

Did Christ's Kingdom Rule Begin in 1914?

Debunking 1914 Complementary Guide



Three Questions Every Jehovah's Witness Should Consider

The Watchtower's 1914 doctrine depends entirely upon Jerusalem being destroyed in **607 B.C.E.** If Jerusalem was actually destroyed in **587/586 B.C.E.**, then the calculation leading to 1914 fails.

The following documents allow you to examine the evidence for yourself.

1. Did Jeremiah's 70 Years Begin with Jerusalem's Destruction?

The Watchtower teaches that Jeremiah's 70 years began when Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.E. and ended when the Jews returned in 537 B.C.E. Yet Jeremiah 25:11-12 says:

"These nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

The prophecy concerns the period during which the surrounding nations served Babylon—not the length of Jerusalem's desolation.

Historically, Babylon became the dominant world power after the fall of Assyria in **609 B.C.E.** and continued until Babylon fell to Persia in **539 B.C.E.**

609 B.C.E. – 539 B.C.E. = 70 years

Questions:

- Does Jeremiah say the 70 years were for Jerusalem's ruins or for the nations serving Babylon?
- When did Babylon become the dominant empire?
- When did Babylon fall?

2. How Long Did Jerusalem Lie Desolate?

The Bible distinguishes between Babylon's 70-year domination and Jerusalem's period of desolation.

In the fourth year of Darius (517 B.C.E.), the Jews asked: "Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?" (Zechariah 7:3)

Jehovah then referred to their mourning: "These seventy years." (Zechariah 7:5)

The mourning commemorated the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in the fifth month.

If the question was asked in 517 B.C.E. and they had been mourning for seventy years:

**517 B.C.E. + 70 years =
587 B.C.E.**

Questions:

- What event were the Jews mourning?
- What year was Darius' fourth year?
- Does Zechariah place Jerusalem's destruction around 587 B.C.E.?

3. Is There Room for an Extra 20 Years in Babylonian History?

The Watchtower must move Jerusalem's destruction from 587 B.C.E. back to 607 B.C.E.

This requires inserting an additional **20 years** into Neo-Babylonian history.

However, thousands of contemporary business records, contracts, receipts, astronomical texts, and king lists connect the reigns of:

- Nabopolassar
- Nebuchadnezzar
- Evil-Merodach
- Neriglissar
- Labashi-Marduk
- Nabonidus

These records form one continuous timeline leading to Babylon's fall in 539 B.C.E.

Questions:

- Where can twenty additional years be inserted?
- Which king ruled those extra years?
- Why do no contemporary documents mention them?

Conclusion

1. If Jeremiah's 70 years refer to the nations serving Babylon from **609–539 B.C.E.**;
2. Zechariah places Jerusalem's destruction around **587 B.C.E.**;
3. The Babylonian records leave no room for an extra twenty years; then the foundation for the Watchtower's 607 B.C.E. date collapses.

And if 607 B.C.E. is incorrect, the calculation leading to 1914 cannot be correct.

"Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good."

— 1 Thessalonians 5:21 (NASB)

"LYCANTHROPY . . . from [y'/kos], *lupus*, wolf; [an'thro-pos], *homo*, man. This name was given to the sickness of people who believe themselves to be changed into an animal, and who imitate the voice or cries, the shapes or manners of that animal. These individuals usually imagine themselves transformed into a wolf, a dog or a cat; sometimes also into a bull, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar." (*Dictionnaire des sciences médicales, par une société de médecins et de chirurgiens*, Paris, 1818, Volume 29, page 246) The symptoms of lycanthropy are similar to those of Nebuchadnezzar's demented state. Since his mental illness was divinely decreed, however, it cannot specifically be identified with a known disorder.

²³ Scholar John E. Goldingay cites several parallels to Nebuchadnezzar's madness and restoration. For instance, he states: "A fragmentary cuneiform text apparently refers to some mental disorder on Nebuchadnezzar's part, and perhaps to his neglecting and leaving Babylon." Goldingay cites a document called "The Babylonian Job" and says that it "testifies to chastisements by God, illness, humiliation, seeking interpretation of a terrifying dream, being thrown over like a tree, being put outside, eating grass, losing understanding, being like an ox, being rained on by Marduk, nails being marred, hair growing, and being fettered, and then to a restoration for which he praises the god."

SEVEN TIMES THAT AFFECT US

²⁴ As represented by the great tree, Nebuchadnezzar symbolized world rulership. But remember, the tree

²⁵ What secular testimony is there to Nebuchadnezzar's insanity?

²⁶ (a) The great dream tree symbolizes what? (b) What was restrained for seven times, and how did that come about?

stands for rulership and sovereignty far grander than that of Babylon's king. It symbolizes the universal sovereignty of Jehovah, "the King of the heavens," especially with respect to the earth. Before Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians, the kingdom centered in that city with David and his heirs sitting on "Jehovah's throne" represented God's sovereignty with reference to the earth. (1 Chronicles 29:23) God himself had such sovereignty chopped down and banded in 607 B.C.E. when he used Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem. Exercise of divine sovereignty toward the earth by a kingdom in the line of David was restrained for seven times. How long were these seven times? When did they begin, and what marked their end?

²⁵ During Nebuchadnezzar's madness, "his very hair grew long just like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws." (Daniel 4:33) This took longer than seven days or seven weeks. Various translations read "seven times," and alternatives are "appointed (definite) times" or "time periods." (Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32) A variant of the Old Greek (*Septuagint*) reads "seven years." The "seven times" were treated as "seven years" by the first-century Jewish historian Josephus. (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 10, Chapter 10, paragraph 6) And certain Hebrew scholars have viewed these "times" as "years." "Seven years" is the rendering in *An American Translation*, *Today's English Version*, and the translation by James Moffatt.

²⁶ Evidently, Nebuchadnezzar's "seven times" involved seven years. In prophecy, a year averages 360 days, or

²⁵, ²⁶. (a) In Nebuchadnezzar's case, how long were the "seven times," and why do you so answer? (b) In the major fulfillment, when and how did the "seven times" begin?

How
does
the
watchtower
derive
1914
for Christ
kingdom?

12 months of 30 days each. (Compare Revelation 12:6, 14.) So the king's "seven times," or seven years, were 360 days multiplied by 7, or 2,520 days. But what about the major fulfillment of his dream? The prophetic "seven times" lasted much longer than 2,520 days. This was indicated by Jesus' words: "Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) That "trampling" began in 607 B.C.E. when Jerusalem was destroyed and the typical kingdom of God ceased to function in Judah. When would the trampling end? At "the times of restoration of all things," when divine sovereignty would again be manifested toward the earth through symbolic Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God.—Acts 3:21.

²⁷ If we were to count 2,520 literal days from Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E., that would bring us only to 600 B.C.E., a year having no Scriptural significance. Even in 537 B.C.E., when the liberated Jews were back in Judah, Jehovah's sovereignty was not manifested on the earth. That was so because Zerubbabel, the heir to David's throne, was made not king but only *governor* of the Persian province of Judah.

²⁸ Since the "seven times" are prophetic, we must apply to the 2,520 days the Scriptural rule: "A day for a year." This rule is set out in a prophecy regarding the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 4:6, 7; compare Numbers 14:34.) The "seven times" of earth's domination by Gentile powers without interference by God's Kingdom therefore spanned 2,520 years. They began

27. Why would you say that the "seven times" that began in 607 B.C.E. did not end 2,520 literal days later?

28. (a) What rule must be applied to the 2,520 days of the prophetic "seven times"? (b) How long were the prophetic "seven times," and what dates mark their beginning and their end?

with the desolation of Judah and Jerusalem in the seventh lunar month (Tishri 15) of 607 B.C.E. (2 Kings 25:8, 9, 25, 26) From that point to 1 B.C.E. is 606 years. The remaining 1,914 years stretch from then to 1914 C.E. Thus, the "seven times," or 2,520 years, ended by Tishri 15, or October 4/5, 1914 C.E.

²⁹ In that year "the appointed times of the nations" were fulfilled, and God gave rulership to "the lowliest one of mankind"—Jesus Christ—who had been considered so base by his foes that they even had him impaled. (Daniel 4:17) To enthrone the Messianic King, Jehovah loosened the symbolic iron and copper bands around the "rootstock" of his own sovereignty. The Most High God thus allowed a royal "sprout" to grow from it as a manifestation of divine sovereignty toward the earth by means of the heavenly Kingdom in the hands of David's greatest Heir, Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 11:1, 2; Job 14:7-9; Ezekiel 21:27) How we thank Jehovah for this blessed turn of events and for unraveling the mystery of the great tree!

29. Who is "the lowliest one of mankind," and what did Jehovah do to enthrone him?

WHAT DID YOU DISCERN?

- What did the great tree of Nebuchadnezzar's dream symbolize?
- What befell Nebuchadnezzar in the initial fulfillment of his tree dream?
- After his dream's fulfillment, what acknowledgment did Nebuchadnezzar make?
- In the major fulfillment of the prophetic tree dream, how long were the "seven times," and when did they begin and end?

Does the
Watchtower
teach
Jerusalem
was
destroyed
in 607 B.C.E.?

²⁸ Thankful, indeed, we can be that Jehovah preserved in his inspired Word an accurate picture of the needed details involving the Jews, the Babylonians and the Medo-Persians in the sixth century B.C.E. Otherwise it would be difficult to piece together the exact timing of events back there, for secular records of that period are certainly incomplete.

²⁹ However, based primarily on such secular records, some persons figure that Jerusalem was destroyed in 587/6 B.C.E. and that the Jews came under Babylonian domination in Nebuchadnezzar's accession year, which they calculate as being 605 B.C.E.* They thus hold 605 B.C.E. to be the date when Jeremiah 25:11 began to be fulfilled: "All the land shall be a desolation; and they shall serve among the Gentiles seventy years." (Bagster's Greek Septuagint) If that were so and the Gentile Times were counted from then, it would put the end of the prophetic "seven times" in the World War year of 1916. Yet, as stated, we believe that there is much stronger reason for accepting the information in God's inspired Word, which points to the Gentile Times' beginning in October 607 B.C.E. and ending in October of 1914 C.E.

³⁰ We can be happy that God long ago had recorded in his Word prophecies that so clearly give the timing of Jesus' coming as Messiah in 29 C.E., and

* See Appendix, page 186.

28, 29 (a) What is it about secular records that should make us thankful for the details preserved in God's Word? (b) Why is there strong reason for preferring October 1914 over other dates for the end of the Gentile Times?

30. What combined events identify the period from 1914 as the "last days"?

also of his "presence" as glorious heavenly King from 1914 C.E. While "the conclusion of the system of things" runs its course, we see intensifying all around us the conditions for which Jesus told us to watch. The world wars, the famines, the pestilences, the earthquakes, the lawlessness, the lovelessness, the hatreds and persecution of those who stand for Bible principles—all of these in combination have identified for us the "last days."—2 Timothy 3:1; Matthew 24:3-12; Mark 13:7-13.

THE MILLENNIUM—WHEN?

³¹ How long will this fearful situation last? With Christ Jesus now enthroned as Warrior-King, there is good reason to believe that it will not be long before he executes judgment on God's enemies. "Concerning that day or the hour nobody knows," so that we gain nothing by speculating. Nevertheless, we should heed Jesus' counsel: "Keep on the watch." (Mark 13:32; Matthew 24:42) As we view the worsening conditions on earth and experience how people in general are unresponsive to the Kingdom good news, we may be inclined to ask, as did God's prophet, concerning our preaching: "How long, O Jehovah?" To which Jehovah replies:

"Until the cities actually crash in ruins, to be without an inhabitant, and the houses be without earthling man, and the ground itself is ruined into a desolation." (Isaiah 6:10-12)

At his appointed time Jehovah will carry out this execution of judgment, first upon Christendom and then on all other segments of Satan's world. Christ's

31. (a) What counsel does Jesus give for our day, and why? (b) What question may we be inclined to ask, and what is Jehovah's reply?

Is the WT's
1914 chronology
based on a
false date
for the fall of
Jerusalem?
607 or
587 B.C.E.?

According to verse 12, what event was to mark the completion of the 70 years?
 "When 70 years have been fulfilled" Jehovah "shall call to account against" what?
 - "the King of Babylon?"
 According to verse 12, is there anyway Jehovah's judgment against the King of Babylon
 could have occurred prior to the completion of the 70 years?
 - "When" 70 years "have been fulfilled"

JEREMIAH 25:10—30

against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will devote them to destruction and make them an object of astonishment and something to whistle at and places devastated to time indefinite. 10 And I will destroy out of them the sound of exultation and the sound of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the hand mill and the light of the lamp. 11 And all this land must become a devastated place, an object of astonishment, and these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon* seventy years."

servants and his princes and all his people; **20** and all the mixed company, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philis'tines and Ash'ke-lon and Ga'za and Ek'ron and the remnant of Ash'dod; **21** E'dom and Mo'ab and the sons of Am'mon; **22** and all the kings of Tyre and all the kings of Si'don and the kings of the island that is in the region of the sea; **23** and De'dan and Te'ma and Buz and all those with hair clipped at the temples; **24** and all the kings of the Arabs and all the kings of the mixed company who are residing in the wilderness; **25** and all the kings of Zim'ri and all the kings of E'lam and all the kings of the Medes; **26** and all the kings of the north who are near and far away, one after the other, and all the [other] kingdoms of the earth that are on the surface of the ground; and the king of She'shach^A himself will drink after them.

827 God's

26 In the begin-
ning of Je-hoi'a-k
the king of Juda
from Jehovah, say
Jehovah has said,
of the house of J
speak concerning
that are coming i
house of Jehovah

*"Babylon," Vg; "Ba'bel," MSyT. [□] See Jeremiah 1:1, footnote^o. [△] "She'shach," MVg; "Ba'bel [or, Babylon]," T. This may be a cryptographical name for Babylon, by the device known as *At-bash'*, which disguises the true name by taking the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet (*tau*) for the first (*aleph*), and the second-last letter (*shin*) for the second letter (*beth*), and so on. Thus in "Ba'bel" each *beth* (or B) would stand for *shin*, and the *lamed* would stand for *kaph*, and the name would become *She-shakh'*. Delitzsch held that "She'shach" stood for *Sis-ku-KI* of an old Babylonian royal register. *Sis-ku* or *Sis-ka* may have been a district of ancient Babylon.

When did the "King of Babylon" die?
If 537 B.C.E marks the completion of the 70 years (as the WT claims),
how could Jehovah "call to account against" a dead king who died
2 years earlier in 539 B.C.E.?

DANIEL 5:21—6:5 Rebukes king. Babylon falls. Plot against Daniel 1100

taken away from him.^a 21 And from the sons of mankind* he was driven away, and his very heart was made like that of a beast, and with the wild asses his dwelling was.^b Vegetation they would give him to eat just like bulls, and with the dew of the heavens his own body got to be wet,^c until he knew that the Most High God is Ruler* in the kingdom of mankind, and that the one whom he wants to, he sets up over it.^d

22 "And as for you, his son Bel-shaz'zar,^e you have not humbled your heart,^f although you knew all this.^g 23 But against the Lord of the heavens* you exalted yourself,^h and they brought before you even the vessels of his house;ⁱ and you yourself and your grandees, your concubines and your secondary wives have been drinking wine from them, and you have praised mere gods* of silver and of gold, copper, iron, wood and stone,^j that are beholding nothing or hearing nothing or knowing nothing;^k but the God^l in whose hand your breath^m is^l and to whom all your ways belong^m you have not glorified.ⁿ

24 Consequently from before him there was being sent the back of a hand, and this very writing was inscribed.^o 25 And this is the writing that was inscribed: ME'NE, ME'NE, TE'KEL and PAR'SIN.*

26 "This is the interpretation of the word: ME'NE, God has numbered* [the days of] your kingdom and has finished* it.^p

27 "TE'KEL, you have been weighed* in the balances and have been found deficient.^q

28 "PE'RES, your kingdom has been

Da 5:21* Or, "sons of men." Aram., *beneh'ana-sha*. 21* Or, "ruling." See 4:17 ftn, "Ruler." 23* "The Lord of the heavens." Aram., *ma-re'-shemat-ya*. 23* "And . . . gods of." Aram., *wel'e'-la-heh'*. 23* "But the God." Aram., *wel'e'-la-ha*; LXX^{Bagster} (Gr.), *The-on'*. 23* "Your breath." Aram., *nish-methakh'*. Compare Pr 20:27 ftn. 25* Lit., "A Mina, a Mina, a Shekel and Half Shekels." Aram., *Mene' Mene' Tegel' u-Phar-sin'*. *Phar-sin'* is pl. of *Peres'*, "a half shekel." 26* "MENE, God has numbered." Aram., *Mene' menah'-Ela-ha*. 26* Or, "abandoned." 27* "TEKEL, you have been weighed." Aram., *Tegel' teqil'tah*.

CHAP. 5

a Isa 47:1
b Da 4:25
c Da 4:32
d Job 34:24
e Job 34:18
f Eze 17:24
g Da 4:17
h Da 4:35
i Da 5:11
j Da 5:18
k Mt 23:12
l Lu 12:47
m Jas 4:17
n Isa 37:23
o Jer 50:29
p Da 5:3
q Isa 37:19
r Ac 17:29
s De 32:21
t Ps 115:5
u Ps 135:17
v Isa 46:7
w 1Co 8:4
x 1Ps 104:29
y Isa 42:5
z Ac 17:25
aa Pr 20:24
ab Jer 10:23
ac Ro 1:21
ad Da 5:5
ae Ps 13:11
af Jer 25:12
ag Jer 27:7
ah Jer 50:1
ai Jer 51:11
aj Job 31:6
ak Ro 2:6
al 1Co 3:13
am Col 3:25

Second Col.

a Ezr 1:1
b Isa 21:2
c Isa 45:1
d Jer 50:9
e Da 6:28
f Da 9:1
g Isa 14:2
h Da 5:7
i Da 5:16
j Isa 21:9
k Jer 51:8
l Jer 51:31
m Jer 51:39
n Jer 51:57
o Da 6:1
p Da 9:1

CHAP. 6

a Es 1:1
b Pr 3:16
c Isa 14:2
d Da 2:48
e Da 5:29
f Ezr 8:36
g Es 8:9
h Da 3:2
i Ezr 4:22
j Es 7:4
k Lu 19:23
l Pr 3:35
m Pr 22:29
n Ja 1:17
o Da 5:12
p Ps 37:12
q Pr 29:27
r Ec 4:4
s Php 2:15
t 1Pe 2:12

divided* and given to the Medes and the Persians.^{aa}

29 At that time Bel-shaz'zar commanded,* and they clothed Daniel with purple, with a necklace of gold about his neck; and they heralded* concerning him that he was to become the third ruler in the kingdom.^b

30 In that very night* Bel-shaz'zar the Chal-de'an king was killed^c 31* and Dari'us^{ad} the Mede himself received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

6 It seemed good to Dari'us, and he set up over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, who were to be over the whole kingdom;^e 2 and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one,^f in order that these satraps* might continually be giving to them the report and the king himself might not become the loser.^h 3 Then it was that this Daniel was steadily distinguishing himselfⁱ over the high officials and the satraps, forasmuch as an extraordinary spirit* was in him;^j and the king was intending to elevate him over all the kingdom.

4 At that time the high officials and the satraps themselves were constantly seeking to find some pretext against Daniel respecting the kingdom;^k but there was no pretext or corrupt thing at all that they were able to find, forasmuch as he was trustworthy and no negligence or corrupt thing at all was found in him.^l 5 Consequently these able-bodied men were saying: "We shall

Da 5:28* "PERES, your kingdom has been divided." Aram., *Peres' peri-sath' mal-khu-thakh'*. *Peres'* is sing. of *Phar-sin'*. Compare vs 25 ftn. 28* "To the Medes and the Persians." Aram., *leMa-dhai' u-Phar-as'*. The Aram. word for "Persians" has the same three consonants as *Peres'*. 29* Lit., "said." 29* Or, "and they proclaimed." Aram., *wehakh-ri'zu*; LXX^{Bagster} (Gr.), *e-ke'-ry-ae*; Lat., *prae-di-ca'tum est*. See 3:4 ftn. 30* See "Babylon the Great Has Fallen!" *God's Kingdom Rules!* by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, 1963, p. 227 ftn; see also *ad* under the heading "Belshazzar." 31* MLXX begin chap. 6 here. 31* "And Darius." Aram., *weDhor-ya'-wesh*; LXX^{Bagster} (Gr.), *Dareios*; Lat., *Darius*; Gr., *Ar-ta-xer-xes*. 6:3* "Spirit." Aram., *ru'-ach*; LXX^{Bagster} (Gr.), *pneu'ma*; Lat., *spi-ri-tus*.

1101 Daniel

find in this Daniel except we have to find in the law of his God

6 Accordingly the satraps themselves came to the king,^b and were saying to him king, live on even for 7 All the high officials the prefects and the royal officers and the taken counsel together royal statute^d and the dict, that whoever is any god or man* for to you, O king, should lions' pit.^e 8 Now, establish the statute ing,^f in order for [it] according to the law the Persians,^g which 9 In accord with us himself signed the interdict.ⁱ

10 But Daniel, a that the writing had entered into his house in his roof chamber toward Jerusalem,^j a day^k he was kneeling praying^l and offering God,^m as he had before prior to this.ⁿ 11 able-bodied men the and found Daniel ploring favor before

12 Then it was told and were saying concerning the interdict there not an interdict signed that any man from any god or man except from you, O thrown to the lions' answering and saying well established according the Medes and the not annulled.^q 13 answered, and they

Da 6:5* "His God." A De'i su'i. 7* "God or we-enash"; Lat., *de-o* God." Aram., *Ela-hel*

LEARNING FROM THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

²⁵ The inspired account in Daniel chapter 5 is rich in meaning for us. As a center of false religious practices, ancient Babylon is a fitting symbol of the world empire of false religion. Pictured in Revelation as a bloodthirsty harlot, this global conglomerate of deceit is called "Babylon the Great." (Revelation 17:5) Heedless of all warnings about her God-dishonoring false doctrines and practices, she has persecuted those preaching the truth of God's Word. Like inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem and Judah, the faithful remnant of anointed Christians were effectively exiled in "Babylon the Great" when clergy-inspired persecution virtually closed down the Kingdom-preaching work in 1918.

²⁶ Suddenly, though, "Babylon the Great" fell! Oh, it was practically a noiseless fall—just as ancient Babylon fell almost noiselessly, in 539 B.C.E. But this figurative fall was devastating nonetheless. It occurred in 1919 C.E. when Jehovah's people were freed from Babylonish captivity and were blessed with divine approval. This ended the power of "Babylon the Great" over God's people and marked the beginning of her public exposure as an unreliable fraud. That fall has proved to be irreversible, and her final destruction is imminent. Jehovah's servants have thus been echoing the warning: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins." (Revelation 18:4) Have you heeded that warning? Do you share it with others?*

* See pages 205-71 of the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

25. (a) Why is ancient Babylon a fitting symbol of today's global system of false religion? (b) In what sense were God's modern-day servants held captive in Babylon?

26. (a) How did "Babylon the Great" fall in 1919? (b) What warning should we ourselves heed and share with others?

²⁷ So the handwriting is on the wall today—but not for "Babylon the Great" alone. Remember a vital truth central to Daniel's book: Jehovah is the Universal Sovereign. He, and he alone, has the right to set up a ruler over mankind. (Daniel 4:17, 25; 5:21) Anything standing in opposition to Jehovah's purposes will be removed. It is only a matter of time before Jehovah acts. (Habakkuk 2:3) For Daniel, such a time finally came in the tenth decade of his life. He then saw Jehovah remove a world power—one that had been oppressing God's people since Daniel's boyhood.

²⁸ There is undeniable proof that Jehovah God has established upon a heavenly throne a Ruler for mankind. That the world has ignored this King and has opposed his rulership is sure evidence that Jehovah will soon wipe out all opposers of Kingdom rule. (Psalm 2:1-11; 2 Peter 3:3-7) Are you acting upon the urgency of our times and placing your confidence in God's Kingdom? If so, you have really learned from the handwriting on the wall!

27, 28. (a) Daniel never lost sight of what vital truth? (b) What evidence do we have that Jehovah is soon to act against the wicked world of today?

WHAT DID YOU DISCERN?

- How was Belshazzar's feast interrupted on the night of October 5/6, 539 B.C.E.?
- What was the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall?
- What prophecy about Babylon's fall was being fulfilled while Belshazzar's feast was in progress?
- What meaning does the account of the handwriting on the wall hold for our day?

So what event marks the completion of the 70 years "when" Jehovah called to account "against the king of Babylon" (Jer 25:12)?

Since 539 B.C.E. marks the "fulfillment" of the 70 years, what year marks the beginning—607 BCE or 609 BCE?

What happened in 609 B.C.E.? The "nations" began serving what kingdom? - Babylon?

only twenty years after the last campaign against Elam (about the year 643), there began a most rapid decline of the Assyrian Empire whose final stage were the capture of Aššur in 614, of Nineveh in 612, and of Harran in 610. In 609 Assyria was mentioned for the last time as a still existing but marginal formation in northwestern Mesopotamia. After that year Assyria ceased to exist.

The fall of Assyrian Empire was a source of elation among the nations enslaved by it [8], and in our times, a point of contention for many scholars who, even though many explanatory hypotheses have been already put forth, still remain puzzled by the rapid decay of the once powerful Empire. It was with this in mind that P. Garelli called the fall of Assyria "un scandale historique" [9] some years ago. Obviously, there is some overstatement in this description of which P. Garelli must have been aware; even in that time scholars could point out several causes which had signalled Assyria's crisis but could not explain it exhaustively.

The character of the Assyrian Empire was shaped to a great extent by the closeness of the hostile Aramaean element. Like other Mesopotamian countries before her, Assyria could not develop without free access to natural resources, but being surrounded on all sides by the hostile Aramaeans she could not obtain them through regular trade exchange; as has been aptly explained by N. B. Jankowska the conditions for equivalent exchange between different economic regions did not exist in the first millennium. [10] For that reason Assyria had to obtain resources by force in the course of unending wars. The fact that Assyria existed in a constant state of war determined that her army would play prominent role in the country's economy. [11] The army supplanted merchants and became the main provider of natural resources and goods obtained by way of tribute, spoils and common pillage. This, in turn, was reflected in an internal

organization of the state to high military command administration (abarakl). Not uncommonly, those in administration with posts of officials, with the administrative capacity of commanding Assyria's borders; this in every province encompassed power to act independently in the end of the 9th and a scene of many revolts.

Carrying out its function in the country with a great degree of producing an unfounded method of procurement in the form of tribute and by Assyria; they were laid a burden. The problem of frequent mass deportations in the second half of the 8th century. This state reforms. The superior reaffirmed and the military. Economic difficulties within the population [14] to regulate especially to Assyria pro

- [7] On the relations with Egypt - see A. Spalinger, *Esarhaddon and Egypt: An Analysis of the First Invasion of Egypt*, *Orientalia N. S.*, Vol.43/1974, pp. 295-326; idem *Assurbanipal and Egypt: A Source Study*, *JAOS*, Vol. 94/1974, pp. 316-328; idem *Egypt and Babylonia: A Survey (c. 620 B.C. - 550 B.C.)*, *Studies zur ägyptischen Kultur*, Bd 5/1977, pp. 221-244, especially pp. 221-230; M. Elat, *The Economic Relation of the Neo-Assyrian Empire with Egypt*, *JAOS* 98/1978, pp. 20-34.
- [8] See the *Book of Nahum and Zephaniah*. Cf I. M. Diakonoff, *Istorija Midii ot drevnejšich vremen do konca IV veka do n. e.*, Moskva-Leningrad 1956, p. 303 and pp. 308 ff.
- [9] P. Garelli, V. Nikiprovetzky, o.c., p. 125 and p. 240.
- [10] N. B. Jankowska, *Nektorye voprosy ekonomiki assirijskoj deržavy*, *VDI* 1965/1, pp. 28-46.
- [11] On the subject of Assyrian army and its role, see the recent work by F. Malbran-Labat, *L'armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie d'après des lettres des Sargonides trouvées à Ninive*, Genève 1982.

- [12] Studies on the population were conducted by *Razvitie zemelnych i Narodov i People in Assyria*, *Stosunki agrarny i Censimenti e cartografia*, *Remarques sur l'assyriologie*, 140; J. N. Postgate, Rome 1974 and (1979).
- [13] I. M. Diakonoff, *Central Asia, Narodnyj Azii*, *Narody* (1979).
- [14] Studies of this problem a few years later at Oded, *Mass Depopulation*, 1979.

How many years was Babylon's rulership over the "nations" to last? - 90 years or 70 years?

Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.)

3 The letter was sent by the hand³⁰²⁷ of Elasah the son¹¹²¹ of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying,

4 "Thus says⁵⁵⁹ the LORD of hosts,⁶⁶³⁵ the God⁴³⁰ of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile¹⁵⁴⁰ from Jerusalem to Babylon,

5 "Build houses¹⁰⁰⁴ and live in them; and plant gardens, and eat their produce.

6 Take wives⁸⁰² and become the fathers of sons¹¹²¹ and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands,⁵⁸² that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease.

7 And seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile,¹⁵⁴⁰ and pray⁶⁴¹⁹ to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare."

8 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Do not let your prophets who are in your midst⁷¹³⁰ and your diviners⁷⁰⁸⁰ deceive you, and do not listen⁸⁰⁸⁵ to the dreams which they dream.

9 For they prophesy⁵⁰¹² falsely⁸²⁶⁷ to you in My name; I have not sent them, declares⁵⁰⁰¹ the LORD.

10 For thus says the LORD, When seventy years have been completed⁴³⁹⁰ for Babylon, I will visit⁶⁴⁸⁵ you and fulfill My good²⁸⁹⁶ word¹⁶⁹⁷ to you, to bring you back⁷⁷²⁵ to this place.

11 For I know³⁰⁴⁵ the plans⁴²⁸⁴ that I have²⁸⁰³ for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity⁷⁴⁵¹ to give you a future³⁷⁹ and a hope.

12 Then you will call⁷¹²¹ upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.³⁸²⁴

14 And I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore⁷⁷²⁵

3 1Chr. 6:13
4 Jer. 24:5
5 Lit., fruit
6 Jer. 29:28
7 Lit., beget
8 Jer. 16:2-4
9 Jer. 16:2-4
10 Dan. 4:27; 6:4
11 Jer. 23:25; 28:15; Eph. 7:23; Dan. 4:19; 1Tim. 2:1, 2
12 Lit., your
13 Lit., you Jer. 27:9; 29:1
14 Jer. 14:14; 23:21; 27:14, 15; 28:15; Eph. 5:6 Jer. 23:25, 27
15 Jer. 27:15; 29:21 Jer. 29:31
16 2Chr. 36:21-23; Jer. 25:12; 27:22; Dan. 9:2; Zech. 7:5
17 Jer. 24:6, 7; Zeph. 2:7
18 Lit., am planning Jer. 40:5; Jer. 23:5, 6; 30:9, 10 Ps. 40:9-11; Jer. 30:18-22
19 Jer. 31:17; Hos. 2:15
20 Ps. 50:15; Jer. 33:3; Dan. 9:3 Ps. 145:19
21 Deut. 4:29; Ps. 32:6; Matt. 7:7 1Chr. 22:19; 2Chr. 22:9; Jer. 24:7
22 Jer. 24:7
23 Jer. 31:14; 12:15; 16:15
24 Jer. 29:21, 24
25 Jer. 38:2, 3, 17-23
26 Jer. 27:8; 29:18; 32:24
27 Jer. 24:3, 8-10
28 Deut. 28:25; 2Chr. 29:8; Jer. 15:4; 24:9; 34:17; Ezek. 12:15 Ps. 65:15; Jer. 42:18 Jer. 25:9; Lam. 2:15, 16
29 Jer. 6:19
30 Jer. 25:4; 26:5; 35:15
31 Jer. 24:5; Ezek. 11:9; Mic. 4:10
32 Jer. 14:14, 15; 29:8, 9; Lam. 2:14; 2Pet. 2:1
33 Lit., taken
34 Is. 65:15
35 Dan. 3:6, 21

your fortunes⁷⁶²² and will gather⁶⁹⁰⁸ you from all the nations¹⁴⁷¹ and from all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.¹⁵⁴⁰

15 "Because you have said,⁵⁵⁹ The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon—

16 for thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne³⁶⁷⁸ of David, and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your brothers²⁵¹ who did not go with you into exile—¹⁴⁷³

17 thus says the LORD of hosts, Behold, I am sending upon them the sword,²⁷¹⁹ famine, and pestilence,¹⁶⁹⁸ and I will make them like split-open⁸¹⁸² figs that cannot be eaten due to rottenness.⁷⁴⁵⁵

18 And I will pursue them with the sword, with famine and with pestilence; and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms⁴⁴⁶⁷ of the earth,⁷⁷⁶ to be a curse,⁴²³ and a horror,⁸⁰⁴⁷ and a hissing, and a reproach²⁷⁸¹ among all the nations where I have driven them,

19 because they have not listened⁸⁰⁸⁵ to My words, declares the LORD, which I sent to them again and again by My servants⁵⁶⁵⁰ the prophets; but you did not listen,⁸⁰⁸⁵ declares the LORD.

20 "You, therefore, hear the word of the LORD, all you exiles, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying to you falsely in My name, Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall slay⁵²²¹ them before your eyes.

22 And because of them a curse⁷⁰⁴⁵ shall be used by all the exiles¹⁵⁴⁶ from Judah who are in Babylon, saying, "May the LORD make⁷⁷⁶⁰ you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,

23 because they have acted⁶²¹³ foolishly⁵⁰³⁹ in Israel, and have committed adultery⁵⁰⁰³ with their neighbors⁷⁴⁵³ wives, and have spoken¹⁶⁹⁶ words in My name falsely, which I did not command⁶⁶⁸⁰ them; and I am He who knows, and am a witness," declares the LORD."

24 And to Shemaiah the Nehelamite you shall speak⁵⁵⁹, saying,

25 "Thus says⁵⁵⁹ the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Because you have sent letters⁵⁶¹² in your own name to all the people who are in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest,³⁵⁴⁸ and to all the priests, saying,

26 "The LORD has made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, to be the overseer⁶⁴⁹⁶ in the house¹⁰⁰⁴ of the LORD over every madman³⁷⁶ who prophesies,⁵⁰¹² to put him in the stocks and in the iron collar,

27 now then, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who prophesies to you?

28 "For he has sent to us in Babylon, saying, The exile will be long;⁷⁵² build houses and live in them and plant gardens and eat their produce."

29 And Zephaniah the priest read⁷¹²¹ this letter to Jeremiah the prophet.

30 Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah, saying,

31 "Send to all the exiles, saying, Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite, "Because Shemaiah has prophesied⁵⁰¹² to you, although I did not send him, and he has made you trust⁹⁸² in a lie,"

32 therefore thus says the LORD, Behold,⁷²⁰⁰ I am about to punish⁶⁴⁸⁵ Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his descendants;²²³³ he shall not have anyone living among this people, and he shall not see the good that I am about to do⁶²¹³ to My people," declares the LORD, "because he has preached rebellion⁵⁶²⁷ against the LORD."

What about Jerusalem's 70 years of desolation?

ZECHARIAH 1:9—2:6

Angelic inspection. Measuring Jerusalem

1160

there were horses red, bright red, and white."^a

9 And so I said: "Who are these, my lord?"^b

At that the angel^c who was speaking with me said^c to me: "I myself shall show you who these very ones are."

10 Then the man who was standing still among the myrtle trees answered and said: "These are the ones whom Jehovah has sent forth to walk about in the earth."^d 11 And they proceeded to answer the angel of Jehovah who was standing among the myrtle trees and to say: "We have walked about in the earth,^e and, look! the whole earth is sitting still and having no disturbance."^f

12 So the angel of Jehovah answered and said: "O Jehovah of armies, how long will you yourself not show mercy to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah,^g whom you have denounced these seventy years?"^h

13 And Jehovah proceeded to answer the angel who was speaking with me, with good words, comforting words;ⁱ 14 and the angel who was speaking with me went on to say to me: "Call out, saying, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: "I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy."^j 15 With great indignation I am feeling indignant against the nations that are at ease;^k because I, for my part, felt indignant to only a little extent,^l but they, for their part, helped toward calamity."^m

16 "Therefore this is what Jehovah has said, "I shall certainly return to Jerusalem with mercies."ⁿ My own house will be built in her,"^o is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, "and a measuring line itself will be stretched out over Jerusalem."^p

17 "Call out further, saying, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: "My cities will yet overflow with goodness;^q and Jehovah will yet certainly feel re-

Zec 1:9* "My lord." Heb., 'adho-ni'; Gr., ky'-rie; Lat., do-mi-ne. 9* Or, "the messenger." Heb., ham-mal'-akh'; Gr., ho ag'-ge-los; Lat., an'-ge-lus. 10* Or, "in the land." Heb., ba'-a'-rets.

CHAP. 1

a Zec 6:2
b Zec 6:6
c Da 7:16
d Zec 4:4
e Da 8:16
f Zec 4:5
g Ps 91:11
h Ps 103:21
i Heb 1:14
j Ps 103:20
k Zec 1:15
l Ps 74:10
m Ps 102:13
n Isa 64:9
o 2Ch 36:21
p Jer 25:12
q Da 9:2
r Zec 7:5
s Isa 40:1
t Jer 29:10
u Jer 30:10
v Zep 3:15
w Ho 11:8
x Joe 2:18
y Na 1:2
z Zec 8:2
aa Jer 48:11
ab Zec 1:11
ac Isa 54:8
ad Heb 12:7
ae Ps 69:26
af Ps 137:7
ag Isa 47:6
ah Jer 51:35
ai Isa 12:1
aj Jer 33:14
ak Zec 8:3
al Eze 6:14
am Isa 44:28
an Hag 1:14
ao Jer 31:39
ap Eze 40:3
aq Zec 2:1
ar Ps 69:35

Second Col.

a Isa 51:3
b Ps 132:13
c Zec 3:2
d Zec 1:21
e 2Ki 24:12
f 2Ki 25:11
g 2Ki 15:29
h 2Ki 17:6
i 2Ki 18:11
j Jer 50:17
k 2Ch 36:20
l Da 8:9
m Ps 75:4
n Ps 110:5
o Lu 21:24

CHAP. 2

i Zec 1:16
j Re 11:1
k Jer 31:39
l Eze 45:6
m Re 21:15
n Jer 30:18
o Eze 36:10
p Zec 12:6
q Isa 33:20
r Isa 44:26
s Jer 31:24
t Jer 33:10
u Zec 8:4
v 2Ki 6:17
w Ps 46:11
x Ps 125:2
y Isa 26:1
z Isa 12:6
aa Isa 60:19
ab Hag 2:9
ac Isa 11:12
ad Isa 11:16
ae Jer 1:14
af De 28:64
ag Eze 5:12

grets over Zion^a and yet actually choose Jerusalem."^b

18 And I proceeded to raise my eyes and see; and, look! there were four horns.^c 19 So I said to the angel who was speaking with me: "What are these?" In turn he said to me: "These are the horns that dispersed Judah,^d Israel^e and Jerusalem."^f

20 Furthermore, Jehovah showed me four craftsmen. 21 At that I said: "What are these coming to do?"

And he went on to say: "These are the horns^g that dispersed Judah to such an extent that no one at all raised his head; and these others will come to set them trembling, to cast down the horns of the nations that are lifting up a horn against the land of Judah,^h in order to disperse her."ⁱ

2 And I proceeded to raise my eyes and see; and, look! there was a man,^j and in his hand a measuring rope.^k 2 So I said: "Where are you going?"

In turn he said to me: "To measure Jerusalem, in order to see what her breadth amounts to and what her length amounts to."^l

3 And, look! the angel who was speaking with me was going forth, and there was another angel going forth to meet him. 4 Then he said to him: "Run, speak to the young man over there, saying, "As open rural country Jerusalem will be inhabited,^m because of the multitude of men and domestic animals in the midst of her."ⁿ 5 And I myself shall become to her," is the utterance of Jehovah, "a wall of fire all around," and a glory is what I shall become^o in the midst of her."^p

6 "Hey there! Hey there! Flee, then, you people, from the land of the north," is the utterance of Jehovah.

"For in the direction of the four winds^q of the heavens I have spread you people abroad," is the utterance of Jehovah.

Zec 1:21* "Judah," MSyVg; LXX, "Jehovah." 2:1* "A man." Heb., 'ish. 5* Or, "I shall prove to be." Heb., 'eh-yeh'. See Ex 3:14 ftn. 6* "Winds." Heb., ru'-choth', pl.; Gr., an'-e-mon; Lat., ven'-tos. See Ge 1:2 ftn, "Force."

1161 Nations

7 "Hey there, Z cape, you who are daughter of Babylon what Jehovah of armies is doing after [the] g to the nations that people;^d for he that touching my eyeball am waving my hand they will have to be slaves."^e And you p know that Jehovah has sent me.^f

10 "Cry out loud daughter of Zion;^g ing,^k and I will r of you,"^h is the utt

11 "And many nat become joined to Je and they will actual ple;ⁿ and I will r of you."^o And you

that Jehovah of arm me to you.^o 12 An tainly take possessi portion upon the he must yet choose Jer silence, all flesh, be he has aroused him dwelling.ⁱ

3 And he proceeded ua^u the high i fore the angel^c of Je standing at his righ resist^w him. 2 Ther hovah^x said to Satan you, O Satan, yes, Je he who is choosing one not a log snatche

3 Now as for Josh be clothed in befoul standing before the

Zec 2:7* "Babylon," LX 8* "My eyeball" was the Sopherim changed the t ball." See App 2b. 11* dressed to the "daughter ua." Heb., Yehoh-shu'a'; Heb 4:8 ftn, "Joshua." ger." 1^a Or, "and the the Satan." Heb., weh- tan; Gr., Dia'-bolos. See 2* "The angel (messeng MLXXVg, "Jehovah." is, from excrement.

the Mede became the first ruler of the conquered city of Babylon. (Daniel 5:30, 31) For a short time, he and Cyrus the Persian reigned jointly over the Medo-Persian Empire. When Darius died, Cyrus became the sole head of the Persian Empire. For the Jews in Babylon, the reign of Cyrus meant release from captivity. In 537 B.C.E., Cyrus issued a decree that allowed Jewish exiles in Babylon to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem and Jehovah's temple. The typical kingdom of God, however, was not reestablished in Judah and Jerusalem.—2 Chronicles 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-2:2a.

¹³ The silver breasts and arms of the dream image pictured the line of Persian kings beginning with Cyrus the Great. That dynasty lasted for over 200 years. Cyrus is thought to have died while on a military campaign in 530 B.C.E. Of some 12 kings that succeeded him to the throne of the Persian Empire, at least 2 dealt favorably with Jehovah's chosen people. One was Darius I (Persian), and the other was Artaxerxes I.

¹⁴ Darius I was third in the line of Persian kings after Cyrus the Great. The preceding two were Cambyses II and his brother Bardiya (or perhaps a Magian pretender named Gaumata). By the time Darius I, also known as Darius the Great, ascended the throne in 521 B.C.E., the work of rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem was under ban. Upon uncovering the document containing Cyrus' decree in the archives at Ecbatana, Darius did more than remove the ban in 520 B.C.E. He also provided funds from the royal treasury for rebuilding the temple.—Ezra 6:1-12.

¹⁵ The next Persian ruler to assist in Jewish restoration

13. What did the silver breasts and arms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image picture?

14, 15. What assistance did Darius the Great and Artaxerxes I give to the Jews?

efforts was Artaxerxes I, who succeeded his father Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) in 475 B.C.E. Artaxerxes was surnamed Longimanus because his right hand was longer than the left. During the 20th year of his reign, in 455 B.C.E., he commissioned his Jewish cupbearer Nehemiah to be governor of Judah and to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. This action marked the start of the 'seventy weeks of years' outlined in the 9th chapter of Daniel and set the dates for the appearance and the death of the Messiah, or Christ, Jesus of Nazareth.—Daniel 9:24-27; Nehemiah 1:1; 2:1-18.

¹⁶ The last of the six kings to follow Artaxerxes I on the throne of the Persian Empire was Darius III. His reign ended abruptly in 331 B.C.E. when he suffered a terrible defeat by Alexander the Great at Gaugamela, near ancient Nineveh. This defeat ended the Medo-Persian World Power as symbolized by the silver part of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The power to come was superior in some ways, yet inferior in others. This becomes clear as we listen to Daniel's further interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

A KINGDOM—VAST BUT INFERIOR

¹⁷ Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that the belly and thighs of the immense image constituted "another kingdom, a third one, of copper, that [would] rule over the whole earth." (Daniel 2:32, 39) This third kingdom would follow Babylonia and Medo-Persia. As copper is inferior to silver, this new world power would be inferior to Medo-Persia in that it would not be honored with any privilege like that of liberating Jehovah's people. However, the

16. When and with what king did the Medo-Persian World Power end?

17-19. (a) What world power did the belly and thighs of copper represent, and how extensive was its rulership? (b) Who was Alexander III? (c) How did Greek become an international language, and for what was it well suited?

Since 521 B.C.E. was Darius' 1st year of reign, what year was his 4th year of reign?—517 B.C.E.?

CAMBYSES

YEAR B.C.	NIS	AlA	Sim	Duz	ABU	ULU	UII	Tas	ARA	Kis	TEB	SHA	ADD	A II
1 529	4/12	5/11	6/10	7/10	8/8	9/7		10/6	11/5	12/4	528	1/3	2/1	3/3
2 528	4/1	5/1	5/30	6/29	7/28	8/27		9/26	10/25	11/24		12/23	527	1/21 2/20
3 527	3/21	4/20	5/20	6/18	7/18	8/16	9/15	10/14	11/13	12/13	526	1/11	2/9	3/11
4 526	4/9	5/9	6/8	7/7	8/6	9/4		10/4	11/2	12/1		12/31	525	1/30 2/28
5 525	3/29	4/27	5/27	6/26	7/25	8/24		9/23	10/22	11/20		12/20	524	1/19 2/17 3/18
6 524	4/17	5/16	6/14	7/14	8/13	9/12		10/11	11/10	12/9	523	1/8	2/7	3/8
7 523	4/7	5/6	6/4	7/4	8/2	9/1		10/1	10/30	11/29		12/28	522	1/27 2/26
8 522	3/27	4/25	5/25	6/23	7/23	8/21		9/20	10/19	11/18		12/17	521	1/16 2/14 3/15

Bardiya = year 8 of Cambyses

Nebuchadnezzar III = year 8 of Cambyses

DARIUS I

Nebuchadnezzar IV = year 1 of Darius I

Ascension year
→
4th
reign
year →

1 521	4/14	5/13	6/12	7/11	8/10	9/8		10/8	11/6	12/6	520	1/4	2/2	3/4
2 520	4/3	5/2	6/1	6/30	7/30	8/29		9/27	10/27	11/25		12/25	519	1/23 2/21
3 519	3/23	4/22	5/21	6/20	7/19	8/18	9/17	10/16	11/15	12/14	518	1/12	2/11	3/12
4 518	4/11	5/10	6/9	7/9	8/7	9/6		10/5	11/4	12/3	517	1/2	1/31	3/1
5 517	3/30	4/29	5/29	6/27	7/27	8/25		9/24	10/23	11/22		12/21	516	1/20 2/18 3/20
6 516	4/18	5/18	6/16	7/16	8/14	9/13		10/13	11/11	12/11	515	1/9	2/8	3/10
7 515	4/8	5/7	6/6	7/5	8/4	9/3		10/2	11/1	11/30		12/30	514	1/29 2/27
8 514	3/29	4/27	5/26	6/25	7/24	8/23		9/21	10/21	11/19		12/19	513	1/18 2/16 3/17
9 513	4/16	5/15	6/13	7/13	8/11	9/10		10/9	11/8	12/7	512	1/6	2/4	3/6
10 512	4/5	5/4	6/2	7/2	8/1	8/30		9/29	10/28	11/27		12/26	511	1/25 2/23
11 511	3/25	4/23	5/23	6/21	7/21	8/20	9/18	10/18	11/16	12/16	510	1/14	2/13	3/14
12 510	4/13	5/12	6/11	7/10	8/9	9/7		10/7	11/6	12/5	509	1/4	2/2	3/2
13 509	4/1	4/30	5/30	6/29	7/28	8/27		9/25	10/25	11/23		12/23	508	1/21 2/20 3/21
14 508	4/20	5/19	6/18	7/18	8/16	9/15		10/14	11/13	12/12	507	1/11	2/9	3/11
15 507	4/9	5/9	6/7	7/7	8/5	9/4		10/4	11/2	12/2	506	1/1	1/30	3/1
16 506	3/30	4/28	5/28	6/26	7/26	8/24		9/23	10/22	11/21		12/20	505	1/19 2/17 3/18
17 505	4/17	5/16	6/14	7/14	8/13	9/11		10/11	11/9	12/9	504	1/7	2/6	3/7
18 504	4/6	5/5	6/4	7/4	8/2	9/1		9/30	10/30	11/28		12/28	503	1/26 2/25
19 503	3/27	4/25	5/24	6/23	7/22	8/21	9/20	10/19	11/18	12/17	502	1/15	2/14	3/15
20 502	4/14	5/13	6/12	7/12	8/10	9/9		10/8	11/7	12/6	501	1/5	2/3	3/4

YEAR B.C.	NIS
21 501	4/2 5
22 500	3/23 4
23 499	4/11 5
24 498	3/31 4
25 497	4/18 5
26 496	4/8 5
27 495	3/28 4
28 494	4/16 5
29 493	4/4 5
30 492	4/23 5
31 491	4/12 5
32 490	4/2 5
33 489	4/19 5
34 488	4/9 5
35 487	3/30 4
36 486	4/18 5
1 485	4/6 5
2 484	3/26 4
3 483	4/14 5
4 482	4/3 5
5 481	4/21 5
6 480	4/11 5
7 479	3/31 4
8 478	4/19 5
9 477	4/8 5
10 476	3/28 4
11 475	4/15 5
12 474	4/5 5
13 473	4/22 5
14 472	4/12 5
15 471	4/2 5

When was Jerusalem and its temple rebuilt?
 Was it laying in ruins for 90 years (607 B.C.E. - 517 B.C.E.)
 or for 70 years (587 B.C.E. - 517 B.C.E.)?

ZECHARIAH 6:15—8:3

70 years of insincere fasts. True justice

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the grand crown* itself will come to belong to He'lem* and to To-bi'jah and to Je-da'iah* and to Hen^a the son of Zeph-a-ni'ah as a memorial^b in the temple of Jehovah. 15 And those who are far away will come and actually build in the temple of Jehovah.^c And you people will have to know that Jehovah of armies himself has sent me to you.^d And it must occur—if you will without fail listen to the voice of Jehovah YOUR God.^e”

7 Furthermore, it came about that in the fourth year of Da-ri'us^f the king the word of Jehovah occurred to Zech-a-ri'ah, on the fourth [day] of the ninth month, [that is,] in Chis'lev.^g 2 And Beth'el proceeded to send Shar-e'zer and Re'gem-mel'ech and his men* to soften^h the face of Jehovah, 3 saying to the priestsⁱ who belonged to the house of Jehovah of armies, and to the prophets, even saying: “Shall I weep in the fifth^j month, practicing an abstinence,* the way I have done these O how many years?”^k

4 And the word of Jehovah of armies continued to occur to me, saying: 5 “Say to all the people of the land* and to the priests, ‘When you fasted^l and there was a wailing in the fifth [month] and in the seventh^m [month], and this for seventy years,ⁿ did you really fast to me, even me?’ 6 And when you would eat and when you would drink, were not you the ones doing the eating, and were not you the ones doing the drinking? 7 [Should you] not [obey] the words^p that Jehovah called out by means of the former prophets,^q while Jerusalem happened to be inhabited, and at ease, with her cities all around her,

Zec 6:14* “Grand crown.” Lit., “crowns,” pl. to denote excellence and accompanied by a sing. verb. 14* “Helem,” MTVg; Sy, “Hel-dai.” 14* “Hen,” MTVg; Vg*, “Hem”; Sy, “Jo-siah.” 7:1* The postexilic name of the ninth Jewish lunar month, which falls within November and December. See App 8b. 2* “And his men.” Heb., *wa'-ana-shav'*, pl. of *'ish*. 3* “Practicing an abstinence.” Heb., *hin-na-zer*, in the infinitive absolute, indefinite as to time and impersonal. 5* “People of the land.” Heb., *'am ha-'a-rets*. See Hag 2:4 ftn.

CHAP. 6

a Zec 6:10
 b Ex 28:12
 Jos 4:7
 c Isa 56:6
 Isa 60:10
 d Zec 4:9
 e Jer 7:23

CHAP. 7

f Ezr 6:14
 Zec 1:1
 g Jer 36:22
 h Ex 32:11
 Isa 13:12
 1Ki 13:6
 Jer 26:19
 i De 17:9
 Eze 44:15
 Ho 4:6
 Mal 2:7
 j 2Ki 25:8
 Jer 52:12
 k Isa 22:12
 Zec 7:5
 l Isa 58:6
 m Jer 41:1
 Jer 41:2
 n Jer 25:11
 Zec 1:12
 o Isa 58:4
 Mt 6:16
 Col 2:23
 p Isa 55:3
 Jer 36:2
 q 2Ch 36:15
 Jer 7:25
 Jer 44:4

Second Col.

a Jer 17:26
 b 1Ch 27:28
 c Pr 21:3
 Jer 7:5
 Jer 21:12
 d Pr 16:6
 Pr 19:22
 Ho 10:12
 Mic 6:8
 e Jas 2:13
 f De 27:19
 Isa 1:17
 g Ex 22:22
 De 24:17
 Pr 23:10
 Jas 1:27
 h Ex 23:9
 De 24:14
 Mal 3:5
 i Ps 72:4
 Pr 22:22
 j Ps 36:4
 Pr 6:18
 Zec 8:17
 Mr 7:21
 k 2Ki 17:14
 2Ch 33:10
 Pr 1:24
 Jer 6:10
 l Ne 9:29
 m Isa 6:10
 Jer 25:7
 Zec 1:4
 n Eze 3:7
 o Isa 44:18
 Mt 13:15
 p 2Pe 1:21
 q Ne 9:30
 Ac 7:51
 r 2Ch 36:16
 Jer 21:5
 s Pr 1:24
 Isa 50:2
 t Pr 21:13
 Isa 1:15
 La 3:44
 u Le 26:33
 De 28:64

and [while] the Neg'eb*^a and the She-phe'lah*^b were inhabited?”

8 And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to Zech-a-ri'ah, saying: 9 “This is what Jehovah of armies has said, ‘With true justice* do YOUR judging;^c and carry on with one another loving-kindness*^d and mercies;^e 10 and defraud no widow^f or fatherless boy,^g no alien resident^h or afflicted one,ⁱ and scheme out nothing bad against one another in YOUR hearts.’” 11 But they kept refusing to pay attention,^k and they kept giving a stubborn shoulder,^j and their ears they made too unresponsive to hear.^m 12 And their heart* they set as an emery stone to keep from obeying the law^o and the words that Jehovah of armies sent by his spirit,^p by means of the former prophets;^q so that there occurred great indignation on the part of Jehovah of armies.”

13 “And so it occurred that, just as he called and they did not listen,^s so they would call and I would not listen,^t Jehovah of armies has said. 14 And I proceeded tempestuously to hurl them throughout all the nations^u that they had not known;^v and the land itself has been left desolate behind them, with no one passing through and with no one returning;^w and they proceeded to make the desirable land* an object of astonishment.”

8 And the word of Jehovah of armies continued to occur, saying: 2 “This is what Jehovah of armies^x has said, ‘I will be jealous for Zion with great jealousy,^y and with great rage^z I will be jealous for her.’”

3 “This is what Jehovah has said, ‘I will return to Zion^b and reside in the midst of Jerusalem;^c and Jerusalem will certainly be called the city of true-

v De 28:33; Jer 5:15; w Le 26:22; 2Ch 36:21; x De 8:7; De 11:12; CHAP. 8 y Ps 103:21; z Joe 2:18; a Isa 63:5; Na 1:2; b Zec 1:16; Mal 3:7; c Isa 12:6; Joe 3:17; Zec 8:8.

Zec 7:7* Or, “the south,” that is, the southern part of the Promised Land. 7* Or, “the lowland.” 9* Lit., “[With] the judgment of truth.” 9* Or, “and . . . loyal love.” Heb. *weche'sedh*.

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ness,*^a and the mo- of armies, the holy

4 “This is what has said, ‘There wi and old women in of Jerusalem,^d each staff^e in his hand be dance of [his] days. squares of the city filled with boys and public squares.’”

6 “This is what has said, ‘Although difficult* in the eyes ones of this people in it seem too difficult ; is the utterance of J

7 “This is what has said, ‘Here I am from the land of the the land of the set 8 And I shall certain and they must resid Jerusalem;ⁱ and they people,^j and I myself ; God in trueness and i

9 “This is what J has said, ‘Let the ha be strong,^l you who a days these words fr the prophets,^m on the foundation of the ho armies was laid, for built.ⁿ 10 For befor were no wages for r exist;^o and as for the tic animals, there wa and to the one going coming in there was of the adversary,^{ap} as all mankind against c

11 “And now I s the former days to th

Zec 8:3* Or, “the city c ha'emeth”. 6* Or, “wo possible.” 6* “Although ble in the sight of the re people in those days, sh sible in my sight?” LXX. 8* Or, “I . . . shall prov yeh”. Compare Ex 3:14 f of the earthling man.”] dham”. 10* “No such t fem.; not referring to “w the paying of wages. 10

Business documents interlock the consecutive reigns of each of the Babylonian kings. How could these "contemporary" documents that formed the monetary system of Babylon have been altered? How can 20 years (to match the WT's chronology) be added to the interlocking reigns of these kings?

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 14

Historians hold that Babylon fell to Cyrus' army in October 539 B.C.E. Nabonidus was then king, but his son Belshazzar was coruler of Babylon. Some scholars have worked out a list of the Neo-Babylonian kings and the length of their reigns, from the last year of Nabonidus back to Nebuchadnezzar's father Nabopolassar.

According to that Neo-Babylonian chronology, Crown-prince Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptians at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.E. (Jeremiah 46:1, 2) After Nabopolassar died Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon to assume the throne. His first regnal year began the following spring (604 B.C.E.).

The Bible reports that the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in his 18th regnal year (19th when accession year is included). (Jeremiah 52:5, 12, 13, 29) Thus if one accepted the above Neo-Babylonian chronology, the desolation of Jerusalem would have been in the year 587/6 B.C.E. But on what is this secular chronology based and how does it compare with the chronology of the Bible?

Some major lines of evidence for this secular chronology are: *Ptolemy's Canon*: Claudius Ptolemy was an Egyptian astronomer who lived in the second century C.E. His Canon, or list of kings, was connected with a work on astronomy that he produced. Most modern historians accept Ptolemy's information about the Neo-Babylonian kings and the length of their reigns (though Ptolemy does omit the reign of Labashi-Marduk). Evidently Ptolemy based his historical information on sources dating from the Seleucid period, which began more than 250 years after Cyrus captured Babylon. It thus is not surprising that Ptolemy's figures agree with those of Berossus, a Babylonian priest of the Seleucid period.

Nabonidus Harran Stele (NABON H 1, B): This contemporary stele, or pillar with an inscription, was discovered in 1956. It mentions the reigns of the Neo-Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, Neriglissar. The figures given for these three agree with those from Ptolemy's Canon.

VAT 4956: This is a cuneiform tablet that provides astronomical information datable to 568 B.C.E. It says that the observations were from Nebuchadnezzar's 37th year. This would correspond to the chronology that places his 18th regnal year in 587/6 B.C.E. However, this tablet is admittedly a copy made in the third century B.C.E. so it is possible that its historical information is simply that which was accepted in the Seleucid period.

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APPENDIX

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Business tablets: Thousands of contemporary Neo-Babylonian cuneiform tablets have been found that record simple business transactions, stating the year of the Babylonian king when the transaction occurred. Tablets of this sort have been found for all the years of reign for the known Neo-Babylonian kings in the accepted chronology of the period.

From a secular viewpoint, such lines of evidence might seem to establish the Neo-Babylonian chronology with Nebuchadnezzar's 18th year (and the destruction of Jerusalem) in 587/6 B.C.E. However, no historian can deny the possibility that the present picture of Babylonian history might be misleading or in error. It is known, for example, that ancient priests and kings sometimes altered records for their own purposes. Or, even if the discovered evidence is accurate, it might be misinterpreted by modern scholars or be incomplete so that yet undiscovered material could drastically alter the chronology of the period.

Evidently realizing such facts, Professor Edward F. Campbell, Jr., introduced a chart, which included Neo-Babylonian chronology, with the caution: "It goes without saying that these lists are provisional. The more one studies the intricacies of the chronological problems in the ancient Near East, the less he is inclined to think of any presentation as final. For this reason, the term *circa* [about] could be used even more liberally than it is."—*The Bible and the Ancient Near East* (1965 ed.), p. 281.

Christians who believe the Bible have time and again found that its words stand the test of much criticism and have been proved accurate and reliable. They recognize that as the inspired Word of God it can be used as a measuring rod in evaluating secular history and views. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) For instance, though the Bible spoke of Belshazzar as ruler of Babylon, for centuries scholars were confused about him because no secular documents were available as to his existence, identity or position. Finally, however, archaeologists discovered secular records that confirmed the Bible. Yes, the Bible's internal harmony and the care exercised by its writers, even in matters of chronology, recommends it so strongly to the Christian that he places its authority above that of the ever-changing opinions of secular historians.

But how does the Bible help us to determine when Jerusalem was destroyed, and how does this compare to secular chronology?

The prophet Jeremiah predicted that the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem and make the city and land a desolation. (Jeremiah 25:8, 9) He added: "And all this land must become a devastated place, an object of astonishment, and these nations

"LET YOUR KINGDOM COME," 1981

- 7 'ia¹-a-nu taš-ku-nu ù mdAG-NUMUN-SI.SÁ
 8 [ù mba-la]-tu A-šú šá mdEN-KAR-ir DUMU me-gi-bi
 9 [LÚ] 'mu¹-kin-nu-tu i-na ú-íl-tim-šú áš-bu
 10 [. . .] i-na ITU.GAN MU.SAG.NAM.LUGALE
 11 [mLÚ] 'd¹AMAR.UD LUGAL TIN.TIR.KI 7 1/2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR
 12 [. . .] 'x¹ 19 1/2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR f_{gu-gu-ú-a}
 13 [ina] 'pa¹-ni mdAG-ŠEŠ.MEŠ-MU ta-áš-ši
 14 f_{gu-gu-ú-a} i-na hu-ud lùb-bi-šú f_{TE-ka-i-di-i}
 15 qal-lat-su a-na 19 1/2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR a-na ši-me gam-ru-tú
 16 a-na mdAG-ŠEŠ.MEŠ-MU ta-ad-din pu-ut si-ši-i
 17 LÚ pa-qí-ra-nu ù DUMU DÙ-ú-tu šá f_{TE-ka-i-di-i}
 18 f_{gu-gu-ú-a} na-šá-a-ta
 19 LÚ mu-kin-nu mtab-ni-e-a DUMU-šú šá mdAG-GI A md30-šá-du-nu
 20 mdAG-ŠEŠ.MEŠ-bul-lit A-šú šá mdAG-NUMUN-SI.SÁ A me-gi-bi
 21 mri-mut A-šú šá mdAG-MU-GAR-un A m_{ga-húl}
 22 mib-na-a DUMU-šú šá m_{ina-qí-bi}-d¹EN DUMU man-da-ḥar
 23 ina a-šá-bi šá f_{ba-ba-a} DUMU.SAL-su šá mdAG-NUMUN-SI.SÁ
 24 A me-gi-bi u LÚ.ŠID mdAMAR.UD-BA-šá-an-ni A-šú šá
 25 mdD¹-ia A mdILLAT-I TIN.TIR.KI ITU.GAN UD.23.KAM
 26 [MU].SAG.NAM.LUGALE
 27 [mLÚ.d¹AMAR.]JUD LUGAL TIN.TIR.KI

43 year of
Nebuchadnezzar and
1st year of Evil-Merodach
inter lock

(Document concerning) the lady Līt-ka-īdi, the slave of Gugūa, the daughter of Zākīr, the descendant of the Isinite, who was placed at the disposal of Nabû-ahhē-iddina, the son of Šulā, the descendant of Egibi in the month of Ajaru, forty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and (for whom) twelve shekels of silver served as security. There was no interest on the silver and no wages for the slave. Nabû-zēru-līšir [and Balā]tu, the son of Bēl-ētir, the descendant of Egibi, were present as witnesses to the contract. [Later (?) in the month of Kislimu, accession year of [Amēl]-Marduk, king of Babylon, seven and one-half shekels of silver [. . .] (making a total of) nineteen and one-half shekels of silver, Gugūa brought (Līt-ka-īdi)[to] Nabû-ahhē-iddina. Gugūa of her own free will sold Līt-ka-īdi to Nabû-ahhē-iddina for the full price of nineteen and one-half shekels of silver. Gugūa shall bear the responsibility for siḫū, claimant, (and further guarantees that) Līt-ka-īdi is not a free citizen. Witnesses are Tabniea, the son of Nabû-ušallim, the descendant of Sin-šadūnu, Nabû-ahhē-bullit, the son of Nabû-zēru-līšir, the descendant of Egibi, Rīmūt, the son of Nabû-šuma-iškun, the descendant of Gaḥul, Ibnâ, the son of Ina-qībi-Bēl, the descendant of Andahar. In the presence of Babâ, the daughter of Nabû-zēru-līšir, the descendant of Egibi, and the scribe, Marduk-iqīšanni, the son of Bānija, the descendant of Illat-na'īd. Babylon, month of Kislimu, the twenty-third day, [accession year of [Amēl-Mar]duk, king of Babylon.

Commentary

- 9 See commentary on text 33 by San Nicolò, Or.(N.S.) 16 (1947), p. 292 ff.
 16-18 pu-ut si-ši-i . . . na-šá-a-ta. San Nicolò, in BR 6, p. 28 (after Ungnad, NRV no. 63 and NRV Glossar p. 137) presents no precise translation of the term siḫū other than "für einen Ändernden", which is hardly satisfactory. Augapfel presents a translation "rebellion" which is also seemingly suggested by Deimel, SL III², p. 325 ("Unordnung, hervorrufen, Rechtsanspruch erheben"). The precise same phrase is found, among innumerable other occasions, in Nbk. 67 and in GCCI II 95, which Mendelsohn renders "the responsibility for rebellion, claimant, . . . and personal freedom (the sellers) bear." See Mendelsohn, *Slavery*, p. 139, note 21. However, Petschow has already pointed out (*Pfandrecht*, p. 114) that siḫū is also used in the sale of real estate, and the translation "rebellion" hardly fits there. The term siḫū must refer to someone who challenges the legality of the sale.
 For San Nicolò's translations of pāqirānu and mār banūtu ("Vollfreiheit, Vindikanten") see BR 6, p. 28.

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Another interesting text is no. 95, which, though bearing no date¹⁹³, refers to the *imittu* ("estimated yield" or "impost") of numerous fields for the first year of Amēl-Marduk¹⁹⁴. In the Neo-Babylonian period, it was the usual procedure to estimate the yield of a field or garden (especially the property of the palace or temple) before harvest time. It then became the responsibility of those working the field to turn over this estimated amount (written down in a promissory note, or *u'iltu*)¹⁹⁵ after the harvest was completed. In the case of land owned by private citizens, this survey was sometimes conducted by scribes, but it is also known that, in Uruk at least, a "tax assessor" or *ēmidu* did the job on land controlled by Eanna¹⁹⁶. Some of these records kept by the larger administrative organizations (YOS 7, 109, CT 22, 87) have survived. The document in question here is such a record, which includes not only the estimated yield figures, but is also a record of what portions of that yield were received by and distributed to various persons (lines 8-14, 15-25, etc.), to bands of workers (lines 7, 23, 32, 52), temple servants and artisans (lines 30-31) and officials (lines 33-36, etc.) in the month of Kisilimu, accession year of Neriglissar.

It would be foolish to suggest that all aspects of Neo-Babylonian "economic life" are represented in the texts from Amēl-Marduk's reign. Nevertheless their contents do allow one or two conclusions to be drawn. Although no. 95 is the only example of its kind that can be included in the corpus, it is sufficient to show that the Chaldean economy, like that of Ur III centuries before, was not devoid of the "planning element". If the *Wirtschaftsurkunden* are any indication, the "administrations", particularly those of the temples, were just as meticulous as in any other prior period. The documents that have survived, recording every detail from the number of sheep received for the field (no. 52) or offerings of salt (no. 36), garments (no. 38), beer (no. 39) and grain for Eanna to the rations for animals (no. 84) and workers (nos. 46 and 56) and the amounts of silver or dates received (no. 48) and later distributed to various individuals (no. 49), provide adequate testimony. Although slaves constituted a desirable element and played an important role in the economy's operation, the tablets indicate that this did not prevent them from possessing wealth (nos. 17 and 29), leasing or buying property, taking part in commercial enterprises (no. 18) or acquiring their freedom. Above all, however, the contracts serve as sufficient commentary not only on normal everyday buying and selling activities, but also on the involvement of the developing banking houses in the affairs of private citizens. They demonstrate that such men as Nabû-ahhē-iddina, Iddina-Marduk and their business associates could take advantage of both the plights of debtor and creditor alike, while at the same time expanding the material resources at their disposal in an age when inflation (as evidenced by no. 33) seemed to be the order of the day. Taken together, these sources combine to paint an intriguing picture of a period about which relatively little has been written.

¹⁹³ This probably comes from the accession year of Neriglissar, as the month of Kisilimu of his accession year is indicated as the time when this "estimated yield" from the reigns of Amēl-Marduk and Nebuchadnezzar was distributed.

¹⁹⁴ See Petschow, *BiOr* 13, p. 102 ff. This also includes *imittu* from the forty-second and forty-third years of Nebuchadnezzar.

¹⁹⁵ This occurs in no. 56, lines 27-28: "twelve hundred eighty *kurru* of dates, impost for the forty-second and forty-third years from the canal Iddina for which a document was drawn against Bēl-uballit, the son of Ea-iddina, and Zērija, son of Nabū-iddina." See also text no. 34 (accession year of Amēl-Marduk) where the *u'iltu* of the palace scribe is drawn against Šuma-ukīn and Šillā for the amount of seven hundred *kurru* of barley from the field (?) he presumably leased. It seems clear that the field and grain produced belonged not to the palace but to the scribe himself.

¹⁹⁶ See YOS, 7, 38, 7; AnOr 8, 30, 3 and 6; YOS 6, 232, 4 and 8, and BIN I, 28, 7. The *ēmidu* seems to be exclusively connected with the Eanna at Uruk.

- 35 5 GUR a-na m^{ki}-na-a A m^e-rib-šú u ŠEŠ.MEŠ.šú
 36 2 GUR 2 (PI) 18 (SILA) ina ŠUK.ĤIA š LÚ.AD.KID(!)-ú-tu mdⁱⁿ-nin-NUMUN.GÁL-š
 37 2 GUR 2 (PI) 18 (SILA) ina maš-šar-ti md^u-ia A mdAG-PAB
 38 13 GUR ina maš-šar-ti m^{na}-din A mdU+GUR-MU-DÙ
 39 14 GUR 30 (SILA) š m^{mu}.dAG A mGAR-MU u mdUTU-MU-DU LÚ man-di-di
 40 a-na É.AN.NA iš-šú-ni ITU.BÁR UD.8.KAM
 41 11 GUR 2 (PI) 18 (SILA) š m^{mu}.dAG A mGAR-MU u mdAG-ŠEŠ.MEŠ-TIN-iš
 42 a-na É.AN.NA iš-šú-ni ITU.BÁR UD.16.KAM
 43 PAB 7 ME 39 GUR 1 PI ZÚ.LUM.MA maš-ru
 44 ri-e-ĥi 5 ME 40 GUR 4 (PI) 6 (SILA) ZÚ.LUM.MA ina IGI-šú-nu
-
- 45 4 ME 82 GUR 30 (SILA) ZÚ.LUM.MA i-mit-ti š ID ĥar-ri š mSUM-na-a
 46 š MU.I.KAM ina IGI mNUMUN-ia A mdAG-MU
 47 ina ĥib-bi 1 ME 20 GUR 2 (PI) 24 (SILA) 4-ú ĤA.LA š LÚ.NU.GIŠ.SAR.MEŠ
 48 ri-e-ĥi 3 ME 61 GUR 3 PI ina IGI mNUMUN-ia
 49 ina ĥib-bi 1 ME 10 GUR ku-um 55 GUR ŠE.BAR š a-na ki-is-sat
 50 š iš-šur a-na mdUG.GA-im-dINNIN A(!) mdUTU-DÙ SUM-na
 51 3 GUR ina maš-šar-ti š ITU.ZÍZ mdAG-TIN-su-E A mdU-a
 52 40 GUR a-na LÚ.ERIN.MEŠ š pi-ir-ri š ITU.BÁR ITU.GUD u SIG,
 53 20 GUR a-na ŠUK.ĤIA.MEŠ a-na LÚ.A.[KI]N.MEŠ
 54 ina 60 GUR š m[. . .] A mdAMAR.UD-PAB a-na ŠUK.ĤIA
 55 PAB 1 ME 73 GUR [. . .] ri-e-ĥi 1 ME 85 [. . .]

Reigns of 3 kings
interlock in this one
document:
Nebuchadnezzar
Evil-Merodach
Neriglissar

(Document concerning) seven hundred one *kurru* of dates, capital, the estimated yield of the first year of Amēl-Marduk, king of Babylon, from the gardeners on the royal canal and the Takkiru canal, apart from the dates of Šubat-agurrētu and the irrigation ditch of Iddina, placed at the disposal of Nabû-ahhē-šullim, son of Nabû-dannu. From this amount, one hundred seventy-five *kurru*, one *pi*, nine *qa*, one-fourth portion, (is the) share of the gardeners; the remaining five hundred twenty-five *kurru*, three *pi* and twenty-seven *qa* (of dates) are at the disposal of Nabû-ahhē-šullim. From this amount, eighty-five *kurru*, two *pi*, eighteen *qa* are for the workers, [one *pi*] (is) from Bunanu (and) in the house of Nabû-ahhē-šullim, thirty *kurru* are from Bēl-aḥa-ušabši in the [. . .] . . . , fifty-seven *kurru*, two *pi*, eighteen *qa* are from the dates of the royal canal from Bunanu, twelve *kurru*, one *pi*, eighteen *qa* (constitute) the estimated yield from the city of Lasutu from Bānija, son of Šulā. Month of Kislimu, accession year of Nergal-šarra-ušur. Total of one hundred eighty-five *kurru*, two *pi*, eighteen *qa* of dates received (from the above personnel). The remaining three hundred forty *kurru*, one *pi*, nine *qa* of dates are at the disposal of Nabû-ahhē-šullim.

Two hundred two *kurru*, three *pi*, twelve *qa* from Šubat-agurrētu are at the disposal of Ibni-Innin, the son of Nabû-šuma-ibni, and Nabû-aḥa-iddina, the slave of the *qīpu* official. From this amount, fifty *kurru*, three *pi*, and twelve *qa* is a fourth portion belonging to the gardeners. The remaining one hundred fifty-two *kurru* of dates, from this amount, twenty-two *kurru* from the field of Arabi are from Šulā, eight *kurru* are from the sons of Nabû-ēriš, four *kurru* are from Nergal-ēriš, the plowman; total of thirty *kurru*, three *pi*, six *qa* of dates which were given to Rīmūt, the cattle-feeder, as rations, have been received. The remaining one hundred twenty-one *kurru*, thirty *qa* of dates are at the dis[posal] of Ibni-Innin and Nabû-aḥa-iddina.

(Concerning) the [twelve hundred] *kurru* of dates, the estimated yield of the watercourse of [Iddina] [for] the forty-second and forty-third years, for which a contract was drawn up against Bēl-uballiṣ the son of Ea-iddina and Zērija, the son of Nabû-iddina, from this amount, three hundred forty *kurru*, one *pi*, six *qa* are for rations (covering the period) from the month of Kislimu for the people and the temple slaves performing work in the Eanna, one hundred twenty-four *kurru*, four *pi* are for the workers (covering the months of) Tebe=

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ee person.

persons) and scribe

month) Tašritu, the
of Babylon."

-nadin-aḫi are the
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have voluntarily sold
of Nur-Sin for fifty-
agreed upon.

sponsible for false

endant of Egibi (and)
descendant of Gimillu
-half mina within a

e persons) and scribe
f (the month) Šabaṭu,
ing of Babylon."

oman Ubartu and the
or fifty-five shekels.
paid only twenty-five
transaction, and two
nt of the remaining

Nabu-aḫḫe-bullit, the
ant of Sin-damaqu, and
f Šuzubu descendant of
e, of their own free
l wife Banitum-umma,
daughters(?), a total
n son of Šula descend-
ver, the full price.

-bullit, the sons of
Sin-damiq, and their
e for false claims,
iming) the status of a
slaves. (Each of them)

makes a guaranty for the others.

Witnesses (the names of six persons) and scribe
(name). Babylon, the 16th day of (the month) Ululu,
the accession year of Nergal-šar-ušur, king of
Babylon."

Two brothers and their mother (the father was
apparently not alive) sold four slaves and guaranteed
that the persons whom they had sold were really their
own legal property.

Nbn 13 [cf. Peiser's transliteration and
translation in KB 4:206-209]: "Belilitu daughter of
Bel-ušeziḫ descendant of the messenger declared the
following to the judges of Nabonidus, king of
Babylon: 'In the month of Abu, the first year of
Nergal-šar-ušur, king of Babylon, I sold my slave
Bazuzu to Nabu-aḫḫe-iddin son of Šula descendant of
Egibi for one-half mina five shekels of silver, but he
did not pay cash and drew up a promissory note.'

The royal judges listened (to her) and commanded
that Nabu-aḫḫe-iddin be brought before them. Nabu-
aḫḫe-iddin brought the contract that he had concluded
with Belilitu and showed the judges (the document which
indicated that) he had paid the silver for Bazuzu.

And Zerija, Nabu-šum-lišir, and Etellu testified
before the judges about the silver which their mother
Belilitu had received.

The judges took counsel among themselves, ruled
against Belilitu's suit for one-half mina five shekels,
and awarded (this amount) to Nabu-aḫḫe-iddin.¹⁴⁵

Present at the pronouncement of this judgment
were: (the names of six judges and their seals
follow), scribe (name and seal).

Babylon, the 12th day of (the month) Šabaṭu, the

¹⁴⁵Peiser's translation [KB 4:209], "they decided
the lawsuit in favor of Bililitu, but awarded (the
slave) to Nabu-aḫḫe-iddin," seems incorrect to me.

accession year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon."

As is clear from the text, Belilitu sold a slave by the name of Bazuzu to Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin for thirty-five shekels in 559, but three years later she filed a complaint that she still had not received the money for her slave. However, Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin showed the judges a document concerning the payment of the slave's purchase price, and the three sons of Belilitu confirmed that their mother had actually received the money. Therefore the court ruled that Belilitu had to pay a fine of thirty-five shekels of silver to Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin.

The very contract that deals with the sale of the slave Bazuzu to Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin has been preserved. According to this document [Ner 23], one of Belilitu's sons, namely Etellu, was responsible for the guaranties normally given at the sale of slaves. It is also to be noted that Ner 42 attests that Belilitu sold a slave to this same Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin in 558. However, her son Zeriya asserted a claim to this slave, and the latter was returned to the plaintiff [see BRL III:16; Marx 1902:53].

Nbn 42: "Nabu-iddin son of Nabu-na'id descendant of Balaṭu is the guarantor for the slave women, Didinnatu and . . .-lumur, whom Iddin-Marduk son of Iqiša descendant of Nur-Sin has purchased¹⁴⁶ from the hand of Nabu-kašir son of Nabu-zer-lišir. He must bring (them) to Babylon and along with the messenger of Iddin-Marduk turn (them) over to Iddin-Marduk.

Witnesses (the names of four persons) and scribe (name). Šahrinu, the 15th day of (the month) Kislimu, the 1st year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon."

Nbn 39/40 show that the slave women mentioned in Nbn 42 were sold by their master, Nabu-kašir, to two brothers, Mušezib-Marduk and Marduk-šum-iddin, for

¹⁴⁶i-bu-ku, literally, "(whom) he led away."

fifty shekels. The guaranties, and the sal ṭabi-Bel, one of the judging from Nbn 42, for some reason, because, were drawn up, the slave women to Iddin-Marduk Babylon. A certain Nabu was required to take them to give them to their new

Nbn 194: "Uqupu, of Marduk-zer-ibni des sold to Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin for one mina five shekels

Balatsu son of A present as witness to Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin.

Babylon, the 30th 5th year of Nabonidus,

As is clear from Nabu-aḥḥe-iddin a certain payment.

Nbn 388: "Nabu-ereš Aḥu-bani has, of his woman, an old woman (the zeri son of Nabu-zer-merchant for fourteen agreed upon.

Nabu-ereš is re vindication suits, or royal slave woman or with respect to Li'itu

Witnesses (names) (name). Babylon, the the 9th year of Nabonidus

This same Nabu-ereš sold another slave, at the same year, and,

sfg. GAN.ME.DA as *nabāsu* rather than as *tabarru*. He comments on other sections of the text, *ibid.*, p. 239.

This text, though broken or illegible in several places, still is interesting in many ways. It presents a unique year-by-year inventory of wool stuffs made into garments for the cult statues of the deities in Uruk. Among the gods and goddesses mentioned are Ušur-amatsu (lines 8', 43'), Aškašitum (lines 8', 43'), Bēlet ša Uruk (line 14'), Nabū (? line 15'),⁶⁹ Gula (line 19'), and PALIL (line 32'). Types of garments made include the *guḫašsu* (*guḫašsu*), *ḫūratu*, *ḫušannu*, *išḫanabaš*, *šibtu*, and A.RI.DU. The colors of the wool range from white (*pešū*) through all shades of red, purple, and blue (*inzaḫurētu*, *nabāsu/tabarru*, *tākiltu*). Badly needed is a study of the various cult garments of the deities based on the large number of references in Neo-Babylonian and comparable texts.⁷⁰

This text is also a unique inventory of wool garments in that it is arranged chronologically. Furthermore, it covers the vital years before and after the Persian conquest of Babylonia:

3'-13': Nabonidus, year 15
14'-25': Nabonidus, year 16
26'-33': Nabonidus, year 17
34'-39': Cyrus, year 1
40' : Cyrus, year 2.

↳ The 17th year of Nabonidus and the 1st year of Cyrus interlock

Save that the volume of wool stuffs used for cult garments appears to drop off slightly during the critical years 539-538 (Nabonidus, Year 17 and Cyrus, Year 1); the cult at Uruk continues uninterrupted during the change-over from Babylonian independence to subjection under the Persian empire.

5': GIŠ.LAGAB (read by Oberhuber as GIŠ.ḪAB) here and in lines 10', 28', 32', 36' in this text has the Akkadian equivalent *ḫūratu* or *pagratu*.⁷¹

8': Read šá ^a[U-šu]r-a-mat-su ù ^aAšl-ka-[a-a-i]-tum. The first DN is not to be read as Marduk (sic Oberhuber and Röhlig). For *Aškašitu(m)* as an epithet of Ištar of Uruk, see *AHw* I 69a sub voce *Arkāšitu*.

9': *iš-ḫa-na-ba-aš*. This is the first Neo-Babylonian occurrence of the word.⁷²

14': Read probably: 8 <GUN> 40! MA.N[A m]i-ḫ-šu BABBAR-ú ^ú... "Eight (talents) and forty minas of white yarn (to make) six garments for the Lady of Uruk."

15': There is no need to amend MĀŠ.ME into *bir!-me* (sic Röhlig) here or in lines 24 or 31. TÚG.MĀŠ.ME(š) is to be read *šibtu*.⁷³

24': *šibātu(MĀŠ.ME) ša kidinnē*: "garments (made) of *kidinnē*-material."

26': 8 GUN 8½ MA.NA TÚG mi-ḫ-šu BABBAR-ú 11 MA.NA 41½ GÍN TÚG m[i-ḫ-šu ...]⁷⁴

27': For *inzaḫurētu* see *CAD* I 163-164 and *AHw* I 384b. Note that here and in lines 7', 35', and 42' are relatively rare occurrences of this word to describe red-dyed wools.

34': 7 GUN 55½ MA.NA ...

40': 6 [+ x] GUN 4 MA.NA ...

41': should be regarded as an insert after line 42' not as a separate line.

43': šá ^a[U-šu]r-a-mat-su ^aAšl-ka-a-i-tum. Cf. line 8'.

⁶⁹ Is Bēl to be restored immediately before Nabū? Neither divine name can be regarded as certain here.

⁷⁰ A study along similar lines for a particular section of the divine cultic wardrobe has been presented by A. L. Openheim, "The Golden Garments of the Gods," *JNES*, VIII (1949), 172-93.

⁷¹ *CAD* H 247b; *AHw* I 358a.

⁷² To be added to *CAD* I 241a: Cf. *AHw* I 394b.

⁷³ *CAD* S 182.

⁷⁴ Cf. line 34'.