we can read: “and in the twentieth year he (Jabin) mightily oppressed the children of Israel.” (Judges 4:1-3).

It was in the twentieth, and the last, year of Shamgar that Jabin oppressed Israel. The Hebrew of the word translated “oppressed” in this text does not necessarily imply that Jabin subjected Israel, but rather, that he troubled them, and this in the northern part of the country only. (See marginal note of Judges 4:2).

Shamgar, as a judge, appeared not to have exercised complete control of the land, and thus we read: “In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways (or ‘crooked ways’)” (Judges 5:6, marginal reading). Although the land had rest during this time (no active wars), yet, owing to the weakness of Judge Shamgar, there was a feeling of insecurity – the people were afraid to walk openly along the highways.

In the last (the twentieth year) of Shamgar, Jabin determined to subject Israel wholly to his yoke, and his oppression was at that time so great, that the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, with the result that Deborah, with Barak, put an end to Jabin and Sisera. (See Song of Deborah and Barak, Judges chapter 5).

From the Hebrew text it is clear that the times of Ehud, Shamgar (Jabin) and Deborah are included in the 80 years spoken of in Judges 3:30.

Immediately preceding the eighty years, Israel had been in servitude to Moab for 18 years (Judges 3:14). Previous to this 18 years, Othniel had judged Israel for 40 years (Judges 3:9-11). Othniel had delivered Israel from their 8 years of servitude to Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8-10).

This trouble of servitude had come upon the erring children of Israel when all that faithful generation which served the LORD during the days of Joshua, and of the elders that had outlived him, had died out. How many years in the interval between the end of the wilderness journey and the beginning of the 8 years of servitude to Mesopotamia? We can ascertain this by first summing up the periods backward from the death of Jair, and then deducting this total from the overall period of 300 years spoken of by Jephthah (Judges 11:26):

Jair	22 years
Tola	23 years
Abimelech	3 years
Gideon	40 years
Midian (Judges 6:1)	7 years
Ehud, Shamgar (Jabin) and Deborah (Judges 3:30)	80 years
Moab	18 years
Othniel	40 years
Mesopotamia	<u>8 years</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>241 years</b>

This total of 241 deducted from the 300 equals 59 years. The LORD had caused Israel to wander for 40 years in the wilderness, until all men from 20 years old and upward, who had come out of Egypt, had been consumed in the wilderness [except Joshua and Caleb]. (Numbers 32:11-13).

Therefore, the oldest of the “elders that outlived Joshua” would be 60 when he entered Canaan; and even if he had lived to the extreme age of Joshua, 110 years, his death would still be 9 years short of the beginning of the Mesopotamian servitude.

Turning again to the list of 19 periods referred to by Brother Russell [see page 37], we find that the twelfth period, the oppression of Ammon, requires our attention. Let us read Judges 10:8 [and context] which speaks of this oppression from the text of the Authorized Version.

“...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. And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel: eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. Moreover the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.” (Judges 10:7-9)

It is pointed out that the above English translation does not convey the meaning of the Hebrew original. One can see that, as it stands, the English text requires some explanation: “that year ... eighteen years...”. The word “eighteen” should properly be rendered “eighteenth,” to get the true sense of the passage. This is determined by the context. The correct translation is:

“And that year they (the Ammonites) vexed and crushed the children of Israel in this, the 18<sup>th</sup> year.”

Note also that the word “oppressed” is, in the marginal reading, “crushed,” which is a truer translation of the Hebrew word, and suggests a different thought.

The Ammonites did not succeed in dominating Israel as a whole. They troubled and vexed part of Israel for 17 years, during the time of Jair’s judgeship. But that year, when Jair died, which was the eighteenth year of their hostility to Israel, they thought now that Judge Jair was removed in death, they would easily have success in dominating the whole of Israel. And accordingly they attacked Israel dreadfully, crushingly. But they were stopped and defeated by Jephthah, “a mighty man of valour” (Judges 11:1).

And in the 11th chapter of Judges we read how Jephthah was made the leader of Israel, and how the LORD delivered the children of Ammon into his hands:

“...he smote them from Aroer,... with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.” (Judges 11:32-33).

Therefore we are not to reckon on a period of 18 years oppression from the time of Jair’s death. The Ammonites did not crush Israel for 18 years, but rather it was in the 18<sup>th</sup> year of their trouble-making that they crushed Israel, thus calling forth that special effort of Israel under Jephthah which defeated and subdued them.

The 6 years of Jephthah’s judgeship began at the death of Jair, the end of the 300 years spoken of by Jephthah (Judges 11:26). From this time point we now count forward in Israel’s history to the time of Samuel’s judgeship, and his anointing of Saul as king.

Ibzan followed Jephthah and judged Israel 7 years. Then Elon judged for 10 years, and Abdon for 8. The 40 years oppression of the Philistines followed on the last 20 of which Samson judged Israel (Judges 13:1; 15:20; 16:30-31). Eli followed with a judgeship of 40 years (1 Samuel 4:12-18). Finally, the prophet Samuel acted as judge until the people asked for a king, and God gave them Saul.

In the list of 19 periods [see page 37], Samuel is entered as having judged Israel for 20 years, on the assumption that the 20 years spoken of in 1 Samuel 7:2 had reference to the duration of Samuel’s judgeship. But 1 Samuel 7:2 does not state that Samuel judged Israel for 20 years. The Scriptures show that up to the time when Saul was anointed to be king of Israel, Samuel must have acted as judge much longer than 20 years.



Ferrar Fenton says 45 years, while other chronologers, reckon Samuel's judgeship to have been between 40 and 50 years. The Scriptures show that Samuel was a child at the time when Eli's eyes began to wax dim for age (1 Samuel 3:1-2). But Samuel is said to be old and gray headed when he anointed Saul as king (1 Samuel 12:1-2). This implies a considerable number of years between the death of Eli when Samuel replaced him as judge and his anointing of Saul (see also 1 Samuel 8:1-5; 12:2).

When we take the literal translation of the Hebrew of 1 Samuel 7:2, we read:

"And it came to pass from the time the ark remained in Kirjath-jearim, that the days were multiplied, and it was the 20th year and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD," or "assembled before the LORD."

In the Latin Vulgate [the] translation reads: "...it was now the 20th year."

Most translators and commentators consider that the Philistines, after the death of Eli, continued to have a certain power over Israel during 20 years. In the meantime, however, Samuel was judge in Israel.

But in the 20 years from the arrival of the ark in Kirjath-jearim, Israel had enough of the Philistines oppressive power and had turned to the LORD for help. We read that Samuel prayed to the LORD on behalf of the children of Israel in their distress, after admonishing them to

"...put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." (1 Samuel 7:3).

When the Philistines sought to do battle against the now repentant children of Israel, the LORD "...thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel... So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel..." (1 Samuel 7:4-15).

After these 20 years, in the last of which the Philistines were finally subdued, Samuel judged Israel for 25 years until he anointed Saul to be king, making, therefore 45 years in all for the judgeship of Samuel. The number of years for Samuel as judge...is in agreement with the Scriptures.

Commencing with the end of the wilderness journey, our amended list now reads:

Judgeship of Joshua and the elders that outlived him, etc.	59 years
Mesopotamian servitude	8 years
Othniel	40 years
Moab	18 years
Ehud, Shamgar (Jabin in 20 <sup>th</sup> year) & Deborah w. Barak	80 years
Midian	7 years
Gideon	40 years
Abimelech	3 years
Tola	23 years
Jair	<u>22 years</u>
<b>Total (Judges 11:26)</b>	<b>300 years</b>
Jephthah	6 years
Ibzan	7 years
Elon	10 years
Abdon	8 years
Philistines (last 20 Samson)	40 years
Eli	40 years
Samuel	<u>45 years</u>
<b><u>Total from end of wilderness journey.</u></b>	<b>456 years</b>

As the final total of 456 years dates from the end of the wilderness journey, whereas the Apostle dates his 450 years from the division of the land among the tribes of Israel, we deduct 6 years from the 456 year total. The remainder of 450 years being that period spoken of by the Apostle in Acts 13:20.

That it took 6 years to divide the land is pointed out, and fully discussed by Brother Russell in the Second Volume of Studies in the Scriptures, pages 47-48.

Although the above amended list appears to be comprised of 17 periods, it must be remembered that the 80 years is the sum of three periods, namely: 20 years for Ehud, 20 for Shamgar, and 40 for Deborah. Thus we still have 19 periods in all for the time the judges ruled in Israel— 456 years from the end of the wilderness journey and 450 years from the dividing of the land.

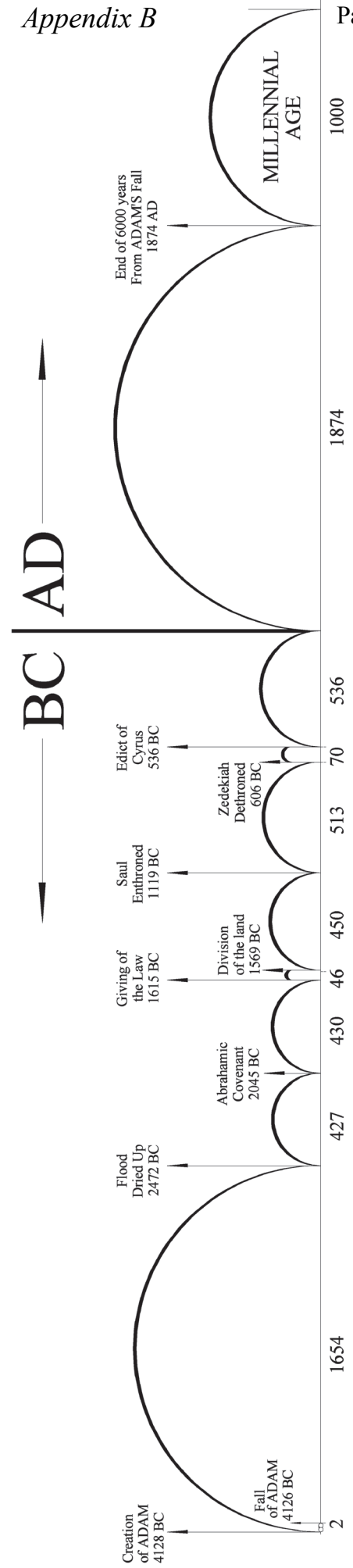
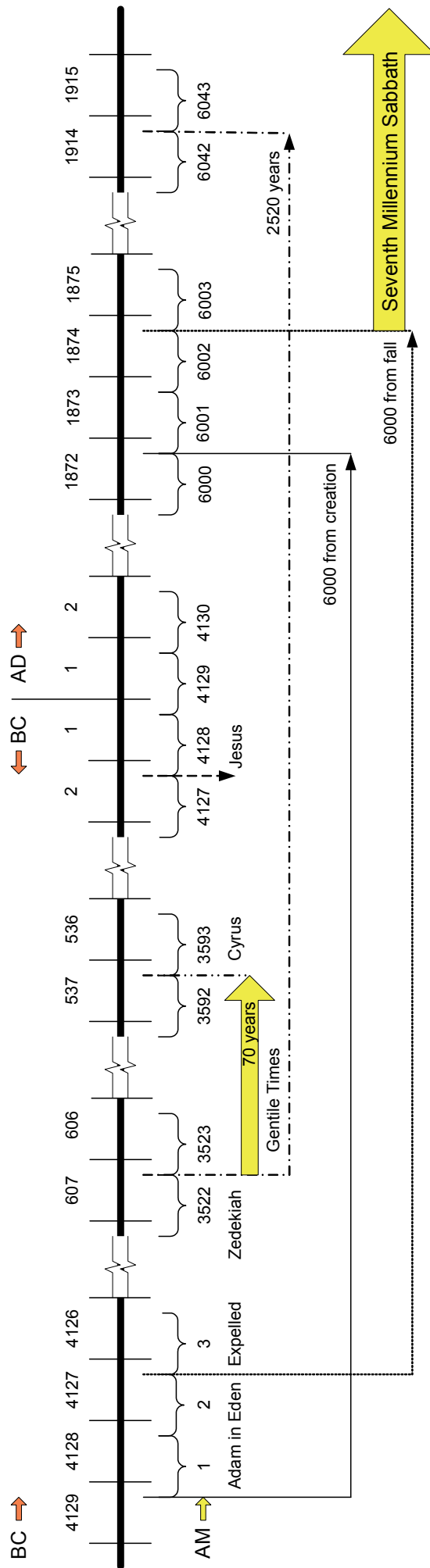


*Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. — 1 Samuel 8:4-8*



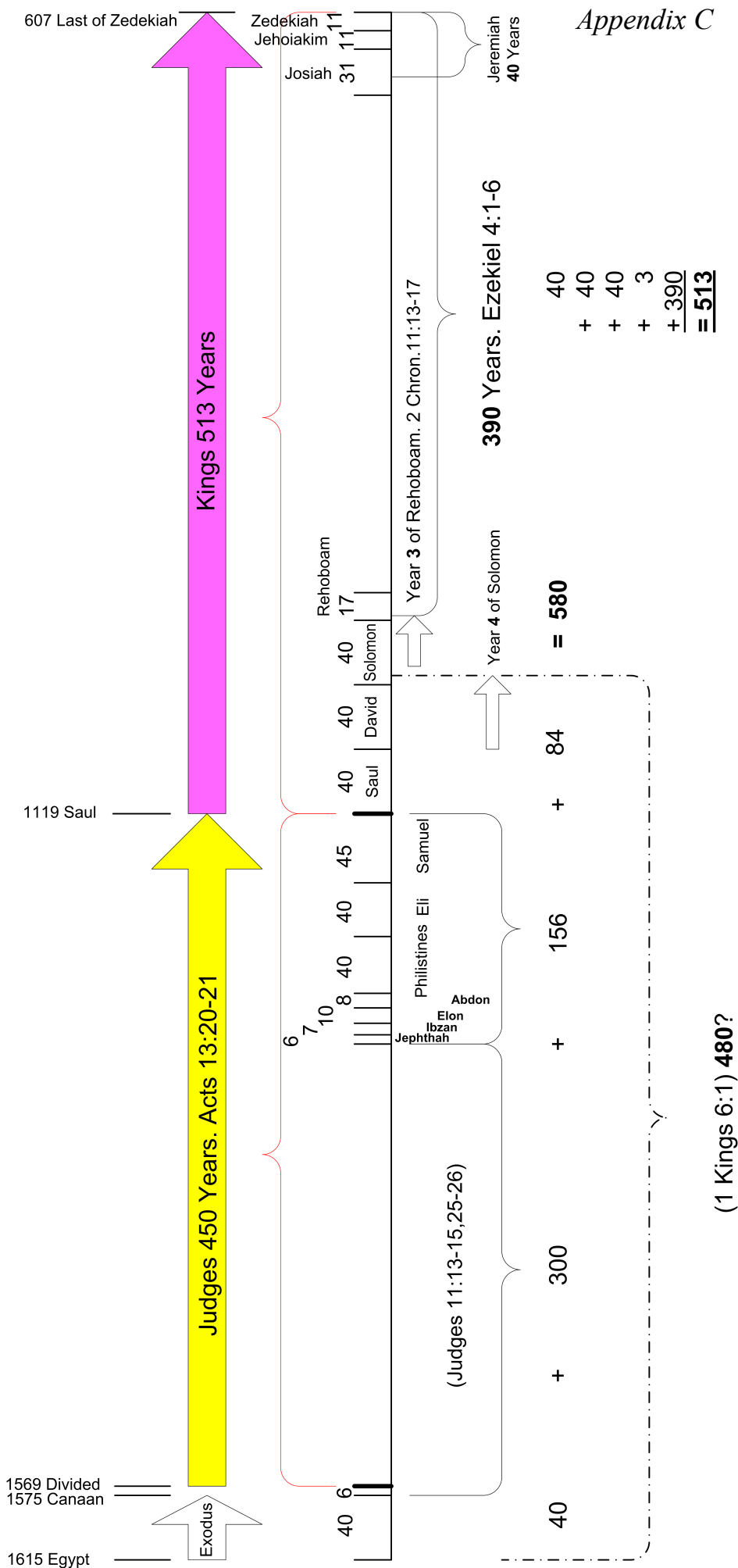
# 6000 years of human history

Studies in the Scriptures,  
Volume 2, chapter 2.  
R:1980 (May 15, 1896)



# Judges and Kings

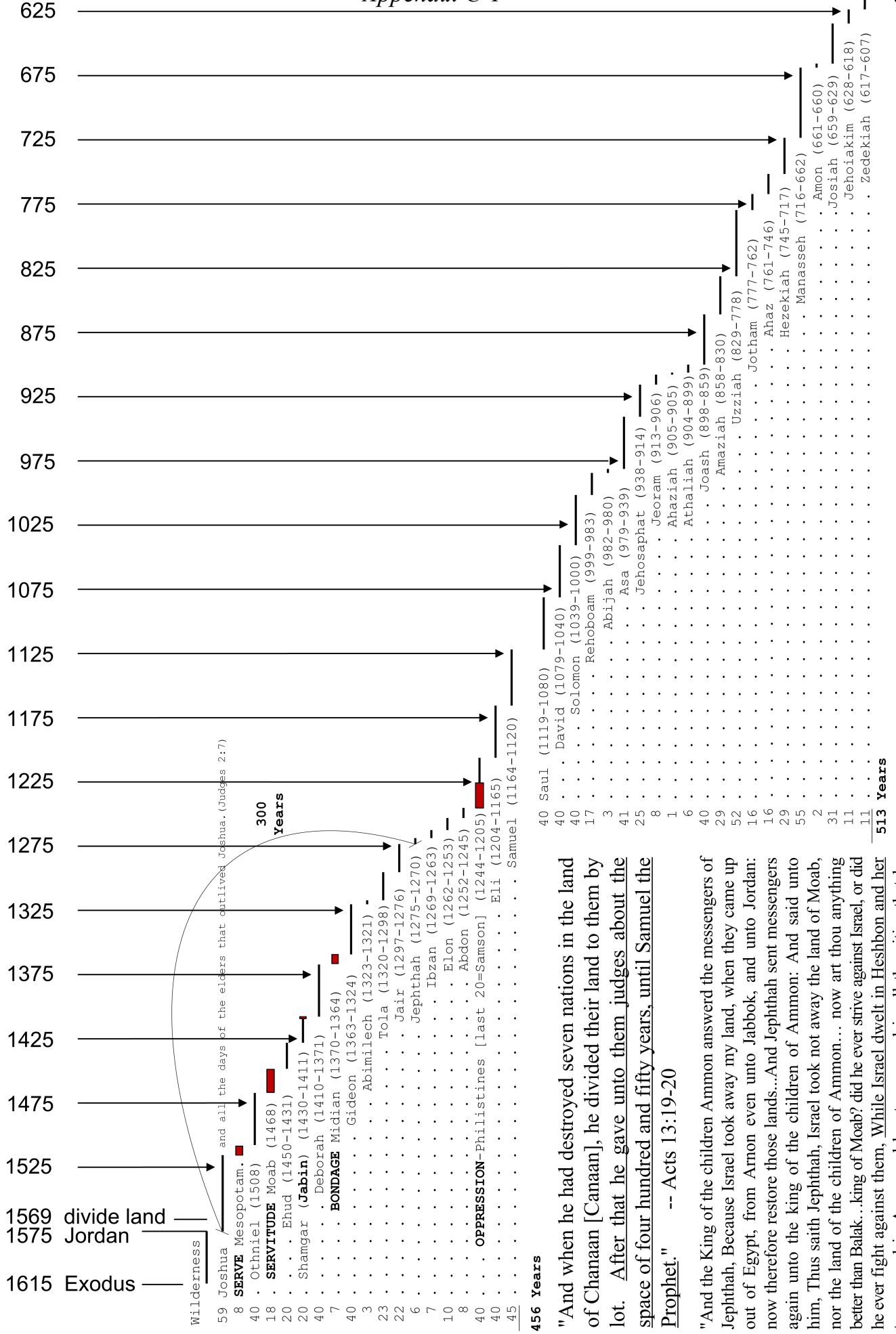
(1 Kings 6:1; Volume 2, Page 53)



Jubilees, Judges & Kings

19th

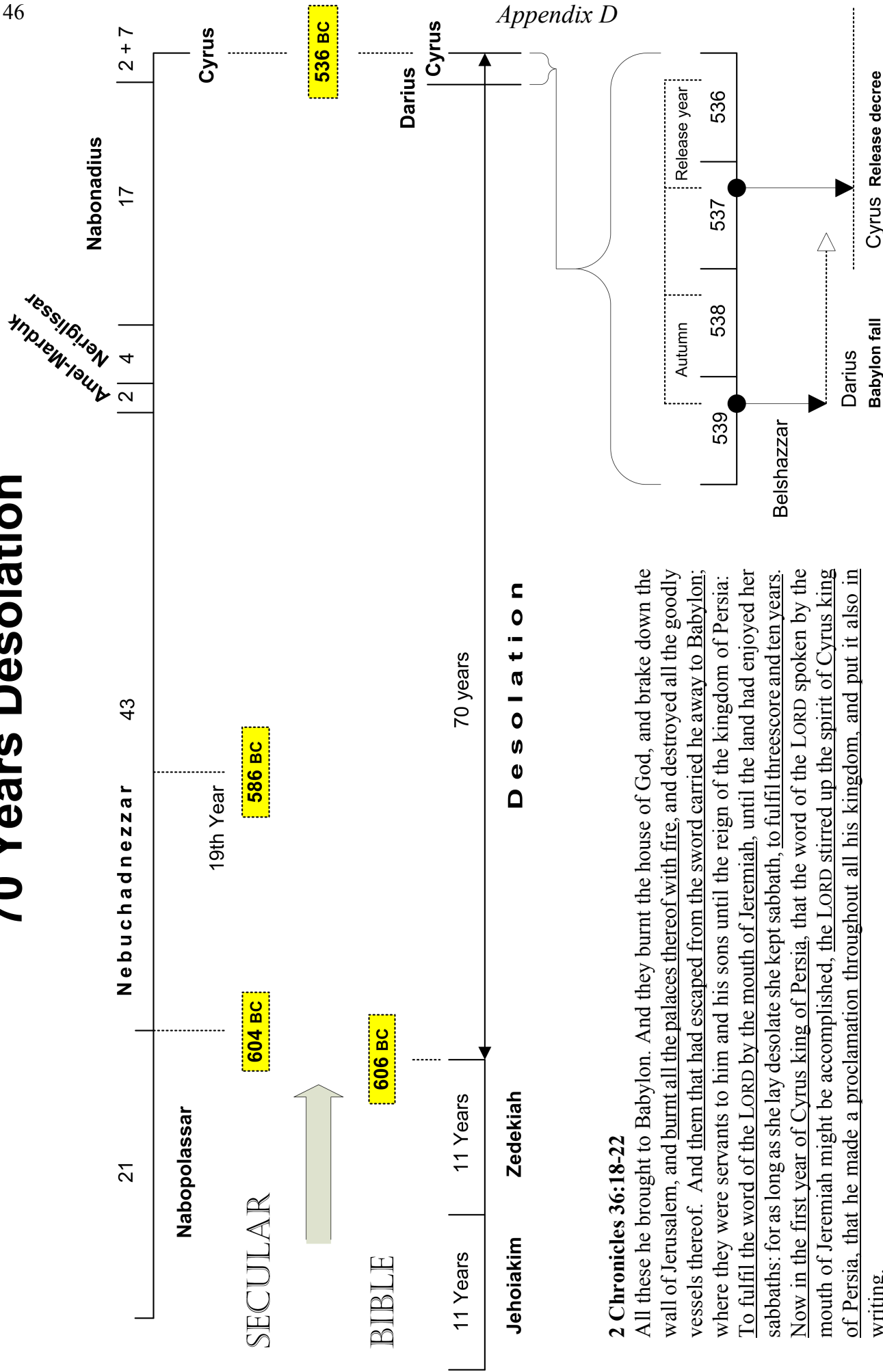
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"And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan [Canaan], he divided their land to them by lot. After that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the Prophet." -- Acts 13:19-20

"And the King of the children Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Armon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those lands... And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon: And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon... now art thou anything better than Balak... king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them, While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Armon, three hundred years? why did ye not recover them within that time?" -- Judges 11:13-15, 25-26

# 70 Years Desolation

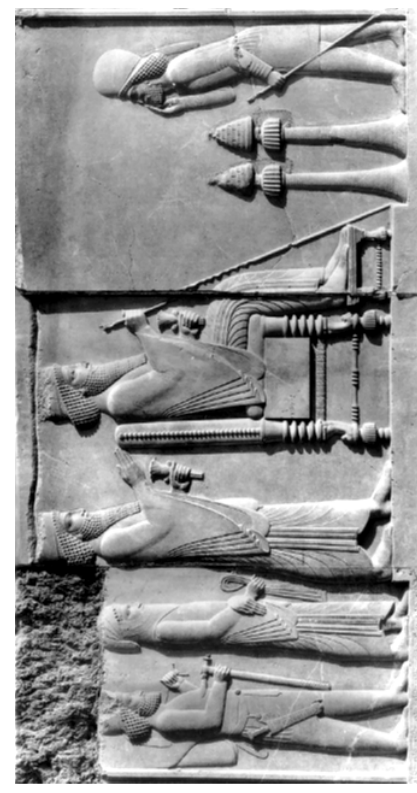
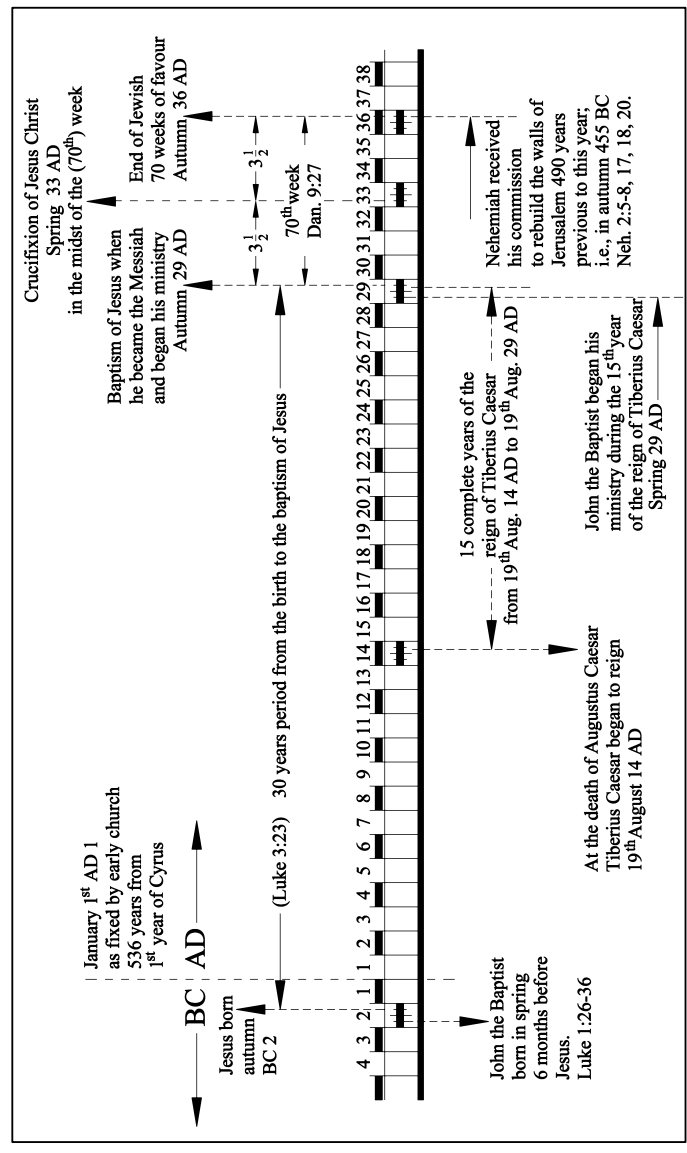
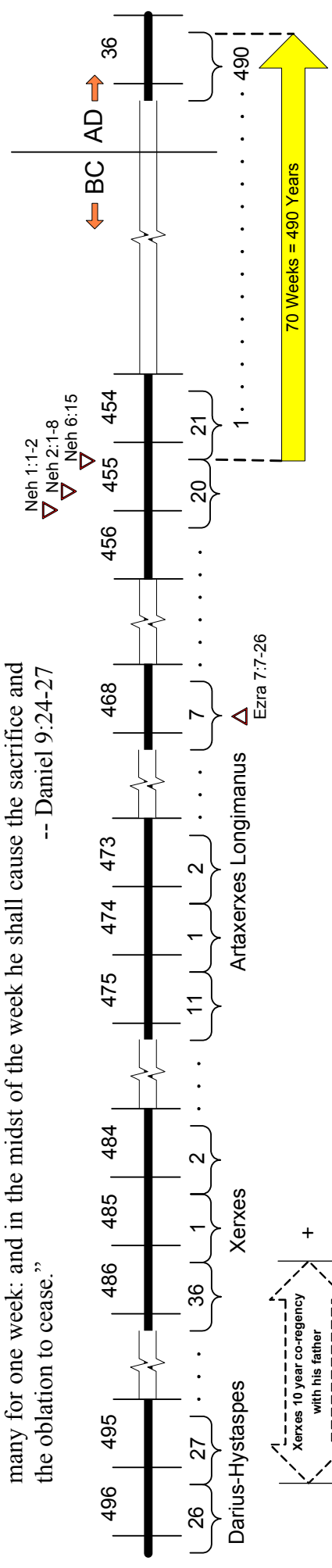


## 2 Chronicles 36:18-22

All these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years. Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people... from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks... And after [the] threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off... And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.”  
-- Daniel 9:24-27

# 70 Weeks



Relief at Persepolis indicating a co-regency of Xerxes with his father Darius Hystaspes.

## APPENDIX 3. THE FIRST YEAR OF ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS IS B.C. 474.

**The decree of Artaxerxes in his 20th. year.**

Most prophetic students would consider that the decree of Artaxerxes in the 20th. year of his reign in Neh.2:1, and Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem, fulfilled the start of the 490 years of prophecy that are mentioned in Dan.9:20-27. Some have put this decree at B.C. 445; however historical evidence shows that B.C. 474 was the year of accession of Artaxerxes Longimanus to the throne, and B.C. 454 is his 20th year. It is difficult to make an accurate chronology of late Persian history, however, there are several important witnesses.

**1. THUCYDIDES VITAL EVIDENCE ON THE YEAR OF ACCESSION OF ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS.**

Thucydides gives crucial evidence on the year of accession of Artaxerxes Longimanus. Anstey writes on pages 291 and 292 of his book, *"The Romance of Bible Chronology"*: "The truth is, there are no authentic records of the late Persian period in existence. The method of measuring time by means of Olympiads was not adopted till more than 60 years after the death of Alexander the Great. It was not used in the Parian Chronicle. A Chronology was framed by Eratosthenes and Apollodorus, and all the known facts of past history were made to fit into it. Hence discrimination is needed to enable us to separate what is really certain from what is a matter of opinion and conjecture.

The one event which Thucydides does mention in his brief and hurried summary of this unwritten period, is the flight of Themistocles, and just here at this very point which he does touch the chronology of this period, he is in flat contradiction to Ptolemy's Canon. Writing of the year B.C. 471, Thucydides says, Themistocles had been ostracized and was living at Argos. Lacedaemonians and Athenians sent officers to arrest him. He fled to the Corcyreans. They conveyed him to the neighboring continent. The officers constantly enquired in which direction he had gone, and pursued him everywhere. He stopped at the house of Admetus the King of the Molossians, who protected him and would not give him up to his pursuers, though they pressed him to do so. And as Themistocles wanted to go to the King (of Persia), Admetus sent him on foot across the country to the sea at Pydna (which was in the Kingdom of Alexander). There he found a merchant vessel sailing to Ionia, in which he embarked. It was driven by a storm to Naxos, but at length he arrived at Ephesus. Themistocles then went up the country with one of the Persians who dwelt in the coast, and sent a letter to Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes, who had just succeeded to the throne."

Anstey states that this shows that Ptolemy's Canon is in error, for according to Ptolemy's Canon, in B.C. 471 Xerxes was in the 15th year of his 21 year reign, after which Artabanus reigned 7 months, and then Artaxerxes Longimanus came to the throne; this would have made Artaxerxes only a boy of 14 in 471 B.C., when Themistocles arrived in Persia, and according to Ptolemy, Artaxerxes Longimanus did not come to the throne until B.C. 464, seven years later.

Anstey continues: "This event is dated in Ptolemy's Canon 7 years later than the time at which it occurred. No blame attaches to Ptolemy for this. He did the best he could with the materials at his disposal. But real blame does attach to the modern scholar, who refuses to recognize a proved error, and continues to regard as an infallible guide, a table of reigns, which as regards this part of the Persian period, is incapable of verification, suspect as to its source and false in its facts."

So we see that after Themistocles had been accused and convicted of treason in his own country, Thucydides records that Themistocles fled to Persia when Artaxerxes had but "lately come to the throne." *Thucydides Book 1 Chapter 137*. Thucydides was in the best position to know about Themistocles for they both lived in Athens, and Thucydides was born about the time, or just after Themistocles death. Thucydides also lived during the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, for we read in Neh.5:14. and 13:6. of the thirty second year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus. According to Thucydides and Diodorus, Artaxerxes reigned forty years; this would be from B.C. 474 to 434: Usher would give a 51 year reign to Artaxerxes from 474 to 424 B.C.; whereas Clinton says he reigned from B.C. 464 to 424.

**NOTE ON THEMISTOCLES.**

Themistocles was an Athenian statesman and general. He developed the harbour at Paraeus and increased the strength of the Athenian navy from seventy to about two hundred ships to prepare for the threatened invasion by the Persians. In the seventh year of his reign, Xerxes and his Persian army invaded Greece; Themistocles persuaded the Athenians to trust in their naval power and strategically directed the battle at Salamis, and Xerxes was defeated; and Themistocles became a national hero. His success made him arrogant, and dangerous anti-Spartan intrigues caused him to be exiled for about five years. His intrigues against the Spartans continued, and the Spartans accused him of treason, and had him tried and convicted in his absence, in his own city of Athens, and obtained a sentence of death against him. Themistocles was forced to flee and after various adventures came to the court of the Persian king Artaxerxes Longimanus, and he was allowed to live in style at Magnesia until he died. The arrival of Themistocles at the court of Artaxerxes Longimanus, and the date of that arrival, is of critical importance in the study of the prophecy of the seventy sevens of Daniel.9:20-27, for it fixes the start of that prophecy.

**NOTE ON THUCYDIDES.**

Thucydides has been called the first and best of impartial and scientific historians. The date and manner of his death is unknown. Anstey says Thucydides lived from 471 to 401 or 396 B.C.; others say 460 B.C. or earlier. Thucydides was an outstanding Greek historian; he was born in Athens and was a member of the aristocratic family that included the great general and statesman Miltiades, and was connected with the royal family of Thrace, where he had an estate and some



gold mines. Thucydides caught the plague in the great pestilence which raged in Athens from B.C. 430 to 427 and was fortunate to survive it. In B.C. 424 he was elected "strategos," a military magistrate and general, and was stationed in Thrace and was given command of the fleet in the Thraceward region. In 422 B.C. Thucydides failed to prevent the capture of the important Thracian city of Amphipolis, when it was taken through a surprise attack in the middle of winter by the Spartan general Brasidas. Thucydides was recalled, tried, and sentenced to an exile which lasted twenty years.

Thucydides spent most of the twenty years of his exile in Thrace and was there for the rest of the war. Thucydides, like John Bunyan, made valuable use of his exile, he spent his time writing, traveling and gathering material for his remarkable "*History of the Peloponnesian War*." He did not return to Athens until it was taken by the Spartans in 404 B.C. and peace was made. In his "*History of the Peloponnesian War*," Thucydides gives an account of the war between Athens and Sparta, but failed to finish the work, stopping his account of the events in the middle of 411 B.C.; more than six and a half years before the end of the war. (431 to 404 B.C.). He describes events leading up to the war, and in books 2 to 8, the war itself.

Thucydides stood alone amongst the historians of his day for historical integrity. Most of the classical historians were often careless and inaccurate in their histories, but Thucydides was remarkable for his meticulous critical historical research. Thucydides complained that his predecessor Herodotus included too many "mythical" elements and that his primary reason for writing was to please his audience; he also complains that other historians were unclear in their chronology. Herodotus, B.C. 484 to 424, Xenophon, about B.C. 430 to 437; and Ctesias, 5th. century B.C.; all lacked the accuracy and integrity of Thucydides in their histories, as Thucydides said of these chroniclers, "They cared only for popularity and took no pains to make their narrative trustworthy." This contrasted greatly with his own searching scrutiny of historical materials and strict adherence to the facts. Thucydides writes, "As to the deeds done in the war, I have not thought myself at liberty to record them on hearsay from the first informant or on arbitrary conjecture. My account rests either on personal knowledge or on the closest possible scrutiny of each statement made by others. The process of research was laborious, because conflicting accounts were given by those who had witnessed the several events, as partiality swayed or as memory served them."

## **2. CHARON OF LAMPUSACUS.**

Was born 554 B.C., and was still writing history in B.C. 464 (Suidas). Charon of Lampsacus, like Thucydides, said that the flight of Themistocles to the court of Artaxerxes Longimanus took place in 471 B.C.; Ptolemy's Canon said that he was not king until seven years later. Anstey states that it is a fact that Ptolemy's Canon is contradicted by competent witnesses at various points.

## **3. CORNELIUS NEPOS. ABOUT 100 A.D.**

Was a Roman historian who lived about 100 A.D., he was a friend of Cicero and Catullus. Twenty five of his short lives of statesmen and warriors have survived in his "*De Viris Illustribus*." He deals mainly with Greeks. Nepos supports Thucydides, he wrote: "I know that most historians have related that Themistocles went over into Asia in the reign of Xerxes, but I give credence to Thucydides in preference to others, because he, of all those who have left records of that period, was nearest in point of time to Themistocles, and was of the same city. Thucydides says that he went to Artaxerxes." *Nepos, Themistocles, Chapter 9.*

## **4. PLUTARCH. A.D. 46 TO 120.**

The Greek historian and philosopher Plutarch is famous for the literary beauty of his parallel biographies of great Greeks and Romans, in which he matched one against the other. The translations of these "*Lives*," by Thomas North became a source of some of Shakespeare's plays. Plutarch writes: "Thucydides and Charon of Lampsacus, say that Xerxes was dead, and that Themistocles had an interview with his son, Artaxerxes; but Ephorus, Dinon, Clitarchus, Heraclides and many others, write that he came to Xerxes. The chronological tables better agree with the account of Thucydides." Them. c.27.

## **5. DIODORUS THE SICILIAN. OF THE FIRST CENTURY A.D.**

The Greek historian Diodorus places the death of Themistocles in B.C. 471. It is reported that after his arrival in Persia, Themistocles asked for his audience with Artaxerxes to be postponed for a year in order to learn the Persian language, so that he could communicate with Artaxerxes in the Persian language.

## **6. JEROME. A.D. 340 TO 420.**

Jerome translated into Latin the Greek "*Chronicon*" of Eusebius, only fragments of the Greek manuscript exist, but Jerome's translation is still extant. Eusebius was the first one to adopt reckoning chronological events by the hypothetical era of the Greek Olympiads, (four year periods beginning in 776 B.C.); and he, unfortunately, adapted historical events to his Chronology, instead of adapting his Chronology to events. The Chronology of Eusebius has been followed by all kinds of authors and determined the Chronology in Western Europe, till the time of Bede, and since, up to almost the present day. Eusebius puts the arrival of Themistocles in the fourth year of the 76th. Olympiad (76 times 4 = 304 taken from 776 = 472. So in the fourth year would be 473 to 472 B.C.

## **7. JAMES USHER. A.D. 1581 TO 1656.**

Usher was born in Dublin, and educated in Trinity College. He took holy orders in 1601 and in 1607 became Professor of Divinity at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1625 he became Archbishop of Armagh, purely on merit, and in 1634 Primate of all Ireland. Usher was a great scholar, after a life-time of study he felt the evidence dictated that Artaxerxes

Longimanus came to the throne in 474 B.C.; and as do other leading chronologers; Petavius, Vitringa 1659-1722. Ernst Wm. Hengstenberg, 1802-1869; writes in his “*Christology of the Old Testament*,” Vol.2, page 395: “Kreuger– places the death of Xerxes in the year 474 or 473, and the flight of Themistocles a year later.” Usher is one of several authorities who put the arrival of Themistocles in Persia in about 473 B.C., when as Thucydides records, Artaxerxes Longimanus had but “lately come to the throne.”

Bishop William Lloyd took Usher’s Chronological dates and put them in the margins of his Lloyd’s Bible, however he altered Usher’s date of the 20th. year of Artaxerxes Longimanus in Nehemiah 2:1, from B.C. 454 to B.C. 445.

### **8. S.P. TREGELLES.**

Writes an instructive footnote on page 100 and 101 of his “Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel.”

“On the 20th of Artaxerxes.- Some have found a difficulty in making out the chronology of the seventy weeks, because they have thought that the time from the 20th of Artaxerxes to the crucifixion of our Lord would not fully accord with that marked out in the prophecy. If it had been so, it need have surprised no one; whatever be the result of the chronological calculations, the word of God is the same; we know that it is certain, and everything else must bend to it. But here I believe the difficulty to be wholly imaginary. It is true that we may find some from the date printed in the margin of our Bibles; but the history of this date, as it here stands, is rather curious. Archbishop Usher drew up a scheme of Chronology which is commonly followed, rather from convenience than from its absolute correctness being supposed. About a hundred and fifty years ago Bishop Lloyd undertook to affix Archbishop Usher’s dates to our English Bibles; but IN THIS INSTANCE, he made a considerable alteration and substituted another date of his own, so as to adapt the reign of Artaxerxes to his own theory.

“The date which stands in our Bibles for the 20th year of Artaxerxes is 446 B.C. This makes the commencement of his reign 465 B.C.; but the authority of the best and most nearly contemporary historian will put the matter in a very different light. Thucydides mentions that the accession of Artaxerxes had taken place before the flight of Themistocles; this authorizes us to adopt Usher’s date and place the commencement of the reign 473 or 474 B.C. This would give the date of 454 or 455 B.C....

“It is a great pity that Archbishop Usher’s date should in this particular case have been misrepresented: it was a point to which he had paid particular attention. About the year 1613 he lectured on the subject at Trinity College, Dublin, resting on the testimony of Thucydides. He then discussed difficulties connected with the supposed length of the reigns of Darius and Xerxes so as to adapt other events to this certain date. From October 1615 he corresponded at various times on the point with Thomas Lydiat (the scholar most familiar with such subjects of any in England), until 1643; and in 1650, after thirty-seven years of minute consideration, he published the result in his ‘*Annales Veritis Testamenti*,’ where the date is 3531. This answers in Usher’s ‘*Collatio Annorum*’ to 474 B.C., or the third year of the seventy-sixth Olympiad. His judgement in 1613 seems to have been doubtful; but in 1617 he says, ‘These things being laid together do show, that the expulsion of Themistocles from Athens fell no later than the beginning of the fourth year of the seventy-sixth Olympiad; to which time you (i.e. Lydiat) doubtfully refer the beginning of his troubles; how much sooner so ever, my opinion is, that at that time Themistocles fled into Persia, as Eusebius noteth, whose testimony I have no reason to discredit, unless I have some better testimony or reason to oppose against it. The year before that, which is the third of the seventy-sixth Olympiad, I suppose Artaxerxes Longimanus to have begun his reign: to whom as yet ‘*neosti basileuonta*,’ Themistocles fled, as Thucydides sufficiently proveth.’ (*Works*, 15, p. 11). Usher in thus laying down this date had no motive for bringing the space of 483 years from the 20th of Artaxerxes to A.D. 29; for his division of the seventy Heptads differs from mine, and he did not regard A.D. 29 as the date of the crucifixion of our Lord.”

### **N.B. 1. THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE FOR A 51 YEAR REIGN OF ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS.**

One cuneiform text, (reproduced by “*The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts*,” edited by H. V. Hilprecht, Vol. 8, Part 1, by Albert T. Clay, 1908, published by Department of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania), is dated, “51st year, accession year, 12th month (of) Darius, king of lands.” Darius 2nd succeeded Artaxerxes to the throne. This evidence is said to be “a scribal error,” by some historians; who favour two other tablets which they say refer to Artaxerxes “41st year, (and) accession year” of his successor Darius 2nd.

### **N.B. 2. XERXES APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CO-REX WITH DARIUS FOR SOME TIME BEFORE DARIUS DIED.**

The Father of Xerxes, Darius the Great, made it quite clear that of his sons Xerxes was to be his successor. In a relief at Persepolis, Xerxes is seen standing by his father’s throne, dressed in identical clothing to Darius, and with his head on the same level as Darius, and with his head on the same level as the head of Darius. The Persian kings insisted that in the pictures represented on royal reliefs, the king’s head was always higher than the head of all others on the relief. This suggests that Xerxes was not only the appointed successor of Darius but also was Co-Rex with Darius for some time before Darius died.

Historical evidence shows that Xerxes was selected as crown prince and viceroy of Babylon about 498 B.C., and that a palace was completed for him in Babylon by about 496 B.C. See pages 215 and 216 of A. T. Olmstead’s, “*History of the Persian Empire*,” and pages 80 and 100 of William Cullican’s, “*Medes and Persians*.” Some think that the evidence for a reign of 21 years for Xerxes is inconclusive, one piece of “evidence,” a papyrus text from Assuan in Egypt, has the date “year 21, the accession year of Artaxerxes;” however Xerxes is not mentioned. In any case a co-regency in 496 B.C. would give a reign of 22 years to 474 B.C., which gives ample scope for the 21 year reign of Xerxes.

ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΚΑΝΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ  
ΑΣΣΥΡΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΗΔΩΝ.

		Ετη	Συνα- γωγή.
α	Ναβονασαρου . . .	ιδ	ιδ
β	Ναδιου . . . . .	β	ιγ
γ	Χωζιρου και Πορου .	ε	κα
δ	Ιουγαίου . . . . .	ε	κγ
ε	Μαρδοκεμπαδου . .	ιβ	λη
γ	Αρκιανου . . . . .	ε	μγ
ζ	Αβασιλευτου πρωτου	β	με
η	Βηλιβου . . . . .	γ	μη
θ	Απροναδιου . . . .	γ	νδ
ι	Ριγνηβηλου . . . .	α	νε
ια	Μεσεσσιμορδακου .	δ	νθ
ιβ	Αβασιλευτου δευτερου	η	ξζ
ιγ	Ασσαραδιου . . . .	ιγ	π
ιδ	Σαοσδουχιου . . . .	κ	ρ
ιε	Χυνιλαδανου . . . .	κβ	ρκβ
ιι	Ναβοπολλασαρου .	κα	ρμγ
ιζ	Ναβοκολλασαρου .	μγ	ρπγ
ιη	Ιλουαροδαμου . . .	β	ρπη
ιθ	Νιρικασσολασαρου .	δ	ρρβ
κ	Ναβοναδιου . . . .	ιζ	σθ

## ΠΕΡΣΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ.

κα	Κυρου . . . . .	θ	σιη
κβ	Καμβυσου . . . . .	η	σκγ
κγ	Δαρειου α. . . . .	λη	σξβ
κδ	Ξερξου . . . . .	κα	σπγ
κε	Αρταξερξου α. . . .	μα	τκδ
κγ	Δαρειου β. . . . .	ιθ	τμγ
κζ	Αρταξερξου β. . . .	μγ	τπθ
κη	Ωχου . . . . .	κα	υι
κθ	Αρωγου . . . . .	β	υιβ
λ	Δαρειου γ. . . . .	δ	υιγ
λα	Αλεξανδρου Μακε- δονος . . . . .	η	υκδ

ΕΤΗ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΗΝ  
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ  
ΤΕΛΕΥΤΗΝ.

α	Φιλιππου του μετ' Αλεξανδρου τον κτιστην . . . . .	ζ	ζ
β	Αλεξανδρου Αιγυου .	ιβ	ιθ

ΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ ΕΝ  
ΑΙΓΥΠΤΩ.

γ	Πτολεμαίου Λαγου .	κ	λθ
δ	Πτ. Φιλαδελφου . .	λη	οζ
ε	Πτ. Ευεργετου α. . .	κε	ρβ
γ	Πτ. Φιλοπατορος . .	ιζ	ριθ
ζ	Πτ. Επιφανους . . .	κδ	ρμγ
η	Πτ. Φιλομητορος . .	λε	ροη
θ	Πτ. Ευεργετου β. . .	κθ	σζ
ι	Πτ. Σωτηρος . . . .	λη	σμγ
ια	Πτ. Διονυσου . . . .	κθ	σοβ
ιβ	Κλεοπατρας . . . .	κβ	σρδ

## ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ.

ιγ	Αυγουστου . . . . .	μγ	τλζ
ιδ	Τιβεριου . . . . .	κβ	τνθ
ιε	Γαίου . . . . .	δ	τξγ
ιγ	Κλαυδιου . . . . .	ιδ	τοζ
ιζ	Νερωνος . . . . .	ιδ	τρα
ιη	Ουεσπασιανου . . .	ι	υα
ιθ	Τιτου . . . . .	γ	υδ
κ	Δομετιανου . . . . .	ιε	υιθ
κα	Νερουα . . . . .	α	υκ
κβ	Τραιανου . . . . .	ιθ	υλθ
κγ	Αδριανου . . . . .	κα	υξ
κδ	Αντονινου . . . . .	κγ	υπγ

PTOLEMY'S CANON OF KINGS OF  
THE ASSYRIANS AND MEDES.

		Each.	Sum.
1	Nabonassar . . . .	14	14
2	Nadius . . . . .	2	16
3	Khazirus and Porus	5	21
4	Jougaius . . . . .	5	26
5	Mardocempadus . .	12	38
6	Archianus . . . . .	5	43
7	First Interregnum .	2	45
8	Belibus . . . . .	3	48
9	Apronadius . . . .	6	54
10	Regibelus . . . . .	1	55
11	Mesesimordachus .	4	59
12	Second Interregnum	8	67
13	Asaridinus . . . .	13	80
14	Saosduchius . . . .	20	100
15	Khuniladanus . . .	22	122
16	Nabopolassar . . .	21	143
17	Nabokolassar . . .	43	186
18	Ilvarodamus . . . .	2	188
19	Nerikassolasar . . .	4	192
20	Nabonadius . . . .	17	209

## PERSIAN KINGS.

21	Cyrus . . . . .	9	218
22	Cambyes . . . . .	8	226
23	Darius I. . . . .	36	262
24	Xerxes . . . . .	21	283
25	Artaxerxes I. . . .	41	324
26	Darius II. . . . .	19	343
27	Artaxerxes II. . . .	46	389
28	Ochus . . . . .	21	410
29	Arogus . . . . .	2	412
30	Darius III. . . . .	4	416
31	Alexander of Mace- don . . . . .	8	424

YEARS OF THE KINGS AFTER  
THE DEATH OF KING  
ALEXANDER.

1	Philip, after Alexander the Founder . . . . .	7	7
2	Alexand. Ægus . . .	12	19

KINGS OF THE GREEKS IN  
EGYPT.

3	Ptolemy Lagus . . .	20	39
4	— Philadelphus . . .	38	77
5	— Euergetes I. . . .	25	102
6	— Philopator . . . .	17	119
7	— Epiphanes . . . .	24	143
8	— Philometor . . . .	35	178
9	— Euergetes II. . . .	29	207
10	— Soter . . . . .	36	243
11	— Dionysius . . . .	29	272
12	Cleopatra . . . . .	22	294

## KINGS OF THE ROMANS.

13	Augustus . . . . .	43	337
14	Tiberius . . . . .	22	359
15	Caius . . . . .	4	363
16	Claudius . . . . .	14	377
17	Nero . . . . .	14	391
18	Vespasian . . . . .	10	401
19	Titus . . . . .	3	404
20	Domitian . . . . .	15	419
21	Nerva . . . . .	1	420
22	Trajan . . . . .	19	439
23	Adrian . . . . .	21	460
24	Antoninus . . . . .	23	483

**5974 years, since the Creation of Man.**

## END NOTES

<sup>100</sup> (Pages 1-3,13,19,27,31) **Morton Edgar**, *Great Pyramid Passages*, Volumes I-II, Glasgow: Boone & Hulley, 1923-1924. Reprinted by Portland Area Bible Students, 2001. Abbreviated as GPPI and GPPII.

<sup>101</sup> (Page 1) **Julian T. Gray**, *Which is the True Chronology?* Cincinnati, Ohio, 1934

<sup>102</sup> (Page 1) Quotations from the works of **Charles Taze Russell** are cited in the text with page numbers as:

A: *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, Vol. 1 of *Studies in the Scriptures*, 1886.

B: *The Time is at Hand*, Vol. 2 of *Studies in the Scriptures*, 1889.

C: *Thy Kingdom Come*, Vol. 3 of *Studies in the Scriptures*, 1891.

R: *Reprints of Zion's Watch Tower*, 1879-1916.

<sup>103</sup> (Page 3) **Paul S. L. Johnson** wrote a lengthy studied letter to Pastor Russell on June 7, 1914 concerning the chronology of Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus and Artaxerxes. The letter is reproduced in the appendix to Laymen's Home Missionary Movement's printing of Volume 2 of *Studies in the Scriptures*. Following the letter, P.S.L. Johnson says:

The writer of the above letter saw our Pastor about three weeks after sending it to him, and received from him the assurance that the points brought up in the letter were well taken; and the latter expressed pleasure that the data therein given secured the date of 1914 as the end of the Gentile Times, which must be held.

<sup>104</sup> (Page 4) **James Usher** is alternately spelled *Ussher* by various writers and even in the 1658 edition of his *Annals*. For consistency, we will render it throughout as "Usher."

<sup>105</sup> (Pages 5,13,14) **Rev. Edward Bishop Elliott, A.M.**, *Horae Apocalypticæ*, London: Seeley, Burnside, and Seeley. First edition: 1844, Second edition: 1846, Third edition: 1847, Fourth edition: 1851.

<sup>106</sup> (Pages 5,6) **Henry Grattan Guinness**, *The Approaching End of the Age*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880. Guinness reproduced the same SCRIPTURE CHRONOLOGY OF THE WORLD chart from Elliott with only the last line extended to "6006 The present year A.D. 1878" and footnote: "The appended table is from Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticæ*, brought down to the present date, 1878." This clearly indicates the 6000 years from creation ending in the year 1872.

<sup>107</sup> (Page 6) In support of B:48 we read from **Hales' A New Analysis of Chronology**, 1830, Volume II, Page 258:

I have dated the first division of the conquered lands in the sixth year, which Josephus reckoned in the fifth year; because Caleb was 40 years old when Moses sent him as one of the spies from Kadesh Barnea, and in the second year after the exode: consequently, he was 39 years old at the exode; and therefore, 79 years old, 40 years after, at the arrival in Canaan; but he was 85 years old when he claimed and got the hill of Hebron for an inheritance; and therefore, 85 – 79 = 6 years, after the arrival in Canaan. Compare Numb. x. 11, xiii. 6, with Josh. xiv. 6-15.

<sup>108</sup> (Page 8) **Dean Henry Alford**, 1810-1871, *Greek New Testament*, London: Rivingtons. 1871. Reprinted by Guardian Press, Grand Rapids, 1976.

<sup>109</sup> (Page 8) *Authorized Version Bible*, with critical commentary. Edited by **F.C. Cook, M.A.**, Canon of Exeter, 1873.

<sup>110</sup> (Pages 5,9,13,19) **Henry Fynes Clinton**, *Fasti Hellenici*, Oxford University Press: 1834-1841.

<sup>111</sup> (Page 9) **Josephus** in A.D. 93 quotes 1 Kings 5:18 and 6:1 almost verbatim and completely omits the clause regarding 480 years. He variously computes the period from the Exodus to the temple to be 592 to 612 years, but not 480. In this regard, the phrase was not in his Hebrew manuscript nor was he relying on a version of the Septuagint which says the "440<sup>th</sup> year." He clearly estimated greater years for the span of events.

*Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews*, Book VIII, Chapter 3, Section 1:

Solomon began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, on the second month, which the Macedonians call *Artemisius*, and the Hebrews *Jur*, five hundred and ninety-two years after the Exodus out of Egypt; but one thousand and twenty years from Abraham's coming out of Mesopotamia into Canaan, and after the deluge one thousand four hundred and forty years; and from Adam, the first man who was created, until Solomon built the temple, there had passed in all three thousand one hundred and two years.

This figure of 3102 years from Adam to the temple is remarkably close to our calculation of 3093 years.

*Antiquities*, Book XX, Chapter 10, Section 1:

Now these thirteen, who were the descendants of two of the sons of Aaron, received this dignity by succession, one after another; for their form of government was an aristocracy, and after that a monarchy, and in the third place the government was regal. Now the number of years during the rule of these thirteen, from the day when our fathers departed out of Egypt, under Moses their leader, until the building of that temple which king Solomon erected at Jerusalem were six hundred and twelve.

*Against Apion*, Book II, Section 2:

I have formerly produced testimonials out of those Phoenician records, as also that this Hirom was a friend of Solomon when he was building the temple of Jerusalem, and gave him great assistance in his building that temple; while still Solomon himself built that temple six hundred and twelve years after the Jews came out of Egypt.

<sup>112</sup> (Pages 10,13,22,29) **Rev. William Hales, D.D.**, *A New Analysis of Chronology and Geography, History and Prophecy*, London: Rivington, 1830. Four volumes.

<sup>113</sup> (Page 10) *The Anti-Nicean Fathers*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1986, Volume II, Page 117: Theophilus to Autolycus, Book III, Chapter 22:

Then concerning the building of the temple in Judea, which Solomon the king built 566 years after the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, there is among the Tyrians a record how the temple was built.

<sup>114</sup> (Page 10) *The Anti-Nicean Fathers*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1986, Volume II, Page 326: Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, Book I, chapter 21:

And Zadok the high priest was the first who ministered in the temple which Solomon built, being the eighth from Aaron, the first high priest. From Moses, then, to the age of Solomon, as some say, are five hundred and ninety-five years, and as others, five hundred and seventy-six.

<sup>115</sup> (Page 10) *The Anti-Nicean Fathers*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1951, Volume X, Page 402: Origen's Commentary on John, Book 10, Section 22:

The Jews therefore said, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days?" How the Jews said that the temple had been forty-six years building, we cannot tell, if we adhere to the history. For it is written in the third Book of Kings [1 Kings 5:18], that they prepared the stones and the wood three years, and in the fourth year, in the second month [1 Kings 6:1], when Solomon was king over Israel, the king commanded, and they brought great precious stones for the foundation of the house, and unhewn stones. And the sons of Solomon and the sons of Hiram hewed the stones and laid them in the fourth year, and they founded the house of the Lord in the month Nisan and the second month: the tenth year in the month Baal, which was the eighth month, the house was finished according to the whole count and the whole plan of it. Thus comparing the time of its completion with the period of building, the building of it occupies less than eleven years.

<sup>116</sup> (Page 14) **John Peter Lang**, *Lang's Commentary*, Translated from German, 1873, Published by Zondervan, 1960.

<sup>117</sup> (Page 14) **Sr. Isaac Newton**, *The Original of Monarchies*, 1701-2, King's College Library, Cambridge, Keynes Ms. 146. Excerpts quoted by Frank E. Manuel, *Isaac Newton, Historian*, Cambridge University Press, 1963. The Newton Project - Imperial College London.

<sup>118</sup> (Page 15) *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, CD-ROM Edition, 1997

<sup>119</sup> (Page 15) The **Ptolemaic Canon** or Chronology is the work of **Claudius Ptolemaeus** (2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.). He authored the Ptolemaic System of Astronomy. This is the system where the earth is stationary and all the heavenly bodies rotate around the earth. This system was replaced by the Copernican system in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. *Ptolemy's Canon* or Chronology is a list of kings with the years of their reigns as included in his *Almagest*. It had no explanatory notes to justify the form of the list. He is contradicted by Persian national traditions preserved by *Firdausi* (about 931-1020 A.D.), by the Jewish national traditions preserved in the *Seder Olam Rabbah*, and by the writings of Josephus. See: *The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy*, Robert R. Newton, 1977. See also *Scientific American*, "Fraud of Claudius Ptolemy," October 1977, page 79. Dependency upon Ptolemy is conceded in *Universal History*, Leopold Von Ranke, 1885, page 87:

The destruction of the Temple is placed in the second Book of Kings (xxv.8), and also by the prophet Jeremiah (lii.12), in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. As Nebuchadnezzar, according to the Ptolemaic canon, ascended the throne of Babylon in the year 604, we must place the destruction in the year 586.

From Britannica we read:

*Chronology: Babylonian and Assyrian, Mesopotamian chronology, 747 to 539 B.C.*

The chief problem in the early years of Assyriology was to reconstruct a sequence for Assyria for

were found by early excavators. These texts are lists of officials who held the office of *limmu* for one year only and whom historians also call by the Greek name of eponym. Annals of the Assyrian kings were being found at the same time as eponym lists, and a number of these annals, or the campaigns mentioned in them, were dated by eponyms who figured in the eponym lists. Some of the Assyrian kings in the annals were also kings of Babylonia and as such were included in Ptolemy's Canon.

Soon after 1880, two chronological texts of outstanding importance were discovered. One of these, now known as King List A, is damaged in parts, but the end of it, which is well preserved, coincides with the first part of Ptolemy's Canon down to 626 B.C. The other text, The Babylonian Chronicle, also coincides with the beginning of the canon, though it breaks off earlier than King List A. For the period after 747 B.C., there remained only one serious lacuna—i.e., the lack of the eponym sequence for the last 40 years or so of Assyrian history. This had not been established by the early 1970s.

#### *Chronology: Jewish*

Substantial use also has been made of the data in the king list known as Ptolemy's Canon (compiled in the 2nd Christian century) commencing in 747 B.C. with the reigns of the Babylonian kings. Scholars differ widely, however, in their interpretation of details, and numerous chronological problems remain unsolved. Only a few dates in this period can be fixed with any degree of confidence.

– *Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.* Copyright © 2005 DVD

<sup>120</sup> (Page 16) **Julian T. Gray**, *Which is the True Chronology*, 1934. **Charles F. Redeker**, *The Biblical 70 Years*, 1993. **Jerry Leslie**, *Dating the Desolation*, 2010

<sup>121</sup> (Page 17) *Say ye not a Conspiracy*, Beauties of the Truth, Volume 11, Number 2, May 2000, page 3.

<sup>122</sup> (Page 17) **John Peter Lang**, *Lang's Commentary*, Translated from German, 1873, Published by Zodervan, 1960. Comment on Zechariah 1:12

The reference to these seventy years does not imply that that period predicted by Jeremiah (xxv.12) was just [now] drawing to a close, for it had already expired in the first year of Cyrus (Ezra i.1). But although the people had been restored, they were still in a sad state,— It might well seem as if the troubles of the exile would never end.

<sup>123</sup> (Page 19) Astronomers, reckoning a zero year, subtract one to reference the common era. The respective dates of Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar are B.C. 536¼ and 606¼, ending the Gentile Times in 1913¾ = the Autumn of 1914 (R:5564).

<sup>124</sup> (Pages 21,27, 29) **Charles Rollin**, *Ancient History*, London: Williamson and Co., 1838. Translated from French.

<sup>125</sup> (Page 14,23) **William Brown Galloway**, *The Chain of Ages*, London: Sampson Low, 1881.

<sup>126</sup> (Page 25) **Carl Friedrich Keil, D.D. and Franz Delitzsch, D.D.**, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, Translated from German, 1866. Reprinted by Wm. B. Eerdmans 1971.

<sup>127</sup> (Page 26) **Edwin M. Yamauchi**, *Persia and the Bible*, Baker Book House:1990. Yamauchi explores Media, Persia, Darius and Cyrus. He cites papers from William H. Shea of the Andrews University Seminary Studies. Shea accounts for Cyrus deferring the full regal titles of Babylon until Darius died, who he accounts for in Babylonian records as Gubaru I. Darius was already 62 years of age upon taking Babylon, Daniel 5:31. From page 59 we read:

Shea concludes that there are six points in which the careers of Gubaru I and Darius the Mede match: (1) Gubaru led the Medo-Persian troops who captured Babylon (see Dan.5:28). (2) He installed governors there (see Dan.6:1-2). (3) He was probably quite old, since he died soon after the capture of Babylon (see Dan.5:30). (4) According to cuneiform texts he died about a year after he conquered Babylon (see Dan.9:1; 11:1). The explanation for the transition from the regnal reckoning of Darius the Mede to the “third year of Cyrus” (Dan.10:1) would be the assumption that the former had passed from the scene. (5) The distinction between the kingdoms of Darius and of Cyrus in Daniel fits the evidence of the chronology and development of Cyrus's titularies. (6) Just as Darius was “made king,” Gubaru served as a vassal under Cyrus. [W.H. Shea, *Darius the Mede: An Update*, 1982]

<sup>128</sup> (Page 27) **James Usher** was born in Dublin (A.D. 1581 to 1656), and educated in Trinity College. He took holy orders in 1601 and in 1607 became Professor of Divinity at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1625 he became Archbishop of Armagh, purely on merit, and in 1634 Primate of all Ireland. After a life-time of study he felt the evidence dictated that Artaxerxes Longimanus came to the throne in 474 B.C. Usher is one of several authorities who put the arrival of Themistocles in Persia in about 473 B.C., when as Thucydides records, Artaxerxes Longimanus had but “lately come to the throne.” Bishop William Lloyd took Usher's Chronological dates and put them in the margins of his Lloyd's Bible, however he altered Usher's date of the 20th year of Artaxerxes Longimanus in Nehemiah.2:1, from 454 B.C. to 445 B.C.

<sup>129</sup> (Page 28) **Joseph Priestley, LL.D, FRS**, *A harmony of the Evangelists in English with Critical Dissertations*, London: 1777, J. Johnson, No. 72, St. Paul's Church-yard.

<sup>130</sup> (Page 28) The Greek historian **Diodorus Siculus** (of the first century A.D.) places the death of Themistocles in 471 B.C. It is reported that after his arrival in Persia, Themistocles asked for his audience with Artaxerxes to be postponed for a year in order to learn the Persian language, so that he could communicate with Artaxerxes in the Persian language.

<sup>131</sup> (Page 29) **Humphrey Prideaux, D.D.**, a learned English divine, noted as a historian, was born at Padstow, in Cornwall; May 3, 1648. He was educated first at Westminster School and later at Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his degree in 1672. [After a list of his numerous published treatises between 1697 and 1724]... But Dr. Prideaux's great work was *The Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament*, the first part of which was published in 1715, the second in 1718... The last named is by far the most desirable of all, as it contains, in addition to the excellent work done by M'Caul, the notes, etc. by Wheeler, who also edited Shuckford's *Connection of Sacred and Profane History* (1858, 2 vols.) and Russell's *Collection of Sacred and Profane History* (1865, 2 vols.), the three embracing the entire period from the Creation to the time of Christ... The *Connection* contains a large mass of erudition, and accurate information on every topic of Jewish history and antiquities, and on all the links which connected that peculiar people with the surrounding 182 nations. It is indispensable to the Biblical and interesting to the general scholar.

– *McClintock & Strong Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*

<sup>132</sup> (Page 27,30) **Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg**, *Christology of the Old Testament*, Edinburgh: 1854. Translated from German. Original reprint in two volumes by MacDonald Publishing Company, McLean, VA.

<sup>133</sup> (Pages 31,33) **Greek Olympiads**:

As the cities of ancient Greece progressed to their classical maturity, the need arose among them for a chronological system on a universally understood basis. In the archaic period, genealogies of local monarchs or aristocrats sufficed for the historical tradition of a given area, and events were associated with the lifetimes of well-known ancestors or "heroes." When the city-states adopted annual magistracies, the years were designated by the eponymous officials—"in the archonship of Glaucippus" or "when Pleistolas was ephor." This was the local usage throughout classical and Hellenistic Greece, the title of the magistrate varying in different cities. The correctness of the series was a matter first of memory and later of careful record. In all genealogical reckoning there is a point at which acceptable tradition shades into myth.

Chronology became subject to systematization when cities felt a national need for accurate clarification of their past. In literature the growth of historiography initiated a search for a method of dating that could be universally applied and acknowledged. In the 5th and 4th centuries, local historians used local magistracies as their framework; research was devoted to rationalization of conflicting traditions and production of definitive lists. Charon of Lampsacus, perhaps in the early 5th century, compiled a record of Spartan magistrates; Hellanicus of Lesbos, author of the earliest history of Athens, wrote on the priestesses of Argos. Lists of victors in the great Olympic games were valid for all Greece, pointing the way to the widely accepted reckoning by Olympiads (see below).

The system of dating by Athenian archons came to be recognized outside Attica as of wider value, but, in the Hellenistic period, Alexandrian scholarship, represented especially by Eratosthenes of Cyrene, the "father of chronology," was instrumental in promoting the use of the Olympiads as an acceptable system, reckoning a four-year period from each celebration of the Olympic Games. Timaeus of Tauromenium (c. 356-260 B.C.) was the first historian to employ it, but it was little used outside historical writing. Aristotle had been concerned to identify the generation of the first Olympiad, accepted as 776 B.C. on modern reckoning. For convenience, the beginning of the Olympic year was equated with the summer solstice, when the Athenian year also began.

The use of these chronological possibilities is best seen in historians using the annalistic method, of whom Diodorus Siculus is most notable. In the Christian period, Eusebius, followed by St. Jerome, began the work of reconciling all these indications to the Judaic tradition and produced the foundation of chronology in terms of the Julian calendar upon which modern historians have constructed their framework.

Literary tradition gives the succession of Athenian archons from 480 to 294 B.C. The regnal, era, and Olympiad years also provide dates within a 12-month period. Closer dating is seldom possible unless the sources give precise information in calendric terms, as occasionally in literature and regularly in Egyptian public documents.

– *Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. Copyright © 2005 DVD. Chronology: Greek*

<sup>134</sup> (Page 31) After the Babylonian Exile, as evidenced by the data in the Bible and the Aswān papyri, the Jews reckoned by the years of the Persian kings. The chronological problems of this period are caused by the apparent disorder in the sequence of events related in the biblical books of Ezra and Nehemiah and by the difficulty of identifying some of the Persian kings in question. For example, the King Artaxerxes of these books may stand for Artaxerxes I Longimanus (465–425 B.C.), for Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404–359/358 B.C.), or in the case of Ezra at any rate, for Artaxerxes III Ochus (359/358–338/337 B.C.). – *Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. Copyright © 2005 DVD. Chronology: Jewish*

<sup>135</sup> (Page 31) **Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A.**, *Clarke's Commentary*, England: 1810-1825, reprinted by Abingdon Press.



<sup>136</sup> (Page 27,32) **Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, LL.D.**, *Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel*, London:1854, 1882. Quoted in the *Tower*: November 15, 1907 (R:4093-4), with these additional comments:

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:— With reference to first complete paragraph of Vol. II., p.67, the following facts, culled from “Tregelles on Daniel,” regarding Usher’s position in the matter of the date of Nehemiah’s commission, may be of interest to WATCH TOWER readers, seeing that he is deservedly considered as an authority on chronology...

It appears that Archbishop Usher was the first to establish the date of Nehemiah’s commission as 454 B.C. as a result of lecturing on the 70 weeks of Daniel in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1613. Other critics who support the date given in DAWN II. are Vitringe [Vitringa], Kruger and Hengstenberg, as well as Tregelles, above quoted. With much love, I remain, Yours in the Lord, J.P. BURNS,—England.

<sup>137</sup> (Page 32) **Martin Anstey, B.D., M.A.**, *The Romance of Bible Chronology*, Marshal Brothers, 1913.

<sup>138</sup> (Page 27,33) **Cornelius Nepos, Justin**, *Cornelius Nepos and Eutropius*, London: George Bell & Sons, 1876.

<sup>139</sup> (Page 33) **Plutarch**, *Selected Lives and Essays*, New York: Walter J. Black, Inc., 1951.

<sup>140</sup> (Page 34) Catalogue of Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, vol. 8: shelves of Sippar 2, by E. Leichty and A. Grayson, 1987, p 153, indicated by BM 65494.

<sup>141</sup> (Page 34) *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts*, edited by H.V. Hilprecht, Vol. 8, Part 1, by Albert T. Clay, 1908, published by Department of Archaeology, CBM 12803, No. 127.

<sup>142</sup> (Page 34) **Rolf Furuli**, (Norwegian Magister Artium, First Councillor in Semitic Languages): *Persian Chronology and the Length of the Babylonian Exile of the Jews*, Oslo Norway, 2012 [Volume II, 2013 *Assyrian, Babylonian and Egyptian Chronology Compared with the Chronology of the Bible*]

Page 193: At least 8 tablets from the accession year of Xerxes are dated before the last dated tablet from year 36 of Darius I. One tablet from the accession year of Xerxes may even be dated in month 2. If these tablets are taken at face value, they rule out that year 36 of Darius I was the same as the accession year of Xerxes.

Page 237: If there really were an 16-year long co-regency, what are the implications from a chronological point of view? First of all, the reign of the next king, Artaxerxes I, would be pushed back by 10 years. Year 21 of Xerxes would be 475/74, which would be the accession year of Artaxerxes I, and his first regnal year would be 474/73 BCE. Secondly, it would be a blow to the Ptolemaic chronology, which has 21 years for Xerxes after 36 years of Darius I. Thirdly, the calculations of the Saros tablets cannot be true because they follow a pattern that is very similar to that followed by Claudius Ptolemy.

Page 239: Artaxerxes I followed his father Xerxes... In the Persian Empire, the dated business tablets that are found are fewer than in the Neo-Babylonian Empire. I am aware of 160 tablets dated in the reign of Xerxes, and around 550 dated in the reign of Artaxerxes I. I am not aware of any dated business tablets from the accession year of Artaxerxes I; therefore, we do not know anything about the transition of power from Xerxes to Artaxerxes I.

Pages 240-248: Cuneiform tablets and other sources suggest that Artaxerxes I reigned more than 41 years... Tablet BM 65494, which is dated on day 4, month 6, year 50 of Artaxerxes and was written in Borsippa. Regarding this tablet, C.B.F. Walker at the British Museum answered an inquiry about the correctness of the number 50: “this is correct, but 50 is presumably a scribal error for 40.” The existence of this tablet would also suggest that the number “51” on the other tables is correct. Thus, there are 45 anomalous tablets dated to Artaxerxes I after the first tablet dated in the reign of Darius II, 43 from year 41 of Artaxerxes I, and one from his year 50 and one from his year 51.

<sup>143</sup> (Page 34) **Ernst E. Herzfeld**, *A New Inscription of Xerxes from Persepolis*, University of Chicago Press, 1932

<sup>144</sup> (Page 34) **Albert T. Olmstead**, *History of the Persian Empire*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1959, Chapter XVI:216-217

...In his powerful right fist Darius grasps firmly the long slender scepter, also gold-plated, with jeweled knob, extending to the floor. His left hand grasps as firmly a lotus with two buds.

On the low platform supporting the throne which adds to the impression of royal majesty stands Xerxes. He wears exactly the same robe, the same cidaris, and the same spade beard, and in his left hand he carries another lotus. The sculpture thus confirms his own claim that “my father made me the greatest after himself.” But, after all, he is still only the crown prince and must stand humbly behind his sacred father, toward whose throne he raises his right hand, palm open, in the usual gesture of worship made by the reigning king to Ahuramazda.

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