

Jerusalem 607 BCE Vindicated

**Why only 607 BCE can be
supported by the Bible**

With full appendix and charts

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Why Jehovah's Witnesses are right for sticking to the Bible's chronology of 607 BCE for the destruction of Jerusalem. Arguments for 587 BCE are scripturally flawed, causing four Bible prophecies to fail. The year 607 BCE really is the only date that works with the Bible.

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Why is 607 BCE important to Jehovah's Witnesses?

The apostle Paul once stated, “from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples”. Today that very thing is happening. Apostate Jehovah's Witnesses along with other opposers attack our beliefs from all angles. This includes our 1914 doctrine.

We believe Jesus Christ began his rule invisibly in the heavens in 1914, through an interpretation of the *Seven Times* prophecy in Daniel. The Seven Times lasts 2,520 years, and began when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonian empire and the last Davidic King was removed. Our strict Bible chronology places this event in the year 607 BCE. Counting 2,520 years from that date, we come to the year 1914 CE. *For a more detailed explanation of this interpretation, and how it is biblically sound, see Appendix A.*

This, however, conflicts with the widely accepted chronology of secular historians. They believe Jerusalem was destroyed in 587 BCE, twenty years later than we say. If they are correct, the 1914 doctrine has a serious problem — it's twenty years out! However, this essay will set out to show — from the Bible — that the 607-based chronology of Jehovah's Witnesses is correct.

- **607 is the date Jerusalem was destroyed by Babylon.**
- **1914 is calculated using that date as a starting point.**
- **If 607 is wrong, 1914 is also wrong.**

The real issue at hand – seventy years

Why do we disagree with secular historians? The secular chronology is based on interpreting ancient clay tablets, writings, and inscriptions. From these, they discern how long each Babylonian King ruled before the empire was conquered in 539 BCE. *For a brief discussion of the secular evidence, see Appendices B and M.*

Counting back from that date, and adding up what they have discerned to be the reigns of each king, 605 BCE is found to be the first year of mighty King Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah says this King destroyed the city of Jerusalem in his 19th year of rule. Hence, counting forward 19 years bring us to 587 BCE. Incidentally, this is also the method Christendom uses.

Jehovah's Witnesses, on the other hand, believe something the secular historians do not. We believe the Bible is the inspired and inerrant word of God, so we take the Bible's prophecies into account when calculating ancient chronology.

The prophet Daniel tells us, “**Jerusalem will lie in ruins for seventy years.**” (Daniel 9:2, *Contemporary English Translation*) However, the secular chronology disagrees with the Bible. Their chronology allows only fifty years — not seventy — from 587 BCE when Jerusalem was supposed to be destroyed, until the Jews returned home in 537 BCE. –*See charts 1, 2, and 3 starting on page 75 to compare the chronologies*

So, Jehovah's Witnesses will not accept secular chronology when it contradicts the Bible. Hence, counting back from 537 BCE (the year the Bible says the Jews returned home) for a full seventy years, we arrive at the year 607 BCE. That must be the year Jerusalem was destroyed. The secular date of 587 BCE, twenty years out, must be wrong. The following chapters of this work will show from other Bible prophecies why 607 BCE must be correct.

- **The Bible says Jerusalem lay in ruins for 70 years.**
- **Secular historians, apostates, and Christendom say it was only 50 years.**

Seventy years of what?

The method of arriving at 607 BCE seems simple enough. How could anyone ignore the clear words of the Bible and put secular chronology above the inspired word of God? Any respectable apostate doesn't want to look like he's contradicting the Bible — that would put others off his attempts to discredit the 1914 doctrine and draw them out of the truth.

So instead, they twist the 70-year prophecy of “devastation” (or, ruins) to “actually mean” something else. If they manage to show that 607 is wrong, yet the 70-year prophecy was still fulfilled somehow, then there is no reason why Jehovah's Witnesses should not accept the secular chronology. Accepting that, in turn, means the 1914 doctrine would have to be scrapped.

Typically, they use two different approaches. They claim it either “actually” means **mere servitude to the King of Babylon** for seventy years, or instead claim it “actually” means some sort of **vague or figurative type of devastation** for seventy years. They go to great lengths to argue that how long the city of Jerusalem lay in ruins is irrelevant. This is despite the scriptures ever-so clearly stating that Jerusalem would be in ruins without an inhabitant.

So, do the scriptures say the city of Jerusalem will lie in ruins for a full seventy years, or not?

- **Apostates support the Bible-contradicting secular chronology.**
- **They claim it was 70 years of servitude, not desolation.**
- **They claim the date of Jerusalem's destruction doesn't matter.**

Is Jerusalem included in the seventy year desolation?

When the 70 years were about to expire, the prophet Daniel stated “In the first year of Darius [539/538 BCE] ... who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reigning [over the Jews as King in Babylon] I myself, Daniel, discerned by the books the number of the years concerning which the word of Jehovah had occurred to Jeremiah the prophet, for fulfilling the devastations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.” —Daniel 9:1-2

Notice that Daniel said he had worked this out from reading the “books”, the word that “had occurred to Jeremiah”. Today those words of Jeremiah that Daniel read are found at Jeremiah chapter 25. There Jeremiah says, “**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. ... Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and her kings, her princes, to make them a devastated place, an object of astonishment, something to whistle at and a malediction**” —Jeremiah 25:11, 18

Yes, Daniel read in Jeremiah that when “all” of the land — yes including “Jerusalem” with her “kings” and “princes” — becomes devastated, 70 years will pass. That is simply what it says.

However, some apostates try to claim that *only the land of Judah* was to be devastated for 70 years, and it's capital city wasn't part of the prophecy, but *only the land around it*. This is how they get around the fact that their secular chronology says Jerusalem was only in ruins for 50 years.

Is such a theory scriptural?

Where do the 70 years start?

In the same prophecy of Jeremiah where he speaks of Nebuchadrezzar coming to destroy his people, and where “**these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years**”, he specifically mentions where the “calamity” will start. Where?

He says, “**it is upon the city upon which my name is called that I am starting off in bringing calamity**” (Jeremiah 25:29). No, it is not upon the land surrounding the city, or on any other nation, but upon the city of Jerusalem itself is where the “calamity” will begin — “**the city upon which my name is called**”.

However, could this calamity be a single attack or a batch of exiles being taken? No, just to make things perfectly clear the “calamity” is described. A few verses further on it tells us: “**A calamity is going forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest itself will be roused up from the remotest parts of the earth. And those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth.**” Yes, this was not the beginning of any vassal Kingship, but bloody destruction of Jerusalem — where “**I am starting off in bringing calamity**” says Jehovah.

Ezekiel also confirms that the judgment begins with Jerusalem, in a vision. “**Pass through**

the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem... Pass through the city after him and strike. Let not your eye feel sorry, and do not feel any compassion... from my sanctuary you should start." (Ezekiel 9:4-6). No, the judgment did not start on the countryside of Judah, leaving the city of Jerusalem untouched. The prophecy could not be more clear — the judgment began in Jerusalem with the striking and killing of its inhabitants.

The prophecies clearly describe the start of the 70 years of desolation and servitude as beginning with the destruction of one City — Jerusalem.

When did Judah go into exile?

There is more proof that the countryside of Judah only went into exile when Jerusalem was destroyed — not before. What is this proof? It is in 2nd Kings chapter 25. First, it informs us that Jerusalem has been destroyed.

And in the fifth month on the seventh day of the month, that is to say, the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard, the servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. And he proceeded to burn the house of Jehovah and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; and the house of every great man he burned with fire. And the walls of Jerusalem ... [were] pulled down.

Now, see if you can spot in the subsequent verses when Judah went into exile:

...and from the city he took one court official that had a command over the men of war, and five men from those having access to the king that were found in the city; and the secretary of the chief of the army, the one mustering the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land that were to be found in the city; and Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard then took them and conducted them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. And the king of Babylon proceeded to strike them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah went into exile from off its soil.

That's right. The countryside of Judah did not go into exile before the city. It is after Jerusalem was destroyed that "Judah went into exile from off its soil". They are the Bible's words — not ours.

Judeans living outside Jerusalem

Furthermore, The Bible specifically says that there were Judeans living *outside* of Jerusalem in their own cities and villages, shortly before Jerusalem was destroyed. Jeremiah says, "Now it came about in the fifth year of Jehoiakim [two years into the devastation of Judah, according to apostates] the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, in the ninth month, that all the people in Jerusalem and all the people that were coming in from the cities of Judah into Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before Jehovah."

The *New Living Translation* says, “**People from all over Judah came to attend the services at the Temple on that day.**” The Message translation says, “**all the people from the Judean villages**”. Clearly, Judah was not ravaged, leaving Jerusalem the sole surviving city, as they claim.

Daniel believed the foretold devastation included Jerusalem, remarking it would be “**fulfilling the devastations of Jerusalem**”, and no wonder! The prophecy he consulted in Jeremiah said “**all this land**” will be devastated, that “**Jerusalem and the cities of Judah** **Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and her kings, her princes, to make them a devastated place**”.

The 70 year prophecy is intimately tied together with Jerusalem. That's what Daniel believed. It makes no sense for the prophets to say “**all**” of the country will be decimated, and then expect their readers to assume it means the largest city will remain untouched for twenty years. The Bible's words are not complicated in this part of the Bible. They are very clear. Only the apostate's reasoning makes them unduly complex and hard to understand.

Indeed, it would be very odd for Daniel to have discerned that 70 years of devastation had passed over Jerusalem if the secular chronology is correct. According to the secular chronology, the city was inhabited, with a king, a priesthood, and an operating temple, for two decades during the so-called “devastation”.

Additionally, Jeremiah made the prophecy in “**the fourth year of Jehoiakim**” (Jeremiah 25:1), or 604 BCE in their secular chronology. This is a big problem for the apostates, because they say the devastation on Judah had already begun the year before, in 605 BCE. Yet, here Jeremiah is making his prophecy about the future! He says “**this land must become a devastated place**” (Jeremiah 25:11), and “**this very city will be devastated**” (Jeremiah 26:9).

Conclusion

Some people would have us believe that the “**devastations of Jerusalem**” that Daniel talked about, are some sort of vague concept that began twenty years before Jerusalem was destroyed, when the rest of Judah was (supposedly) ravaged. However, the inspired word of God disagrees on all these points. The Bible shows that Judah was not devastated years prior to the destruction of its capital city, no not at all.

- **The 70 years begin with calamity and death upon Jerusalem**
- **The Bible says Judah and Jerusalem will be devastated together**
- **One year after the apostates claim the devastation began, the Bible speaks of it as in the future.**
- **Two years after it supposedly began, the Bible mentions persons from the other cities of Judah.**
- **Judah only goes into exile after the destruction of the city**

Ruins, desolation, a wasteland

The apostates argue that when Daniel said “devastations” of Jerusalem, he didn't actually mean it, and “actually” meant something different.

The word rendered in the *New World Translation* is a plural — *devastations*. Hence, some try to argue that more than one devastation was involved, a series of “devastations” of different kinds, lasting 70 years in total. That way they can strain out the possibility that Jerusalem could have remained inhabited for 20 years (with a king, priesthood, functioning temple) and yet still be experiencing some contrived sort of nominal 'devastation' because the land around it was supposedly devastated (our previous section shows that it wasn't).

The Bible says that the surrounding countryside of Judah was not devastated at that time. The idea that there are multiple kinds of devastation is not found in any of the prophecies of Jeremiah, nor any other prophet.

More to the point, they are reading too much into that one single word, **devastations**.

The word used in the original Hebrew writings for devastations is *chorbâh* (sometimes written as *horvot*). Literally, it simply means *ruins*, or to be *in ruins*. If a house has been severely damaged and abandoned, you could say it is *chorbâh*, or “in ruins” or “devastated”. For example, look at these scriptures in one translation where the word *chorbâh* is used:

Isaiah 52:9: “Jerusalem, rise from the ruins [**chorbâh**] ! Join in the singing. The LORD has given comfort to his people; he comes to your rescue.”

Isaiah 58:12: “You will rebuild those houses left in ruins [**chorbâh**] for years; you will be known as a builder and repairer of city walls and streets.”

Isaiah 61:4: “Then they will rebuild cities that have been in ruins [**chorbâh**] for many generations.”

Job 3:14: “With kings and with counselors of the earth, Who rebuilt ruins [**chorbâh**] for themselves”.

Jeremiah 27:17: “Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon, and live! Why should this city become a ruin [**chorbâh**]?”

Jeremiah 44:6: “My wrath and My anger were poured out and burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, so they have become a ruin and a desolation [**chorbâh**] as it is this day.”

Malachi 1:4: “Esau's descendants may say, “Although our nation Edom is in ruins [**chorbâh**], we will rebuild.”

Ezra 9:9: “...raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins [**chorbâh**], and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.”

Leviticus 26:31: “I will lay waste [**chorbâh**] your cities”.

Above we have picked a handful of the uses of *chorbâh* in the scriptures, and all usages refer the same thing, **buildings destroyed, and in ruins**. This is not the mere opinion of a linguist or expert, but the clear way in which the Bible consistently uses this word in various contexts. It shows us that it is more than some sort of vague concept of devastation or humiliation, for it does not ever carry such a thought in any of its forty-two occurrences in the scriptures. Not even once. In every place it means total ruins, abandonment, and complete desolation. –*For more information on the word, consult the a Bible concordance using Strong's number 02721.*

Hence, let us see how various translations have rendered *chorbâh* at Daniel 9:2:

The New Living Translation: “Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years.”

The Bible in Basic English: “the making waste of Jerusalem was to be complete, that is, seventy years.”

Young's Literal Translation: “concerning the fulfilling of the wastes of Jerusalem -- seventy years”

God's Word translation: “The LORD had told the prophet Jeremiah that Jerusalem would remain in ruins for 70 years.”

The Good News Translation: “the seventy years that Jerusalem would be in ruins”

New Century Version: “Jerusalem would be empty ruins for seventy years.”

Contemporary English Version: “Jerusalem will lie in ruins for seventy years.”

It is easy to see what Daniel was trying to say. According to what he had read in Jeremiah, Jerusalem would be desolated, in ruins, a waste, abandoned, for 70 full years. It really is that simple. –*To find out why the NWT uses the word devastations instead of ruins, see Appendix C*

Interestingly, there is a word which the *New World Translation* renders similarly as “**lying desolated**”, it is *shamem* (or, *shama*). In 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 it says King Nebuchadnezzar “**carried off those remaining from the sword captive to Babylon, and they came to be servants to him and his sons until the royalty of Persia began to reign; to fulfill Jehovah’s word by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had paid off its Sabbaths. All the days of lying desolated [shamem] it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.**”

According to the *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament*, the word *shamem* means, “to be desolated, be deflowered, be deserted”.

Let us consult the other translations again:

God's Word translation: “While it lay in ruins, the land had its 70 years of rest.”

Contemporary English translation: “Judah was an empty desert, and it stayed that way for seventy years, to make up for all the years it was not allowed to rest.”

New Life Version: “For the seventy years that the land was not being used, the Day of Rest was kept.”

New International Reader's Version: “It rested. That deserted land wasn't farmed for a full 70 years.”

New International Version (UK): “The land enjoyed its Sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed.”

There is no reasonable doubt about the verses we have considered so far. They could not be more plain and clear in what they say. All the land, specifically including the capital city Jerusalem, would be a ruin, a deserted land, an empty desert, resting, not being used, desolate, a wasteland, a wilderness.

There is more proof, let's go back to the prophecy of Jeremiah about this 70 year devastation. There he said, “**A desolate waste the whole land will become, and shall I not carry out a sheer extermination? ... Every city is left, and there is no man dwelling in them.**” (Jeremiah 4:27, 29b) “**Be corrected, O Jerusalem, that my soul may not turn away disgusted from you; that I may not set you as a desolate waste, a land not inhabited.**” (Jeremiah 9:11) So we can see that the land, including “Jerusalem”, and “every city”, is to be left without an inhabitant.

Another part of the Bible, 2nd Chronicles, summarizes the whole 70 year period. There it says:

“He [Nebuchadnezzar] burned the Temple of Jehovah, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, torched its palaces, and wiped away everything that was of any beauty.

“Then he carried off everyone who was left to Babylon, where they served as slaves for him and his sons until the Medes came along and fulfilled the words of Jehovah through Jeremiah, and the land had observed its Sabbaths. For, during the seventy years that the land lay desolate, it was observing the Sabbath.

“It was in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, after the fulfillment of the words of Jehovah through the mouth of Jeremiah, that Jehovah awakened the spirit of Cyrus and commanded him to send a written proclamation throughout his kingdom that said, ‘Cyrus the king of Persia says, All the kingdoms of the earth have been given to me by Jehovah the God of heaven, and He told me to build a Temple to Him in Jerusalem in Judea. Who of you are His people? His God Jehovah is now with him, so let him return to Jerusalem!’” —2 Chronicles 36:20-23

There is a smooth logical flow in the verses above. It tells us of the beginning and the end of the 70 years. First, it shows the city being destroyed and the last exiles being taken. Then when the “**land lay desolate**” (it is now truly desolate after Jerusalem being destroyed), it fulfilled its 70 years of Sabbath resting. The 70 years end after the Jews finally reinhabit the land.

When Daniel worked out the number of the years, he was correct. The “**desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.**” —Daniel 9:2, *New International Version*

- The word used for 'devastations', *chorbâh* means to be 'in ruins'.
- Daniel specifically said the city of Jerusalem was in *chorbâh* for 70 years.
- The Bible says the whole land would be an empty desert — including Jerusalem.
- The Bible shows the 70 years began when Jerusalem was destroyed.

Servitude to the King of Babylon for 70 years?

Earlier we described how some interpret the prophecy of the 70-year desolation to mean 70 years of 'servitude' to the King of Babylon. Why? Because their secular chronology says Jerusalem was only desolated for 50 years. However, if they can strain out of the Bible the idea that Jerusalem was merely 'serving' Babylon for 70 years, then the city could still be inhabited for a further 20 years as their secular dates say. That way the 70-year prophecy is still fulfilled, but only Jehovah's Witnesses are "proved" wrong.

Promoters of 587 fiercely argue that the Bible supports their view – that the "servitude" began 20 years before Jerusalem was destroyed. However, is that really what the Bible teaches?

Interestingly, the Bible answers the question very clearly. When did the 70 years of servitude begin? Does it begin *before* Jerusalem is destroyed, as some claim, or was it *only upon its destruction*, as Jehovah's Witnesses teach? Jeremiah chapter 25 says:

"The word that occurred to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that is, the first year of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon"

This isn't telling us when the servitude begins, but only when Jeremiah made the prophecy talking of the future. We will talk about that more later. He continues:

"Here I am sending and I will take all the families of the north," is the utterance of Jehovah, "even sending to Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and 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. 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. 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."

Notice the land will become devastated, and then **"these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon"** for 70 years. The prophecy continues:

"For this is what Jehovah the God of Israel said to me: "Take this cup of the wine of rage out of my hand, and you must make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. And they must drink and shake back and forth and act like crazed men because of the sword that I am sending among them.

So Jeremiah is given a figurative **"cup"**, filled with Jehovah's rage. Jeremiah must now make all the nations gulp down Jehovah's displeasure.

“And you must say to them, 'This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said: “Drink and get drunk and puke and fall so that you cannot get up because of the sword that I am sending among you.”’ And it must occur that in case they refuse to take the cup out of your hand to drink, you must also say to them, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: “You will drink without fail.”’

Yes, the nations certainly will drink Jehovah's rage. They have no choice. After all, if his own people are going to drink of it, the nations certainly will. However, when will he make his own people drink of this cup? Jehovah makes it quite clear when, saying:

“For, look! it is upon the city upon which my name is called that I am starting off in bringing calamity, and should you yourselves in any way go free of punishment? You will not go free of punishment, for there is a sword that I am calling against all the inhabitants of the earth,’ is the utterance of Jehovah of armies.””

The answer to our original question, *'Does the servitude begin when Jerusalem is destroyed?'* has been right here all along – in the very same chapter where the 70 years of servitude is mentioned. After stating that Judah will become a devastated land, and that the nations will serve Babylon for 70 years, did you notice that the starting point of the 70 years is directly pinpointed?

Jehovah is “**starting off**” with “**the city [upon] which my name is called**”, that city, of course, being Jerusalem. Only when that city meets calamity will the 70 years for all the nations begin. It does not say the calamity starts upon the countryside of Judah, as some claim. Nor does not say it begins with a mere exile. It starts off in the city of Jerusalem, and it is “**a sword that I am sending among you.**”

The calamity of Jerusalem is the “**starting**” point, and from that point onward the nations will not remain “**free of punishment**”. For sure, “**Jerusalem**” will drink the cup first, but all the other nations must drink the cup and serve the King of Babylon too. Can it get any clearer than this? –*See chart 9 on page 79 to see how this looks on a time-line.*

What does this mean? It means 587 cannot be the date of Jerusalem's destruction. As you know, 587 to 537 is only 50 years. On the other hand, 607 to 537 is exactly 70 years.

Appreciating the full meaning of the servitude

Surely, though, all of the nations were not conquered at the same time as Jerusalem. For example. Egypt was conquered twenty-one years later. So in what way would “**all these nations**” serve Babylon for 70 years? Surely in Egypt's case it is less? And wouldn't it be a different length of time for other nations?

Additionally, Jeremiah 25:26 says that “**all the kings of the north who are near and far away, one after the other, and all other kingdoms of the earth that are on the surface of the ground**” will similarly drink Jah's cup and serve Babylon. Obviously, Babylon did not conquer “**all the kingdoms of the earth that are on the surface of the ground**” and then make them serve Babylon for the next seven decades – and certainly not in the same year

they conquered Jerusalem! So what could the servitude mentioned in the verse, “**these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years**”, possibly mean?

Isaiah 14:12-14 tells us. Speaking of Babylon in a figurative sense, it says:

“O how you have fallen from heaven, you shining one, son of the dawn! How you have been cut down to the earth, you who were disabling the nations! As for you, you have said in your heart, ‘To the heavens I shall go up. Above the stars of God I shall lift up my throne, and I shall sit down upon the mountain of meeting, in the remotest parts of the north. I shall go up above the high places of the clouds; I shall make myself resemble the Most High.”

The servitude began – not when Babylon conquers every kingdom on earth – but when Babylon puts itself above the stars of God, and when it makes itself “**resemble the Most High**”. This happened when she destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. All the nations serving Babylon is clearly symbolic. When Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and took the remaining Jews into exile, there was no longer a King sitting on Jehovah's throne. Babylon had, in effect, been permitted to usurp Jehovah's position as rightful sovereign. Thus Babylon appeared to be in control of all the nations — even controlling God's people.

607 allows only 68 years too?

You may realize that 607 to 539 is only 68 years, not 70. This is true. However, the nations and the Jews continued to serve the *King of Babylon* for two more years. How? Cyrus was now the King of Babylon, and it was not until he released the Jewish exiles that the 70 years of servitude ended, as the King of Babylon was no longer in control of the Jews and placing himself equal to the Most High.

Letting the Bible Answer

Consider how the Bible answers the following questions.

When was the prophecy of the 70 years made?

Jeremiah 25:1: The word that occurred to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that is, the first year of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon

Has Babylon already conquered Judah and the nations and brought them under their servitude?

25:9: “...here I am sending [in the future] and I will take [future] all the families of the north,” is the utterance of Jehovah, “even sending to Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring [future] them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will devote [future] them to destruction and

make them an object of astonishment and something to whistle at and places devastated to time indefinite.”

What two events would begin at the same time?

25:11: “And all this land [Judah, including its capital] must become a devastated place, an object of astonishment, and these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years.”

What does the devastation mean?

25:10: “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.”

Everyday things such as getting married, grinding grain in a hand mill, laughing, and lighting lamps were to cease in Jerusalem. Clearly this could not mean Jerusalem continues to be inhabited for 20 years during the servitude!

What is the cup that every nation will drink?

25:15: “For this is what Jehovah the God of Israel said to me: “Take this cup of the wine of rage out of my hand, and you must make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. And they must drink and shake back and forth and act like crazed men because of the sword that I am sending among them.”

Have they began drinking it at the time of this prophecy?

25:15, 16: “...and you must make [future] all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. And they must drink”.

Who drinks the cup first, and what does it mean for them?

25:17,18: “And I proceeded to take the cup out of the hand of Jehovah and to make all the nations drink to whom Jehovah had sent me: namely, Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and her kings, her princes, to make them a devastated place, an object of astonishment, something to whistle at and a malediction, just as at this day”.

Who will drink the cup after Judah?

25:19-26: “Pharaoh the king of Egypt ... the kings of the land of Uz ... Philistines and Ashkelon and Gaza and Ekron and the remnant of Ashdod; Edom and Moab and the sons of Ammon; and all the kings of Tyre and all the kings of Sidon and the kings of the island that is in the region of the sea; and Dedan and Tema and Buz the kings of the Arabs and all the kings of Zimri and all the kings of Elam and all the kings of the Medes; 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 Sheshach himself will drink after them [Judah, and the others].”

Again, what is the starting point of the 70 years of servitude and the cup drinking?

25:28: “Jehovah of armies has said: “You [all the nations] will drink without fail. For, look! it is upon the city upon which my name is called that I am starting off in bringing calamity, and should you yourselves in any way go free of punishment? You will not go free of punishment, for there is a sword that I am calling against all the inhabitants of the earth,” is the utterance of Jehovah of armies.”

Clearly, Jehovah is “**starting off**” in bringing the calamity upon the city “**upon which my name is called**”. Jerusalem must be destroyed first. Then, “**these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years**”.

Did the 70 years begin in Neb's 1st year?

In the last chapter we described how the Bible clearly teaches that the 70 years of servitude to the King of Babylon begin with Jerusalem's destruction. However, promoters of 587 ignore this or callously explain it away.

Instead, they hold to 587 as the date of Jerusalem's destruction, but find some *other* event around the year 607 which would begin Judah's "serving" of Babylon. That way, they don't have to say the 70-year prophecy failed. If they cannot find some event of servitude to mark the beginning of the 70 years, they would be forced to argue that the Bible's prophecy failed, and that's a poor way of drawing people out of the truth.

Unfortunately for them, there is no outstanding event in the secular chronology which is 70 years before the exiles returned home. Or is there?

In Daniel 1:1, the prophet says that he was taken into exile in the "**third year of Jehoiakim**". Daniel was speaking from the perspective of Babylon, and he was referring to the third year of Jehoiakim's vassal Kingship to the Babylonian Empire. All dates given by Daniel talk from this perspective. –*See Appendix N*

However, **what if** Daniel **wasn't** talking of the third year of **vassal** kingship, but was talking about the third year of **normal reign in Judea**? If that's the case, then in the secular chronology Daniel and other Judeans were taken in exile to Babylon in the year 605 BCE. That's roughly 70 years before the exiles returned! That's certainly good enough! From this they can argue that the 70 years of servitude began then. –*See chart 2 on page 75 to see how this looks chronologically.*

The Bible lists all the occasions when King Nebuchadnezzar took exiles from Judah to Babylon. He did this three times, in his 7th year, his 18th year, and his 23rd year. (Jeremiah 52:28-30) However, to make their reinterpretation fit, the apostates are forced to invent this new, earlier, occasion when Nebuchadnezzar takes away exiles – in his 1st year.

So, they argue that their secular chronology is still correct in saying that Jerusalem was destroyed in 587, but the 70 year prophecy was still fulfilled. They say the 70 years of 'servitude' began in that year when the first batch of exiles were supposedly taken, in Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year, which corresponds to Jehoiakim's 3rd year.

However, one cannot simply artificially invent an extra exile that took place before all the others, without it causing some serious contradictions in the Bible narrative.

Only 68 years?

First of all, it doesn't truly fulfill the requirements of the 70 year prophecy. Not only is Jerusalem inhabited for 20 years into it when the prophecies said otherwise, but if we count from 605 BCE to 537 BCE when the exiles returned home, that is only 68 years of "servitude", not 70. This interpretation manages to prove itself wrong before the word 'Go'. If this were a better and more correct explanation than 607, why does it immediately create an inconsistency? If it is the truth, why does it not harmonize more than 607 does? *For more information, see Appendix E.*

Besides, if there was an exile in Jehoiakim's third year, as they claim, the Bible repeatedly contradicts such an idea.

Jeremiah does not mention it in his list of exiles

At the end of his book, Jeremiah lists "all" the exiles which were taken to Babylon. He says, "**These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar took into exile: in the 7th year, 3,023 Jews. In the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar, from Jerusalem there were 832. In the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard took Jews into exile, 745. All the souls were 4,600.**" —Jeremiah 52:28-30

As we can see, Jeremiah lists "all the souls" taken, yet does not mention any that are taken during the invented exile in Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year, the 3rd year of Jehoiakim. Why? Probably because the apostates have simply created the first exile in their heads, and it never happened in the real world. If it really did happen as claimed, then we must ask why it does not harmonize with this scripture and why Jeremiah makes an incomplete list while wrongly calling it a list of "all" exiles.

Jeremiah's first account of the King's fourth year

There are further problems. Several passages in Jeremiah totally contradict the idea of an extra exile in Jehoiakim's third year.

Jeremiah chapter 25 is set during the fourth year of King Jehoiakim. According to the apostates, shortly before that time, Jerusalem was put under siege, the King was possibly taken to Babylon in chains before being returned as a vassal King, that exiles were taken away, and some of the temple utensils were also removed. That was the supposed start of the desolation (sorry, I mean servitude).

Yet, Jeremiah's account strangely doesn't mention any these recent events. "**The word that occurred to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that is, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon;**"

The prophet continues "**...these twenty-three years the word of Jehovah has occurred to me, and I kept speaking to you people, rising up early and speaking, but you did not listen. And Jehovah sent to you all his servants the prophets, rising up early and**

sending them, but you did not listen, ... “For the reason that you did not obey my words, here I am sending and I will take all the families of the north,” is the utterance of Jehovah, “even sending to Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will devote them to destruction”. —Jeremiah 25:1-9

The apostates claim that during the year the above was written, Babylon had already come against the land. It's rather odd how the prophet mentions none of that. On the contrary, he seems to be emphasizing that warnings have been given for the past twenty-three years, and no one listened or paid attention. It seems no one will believe Babylon will ever come.

Besides, Jeremiah warns in verse 10: “**And this land must become a devastated place**”. Yes, the foretold seventy years of devastation *had not begun yet*. So if the 587-based theory is more accurate than 607, we wonder why this inconsistency in the narrative is created. Surely, if it were true, it should harmonize rather than contradict?

Jeremiah's second account of the King's fourth year

Jeremiah wrote another account during the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Does that support the idea that exiles had already been taken? No.

In Jeremiah chapter 36 it tells us that “in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that this word occurred to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying: “Take for yourself a roll of a book, and you must write in it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel ... Perhaps those of the house of Judah will listen to all the calamity that I am thinking of doing to them, to the end that they may return, each one from his bad way, and that I may actually forgive their error and their sin.””

So this is the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign — the year after the fictitious first exile. Yet, according to this Bible passage, nothing has yet happened. No punishment, no calamity has arrived. Jehovah is still “**thinking**” about bringing calamity upon them.

Additionally, some apostates claim that Judah was desolated, leaving Jerusalem relatively untouched. Yet, Jehovah says “**perhaps the house of Judah will listen to all the calamity that I am thinking of doing**”. Jehovah does not tell them to look at the calamity that has taken place on Judah, warning Jerusalem that the same will happen to them. No, the whole “**house of Judah**” needs to take the warning seriously.

Once more we are compelled to ask: if this first exile really happened, why is it causing such disharmony with the narrative of events?

Jeremiah's account of the King's fifth year

Another account, a year later, still doesn't provide any evidence that Judah was already desolated.

“Now it came about in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of

Judah, in the ninth month, that all the people in Jerusalem and all the people that were coming in from the cities of Judah into Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before Jehovah. And Baruch began to read aloud from the book the words of Jeremiah at the house of Jehovah... in the ears of all the people."

So, this is the fifth year, and **"all the people"** of Jerusalem and **"the cities of Judah"** come to celebrate a religious festival. We've already covered the fact that the cities of Judah were supposedly destroyed two years previously, according to the apostates' fictitious first exile. Yet, here are the people coming into Jerusalem from their cities to observe a religious fast. I wonder where they had been for the previous two years? Perhaps where the Bible says they were, in **"the cities of Judah"**!

Additionally, they argue that many nobles and sons of royalty (princes) were also already taken to Babylon in the fictitious first exile. So why does his account continue to tell us that **"all"** the princes are in Jerusalem?

"At that he went down to the house of the king, to the dining room of the secretary, and, look! there is where all the princes were sitting, Elishama the secretary and Delaiah... and Elnathan... and Gemariah... and Zedekiah... and all the other princes."

God's inspired word the Bible tell us that **"all the princes"** were present in Jehoiakim's fifth year of reign, and it even names many of them for us. If the exile mentioned in Daniel chapter 1 had already taken place two years earlier, as claimed, then how come **"all the princes"** and **"all the people"** are in Jerusalem?

Daniel 1 says the Babylonians took **"some of the sons of Israel and of the royal offspring and of the nobles"**. Daniel's account also shows us how they remained in Babylon for three years of training. Yet, two years later (supposedly), here they **"all"** are in Jerusalem!

The reason is obvious, no exiles were taken in Jehoiakim's third year.

The account continues to describe the reaction of the princes when they hear the words of Jeremiah. **"Now it came about that as soon as they heard all the words, they looked at one another in dread."** So shocked are the princes when they hear what Jehovah will do to them, they take the scroll of Jeremiah's prophecies to the King. **"And Jehudi began to read it aloud in the ears of the king and in the ears of all the princes standing by the king. And the king was sitting in the winter house, in the ninth month, with a brazier burning before him. Then it came about that as soon as Jehudi had read three or four page-columns, he proceeded to tear it apart with the secretary's knife, pitching it also into the fire that was in the brazier until all the roll ended up in the fire that was in the brazier. And they felt no dread."**

The princes are afraid of the words, but the King and his servants merely burn the scroll and thought nothing of it — and no wonder, because Jerusalem and its princes have not yet been attacked or carried off to Babylon. The King can't believe Babylon would do such a thing. No, for Babylon has not yet come up against them. He's not even a vassal to Babylon yet.

Yet certain apostates would have us believe, that between one and two years earlier the

city was sieged by Babylon, conquered, had some of the temple utensils taken away along with various exiles, and even the King was taken away in chains as prisoner to Babylon, but quickly returned to the city as a vassal King (with no precedence for this at all)! How odd that the narrative doesn't even seem to allude to it. Perhaps it's because it didn't happen.

Yet if those things did happen, why did the King feel no dread? Why did Jeremiah not remind the King of his close-shave? He doesn't hold back from reminding Zedekiah of Jehoiachin's exile in later years. Again, why doesn't this explanation cause more harmony in the narrative if it is true? —Please see chart 10 on page 80 showing how the 607 chronology fits perfectly with the Bible narrative of the Kings and their reigns.

Josephus' account

The ancient Jewish historian Josephus also confirms that there was no exiles taken in Jehoiakim's 3rd year. Although his book isn't part of the Bible, his account of the event does fill in some of the blanks and agrees with the Biblical account.

His report (paraphrased) goes something like this:

During the reign of King Jehoiakim (many years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem), Judah became a vassal Kingdom to Babylon. After three years as his vassal, King Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon and stopped paying his tribute.

This led to Jerusalem coming under siege by the Babylonian army. According to Josephus, he put up no resistance and allowed the Babylonian army into the city, hoping for a peaceful resolution. Unfortunately, Nebuchadnezzar had other ideas. He killed King Jehoiakim, took some of the temple utensils, and a few thousand exiles. Nebuchadnezzar then placed the former King's son on the throne, in place of the rebel. However, after a few weeks into his journey home to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar worried that the son may, too, rebel. He sent messages back to his army still in Judea, ordering them to siege Jerusalem.

When Nebuchadnezzar himself returned there, the new Judean King surrendered to the Babylonians immediately. More temple utensils were taken, along with even more exiles. All of these events happened within one year. The prophets Daniel and Ezekiel were among the exiles to be taken to Babylon in that year. *To read Josephus' actual account of these events, and how the Biblical texts fully agree with his report, see Appendix D.*

The Bible fully confirms Josephus' account. Jerusalem is sieged, King Jehoiakim is killed, some temple utensils and exiles are taken (Daniel 1:1). Within weeks, his heir surrenders, more utensils, more exiles, and all the treasures of the house are taken, and Zedekiah is placed on the throne — the very last Judean King (2 Kings 24). All of these events happen within the same year, which is why Jeremiah only lists three batches of exiles. These exiles were the first ones, taken in Nebuchadnezzar's 7th year. If things did not happen this way, we would need to ask why Josephus should make up such a complicated story. —Jeremiah 52:28-30

Why did everyone forget about the 1st exile?

If an exile took place in Jehoiakim's 3rd year / Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year, isn't rather odd that there is *absolutely no account of it* by Jeremiah or any other Bible writer? Furthermore, why isn't there a *single* clay tablets or ancient document recording the event?

On the other hand, there are an abundance of Biblical and secular references to exiles and temple utensils being taken in the 7th/8th year of Nebuchadnezzar. Also, the only time exiles are mentioned in Babylon is *after* the rule of Jehoiakim has ended, not once before.

Here are a few of these:

- Jeremiah 52:28
- Jeremiah 24:1
- Jeremiah 27:12
- Jeremiah 28:1
- Jeremiah 29:1
- 2 Chronicles 36:9
- 2 Kings 24:12
- Ezekiel 1:1
- Ezekiel 40:1

How mysterious that amongst all of the prophesying and warnings that Jeremiah gave to Jehoiakim, he never once recalls any exile having taken place shortly beforehand. Yet, he held nothing back in reminding Zedekiah of the exile during Nebuchadnezzar's 7th/8th year when Jehoiachin was taken. The situation is especially odd as the 1st exile is supposedly the crucial start of the 70 year prophecy, and the fulfillment of all the prophecies of Jeremiah, Isaiah, and other prophets.

Further, the 1st exile is strangely forgotten when a summary is given of all the exiles. Yet again, only the exiles in the 7th, 18th and 23rd years are mentioned. The 1st year remains absent. That is not all, the stories about the events in both 2nd Kings and 2nd Chronicles mention the exile of Jehoiachin (Jeconiah), but again mysteriously forget to mention that all important first exile, during the rule of Jehoiakim after his ruling of Judah for only 3 years. Additionally the prophet Ezekiel only speaks of the exile that took place when Jehoiachin went into exile, but never once mentions the exile of the Jews, like Daniel, supposedly taken in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. He even calls it “**our exile**” – and he even mentions Daniel at one point in his writings, but never speaks of his being taken at an earlier date.

Neither Jeremiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Jehoiakim, nor the false prophet Hannaniah, nor Ezra who wrote 2nd Chronicles, nor Zedekiah, mention this supposed first exile that occurred in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. Not even one time do they mention it. Amazing. Yet, above there are quoted almost 10 places where the exile of Jehoiachin in Neb's 7th/8th year are mentioned.

Were they trying to hide it from us? Did everyone have amnesia? Or did it even happen at all? The Bible shows the answer to that latter question to be a resounding *No!* The first exile never occurred, it only exists – and has only ever existed – in the minds of those who

would 'correct' the Bible to make it fit with fallible secular chronology. That is why it does not harmonize with the scriptures.

The third year of his vassal Kingship

Its clear that apostates are wrong to claim that exiles were taken in Jehoiakim's 3rd year of Judean rule. When Daniel said **"in the third year of Jehoiakim"** he was obviously speaking from the perspective of Babylon's control over the Jews, meaning in the third year of Jehoiakim's vassal Kingship to Babylon.

That is why 2 Kings 24:1 says, **"In his days Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up, and so Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. However, he turned back and rebelled against him."** It is no mere coincidence that the vassalship lasted "three years". Yes, three years of vassal Kingship ended in rebellion, and a crushing defeat for King Jehoiakim. That is when the king died and exiles were taken. Thus, Daniel says "in the third year of Jehoiakim".

Daniel always spoke from his perspective as a Babylonian official. When Daniel mentions the Persian ruler Cyrus, he says **"In the third year of Cyrus the king of Persia there was a matter revealed to Daniel..."** (Daniel 10:1) Cyrus began to rule Persia around 560 BCE. Does this mean Daniel was living in Persia and working for Cyrus in his **"third year"**? No, Daniel is certainly speaking of Cyrus' third year of rulership in Babylon, not his third year of ruling the Persian Empire. –See Appendix O for another example of a vassal kingship being counted

Conclusion

The exile that supposedly took place in Jehoiakim's third year, never happened. It has simply been the product of a deliberate misunderstanding of Daniel 1:1. Many passages in Jeremiah directly contradict the idea. People are mentioned still living in the **"cities of Judah"**, and **"all the princes"** are still there. The King himself seems to scoff at the very notion of Babylon coming up against him. The inspired book of Jeremiah seems to also forget to mention the event in his list of **"all"** the exiles.

The ancient historian Josephus also denies it happened, and it is easy to see that Daniel was speaking from the perspective of Babylon. It is no coincidence that he said the King rebelled and exiles were taken **"in the third year of Jehoiakim"**, when the book of 2nd Kings says his vassal Kingship was exactly three years in duration before his rebellion.

This fictional first exile simply never happened. Thus, the claim that the secular chronology is right, and that the 70 year desolation began in 605 BCE with this mythical exile, is groundless. If it really were true, it would be an important missing part out of the puzzle, and it would make everything add-up. Yet rather than answering many questions and clearing up any complications, placing the event in the narrative causes nothing but problems and bizarre inconsistencies. On the other hand, the 607-based interpretation has none of this effect.

Besides, even if it was true, counting from 605 BCE to 537 BCE only adds up to 68 years

— not 70.

- **There is no Biblical evidence for an extra exile.**
- **Passages in Jeremiah contradict the theory.**
- **Adding the extra exile creates much disharmony in the narrative.**
- **Daniel must have been speaking from his Babylonian perspective.**
- **The apostate theory only adds up to 68 years.**
- **There is no secular evidence of the first exile.**

Did the 70 years begin with Assyria's defeat?

Yet another argument that many apostates use (which contradicts their other arguments), is that the 70 years began in 609 BCE (secular chronology) when Babylon defeated Assyria, and then ran until 70 years later in 539 BCE when Babylon was, in turn, defeated by Medo-Persia.

Their alleged scriptural support for this is Jeremiah 25:11 which says, “**and these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years**”. Yes, this is an extension of the claims that Jerusalem was in mere servitude — not desolation — for 70 years. Please refer back to the chapter *Ruins, Desolation, a Wasteland* to see why that idea is wrong. However, here we will show from the Bible why the 70 years could not have begun with the defeat of Assyria in 609 BCE (secular chronology).

Consider the context of the above-quoted verse:

“The word that occurred to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that is, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon”

Right away we see that this prophecy was made in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. This would be the year 605 BCE in secular chronology. Now let's continue with the passage:

“Therefore this is what Jehovah of armies has said, “For the reason that you did not obey my words, here I am sending and I will take all the families of the north,” is the utterance of Jehovah, “even sending to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and 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. 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. 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.”

Yes — this is a prophecy of a future event. Yet according to the theory above, the 70 years had already begun. This prophecy proves that the beginning of the 70 years was yet future.

Now, this prophecy was given in 605 (that is, according to the secular chronology). It plainly says the nations will serve Babylon for 70 years starting during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Yet, their claim is that the 70 years began 3 years earlier, in 609 – but that is before Nebuchadnezzar began his reign.

In addition, Jeremiah chapter 28 tells us when Jehovah will make the nations serve Babylon. It was written during the 4th year of Zedekiah, the last Judean King. Notice verse 14:

“For this is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said: A yoke of

iron I will put upon the neck of all these nations, to serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon; and they must serve him. And even the wild beasts of the field I will give him.”

Yes, this is another *future* prophecy given during the rule of Zedekiah, about 7 years before the destruction of Jerusalem. It clearly says the yoke of iron is *yet* to be put upon the neck of the nations. The nations are *yet* to serve the King of Babylon.

So the 609 theory has a fatal problem. The Bible says the 70 years of the nations serving Babylon do not begin until after the days of Zedekiah. According to their secular chronology, this is about the year of 594BCE, but their 70 years of servitude was supposed to have begun years earlier in 609 BCE. Wait, there is more.

If the “yoke” bar of Babylonian servitude is put on *immediately* in the year of the last prophecy, then 70 years will bring us down to 524BCE — some 15 years after Babylon's rule has ended, and 15 years after the iron yoke has been removed. So it is not 70 years but only a mere 55 years.

On the other hand, if one accepts the Biblical 607-based chronology which places the above prophecy in 614 BCE, there is more than enough time for the “yoke” to be put on the nations for a full 70 years of servitude.

Who's your daddy?

If that wasn't conclusive enough, notice how the scriptures state that the nations would serve Nebuchadnezzar, as well as his Son, and his Grandson — but never once his father, something which would certainly be the case if the 70 years of servitude began in 609.

Jehovah says through Jeremiah, “**I myself have made the earth, mankind and the beasts that are upon the surface of the earth by my great power and by my stretched-out arm; and I have given it to whom it has proved right in my eyes. And now I myself have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; ...all the nations must serve even him and his son and his grandson**”

So the 70 years of serving Babylon must begin during the rule of Nebuchadnezzar. It could not begin in 609 (secular chronology) since Nebuchadnezzar was not king at that time — his father was, and the scriptures don't mention him. Interestingly, the 607-based Biblical chronology has no problem with this, since we say he began his rule around 625 BCE, not 605 BCE.

Is 609 even right?

The claim that Babylon only held supremacy over the nations after 609 BCE (secular chronology) is uncertain. Assyria was actually defeated three years earlier in 612 BCE (secular chronology) with the destruction of its capital city Nineveh. It was only the remnant of Assyria which fell in 609 BCE (secular chronology) when the last city of Harran was conquered.

Simply, Babylon had held supremacy over Assyria before 609 BCE (secular chronology), the nations had already been under Babylonian domination for some years.

Conclusion

According to the Bible, the nations came under the “yoke” of serving the King of Babylon after Zedekiah was removed by Nebuchadnezzar. To claim the servitude began in 609 BCE (secular chronology) with the defeat of Assyria, simply contradicts the Bible. It really began in 607 BCE, the same year as the destruction of Jerusalem, and ended 70 years later in 537 BCE when God's people returned home.

- **The prophecies for a 70 year servitude were made years after 609 BCE in their own chronology.**
- **The nations only received the “yoke” of serving the King of Babylon after Jerusalem was destroyed.**
- **The nations were to serve Nebuchadnezzar — not his father.**
- **The nations began their servitude in 607 BCE and ended in 537 BCE.**

Does 607 make Daniel unrealistically old?

One argument used in an unsuccessful attempt to disprove 607, is the idea that Jehovah's Witnesses chronology makes the prophet Daniel too old to be realistic.

At the start of his book Daniel tells us, “Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and proceeded to lay siege to it... the king said to Ashpenaz his chief court official to bring some of the sons of Israel and of the royal offspring and of the nobles, children in whom there was no defect at all”. Daniel is among these ones. The King takes them so he can have them “stand in the palace of the king”, but will first “teach them the writing and the tongue of the Chaldeans.”

Presumably, the Hebrew children did not speak the Chaldean language, or know what the King wanted them to do in his palace. They were to be trained. The “**king appointed a daily allowance from the delicacies of the king and from his drinking wine, even to nourish them for three years, that at the end of these they might stand before the king.**”

So they would be trained for “**three years**” before being allowed before the King. “**And at the end of the days that the king had said to bring them in [that is, the three years], the principal court official also proceeded to bring them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king began to speak with them, and out of them all no one was found like Daniel**” and his companions. —Daniel chapter 1

We can see there were clearly “**three years**” of training before Daniel went before the King. So what is the problem? The issue lies in the next chapter of Daniel, which starts by saying, “**And in the second year of the kingship of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams**”, a dream which Daniel interpreted.

Now, if Daniel was in the court of Nebuchadnezzar in the “**second year**” of his Kingship to interpret the King's dream, then according to Jehovah's Witnesses chronology, Daniel would be in Babylon in 624 BCE. This means he must have been 101 years old when he served in the court of Darius. This is highly unlikely.

Does that make the 607 chronology unlikely? No, because that is not what Jehovah's Witnesses teach. As we have already seen, the Bible says Daniel was under training for “**three years**” before he went before the King. So, then, why does Daniel says “**in the second year**” of Nebuchadnezzar?

As we mentioned earlier, Daniel is speaking from the perspective of the Babylonian Kingship over the Jews. That is why he spoke of Jehoiakim's third year of Babylonian Kingship. Similarly, Daniel is also talking about Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian kingship over the Jews. This was the “**second year**” of Nebuchadnezzar being direct King over the Jewish people. Yes, it was the second year after the destruction of Jerusalem when the last Jewish King was removed from his throne.

This must be correct, for the claim of the apostates is preposterous. Daniel 2:13 states, “**And the order itself went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, for them to be killed.**” Why was Daniel known

as one of Babylon's "**wise men**"? Was he not a "child" who had only been in the city for a year and a few months, a boy who was still learning the Chaldean language? Did the account not say that he and his friends were "**children**"? (Daniel 1:17) Yes! Then why do they suddenly become "**wise men**" and Daniel an "**able-bodied man**"? –Daniel 2:25

Furthermore, after Daniel successfully interpreted the King's dream, "**the king made Daniel someone great, and many big gifts he gave to him, and he made him the ruler over all the jurisdictional district of Babylon and the chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon... Daniel was in the court of the king.**"

So the apostates would argue that Daniel, as one of the "**children**" still learning the local language, had only been in the city several months before he was regarded as, not a child, but as an able-bodied man and one of the *wise men of Babylon*. Also, he became ruler over the entire City, and *all of this happened before Daniel had even been brought in before the King for the first time at the end of his three-year basic training*. Can we really take such an idea seriously?

On the other hand, according to 607-based Biblical chronology, Daniel was taken into exile in 617 BCE, "**in the seventh year**" of King Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian kingship, the year Jeremiah says the first exiles were taken. (Jeremiah 52:28) Jeremiah does not mention any earlier exiles, so Daniel could not have been in Babylon in the second year, for that is too early. This 607 interpretation also gives Daniel more than enough time to grow out of childhood and become known as an "**able-bodied man**" and a well-known wise-man.

It also means Daniel's was not unrealistically old when he died. He probably lived from around 630 BCE to 535 BCE, making him under the age of 100 while he worked for King Darius. Such is entirely possible for a man living under the good conditions of the Royal court, and filled with Jehovah's spirit. As one brother says, "*the argument that Daniel would have been too old has no merit whatsoever.*"

Admittedly, Daniel certainly was very old when he died. That is probably why his book ends with the Angel telling him thus: "**And as for you yourself, go toward the end; and you will rest, but you will stand up for your lot at the end of the days.**" —Daniel 12:13

Something doesn't add up

If that wasn't proof enough that Daniel could not have interpreted the King's dream in his 2nd year of Kingship, consider the following dates which prove that Daniel definitely had not yet completed his training in the 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar's kingship. If we believe the secular chronology, this is what we find:

August 605 Daniel exiled¹

Aug/Sep 605 Neb ascends throne

¹ Actually, this date of Aug 605 is impossible. At that time, secular history records Neb returning home to be crowned king in Babylon. He could not have taken exiles with him at this time, nor did he have enough time between to travel from Carchemish to Jerusalem then back to and Babylon. He returned to Syria/Palestine in Jan/Feb 604 and this would have been the earliest possible date that Daniel could have been taken.

April 604 First regnal year begins

April 603 > April 602 second year of Neb

August 602 Daniel's third year of training ends

Daniel interprets the dream in Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd year. Even if Daniel interpreted the dream on the very last day of Neb's 2nd year around April 602, there is still 9 or 10 months before Daniel's 3 years end in Jan/Feb 601. Thus Daniel's 3 years of training in essence becomes 2 years of training or even more than likely even less than 2 years since it is unlikely that he just happened to interpret the dream on the last day of Neb's 2nd year. The 3 years were a full 3 years — not any less. The Bible says, “**for three years, that at the end of these they might stand before the king**”.

One brother versed in Hebrew points out how a later verse in Daniel says “***And at the end of ten days***” and it uses the same Hebrew word as it does when describing the end of Daniel's three years. He tells us the word is, “*lemiktzat’ for describing the end in time period of something. Interestingly, this word is derived from word ‘ketz’ which means end to something or someone. To claim that three years are not actually three years is like to claim ten days are not actually ten days.*”

Further problems

The narrative itself shows that Daniel could not have already become known to the King in Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd year of Kingship. Remember, the 587-based interpretation insists that Daniel has already been made ruler of the district, and head of all the wise men of Babylon, *before* the end of his training and *before* he has been brought in before the King for the first time, and while he is still a teenager. The book of Daniel is supposed to be in chronological order, but according to this theory, events in chapter 2 happened during events in chapter 1 (the 607 interpretation does not have this inconsistency).

So skipping backwards to chapter 1, let's see what the King's reaction was when Daniel was brought in before the King after the completion of his training (remember that the King already knows him, has already met him, has already appointed him head of all the wise men, and Daniel is the ruler of the district of Babylon):

“...to them the king appointed a daily allowance from the delicacies of the king and from his drinking wine, even to nourish them for three years, that at the end of these they might stand before the king. ... **And at the end of the days that the king had said to bring them in, the principal court official also proceeded to bring them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king began to speak with them, and out of them all no one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; and they continued to stand before the king. And as regards every matter of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired about from them, he even got to find them ten times better than all the magic-practicing priests and the conjurers that were in all his royal realm.**” — Daniel chapter 1

Does that sound like the end of three years of training, and being presented before the

King for the first time? Or does it sound like the King talking to his chief of the district, and head of all the Wise men? If you choose the latter, then the chronological order is broken, the narrative makes no sense, and both the situation and the Bible looks absurd. –See *Appendix N* for another way some try to explain away this problem

Conclusion

When Daniel said the “**second year**” of Nebuchadnezzar's kingship, it is abundantly clear he meant Kingship over the Jews, otherwise the sequence of events make no sense. It is the 2nd year since the destruction of Jerusalem. It is the 2nd year since there was no king sitting on Jehovah's throne at Jerusalem. It was the 2nd year that Nebuchadnezzar assumed that position over God's people. It is his 2nd year as world ruler, in fulfillment of the 70-year prophecy.

- **Daniel completed 3 years of training before seeing the King.**
- **Daniel interpreted the dream in the King's 2nd year of kingship over the Jews.**
- **Claiming otherwise makes Daniel chapter 2 look ridiculous...**
- **...and means the dates of his training do not add up.**
- **Daniel remained under 100 years of age while serving Darius.**

The Seventy years for Tyre

The 70 year desolation of Jerusalem isn't the only Bible prophecy that failed according to the 587 chronology. There is another 70-year Bible prophecy that also supposedly failed — for Judah's enemy, Tyre.

Shortly after Jerusalem was destroyed, Ezekiel made the following prophecy in Ezekiel chapter 26: “**And it came about in the eleventh year... the word of Jehovah occurred to me, saying: “Son of man, for the reason that Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha! She has been broken, the doors of the peoples! The trend will certainly be to me. I shall be filled—she has been devastated,’ therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said, ‘Here I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up against you many nations, just as the sea brings up its waves. And they will certainly bring the walls of Tyre to ruin and tear down her towers, and I will scrape her dust away from her and make her a shining, bare surface of a crag.”**—verses 1-4

The prophet pulls no punches telling us who will carry out such destruction. He continues saying, “**Here I am bringing against Tyre Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon**”. (verse 7) He describes the Babylonian army to come upon Tyre, “**with horses and war chariots and cavalymen and a congregation, even a multitudinous people... and he must make against you a siege wall and throw up against you a siege rampart and raise up against you a large shield; and the strike of his attack engine he will direct against your walls, and your towers he will pull down, with his swords.**” —verses 7-9

If we move back to Isaiah, and look in chapter 23, the prophet there gives even more details of exactly what would happen when Tyre is attacked by Babylon. Speaking in the present-tense as if his prophecy is already happening he says, “**Chaldeans. This is the people... They have erected their siege towers; they have stripped bare her dwelling towers; one has set her as a crumbling ruin. Howl, you ships of Tarshish, for your stronghold [Tyre] has been despoiled.**” —verse 13

Now comes the important point. “**And it must occur in that day that Tyre must be forgotten seventy years, the same as the days of one king. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as in the song of a prostitute: “Take a harp, go around the city, O forgotten prostitute. Do your best at playing on the strings; make your songs many, in order that you may be remembered.”**—verses 14-16

So Tyre will not be destroyed by the Chaldeans (Babylonians) laying siege to her, but will simply cause her to be “**forgotten**” for “**seventy years**”. The prophet compares her to a forgotten prostitute who hasn't been hired. She needs to take a harp and sing songs to receive customers again (in ancient times prostitutes were distinguished by their singing in the streets at night to attract the attention of a client).

Isaiah continues, “**And it must occur at the end of seventy years that Jehovah will turn his attention to Tyre, and she must return to her hire and commit prostitution with all the kingdoms of the earth upon the surface of the ground. And her profit and her hire must become something holy to Jehovah. It will not be stored up, nor be laid up, because her hire will come to be for those dwelling before Jehovah, for eating to satisfaction and for elegant covering.” —verses 17-18**

When the seventy year period ends, Tyre's **“profit”** and **“hire”** will become **“something holy to Jehovah”**. This cryptic remark was fulfilled when the temple was rebuilt in 537 BCE. Ezra 3:7 tells us, **“they proceeded to give money to the cutters and to the craftsmen, and eatables and drink and oil to the Sidonians and the Tyrians, to bring cedar timbers from Lebanon to the sea at Joppa, according to the permission granted by Cyrus the king of Persia to them.”**

So from these prophecies we can discern these points:

1. Tyre will not be destroyed by the Chaldeans, but be forgotten for 70 years, in a business sense and will not be hired. Like an unwanted prostitute, she shall have no customers. (Isaiah 23:14)
2. Nebuchadnezzar comes against Tyre sometime after Jerusalem was destroyed. (Ezekiel 26:1)
3. When the 70 year period expires, Tyre shall restart her business, but give her profits to Jehovah's temple. (Isaiah 23:14; Ezra 3:7)

First of all, let's consider this in the secular chronology. According to historians, Tyre came under siege by Babylon shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem. This would place it in either late 587 or early 586 BCE. The 70 year period would end 70 years later in 517 or 516 BCE.

However, Isaiah told us what would happen when the 70 period ends, that Tyre's profit would become **“something holy to Jehovah”**. This occurred in 537 or 536 BCE in the secular chronology when Tyre provided Cedar timbers for the temple of Jehovah.

This is a problem. That's only 50 years later when Tyre performed a holy work for Jehovah, not 70. Therefore, according to the secular chronology, the 70 year prophecy for Tyre failed – it was 20 years out –*See chart 8 on page 78*

Now, in contrast, let's apply the Bible's 607-based chronology. If we assume that Tyre was sieged by Babylon shortly after Jerusalem was destroyed, seeing as the last prophecy against her took place in that year (Ezekiel 26:1), and secular chronology agrees with this point, then Babylon attacked Tyre in late 607 or early 606 BCE. –*See chart 7 on page 78*

Counting 70 years hence, we come to 537 BCE or 536 BCE — the exact year the Bible says Tyre supplied Cedar timbers for the holy temple of Jehovah! The 70 year prophecy is a success!

Only the 607-based Bible chronology allows this prophecy to be fulfilled. The chronology of secular historians, of the Churches, and of the apostates that promote it, all make the 70-year prophecy a joke. According to 587-based secular chronology, Tyre was supplying cedars and free of the Babylonian yoke just 50 years later, not 70! Who do you think is wrong? The secular chronology, or the Bible?

- **The 70 years for Tyre began after Jerusalem was destroyed.**
- **For 70 years Tyre was not hired in a commercial sense.**
- **The period ended when Tyre supplied Cedars for the Temple of Jehovah, exactly 70 years later.**
- **Only the 607-based chronology allows for this period.**

Egypt's Forty Year Desolation

There is a third prophecy that totally and utterly fails in the 587-centered chronology of Christendom and the apostates.

One year before Jerusalem was destroyed, Jehovah said through the prophet Ezekiel, “I will make the land of Egypt a desolate waste in the midst of desolated lands; and its own cities will become a desolate waste in the very midst of devastated cities for forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations” —Ezekiel 29:12

Yes, Egypt was to become a “desolate waste” with “devastated cities”, and this would last for “forty years”.

The reason Ezekiel gave such a warning at that time was because many Jews thought they could escape the coming calamity by taking refuge in Egypt. Jeremiah warned them not to flee to Egypt for this very reason. “If you yourselves positively set your faces to enter into Egypt... to reside there as aliens, it must also occur that the very sword of which you are afraid will there catch up with you... Do not enter into Egypt... I am sending and I will take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant... And he must come in and strike the land of Egypt.” —Jeremiah 42:15, 16, 19, 43:10-11

The desolation did not happen immediately after Ezekiel or Jeremiah made their prophecies. Some Jews did, in fact, flee to Egypt for safety. However, 16 years after the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel announced that the time had come for Nebuchadnezzar to take Egypt.

In “the twenty-seventh year... the word of Jehovah occurred to me, saying: “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar himself, the king of Babylon, made his military force perform a great service against Tyre.” For this service, Jehovah rewards the King.

“Here I am giving to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon the land of Egypt, and he must carry off its wealth and make a big spoil of it and do a great deal of plundering of it; and it must become wages for his military force. As his compensation for service that he did against her I have given him the land of Egypt, because they acted for me”. —Ezekiel 29:17-20

Ezekiel 30:10 confirms that it is Nebuchadnezzar who is to remove all the people from that land. “I will also cause the crowd of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon.”

Remember that Ezekiel earlier said that the desolation of Egypt would last “forty years”. Jehovah also said, “At the end of forty years I shall collect the Egyptians together out of the peoples among whom they will have been scattered, and I will bring back the captive group of the Egyptians; and I will bring them back to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they must become a lowly kingdom.” —Ezekiel 29:13-14

So, from the prophecy we discern the following:

1. Egypt would be desolated for 40 years (Ezekiel 29:12)
2. By Nebuchadnezzar (Ezekiel 29:18. 30:10)
3. It was desolated after Ezekiel's last prophecy against her in his 27th year of exile. (Ezekiel 29:18)
4. After the 40 years, Egypt will be a lowly Kingdom. (Ezekiel 29:14)

When did this happen? From the Bible record we can only assume it happened shortly after Ezekiel said Nebuchadnezzar was given Egypt as compensation for his attack on Tyre. Interestingly, secular chronology agrees. An ancient clay tablet now residing in the British Museum, known as the *Nebuchadnezzar Inscription*, talks about Nebuchadnezzar's action against Egypt in his 37th year. That would be two years after Ezekiel said Egypt would be given to Babylon by Jehovah.

As you can see from Chart 4 on page 76, in the 607-based chronology, Ezekiel makes his prophecy in 590 BCE, and Nebuchadnezzar's 37th year is two years later in 588 BCE when he attacks Egypt. We can assume the Nebuchadnezzar Inscription is correct on this point, because it agrees with our Biblical chronology. So Egypt's 40-year desolation begins in that year.

Counting 40 years hence, we come to the year 548 BCE as the end of Egypt's desolation, when Jehovah would **“bring back the captive group of the Egyptians”** for them to become a **“lowly kingdom”**. Indeed, secular chronology also records that the last Babylonian King Nabonidus held an alliance against the Persians with Amasis II, the King of Egypt, in addition to the Lydian Empire. So far from being a competing world power, Egypt is now a **“lowly Kingdom”** just as the Bible said, resorting to military alliances with its previous opponent.

We can see from the chart that the Bible chronology provided more than enough time for all of these events. Egypt has 40 full years of desolation, with more than enough time afterwards to be repatriated and to forge an alliance with Babylon as the secular records claim.

However, as chart 5 on page 77 shows, the 587-based chronology of Egypt's desolation is a total mess.

According to their chronology, the 27th year of Ezekiel's exile (when he made his final prophecy against Egypt) was in 570 BCE. Again, relying on the secular records, Egypt was attacked by Nebuchadnezzar in his 37th year, which is two years later, 568 BCE.

All fine so far. But wait, just 21 years later the secular records say Egypt forged an alliance with Babylon! Worse still, the secular records say Cyrus conquers Babylon just another 8 years after that. The Bible says that Cyrus let all exiles go when he took power. Did he make an exception, that all exiles could leave and be repatriated except for Egyptians? The Bible doesn't mention anything of the sort.

According to the secular chronology, any such desolation could have only lasted 21 years, perhaps 29 years if you toss out the secular evidence that Egypt forged an alliance with the last Babylonian King. So, there was no 40-year desolation of Egypt. If the 587-based chronology is to be believed, the extensive prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel against Egypt failed miserably!

Egypt was not “**removed from its soil**” for four decades at all, the cities were not “**without an inhabitant**”, and the country was, in fact, ruled over by a King who was strong enough to forge an alliance with Babylon and Lydia against the Medo-Persians. The prophecies of 40 years of desolation with the country being abandoned, are nothing more than a joke. The country even managed to remain independent from the Persian empire after it later conquered Babylon. Some 40 years of desolation and abandonment that turned out to be! *For ways some have tried to explain away the problems, see Appendix G*

On the other hand, if one accepts the Bible's internal chronology that 607 is the date of Jerusalem's destruction, the 40 years of Egypt's abandonment fits perfectly. With the 607 date, Egypt has more than enough time to become repatriated and be ruled over by a King, to have a military alliance with Babylon and Lydia, and be strong enough to retain its independence against Medo-Persian rule for 14 years (as secular chronology also states).

What will you accept? The chronology of secular historians who mold the Bible to fit their chronology, making inspired prophecies fail? Or will you accept the complete and harmonious Biblical chronology, which gives us a time-line without contradictions, showing the total fulfillment of every prophecy Jehovah gave us? Will you judge the accuracy of secular chronology against the occasions where it agrees with the Bible, or will you only judge the Bible correct if the secular evidence happens to agree with it?

- **Egypt was to be desolated for 40 years.**
- **After repatriation, Egypt had an alliance with the last Babylonian King.**
- **Cyrus let all exiles and prisoners free.**
- **Only the 607-based chronology allows for this.**

Zechariah: Did the seventy years continue?

There is yet another way some try to explain away their unworkable secular chronology. Some are aware of the problems in placing the start of the 70 years at an earlier time, namely 20 years *before* Jerusalem was destroyed. Hence, instead they make a different claim: that the 70 years of desolation ended 20 years *after* Jerusalem became re-inhabited! –See chart 3 on page 76

The first thing you may notice about such a theory is that it totally and utterly contradicts the first theory we have been talking about — the idea that the desolation began in the 3rd year of Jehoiakim, with the fictitious exile they claim happened in that year. Surely, you would think, that apostates are sharply divided about what “actually” happened.

You would be wrong. The same people use both arguments — while fully aware that both theories contradict one another, and therefore they are, in fact, contradicting themselves. The reason is that they have one goal: to attack the Watchtower Society and Jehovah's Witnesses. They couldn't care less how the 70 year prophecy was (or was not) fulfilled, they don't care about any pursuit of truth (although they may put on a false piety of searching for “truth”). The only important thing is that the Watchtower Society is “proved” wrong, and little else matters. That is why they openly contradict themselves.

The claim is based in these two verses of Zechariah which, when taken out of context, seem to support their idea. **“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, whom you have denounced these seventy years?” (Zechariah 1:12) “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, ‘When you fasted and there was a wailing in the fifth month and in the seventh month, and this for seventy years, did you really fast to me, even me?’ —Zechariah 7:5**

Those words were said between 520 and 518 BCE, almost 70 years after Jerusalem was destroyed in the secular time-line. Hence, apostates can claim that 587 was the true date of Jerusalem's destruction, and that the foretold 70 years was still continuing according to those verses above.

However, apostates often take scriptures out of context, and this is no exception.

At the start of Zechariah, Jehovah warns the repatriated people not to become like their evicted ancestors, who refused to listen and were punished. They do, in fact, need to show zeal for Jehovah and complete the rebuilding of the temple.

Next, Zechariah has a vision where men on horses walk about the earth. They report back saying, **“We have walked about in the earth, and, look! the whole earth is sitting still and having no disturbance.”** Yes, the nations are currently quiet. They are not concerned about the rebuilding of Jehovah's temple, mainly because it isn't happening. The Jews are being lazy and neglecting the work. There is a fear they may become just like their forefathers.

That is when the angel of Jehovah asks God, **“O Jehovah of armies, how long will you yourself not show mercy to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah, whom you have**

denounced these seventy years?"

Stop and think about this statement. Doesn't it seem odd that the angel would ask Jehovah "**how long**", when the exact length of time had already been determined, namely 70 years? The only possible reason to ask such a rhetorical question is because the 70 years had already ended. Yet, by all appearances Jerusalem was still in a partially desolated and ruined place in desperate need of rebuilding, indeed the temple was still not completed!

In other words, were the 70 years of desolation not enough? Will Jehovah continue withholding his favor, just as he did during the 70 years of desolation? Indeed, "**O Jehovah, how long...?**"

Jehovah himself answers the angel's question. He says, "**I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy. With great indignation I am feeling indignant against the nations that are at ease... My own house will be built in her... My cities will yet overflow with goodness**" Yes, Jehovah will show Jerusalem favor and the temple will be rebuilt and blessings will flow to God's people.

Now let's take a wider look at the verse in Zechariah chapter 7.

Throughout the 70 years of desolation, and since the repatriation, the Jews have kept festivals of fasting, commemorating their sorrow over the destruction of Jerusalem. One day, men from the city of Bethel come to the prophet Zechariah and ask, "**Shall [we the people of Bethel] weep in the fifth month, practicing an abstinence, the way I have done these O how many years?**" Notice that they do not specify that it was 70 years only. For the commemoration had continued on now for an additional 17 years.

The answer then comes from Jehovah in verses 5 to 7, "**Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, 'When you fasted and there was a wailing in the fifth month and in the seventh month, and this for seventy years, did you really fast to me, even me? 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?'**" Clearly Jehovah is talking of the past, "**when**" they fasted during the "**seventy years**". The 70 years was not continuing, although their fasting in the same manner had continued just the same.

Jehovah continues, "**Should you not obey the words that Jehovah called out by means of the former prophets, while Jerusalem happened to be inhabited, and at ease, with her cities all around her**". Jehovah's words are merely pointing out how much better obedience in the first place would have been than the later fasting over the calamity.

Notice that God's words actually takes them back in time and reminds them that if they had simply been obedient when the land was still inhabited before the calamity, then the 70 years of desolation would not have occurred. If the the fastings and commemorations were really for Jehovah rather than their own sorrow, they would be obedient. The rest of the chapter reminds them of just why the desolation came upon them.

When we look at the context, coupled with the previous information that the land was to be desolated, uninhabited, ruined, and a wilderness for 70 years, we can see that the 70 year desolation was not continuing. It ended when they Jews were repatriated in 537 BCE, and began when Jerusalem was destroyed 70 years earlier in 607 BCE.

- **This theory contradicts the previous ones.**
- **The context of the verses show the 70 years were in the past.**

What about 519 BCE?

Because of the facts mentioned in the previous arguments, showing that the 70 years of Jerusalem's desolation really was 70 years (not 50!), some have suggested that perhaps 587 BCE is correct, but the date of Babylon's defeat is the one that is wrong. Perhaps, they say, that Jerusalem was destroyed in 587, lay desolate for 70 years, and then Babylon was conquered in 519 BCE at which time the exiles were released.

Of course, there is abundant secular evidence to show that 539 BCE is the date of Babylon's defeat, and most importantly, *such evidence is accepted by us because it does not contradict the scriptures*. Aside from that, the 519 date is unscriptural.

If Babylon was defeated 20 years after generally accepted, that would push all events afterwards forward by 20 years also. This is because many historical dates are based on the date of Babylon's defeat.

This would affect the prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, the Seventy Weeks prophecy. The “**word to go forth and rebuild Jerusalem**” would have been given in 435 BCE, not 455 BCE. Hence, Jesus was born in 19 CE, baptized in 49 CE, and died in 53 CE. The destruction of Jerusalem by Rome would have subsequently occurred in 90 CE.

Either Jesus isn't the Messiah, Roman history is terribly unreliable, or these dates are simply wrong. The 519 BCE date is impossible, 539 BCE is the only acceptable and reasonable date for the overthrow of the Babylonian Empire, thus making 607 BCE the date for the destruction of Jerusalem 70 years earlier.

- **The 539 date does not contradict the scriptures and happens to be supported by secular chronology.**
- **The 519 date causes serious problems with the Messiah prophecies.**

Conclusion

Here are the failed prophecies if 587 BCE is the correct date for Jerusalem's destruction.

Jerusalem uninhabited and *in ruins* for 70 years. If 587 BCE is correct, then the desolation ends in 517 BCE. By this time homes had been built and crops grown for over 20 years (Haggai 1:4, 11). Alternatively, if the desolation ends in 537 BCE, the period is only 50 years, not 70. Alternatively, if the period began in 3rd year of Jehoiakim, the desolation is only 68 years, not 70, and whole passages of Jeremiah are wrong. No matter what argument is used, the prophecy fails.

70 years of the nations servitude to Babylon, starting with Nebuchadnezzar If 70 years begin in Jehoiakim's 3rd year of rulership, servitude lasts 68 years, not 70. If servitude begins in 609 BCE (secular chronology) with the defeat of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar is not King for another 2 years, but prophecies state nations serve him and not his father; once King, servitude lasts 68 years, not 70. Prophecies still talk of servitude in future after it has started.

Tyre forgotten for 70 years. Period begins after the destruction of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 26:1), which is 587 BCE at the earliest. Period ends when Tyre's profit becomes holy to Jehovah (Isaiah 23:14), in 537 BCE (Ezra 3:1). Only 50 years have passed, not 70.

Egypt devastated for 40 years. Ezekiel gave prophecy in 570 BCE (Ezekiel 29:17) and devastation begins in 568 BCE. Within 30 years Egypt has a King and holds a foreign alliance, and all exiles were released from Babylon, also Kingdom strong enough to rebuff Persian Empire. The 40-year period ends uneventfully in 528 BCE.

However, the 607 BCE date fits all the chronologies and prophecies like a glove! It creates no contradictions, no failed prophecies, and requires no complex arguments or contrived explanations. All one needs to do is accept what the Bible plainly says, that 70 years is 70 years long.

607 BCE – the only date that works

Here is the result when we accept the Bible's mathematics — that 70 years is 70 years long:

Jerusalem uninhabited and *in ruins* for 70 years. If 607 BCE is correct, then the desolation ends right on time in 537 BCE when the Jews are back in their cities.

70 years of the nations servitude to Nebuchadnezzar If 70 years begin

in 607 BCE, servitude lasts the full 70 years. Nebuchadnezzar is King at start as prophecies stated.

Tyre forgotten for 70 years. Period begins after the destruction of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 26:1), which is 607 BCE. Period ends precisely 70 years later when Tyre's profit becomes holy to Jehovah (Isaiah 23:14), in 537 BCE (Ezra 3:1) when Tyre provides materials for the new temple.

Egypt devastated for 40 years. Ezekiel gave prophecy in 590 BCE (Ezekiel 29:17) and devastation begins in 588 BCE, ends exactly 40 years later in 548 BCE. A year later secular chronology records Egypt's King holding a foreign alliance.

The date 607 BCE is the only date which fits – and not only does it fit, but it fits *extremely well*. If one is “searching for truth”, as many 587-promoters claim to be doing, shouldn't one only abandon 607 BCE if there is a *better* explanation? Is 587 a better explanation? Does it harmonize with the Bible in a *better way* than 607? Most certainly not! –See chart 11 on page 80

The only reasonable conclusion is that 607 BCE is the date of Jerusalem's destruction. One would have to be extremely biased, rabidly opposed to Jehovah's Witnesses, or just have no regard for the Bible's inspiration to promote any other date. According to God's Word the Bible, the desolation began with the city of Jerusalem, and it began in 607 BCE.

Month-to-month

In fact, the 607 BCE date even allows the 70-year desolation to begin and end **in the exact same month**. *The Watchtower* of 15th January 2006 explains:

In the seventh month of 537 B.C.E. (Tishri, corresponding to September/October), the faithful returnees offered their first sacrifice. King Nebuchadnezzar had entered Jerusalem in the fifth month (Ab, corresponding to July/August) of 607 B.C.E., and two months later [in the seventh month] the city's desolation was complete (2 Kings 25:8-17, 22-26) As foretold, Jerusalem's 70-year desolation ended right on time. (Jeremiah 25:11, 29:10) Anything Jehovah's Word foretells always comes true.

On the other hand, *not a single one of the 587-based theories creates such a perfect harmonization*. In fact, all chronologies based on 587 cause massive contradictions, causes four prophecies to fail, and makes entire passages of Jeremiah *just plain wrong*.

What the passages “actually” mean

Worst of all, scriptural accounts which are perfectly clear and understandable, apparently require an expert to tell you what they “actually” mean.

When the Bible says Jerusalem and Judah are both devastated for **70 years**, it doesn't *actually* mean 70. When it says **40 years** for Egypt, it doesn't *actually* mean 40. When

Jeremiah said the land **will be** devastated, he *actually* meant it already was. When the Bible said the land would be **without an inhabitant**, it didn't *actually* mean without any inhabitants. When the Bible says **all the princes** were in Jerusalem, it didn't *actually* mean all the princes were there. When the Bible said Daniel was trained for **3 years** before seeing the King, it didn't *actually* mean 3 years before seeing the King. When it said Tyre would be **forgotten for 70 years** until helping rebuild the temple, it didn't *actually* mean 70. And so on and so forth.

We are strongly reminded of the tactics of Trinitarians, how they try to explain away clear words and tell you how “**the father is greater than I am**” *actually* doesn't mean that. The Bible simply doesn't agree with 587 BCE, and attempts to make it fit are contrived, complicated, and end up contradicting whole sets of scriptures. They use secular dates sourced from unknown pagan astrologers to over-ride the inspired writings of faithful Bible prophets, causing it's prophecies to fail; they go further and play with the word of God – inventing an exile that never occurred, just to suit their own ideas. It truly is a disgrace.

On the other hand, we as Jehovah's Witnesses are determined to go with the *whole* Bible record and what it says rather than unproven writings of historians — who may or may not have an ax to grind and reasons to slant history to suit their own beliefs.

Your decision

Will you accept the chronology of the Bible and it's inspired prophecies — God's view — or, will you believe the secular chronology and the viewpoint of imperfect human historians and their Bible-contradicting dates?

This essay and website has been researched, written, and created by brothers who, at one time, believed that 607 BCE was incorrect, and that 587 BCE was more likely. We read the claims of apostates, and were gullible enough to be taken in by them. After some time we realized that the promoters of 587 were not motivated by “truth seeking”, as they so often claim, but rather from an arrogant desire to simply prove the *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York* wrong, and to prove themselves more clever or more righteous than Jehovah's people, whom they hold in obvious contempt.

After much research we can now see that the year 607 BCE really is correct according to the Bible. As the apostle once warned, we were “**so quickly removed from the One who called [us] with Christ's undeserved kindness, over to another sort of good news. But it is not another; only there are certain ones who are causing you trouble and wanting to pervert the good news about the Christ.**” (Galatians 1:6,7) Now we see clearly that Jehovah's Witnesses are right, and 587 is wrong.

There is a very popular book which advocates the 587 BCE date, written by an apostate with a disturbing cult-like following. To successfully draw people out of the truth, he promotes 587 to discredit the 1914 doctrine. He conveniently forgets to mention that 587 contradicts the Bible so much that it makes entire prophecies fail, of course.

By putting on a false piety, pretending to be merely seeking truth, he has fooled many into believing the secular chronology. By using twisted methods of interpretations he even convinces many that the Bible supports this ridiculousness too!

One woman who read his book (and left the truth being erroneously convinced 607 is wrong) remarked that she had “*found the truth about the truth*”. She then quoted Jesus in saying “*the truth shall set you free!*”, happy that she doesn't have to go to meetings anymore or preach as Christ commanded, as she is now far more enlightened than the ignorant Jehovah's Witnesses.

However, she and thousands like her are totally and utterly fooled. Talking of a divisive issue back in the 1st century, the apostle comments, “**Once you were making fine progress, who got at you so that you now are no longer convinced of the truth? That persuasion did not come from the one who called you, and now *the whole lump is in a ferment because of that small amount of yeast*. Yet I am confident that all of you who belong to Christ will not deviate from your convictions; but the one who is upsetting you, whoever that is, he is the one who will bear the responsibility.**” –Galatians 5:7-10, 2001 translation

Also the apostle advises how we should treat ones who cause such problems, “**keep your eye on those who cause divisions and occasions for stumbling contrary to the teaching that you have learned, and avoid them. For men of that sort are slaves, not of our Lord Christ, but of their own bellies; and by smooth talk and complimentary speech they seduce the hearts of guileless ones.**” (Romans 17:18-19) Yes, for “...their word will spread like gangrene.” —2 Timothy 2:17

Appendix A: The Seven Times prophecy

This essay has shown that 607BCE – not 587BCE – is indeed the year that Jerusalem was desolated according to irrefutable evidence in God's word the Bible. Even some of those who have previously tried to discredit Jehovah's Witnesses by saying 607BCE is incorrect, are now forced to admit that it may indeed be the right after all, because they have no clear answer for the Biblical evidence presented.

In light of this, not wanting to admit that Jehovah's Witnesses indeed have the truth, they now have resorted to this view: *'So what. It doesn't matter if it was 607 or 587! This proves nothing about 1914. It is still an artfully contrived story with no basis in the Bible. There is no evidence that 607 began the Gentile Times and that 1914 was the end of those Gentile Times.'*

So the question begs to be answered from a Biblical standpoint: did the 7 times begin in 607 and end in 1914? Did the 7 times begin when the ruler on Jehovah's throne in Jerusalem, Zedekiah, was cut down in 607 and end in 1914 with the rightful ruler, Jesus, the twig of Jesse, becoming the King in God's Kingdom in heaven?

How long are the seven times?

Briefly, Revelation 12:6 tells us: **"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days."** Later in verse 13 of the same chapter we read, **"the woman, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place; there is where she is fed for a time and times and half a time away from the face of the serpent."**

We can clearly see that 3.5 times = 1260 days. By doubling both figures we can easily conclude that 7 times = 2520 days. Then, by applying a-day-for-a-year, we deduct that 7 times = 2520 years. Amazing as it may seem, it is 2520 years from 607BCE to 1914CE. Are the seven times of Daniel chapter 4 to be applied in connection with the Gentile Times and God's rulership?

Why Daniel Used the Word 'Times' not Years

Many claim that the tree dream only applied to Neb, that he would have his sickness for 7 years and then be restored after that 7 years, and it has no further application. However, it is most interesting that the word Daniel chose to use concerning the tree was not the same word used for the word 'year'. He used the word *iddan* which means *epoch, age, seasons, or times*. *Iddan* is not the word that would be used merely to describe one year if one year is what is meant. There is a different word used to describe the word 'year'. For example, the word for year in Hebrew is *shana*. By using the word *iddan* it becomes evident that Daniel wanted to convey the thought that something was meant beyond a simple seven years otherwise why not just use the word for years?

What can we conclude concerning Daniel's use of the word *iddan*? That Daniel must have used that word for 'times' for some purpose, or was directed by Jehovah to do so. We have to wonder why? Why use the word 'times' instead of years? There must be a reason. If the tree dream is only to be applied to Nebuchadnezzar then why didn't the prophecy simply say 7 years. Why 7 times?

Consider the fact that Revelation later shows us that 7 times can equal 2,520. So, apparently it was meant for 7 times to be deciphered as 2,520 in order to show us that it has greater significance other than just the 7 years upon Neb. Otherwise, why the clues? Was it Jehovah's intention to mislead Bible readers?

There can be no doubt that the mention of *times* in Revelation was only written to help us figure out

the the length of seven times in Daniel. Otherwise, John could have just been directed to write 1,260 days – there was no need whatsoever for him to repeat himself and also write 'time times and half of times', because it does not help us in the interpretation of Revelation at all. In other words, the 7 times in Daniel do not help us to figure out what the 3½ times are in Revelation. It is the other way around.

Consider this: If 7 times mean only 7 years, then Daniel could have simply said 7 years. Then Revelation could have simply said 3.5 years or 1,260 days or 42 months. And nobody would ever even need to mention 'times' and everyone would be happy and understand it all. Furthermore, Daniel's mention of 3.5 times in connection with 1,260 days could also have been removed, as the same number – 1,260 days – is also mentioned in Revelation. The whole business of “times” is superfluous – unless it is used as a key in understanding the 7 times.

However, because 7 times means more than simply 7 years with Neb, but 2,520 years in the great scheme of things, then Daniel had to use a different term other than years. He had to use a word that could convey *both the 7 years upon Neb and the hundreds of years spanning the Gentile times*. That term he was directed by Jehovah to use was *iddan* or *times*. Since this needed to be understood, then John was directed to use the same terminology, 'times', to show the length of seven times and thus the book of Daniel could be understood by seekers of truth.

In view of the foregoing, is it reasonable to think that Daniel 4 is only about Nebuchadnezzar? Why does Daniel specifically use the word 'times' rather than years? And why does Revelation then help us to see the length of 7 times? And why does Daniel tell of 7 times passing over until the lowliest one of mankind is set up. Dan 4:17, **"to the intent that people living may know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that to the one whom he wants to, he gives it and he sets up over it even the lowliest one of mankind."** This cannot be mere coincidence, can it?

Could Seven Times Mean 70 Years?

Some claim that 7 times just meant 7 *decades*, therefore concluding that it coincides with the 70 years of Babylonian domination. However, the question would need to be answered: In what way was a lowly one put on high in 537? No king of Judah was restored at that time.

However, we do have a parallel with Neb. He was brought low only to be put on high after 7 times. God's rulership in the form of the Davidic Kings (the last one being Zedekiah) was brought low in 607. It would not be until someone sat on that throne again that the lowly one would be put on high. That lowly one of course is Jesus Christ. When would that lowly one be put on high? That is what the prophecy is answering. First it answers that question in regards to Nebuchadnezzar. Secondly, and most importantly, it answers that question as regards to God's rulership.

Others argue that a year is 365 days not 360 days. Therefore they conclude that 7 times should be 7 X 365. But the Bible interprets itself. The book of Revelation clearly shows that 3 and a half times equals 1260 days. Therefore 7 times equals 2520. We can't argue with that. We can't say, 'oh no, there are 365 days in a year.' That doesn't matter. The Bible shows what 7 times equals. We can't change it. 7 times = 2520 days. If it is a day for a year then 7 times is equal to 2520 years. You only have 2 choices. Either seven times = seven years. Or seven times = 2520 years. (based on a day for a year) It can't be 7 X 365 or 70 years or 7 months or 7 days unless we are going to totally disregard the Bible's explanation of times in Revelation.

What the Tree Pictures

Just why was a dream given to Nebuchadnezzar in which a large tree is cut down, banded, and after seven times has passed over, the bands are be removed and the tree once again is able to grow? The Bible explains the reason in simple terms at Dan 4:17, **"to the intent that people living may know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that to the one whom he wants to, he gives it and he sets up over it even the lowliest one of mankind."** I'm certain that no one will deny this.

As has been said before, the Bible interprets itself and so we do not have to guess about this matter at all. Incredibly, similar words are used concerning the kingship of Zedekiah. Ezekiel 21:25-27 reads concerning Zedekiah: **"As for you, O deadly wounded, wicked chieftain of Israel, whose day has come in the time of the error of the end, this is what the Lord Jehovah has said, Remove the turban, and lift off the crown. This will not be the same. Put on high even what is low, and bring low even the high one. A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I shall make it. As for this also, it will certainly become no ones until he comes who has the legal right, and I must give it to him."**

Most Bible scholars will readily agree that this prophecy does indeed apply to the last king of Judah, Zedekiah. Ezekiel 20:1 gives the time period that the prophecy was given, **"Now it came about in the seventh year.."** The seventh year being the 7th year of Ezekiel's exile. Ezekiel's 7th year of exile was during the rule of King Zedekiah. In fact a quick reading of the entire 21st chapter of the book of Ezekiel will confirm that the prophecy is against Jerusalem and **"against the soil of Israel,"** and verses 18 through 21 confirm that it is the **"king of Babylon"** who would come against Judah and Jerusalem. Ezekiel 21:25-27 must therefore apply to Zedekiah and only Zedekiah since he was the ruling king of Judah at the time when the prophecy was given, he was the last king of Judah, and he was in fact shortly thereafter conquered by the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar.

Yet, there is even more evidence in Ezekiel 21 for connecting the kings of Judah – including the last king Zedekiah – with the tree in Neb's dream. In chapter of Ezekiel 21, did you notice that Jehovah has a sword that he will unsheath upon Judah because of their rebelliousness? It is concerning that sword that the question is asked in verse 10:

Verse 10: "Is it [the executional sword] rejecting the scepter [rulership] of my own son [Israel], as it does every tree?"

Verse 12: "Cry out and howl, O son of man, for it itself has come to be against my people; it [Jehovah's sword] is against all the chieftains of Israel."

Amazing! This exactly parallels Neb's tree dream, where Jehovah's sword will even cut down the **"tree"** or **"scepter"** or rulership of Israel. The cutting down of the tree or rulership of Israel is of great significance because those kings of Israel represented Jehovah's rulership in the earth.

1 Chronicles 29:23 tells us, **"And Solomon began to sit upon Jehovah's throne as king in place of David his father"** From this we can see that the kings of Israel did indeed represent Jehovah's rulership on earth.

It is in this regard that Lamentations 4:20 written after the desolation of Jerusalem and the end of Zedekiah tells us, **"The very breath of our nostrils, the anointed one [king of Israel] of Jehovah, has been captured in their large pit, The one of whom we have said: "In his shade we shall live among the nations."** By using the word shade in connection with the king of Israel we are once again reminded of the large tree in Daniel 4 that would provide protective shade covering for all. This is the same protective tree-like shade that God's rulership provided as represented by the kings of Israel.

So ask yourself this: Out of all the trees or scepters or rulerships that Jehovah would use Babylon to cut down, which tree would be unbanded and restored in the future, receiving kingship from Jehovah himself as he saw fit? Which one would provide the 'lowliest' twig that would shoot forth and become a majestic cedar in Jehovah's Holy Mountain put on high like no other?

Ezekiel 19 provides us with even more amazing similarities in comparing the rulership of Judah with the tree of Neb's dream in Daniel 4. After comparing the rulers of Judah to young cubs of a lioness, notice the similarities to the tree in Daniel 4 with what is said of that mother lion comparing her to a vine in verses 10-14, **"Your mother was like a vine in your blood, planted by waters. A bearer of fruit and full of branches she became because of abundant water. And they came to be for her strong rods, meant for the scepters of rulers. And its height gradually became tall up among branches, and it got to be visible because of its tallness, because of the abundance of its foliage."** –

Ezekiel 19:10-14

Compare that description to Daniel 4:11 "The tree grew up and became strong, and its very height finally reached the heavens, and it was visible to the extremity of the whole earth. Its foliage was fair, and its fruit was abundant, and there was food for all on it. Under it the beast of the field would seek shade, and on its boughs the birds of the heavens would dwell, and from it all flesh would feed itself."

Additionally, just as the tree was chopped down there is a similar outcome to the vine/tree in Ezekiel 19:12 "But she was finally uprooted in fury. To the earth she was thrown, and there was an east wind that dried up her fruit. Her strong rod was torn off and became dry. Fire itself devoured it. And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a waterless and thirsty land. And fire proceeded to come forth from her rod. It devoured her very shoots, her very fruit, and there proved to be in her no strong rod, no scepter for ruling."

And so it was that the high one, Zedekiah, the last ruler of Israel, was brought low. Meanwhile, the Pagan gentile ruler of the time was put on high – even above the kings that had sat on Jehovah's throne in Jerusalem. The kingly representative of Jehovah on earth ceased for a time. The tree was banded until he who had the legal right would come and once again sit on 'Jehovah's throne' as king. This lowly one with the legal right would be put on high when the tree was unbanded. How do we know this to be the case? Amazingly once again, we have the Bible explaining itself in no uncertain terms. Again the book of Ezekiel clears it up.

The Riddle of Ezekiel 17

The whole 17th chapter of Ezekiel describes the end of Zedekiah by means of Nebuchadnezzar, and thus the end of that tree. Notice it: Ezekiel 17 from verse 1:

"And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: Son of man, propound a riddle and compose a proverbial saying toward the house of Israel. And you must say, This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: The great eagle [Nebuchadnezzar], having great wings, with long pinions, full of plumage, which had color variety, came to Lebanon [Jerusalem] and proceeded to take the treetop [Jehoiachin] of the cedar. He plucked off the very top of its young shoots and came bringing it to the land of Canaan; in a city of traders [Babylon; see Ezekiel 17:12] he placed it.

"Furthermore, he took some of the seed of the land and put it in a field for seed. As a willow by vast waters, as a willow tree [Zedekiah] he placed it. And it began to sprout and gradually became a luxuriantly growing vine low in height [Just a mere vassal king of Babylon, not lofty; see Ezekiel 17:13], inclined to turn its foliage inward; and as for its roots, they gradually came to be under it. And it finally became a vine and produced shoots and sent forth branches. And there came to be another great eagle [Egypt's Pharaoh; see Ezekiel 17:15], having great wings, and having large pinions, and, look! this very vine stretched its roots hungrily toward him. And its foliage it thrust out to him in order for him to irrigate it, away from the garden beds where it was planted. Into a good field, by vast waters, it was already transplanted, in order to produce boughs and to bear fruit, to become a majestic vine.

"Say, This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: Will it have success? Will not someone tear out its very roots and make its very fruit scaly? And must not all its freshly plucked sprouts become dry? It will become dry. Neither by a great arm nor by a multitudinous people will it have to be lifted up from its roots. And, look! although transplanted, will it have success? Will it not dry up completely, even as when the east wind touches it? In the garden beds of its sprout it will dry up.

"And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: 'Say, please, to the rebellious house, Do you people actually not know what these things mean? Say, Look! The king of Babylon came to

Jerusalem and proceeded to take its king and its princes and bring them to himself at Babylon. Furthermore, he took one of the royal seed and concluded a covenant with him and brought him into an oath; and the foremost men of the land he took away, in order that the kingdom might become low, unable to lift itself up, that by keeping his covenant it might stand. But he finally rebelled against him in sending his messengers to Egypt, for it to give him horses and a multitudinous people. Will he have success? Will he escape, he who is doing these things, and who has broken a covenant? And will he actually escape? As I am alive, is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, in the place of the king who put in as king the one that despised his oath and that broke his covenant, with him in the midst of Babylon he will die. And by a great military force and by a multitudinous congregation Pharaoh will not make him effective in the war, by throwing up a siege rampart and by building a siege wall, in order to cut off many souls. And he has despised an oath in breaking a covenant, and, look! he had given his hand and has done even all these things. He will not make his escape.'

"Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: 'As I am alive, surely my oath that he has despised and my covenant that he has broken I will even bring it upon his head. And I will spread over him my net, and he will certainly be caught in my hunting net; and I will bring him to Babylon and put myself on judgment with him there respecting his unfaithfulness with which he acted against me. And as regards all the fugitives of his in all his bands, by the sword they will fall, and the ones left remaining will be spread abroad even to every wind. And you people will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have spoken it."

The remaining verses describe the return of a twig as God's ruler. "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: I myself will also take and put some of the lofty treetop of the cedar; from the top of its twigs I shall pluck off a tender one [Jesus] and I will myself transplant it upon a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain of the height of Israel I shall transplant it, and it will certainly bear boughs and produce fruit and become a majestic cedar. And under it there will actually reside all the birds of every wing; in the shadow of its foliage they will reside."

Especially notice the final verse, verse 24: "And all the trees of the field will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have abased the high tree, have put on high the low tree, have dried up the still-moist tree and have made the dry tree blossom. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken and have done it."

Did you notice? The high tree is abased, dried up. The rulership ends. But at a later date a "twig" from the royal tree will return. For a twig will be planted in Jehovah's Holy Mountain and it will become a majestic "tree".

Did you see the connection that the Bible makes between Daniel 4 and Ezekiel 21 and 17? Compare Daniel 4:17 "that people living may know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that to the one whom he wants to, he gives it and he sets up over it even the lowliest one of mankind".

And compare Ezekiel 21:26,27 about the end of Zedekiah's rule and the beginning of Jesus' rule, "Put on high even what is low, and bring low even the high one. A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I shall make it. As for this also, it will certainly become no [one's] until he comes who has the legal right, and I must give [it] to him."

And Ezekiel 17:24 "And all the trees of the field will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have abased the high tree, have put on high the low tree, have dried up the still-moist tree and have made the dry tree blossom. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken and have done it."

All 3 Bible texts mention that the low will be put on high, and that Jehovah is the one giving the rulership to whomever he chooses. There can be no doubt that the tree pictures God's rulership. The end of Zedekiah ends that rulership and is replaced by the gentiles. Divine rulership only starts again once the one who has the "legal right" returns, the twig of Jesse if you will, and once again takes over that rulership.

Trees, Stumps, Roots, Twigs and the Kingship of Jesus

Notice the correlation between scriptures as regards to trees and stumps and twigs and roots and Christ's kingship:

Isa 10:33 "Look! The true Lord, Jehovah of armies, is lopping off boughs with a terrible crash; and those tall in growth are being cut down, and the high ones themselves become low. And he has struck down the thickets of the forest with an iron tool, and by a powerful one Lebanon itself will fall. And there must go forth a twig out of the stump of Jesse; and out of his roots a sprout will be fruitful. And upon him the spirit of Jehovah must settle down, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of mightiness, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah; and there will be enjoyment by him in the fear of Jehovah."

A few verses further on, in verse 10: "And it must occur in that day that there will be the root of Jesse that will be standing up as a signal for the peoples. To him even the nations will turn inquiringly, and his resting-place must become glorious."

Jeremiah 23:5 "Look! There are days coming,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I will raise up to David a righteous sprout. And a king will certainly reign and act with discretion and execute justice and righteousness in the land."

Ezekiel 17:22 "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: I myself will also take and put some of the lofty treetop of the cedar; from the top of its twigs I shall pluck off a tender one and I will myself transplant it upon a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain of the height of Israel I shall transplant it, and it will certainly bear boughs and produce fruit and become a majestic cedar. And under it there will actually reside all the birds of every wing; in the shadow of its foliage they will reside. And all the trees of the field will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have abased the high tree, have put on high the low tree, have dried up the still-moist tree and have made the dry tree blossom. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken and have done it."

Zechariah 6:12 "And you must say to him, 'This is what Jehovah of armies has said: 'Here is the man whose name is Sprout. And from his own place he will sprout, and he will certainly build the temple of Jehovah. And he himself will build the temple of Jehovah, and he, for his part, will carry the dignity; and he must sit down and rule on his throne, and he must become a priest upon his throne, and the very counsel of peace will prove to be between both of them'"

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, sent my angel to bear witness to you people of these things for the congregations. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright morning star."

All of these Bible verses confirm that the twig that comes forth from the tree is the rulership of Jesus Christ as King of God's kingdom. However, the defining scripture that tops it all off and leaves us no doubt is found at Isaiah 6. Here at Isaiah 6:11, notice what is said in conjunction with the desolation of Jerusalem and the restoration of the seed that will come forth:

"At this I said: 'How long, O Jehovah?' Then he said: '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; and Jehovah actually removes earthling men far away, and the deserted condition does become very extensive in the midst of the land. And there will still be in it a tenth, and it must again become something for burning down, like a big tree and like a massive tree in which, when there is a cutting down of them, there is a stump; a holy seed will be the stump of it.'"

While this scripture had fulfillment when Jerusalem was restored in 537BCE, it would also certainly apply to the holy seed which is to rule God's Kingdom, the foremost of whom is Jesus Christ himself. Yes the big, massive tree, was chopped down when Jerusalem was destroyed in 607BCE. However, there was

a stump left and that stump is comprised of the holy seed, those who rule in God's Kingdom. Again further proof that the tree dream does indeed have direct bearing on God's Kingdom and His rulership.

The Prophecies of Daniel Point to Jesus as Ruler

Here is another thing to consider: Have you noted that every prophecy of Daniel concludes with Jesus arriving in God's Kingdom? The only prophecy that does not is in chapter 9, which concludes with the arrival of the Messiah who is the King of God's Kingdom.

Daniel chapter 2: “And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite”.

Daniel chapter 7: “And the kingdom and the rulership and the grandeur of the kingdoms under all the heavens were given to the people who are the holy ones of the Supreme One. Their kingdom is an indefinitely lasting kingdom, and all the rulerships will serve and obey even them.”

Daniel chapter 8: “And against the Prince of princes he will stand up, but it will be without hand that he will be broken.”

Daniel chapter 12: “And during that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your people.”

What about Daniel 4? Does it also conclude with God's Kingdom? Daniel 4:17 says, “**By the decree of watchers the thing is, and by the saying of holy ones the request is, to the intent that people living may know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that to the one whom he wants to, he gives it and he sets up over it even the lowliest one of mankind.**”

Here is something else to consider. Since one of Daniel's prophecies foretold the arrival of Jesus Christ on earth, wouldn't it be expected (or at least not surprising) that it would also tell about his heavenly arrival as king? Daniel 4 accomplishes that very purpose. Does it make sense that all the prophecies of Daniel point to the Messiah/King either coming on earth (once) or ruling in heaven (the rest), but that this one prophecy in Daniel 4 does not have anything to do with the Messiah/King but only Nebuchadnezzar?

The WT put it well when it said the following:

“...examination of the entire book of Daniel reveals that the element of time is everywhere prominent in the visions and prophecies it presents; and the world powers and events described in each such vision are shown, not as isolated or as occurring at random with the time element left ambiguous, but, rather, as fitting into a historical setting or time sequence. Additionally, the book repeatedly points toward the conclusion that forms the theme of its prophecies: the establishment of a universal and eternal Kingdom of God exercised through the rulership of the 'son of man.'”

“In view of the above, it does not seem logical to evaluate the vision of the symbolic 'tree' and its reference to 'seven times' as having no other application than to the seven years of madness and subsequent recovery and return to power experienced by one Babylonian ruler...The time at which the vision was given: at the critical point in history when God, the Universal Sovereign, had allowed the very kingdom that he had established among his covenant people to be overthrown; the person to whom the vision was revealed: the very ruler who served as the divine instrument in such overthrow and who thereby became the recipient of world domination by divine permission, that is, without interference by any representative kingdom of Jehovah God; and the whole theme of the vision, namely: 'that people living may know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that to the one whom he wants to, he gives it and he sets up over it even the lowliest one of mankind' (Da 4:17) all of this gives strong reason for believing that the lengthy vision and its interpretation were included in the book of Daniel because of their revealing the duration of

'the appointed times of the nations' and the time for the establishment of God's Kingdom by his Christ. The fact is evident that the key point of the vision is Jehovah God's exercise of irresistible sovereignty in 'the kingdom of mankind,' and this provides the guide to the full meaning of the vision.

“The tree is shown to have an application to Nebuchadnezzar, who at that point in history was the head of the dominant World Power, Babylon. Yet, prior to Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Jerusalem, the typical kingdom of God ruling out of that city was the agency by which Jehovah expressed his rightful sovereignty toward the earth. It thus constituted a divine block or impediment for Nebuchadnezzar in attaining his goal of world domination. By allowing that typical kingdom at Jerusalem to be overthrown, Jehovah permitted his own visible expression of sovereignty through the Davidic dynasty of kings to be cut down. The expression and exercise of world domination in the 'kingdom of mankind,' unhindered by any representative kingdom of God, now passed into the hands of the Gentile nations. (La 1:5; 2:2, 16, 17)

“In the light of these facts the tree is seen to represent, beyond and above its application to Nebuchadnezzar, world sovereignty or domination by God's arrangement.”

Should We Apply the Day for a Year Rule?

If a day for a year is not applied then that means that the 7 times lasted from 607 to 600. Did a ruler of God's Kingdom come forth then? Logical reasoning will lead a person to believe that the day for a year rule must apply otherwise the prophecy is meaningless. We have as an example the seventy weeks prophecy of Daniel chapter 9. The day for a year rule must apply in Daniel chapter 9 or the prophecy is meaningless and is of no value.

As we have already shown, Daniel used the word for 7 *times* instead of 7 *years*. Therefore it must mean more than 7 years. Otherwise he would have said 7 years not 7 times. Do you think that Jehovah was trying to trick us by using the terminology of 7 times, and then explaining the length of 3.5 times in Revelation, only to merely mean that the 7 times that pass over are 7 years and that is all?

Also, at the same time he supplied the rule 'a day for a year' when Ezekiel laid on his side for so many days (which, by the way, pointed to the destruction of Jerusalem in 607). He also supplied the prophecy of the 70 weeks which also needs the rule of 'a day for a year' for it to have value. The 70 weeks from 455 brings us to 453.5. Nothing happened. So surely, it must be a day for a year.

With that in mind, is there any other reason to apply the day for a year rule to the dream? For a moment, let us reason on why God wanted us to know exactly how long 3 1/2 times are. In one place he calls it 42 months, in another place he calls it 1260 days. If it only meant 42 regular months then why be so specific about it. What difference does a few days here or there make? Why not just 3½ years or 42 lunar or solar months? The only time a few days does make a big difference is when you are dealing with a prophecy that has a day for a year rule applied. In this case every day makes a big difference. When you combine this with the fact that every prophecy of Daniel either concludes with Jesus arriving in God's Kingdom, or with the arrival of the Messiah who is the King of God's Kingdom, then you have a pretty strong reason to apply the day for a year rule.

Jerusalem Will Be Trampled On by the Nations

This is all very well, some may say, but how can we go further and apply the 2,520 years to the “times of the gentiles” that Jesus spoke of? Here are the words at Luke chapter 21:

"Furthermore, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. Then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains, and let those in the midst of her withdraw, and let those in the country places not enter into her; because these are days for meting out justice, that all the things written may be fulfilled. Woe to the pregnant women and the ones suckling a

baby in those days! For there will be great necessity upon the land and wrath on this people; and they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled."

Please take note that these words are different from the words of Matthew and Mark. In Matthew and Mark he does not specifically mention the Roman armies. He refers to the disgusting thing that causes desolation. Only here is he, without a doubt, talking about the Roman armies and what they will do to the literal city of Jerusalem. He states in verse 24 how those Jews in Jerusalem will die by the sword and be led into captivity. Then the statement is made that **"Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled."**

Remember that Jesus is talking to his disciples who believe that in the very near future Jesus will restore the nation of Israel and reside as king over it. In Acts 1:6 we read, **"When, now, they had assembled, they went asking him: 'Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?'"** From this question it is clear that they are expecting Jesus to save Jerusalem and become the king. So when Jesus is telling them exactly what will happen to the literal city of Jerusalem, he then makes it clear to them that Jerusalem and its rulership, contrary to what they expect, will be trampled on by the nations until the appointed (seven) times of the nations are fulfilled. Only then will it truly be restored and he become king. Although they could not grasp that at the time, we can. Of course it was not to be the literal Jerusalem that was restored but the heavenly one.

We must not forget that Jesus is answering the question **"what will be the sign of your presence and conclusion of system of things?"** Then in Luke 21 he is telling what the near future holds for the *literal* city of Jerusalem and its people. Yet Jesus has not forgotten the big question: When is his presence? So after telling of the literal outcome of Jerusalem, he no doubt knows that his disciples are logically thinking, 'then Jerusalem will be restored and Christ's presence as king will begin,' just as they had previously asked in Acts 1:6. So he is letting them know that their thinking is *wrong*. Jerusalem will not then be immediately restored.

Thus he reminds them that Daniel's prophecy said that *'Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times (or seven times) of the nations are fulfilled.'* Only then will his presence and kingship commence. Only then, after the appointed seven times of the nations have been fulfilled, will Jerusalem be restored. While they did not understand at the time, we do understand. So his words were not just for his disciples living, then but also for people living in the last days of this system of things.

Matthew and Mark mentioned the 'disgusting thing', so that definitely had two fulfillments:

1. The roman army and,
2. the United Nations.

However Luke 21:20-23 is specifically and directly speaking about the literal events that would happen in the first century. Those events do not have a specific fulfillment in the last days although the parallel is similar. So after Jesus tells us literally what would happen to Jerusalem and the Jews, he then explains to them that Jerusalem will be trampled until appointed times have ended. The Kingdom will not be restored *until then*. As they would later come to recognize (after holy spirit was poured out at Pentecost), God's Kingdom would not be established literally in Jerusalem as they had thought, but it would be a heavenly kingdom that would come after appointed times of the nations had ended.

To use an illustration: You go to an Elvis concert. He is older and has gained weight and is popping pills. He is not the King he use to be. A fire breaks out at the concert hall. Everybody begins scrambling for the doors. Elvis gets caught up in the crowd and falls down. He is being trampled on. After about 30 seconds a prophet appears to him and says to Elvis. "7 minutes will pass over you until you know who the real King is" Well after another 2 minutes passes another prophet appears and says, "Elvis' neck will be broken and the King will be trampled until the appointed minutes of the crowd are fulfilled." Finally after the 7 minutes have passed the King stands up. He is young, thin, good looking, and rejuvenated just like

at the beginning of his career. Notice that the phrase used is 'the King will be trampled. It works.

- Elvis = Jerusalem
- Crowd = nations
- 7 minutes = 7 times
- Beginning of trampling = 607BCE
- Fat drugged-up King = Israelite rulers until 607
- Elvis' broken neck = Jerusalem's destruction in 70CE
- End of trampling = 1914, true King restored

607 to 1914—The Gentile Times

What does all this lead us to? That the Gentile Times began in 607 BCE with the last of the Judean kings who sat on Jehovah's throne, and ended in 1914 CE when Jesus, the twig, (who had the legal right to rule) became king on God's throne in the heavens. The events that took place on earth in 1914 and since then also confirm this. I submit that the artfully contrived story is not 1914 but rather those with the artfully contrived false story are those that contend that 607 is not the date of Jerusalem's destruction and 1914 is not the end of the Gentile Times. Those promoting this artfully contrived false story that Jesus did not begin his rule in 1914 are the same ones who fulfill the prophecy by saying, "Where is this promised presence of his?"

Appendix B: Secular records “correcting” the Bible

Critics of 607 point to the large body of secular evidence that seems to contradict it. Although there is much evidence, it must not be forgotten that, in effect, they choose to uphold what secular historians say as primary proof above the testimony of the Scriptures.

Historians such as Thiele “correct” the Bible where they believe it is wrong. Yes, in secular chronology, historians say the Bible is incorrect in many places, and then change its meaning to fit Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian secular chronology — trying to reconcile the Holy Scriptures with the writings of pagans.

Here's what one website had to say about Professor Thiele's approach to Bible chronology:

“Edwin R. Thiele indicates in his writings that Biblical chronology must conform to the Assyrian eponyms along with the apparent 763 BC eclipse of the sun.

“Even though he is considered a Biblical chronologist, he nevertheless “corrects” the Bible by using the reported eclipse of 763 BC and by using an Assyrian list of eponyms. [...] Thiele does not understand the dubiousness of using an eclipse to date events or the dubiousness of using the Assyrian list of eponyms to “correct” the Bible.

“[...] Thiele in his 1977 paperback book, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, tries to show that Biblical scripture on the reigns of the kings are hopelessly mixed and contradictory by mentioning some apparent contradictions and by quoting some words of noted scholars to the same effect. [...] Thiele at the end of Chapter one says in effect that he has the solutions, but his solutions ignore scripture and he reasons against some scripture.

“Thiele establishes his chronology based not on the Bible but on secular chronology. He uses the eclipse that is reported to have occurred on June 15, 763 BC along with the reconstructed Assyrian eponym list(s) (pp. 28ff). For example he states that:

“For many years Old Testament scholars have noticed that a total of 128 regnal years for the rulers of Judah from the accession of Athaliah to the end of Azariah ... was about a quarter of a century in excess of the years of contemporary Assyria ...” (p. 44).

“He tries to solve this problem by squeezing the Biblical chronology together so that it will agree with the Assyrian chronology by using “dual dating” and “overlapping regnal” schemes (Chap. 4 to 7). But this problem of the missing 25 years may have something to do with corrupt Assyrian kings’ list(s) and/or by the misidentification of the reported eclipse.

“In chapter 6 Thiele tries to fit Israel’s king Pekah’s reign before king Pekahiah in order to squeeze the Biblical chronology into the Assyrian chronology. [...] [He changes] scripture to suit his own theories and by saying without any proof that the scriptures were “late calculations” of records that were lost.

“In Thiele’ 1983 version of his, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, he is very aware of the problem his chronology causes for the scripture concerning Pekah, for he goes to great lengths to defend his idea (pp. 120, 129-137, 174).

“Thiele’s twisting and “reasoning” against scriptures concerning the reigns of Hoshea and Hezekiah is way off the mark (chap 7). Thiele’s main apparent goal is to fit Biblical chronology into the broken Assyrian chronology. But the Assyrian chronology cannot be trusted.” (Underlining ours)

Now, that is the sort of chronology that supporters for 587 would happily believe — yes, a secular chronology that contradicts the Bible and leads to the scriptures being “corrected” for its “*hopelessly mixed and contradictory*” statements. If we believe the Bible really is the inspired word of God, we cannot accept anything of the sort, irregardless of the secular evidence.

Indeed, the 20-year gap during the Babylonian reigns is only the first discrepancy. As one goes further back in history, the gaps and contradictions with secular history widen more and more — until eventually hundreds of years are involved.

Besides, it's not as if all secular evidence contradicts 607 — because it doesn't. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus argued that Jerusalem was empty for 70 years. He also lists the reigns of the Babylonian Kings — a list which curiously contradicts the Cannon of Ptolemy — for reasons that remain unknown.

Interestingly, not all experts support 587. At least one, Rolf Furuli of Oslo University, writes:

“The chronology of Parker and Dubberstein [hereafter, P&D] has been almost universally accepted for the last fifty years. According to P&D, the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar was 605 B.C.E and his destruction of Jerusalem occurred in 587 B.C.E. The conquest of Babylon by Cyrus occurred in 539...”

“A study of each cuneiform document used by P&D to show in which regnal years of Babylonian and Persian kings intercalary months were added, reveals that 51 percent of the "evidence" used by P&D has no real value, in this author's judgement. A comparison of 1450 cuneiform tablets dated in the reigns of the Persian kings reveals tablets for most of the kings that contradict P&D's scheme, which was based on first and last tablet dated to each king. On this basis it is argued that the chronology of P&D should be radically revised....”

“As of present I have reviewed data from about 7.000 business tablets from the New Babylonian Empire. There are so many tablets that are anomalous (from the point of view of the traditional chronology), that the whole scheme of P&D breaks down; each

king seems to have ruled longer than P&D says.”

As we can see, at least some experts will support the Bible's viewpoint against the traditional 587 date. Perhaps one day it may be possible to fill the 20-year gap using secular sources.

Perhaps the evidence is already here, but we don't know it. Researchers sometimes “read into” tablets what they want to see. The same website we quoted earlier points out the following:

- “Broken date read as 11th year by Kruckmann, but must be read 12th on basis of known materials” (Parker & Dubberstein, p. 7).
- “Broken date ... must be read as [symbol]’ on basis of known intercalated months” (Parker & Dubberstein, p. 7).
- “By addition of one wedge the year may be read either as [symbol] or as [symbol] or by omission of one wedge it may be read as [symbol] Error of either scribe or copyist is evident. Reading as [symbol] seems preferable to us” (Parker & Dubberstein, p. 7, footnote 12).
- “Possible dates for this letter are year 2 or 9 of Cyrus or year 3 of Cambyses” (Parker & Dubberstein, p. 2).
- “A collation by Sachs and Wiseman has shown that the text from Sippar (Strassmaier, loc. cit.) thought to be from the 4th month is correctly to be dated VII/__/acc. [7th month]” (Parker & Dubberstein, p. 12).
- “... line 19 reads VI/6/18 ... year 18 is impossible, so we assume either a scribal error or an error by Contenau” (Parker & Dubberstein, p. 13). This 18th year pertained to Nabonidus, king of Babylon.

This does not mean all evidence for 587 is faked, because it certainly is not. However, as we can see, sometimes anomalous evidence may be disregarded because it doesn't say what it should say. It is assumed *a priori* that 587 is correct, as are all other dates that contradict Bible chronology. Perhaps some key evidence has been overlooked, disregarded, or ‘corrected’?

There are, of course, many contradictions between Biblical and secular chronology. For example, the 40-year desolation of Egypt never occurred according to the secular chronology which supports 587. However, we could spend hours considering them all.

Some are also quick to claim that numerous lines of evidence support 587. They argue that one or two lines of evidence can be dismissed, but many lines should not be. However, what is often forgotten is that sometimes different “lines of evidence” are actually from the same source. For example, the works of Berossus is often classed as one line of evidence, the work of Ptolemy as another, and the cuneiform documents as yet one more. Yet, both Berossus and Ptolemy got their information from the cuneiform documents. So in reality, those three “lines of evidence” are really just one.

Ultimately, of course, we do not base our belief in 607 on archaeological evidence, but on what the Bible says. No matter how much evidence is gathered by secular historians, we will never compromise, reinterpret, or correct the Bible to agree with secular history, as many have happily done.

Jehovah's Witnesses go by the Bible as the ultimate authority. We believe 70 years is 70 years long, and we no matter how much secular evidence is presented, it will never be enough to over-ride the Bible.

Appendix C: Why the NWT uses “devastations” and not “ruins” at Daniel 9:2

The reason the *New World Translation* used the word “devastations” and not “ruins” or “waste” is because it is a very precise translation. The word carries the idea of being deliberately destroyed, rather than simply being in disrepair.

For example, the Colosseum in Rome is certainly “in ruins”, but you could not say it was *chorbâh* because it was not attacked and severely damaged, it merely fell into disrepair over the years and became ruins. The ancient city of Carthage, however, only became ruins after being attacked and desolated by the Romans. Therefore, afterwards one could accurately describe that place as *chorbâh*.

Therefore, the *New World Translation* has faithfully translated the word *chorbâh* with the correct nuance in the English language. In fact, many other English translations use the same word.

Appendix D: Josephus's account of the exiles from Jerusalem

The ancient Jewish historian Josephus lived during the 1st century, born circa 37 CE and died circa 100 CE. He recorded what were most likely the historical views of the Jews as well as the Jews who were part of the newly formed Christian congregation.

His records do not support 587 as the destruction for Jerusalem. In the following passage, he directly contradicts the modern apostate idea that exiles were taken during Jehoiakim's third year. Parts that are important I have underlined, and scriptures that agree are put in [brackets].

Now in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, one whose name was Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians [Jeremiah 25:1], who at the same time went up with a great army to the city Carchemish, which was at Euphrates, upon a resolution he had taken to fight with Neco king of Egypt, under whom all Syria then was. And when Neco understood the intention of the king of Babylon, and that this expedition was made against him, he did not despise his attempt, but made haste with a great band of men to Euphrates to defend himself from Nebuchadnezzar; and when they had joined battle, he was beaten, and lost many ten thousands [of his soldiers] in the battle.

So the king of Babylon passed over Euphrates, and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, excepting Judea. But when Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years, which was the eighth of Jehoiakim's government over the Hebrews, the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim [2 Kings 24:1], and threatened upon his refusal to make war against him. He was frightened at his threatening, and bought his peace with money, and brought the tribute he was ordered to bring for three years.

But on the third year, upon hearing that the king of the Babylonians made an expedition against the Egyptians, he did not pay his tribute [2 Kings 24:1; Daniel 1:1]; yet was he disappointed of his hope, for the Egyptians durst not fight at this time.

And indeed the prophet Jeremiah foretold every day, how vainly they relied on their hopes from Egypt, and how the city would be overthrown by the king of Babylon, and Jehoiakim the king would be subdued by him. But what he thus spake proved to be of no advantage to them, because there were none that should escape; for both the multitude and the rulers, when they heard him, had no concern about what they heard;

but being displeased at what was said, as if the prophet were a diviner against the king, they accused Jeremiah, and bringing him before the court, they required that a sentence and a punishment might be given against him.

Now all the rest gave their votes for his condemnation, but the elders refused, who prudently sent away the prophet from the court of [the prison], and persuaded the rest to do Jeremiah no harm; for they said that he was not the only person who foretold what would come to the city, but that Micah signified the same before him, as well as many others, none of which suffered any thing of the kings that then reigned, but were honored as the prophets of God. So they mollified the multitude with these words, and delivered Jeremiah from the punishment to which he was condemned. Now when this prophet had written all his prophecies, and the people were fasting, and assembled at the temple, on the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim, he read the book he had composed of his predictions of what was to befall the city, and the temple, and the multitude. And when the rulers heard of it, they took the book from him, and bid him and Baruch the scribe to go their ways, lest they should be discovered by one or other; but they carried the book, and gave it to the king; so he gave order, in the presence of his friends, that his scribe should take it, and read it. When the king heard what it contained, he was angry, and tore it, and cast it into the fire, where it was consumed.

He also commanded that they should seek for Jeremiah, and Baruch the scribe, and bring them to him, that they might be punished. However, they escaped his anger.

Now, a little time afterwards, the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim, whom he received [into the city], and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of this prophet, as supposing he should suffer nothing that was terrible, because he neither shut the gates, nor fought against him; yet when he was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants he had made, but he slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity, together with their king Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial; and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country, and of the city: he also took the principal persons in dignity for captives, three thousand in number, and led them away to Babylon; among which was the prophet Ezekiel, who was then but young. And this was the end of king Jehoiakim, when he had lived thirty-six years, and of them reigned eleven. But Jehoiachin succeeded him in the kingdom, whose mother's name was Nehushta; she was a citizen of Jerusalem. He reigned three months and ten days.

But a terror seized on the king of Babylon, who had given the kingdom to Jehoiachin, and that immediately; he was afraid that he should bear him a grudge, because of his killing his father, and thereupon should make the country revolt from him; wherefore he sent an army, and besieged Jehoiachin in Jerusalem; but because he was of a gentle and just disposition, he did not desire to see the city endangered on his account, but he took his mother and kindred, and delivered them to the commanders sent by the king of Babylon, and accepted of their oaths, that neither should they suffer any harm, nor the city; which agreement they did not observe for a single year, for the king of Babylon did not keep it, but gave orders to his generals to take all that were in the city captives, both the youth and the handicraftsmen, and bring them bound to him; their number was ten thousand eight hundred and thirty-two [2 Kings 24:14]; as also Jehoiachin, and his mother and friends. And when these were brought to him, he kept them in custody, and appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, to be king; and made him take an oath, that he would certainly keep the kingdom for him, and make no innovation, nor have any league of friendship with the Egyptians.

The Bible agrees on the order of events. Here are the same order of events in the Bible:

First, it tells us “**In [Jehoiakim's] days Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up, and so Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. However, he turned back and rebelled against him.**” (2 Kings 24:1) According to Josephus, Babylon forced Judah to become a vassal King during the eighth year of Jehoiakim's reign in Judah — not the third. Jeremiah agrees, stating that all was well during his fourth and fifth years and the King was unafraid of any Babylonian attack. Further, it contradicts the idea that exiles had been taken. Jeremiah also mysteriously forgets to list any exiles from that year (because it didn't happen).

Other parts of the Bible tell us what the Babylonian King did to this rebel. **“Against him Nebuchadnezzar's the king of Babylon came up that he might bind him with two fetters of copper to carry him off to Babylon. And some of the utensils of the house of Jehovah Nebuchadnezzar's brought to Babylon and then put them in his palace in Babylon.”** (2 Chronicles 36:6-7) Yes, because of Jehoiakim's rebellion, the Babylonian army came up and took “some” of the temple utensils. Evidentially, the fetters were never used, for Jehoiakim was killed, as Daniel confirms: **“Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and proceeded to lay siege to it. In time Jehovah gave into his hand Jehoiakim the king of Judah and a part of the utensils of the house of the true God, so that he brought them to the land of Shinar to the house of his god”.** (Daniel 1:1-2) Yes, Jehovah “gave into his hand” the rebel Judean King, killing him, and he took “a part” of the temple utensils away. This is what Josephus confirms.

What happens next? **“Jehoiachin his son began to reign in place of him... and for three months and ten days he reigned in Jerusalem”.** Why such a short reign? Because, **“at the return of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and proceeded to bring him to Babylon with desirable articles of the house of Jehovah.”** (2 Chronicles 36:8, 10) In fact, the Bible confirms that Jehoiachin surrendered. **“Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he with his mother and his servants and his princes and his court officials; and the king of Babylon got to take him.”** Earlier when they killed his father, they only took “some” of the temple utensils, but now the Babylonians take “all” the gold temple utensils and “all” the treasures of the house back with them to Babylon. **“Then he brought out from there all the treasures of the house of Jehovah and the treasures of the king's house, and went on to cut to pieces all the gold utensils that Solomon the king of Israel had made”.** (2 Kings 24:12-15) After this, King Nebuchadnezzar leaves Zedekiah on the throne of Judah. Again, all this lines up with Josephus.

So within the same year, two lots of exiles are taken. First, when Jehoiakim is killed 3,000 dignitaries are taken, then a few short months later **“at the return of the year”** Nebuchadnezzar comes back and Jehoiachin is taken away along with 10,000 more exiles.

Jeremiah lists all dignitaries taken, and tells us that the 3,000 were taken during Nebuchadnezzar's seventh full year (or eighth year of rule): **“These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar took into exile: in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews.”** This is not the exile that occurred at the end of Jehoiachin's 3-month reign, when 10,000 were taken. No, this is the exile that took place after his father, Jehoiakim, was killed — the first exile when 3,000 are taken. Why doesn't Jeremiah say the 3,000 were taken during Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year, as the apostates claim? Because there were no exiles taken in that year.

As Jeremiah says, the 3,000 were taken after Jehoiakim was killed. He plainly says this was in Nebuchadnezzar's 7th full year of rule, or 8th year as King — not his 1st year, which corresponds to Jehoiakim's 3rd as the apostates argue. If the 1st century Jews and their most widely-respected historian didn't believe in the fictional exile during Jehoiakim's 3rd year, as apostates and Christendom try to teach today, then the 1st century Christian congregation probably didn't believe in it either. That's because it never happened. Josephus, the Bible, and the ancient Jewish population are correct, while the modern 587 theory is mistaken.

Appendix E: Excuses for only 68 years

Because none of apostate's interpretations allows for a full 70 years (with the most popular being 68 years), they must think of ways to explain this problem away.

One tactic is to argue the 70 years a round figure. However, this is a poor argumentation. First of all, why would God give a round figure? Is he not powerful enough or not sufficiently all-knowing as to give the exact date? Further, the 70 years were to fulfill the Sabbaths for the land. The number 70 is very significant for this, whereas 68 falls short and does not work. Is Jehovah not powerful enough for his 70 years to be 70 years long?

Additionally, could we also argue that other figures are round? Was Noah in the ark for *about* 40 days and nights, perhaps 38, 39, or 41? Were the Israelites afflicted in Egypt for *around* 400 years, maybe 401 or 398? Was the Abrahamic Covenant validated for *somewhere near* 430 years, possibly 428 or 429? What about the 7 creative days, were they 7-ish days, perhaps 5 or 6 or even 8? Will Christ reign for *roughly* 1000 years, turning out to be 998 or some other number?

The prophets said 70 years. They did not mean 68 or 69 or any other number. 70 means 70 and it is a significant number for fulfilling the Sabbaths.

Another tactic is to artificially push forward the date the Jews returned home to make their interpretation fit properly. However, to do this they must ignore verses in Ezra and also contradict the secular history they are trying to promote.

Appendix F: Jeremiah 25:18 - Just as at this day

Despite the overwhelming evidence in Jeremiah that Judah and Jerusalem were not devastated in the third or fourth year of Jehoiakim, some apostates have managed to find a verse that sort-of sounds a bit like it might be supporting their idea (despite many other passages contradicting it).

Jeremiah 25:1, 2, 17, 18 reads as follows:

"The word that occurred to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that is, the first year of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon; which Jeremiah the prophet spoke concerning all the people of Judah and concerning all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying ... And I proceeded to take the cup out of the hand of Jehovah and to make all the nations drink to whom Jehovah had sent me: namely, Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and her kings, her princes, to make them a devastated place, an object of astonishment, something to whistle at and a malediction, just as at this day." Jeremiah 25:17-18

Some take the words "**just as at this day**" as an indication that Judah was already considered a devastated place by the fourth year of Jehoiakim. However, Jeremiah is talking in the past-tense. He is here writing about the prophecy that occurred to him in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, many years before he wrote his book.

In no way does this imply that Jeremiah chapter 25 is being written in that very year. Rather, it is a narration of the events that took place back in that year. In Bible translations that include quotation marks where appropriate (NWT, NIV, RSV, By, NKJV), one will notice that the verses that follow verse 2 are enclosed in quotation marks. It will also be noted that verses 17 to 23 of Jeremiah chapter 25, which contain the words in question, are not enclosed in quotation marks, as are the majority of verses in chapter 25. This is because verses 17 and 18 are Jeremiah's comments on the event, written after Judah had been laid desolate.

Thus, the words "**just as at this day**" refer to the time when Jeremiah 25 was written down (i.e. after the destruction of Jerusalem) and therefore, not in the fourth year of Jehoiakim which refers specifically to the events being narrated.

Appendix G: Attempt at explaining Egypt problem

At the time of writing, few apostates have had the opportunity to mull over the arguments presented for Egypt's 40 years and Tyre's 70 years. Hence they have had little time to formulate what the number 40 *actually* means, and what the number 70 *actually* means.

In the meantime, one initial attempt was to place Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Egypt in the same year as his attack on Tyre. Apart from contradicting secular history, and the problem of Neb's siege of Tyre lasting many years, this attempt to explain the problem away contradicts the Bible.

Their argument demands that Egypt was desolated by Nebuchadnezzar, but still powerful enough (and inhabited) so that King Neb returned many years later and attacked it a second time. The Bible disagrees, and specifically says that there **“will not pass through it the foot of earthing man”** for a full 40 years. Obviously, their desperate attempt to explain away the problem is wrong. See chart 6 on page 77 to see how this looks on a time-line.

Additionally, Ezekiel said (talking of the future) that Egypt would be given to Babylon. Even though, according to this “explanation”, it already had been and was, in fact, desolated by him already.

Needless to say, its a poor patchwork and an obvious attempt to explain away a critical problem. These persons stubbornly refuse to admit that secular chronology is wrong, and that the Bible is right.

Appendix H: Jer. 52:20 - where did the exiles come from?

The Bible clearly says that the land will be without inhabitants during the 70 years. However, this poses apostates with a thorny problem. They argue that the land did indeed have inhabitants for at least 20 years during that period. How do they explain the problem away?

By mis-applying Jeremiah 52:20 which says, **“In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard took Jews into exile, seven hundred and forty-five souls.”** You see, the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar is after Jerusalem was destroyed, yet the scripture talks of more Jews being taken into exile. Hence, some proponents of 587 use this verse to show that the land was not without inhabitants during the 70 year period, in Nebuchadnezzar's 23rd year. Is that what the Bible is saying? No.

After the temple was destroyed, a few people still remained in Jerusalem, but not for long. 2 Kings 25:25-26 tell us: **“In the seventh month, however, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, who was of royal blood, came with ten men and assassinated Gedaliah and also the men of Judah and the Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah. At this, all the people from the least to the greatest, together with the army officers, fled to Egypt for fear of the Babylonians.”**

Here the Bible clearly says that all those who remained among the ruins of Jerusalem after it's destruction, fled to Egypt. Now let us look what Jeremiah said about those Jews in Egypt. In Jeremiah chapter 44 he says:

“The word that occurred to Jeremiah for all the Jews that were dwelling in the land of Egypt, the ones dwelling in Migdol and in Tahpanhes and in Noph and in the land of Pathros, saying: “This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said, ‘You yourselves have seen all the calamity that I have brought in upon Jerusalem and upon all the cities of Judah, and here they are a devastated place this day, and in them there is no inhabitant. It is because of their badness that they did in order to offend me by going and making sacrificial smoke and rendering service to other gods whom they themselves had not known, neither you nor your forefathers.”

And I kept sending to you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending, saying: **“Do not do, please, this detestable sort of thing that I have hated.”** But they did not listen, nor did they incline their ear to turn back from their badness by not making sacrificial smoke to other gods. So my rage, and my anger, was poured out and it burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and **they came to be a devastated place, a desolate waste, as at this day.”**

First all, these verses confirm that Jerusalem and Judah are deserted, desolated and ruined. To claim they are not is senseless. Now, what will happen to Jews in Egypt? Jeremiah continues saying:

“Therefore hear the word of Jehovah, all Judah who are dwelling in the land of Egypt, “Here I myself have sworn by my great name,” Jehovah has said, “that my name will no more prove to be something called out by the mouth of any man of Judah, saying, ‘As the Sovereign Lord Jehovah is alive!’ in all the land of Egypt. Here I am keeping alert toward them for calamity and not for good; and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt will certainly come to their finish by the sword and by the famine, until they cease to be. And as for the ones escaping from the sword, they will return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, few in number; and all those of the remnant of Judah, who are coming into the land of Egypt to reside there as aliens, will certainly know whose word comes true, that from me or that from them.”” —Jeremiah 44:26-28

As you see, only few will escape the death and will eventually return to Judah one day. Now the answer to the question is clear. Those Jews who were taken into exile during Nebuchadnezzar's 23th year, were those who had fled to Egypt. Evidentially, while Nebuchadnezzar was still had Tyre under siege, his guard Nebuzaradan attacked Egypt and caught up with the Jewish refugees. That is why Jeremiah 52:20 says **“In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard took Jews into exile”**. For Nebuchadnezzar himself was evidentially elsewhere.

Jeremiah 44:28 says, **“as for the ones escaping from the sword [in Egypt], they will return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, few in number”**. Another verse says, **“there will come to be no escapee or survivor for the remnant of Judah who are entering in to reside there as aliens, in the land of Egypt, even to return to the land of Judah to which they are lifting up their soulful desire to return in order to dwell; for they will not return, except some escaped ones.”**

During Nebuzaradan the bodyguard's attack on Egypt, he promptly took all surviving Jews into exile, **“seven hundred and forty-five souls”** (Jeremiah 52:20). Escaping to Egypt did the surviving Jews no good at all — most either ended up dead or being taken away in exile to Babylon anyway. Even fewer will have managed to finally return all those years later in 537 BCE.

Appendix I: Ezekiel 33:24, 27 — these devastated places?

Ezekiel 33:21 says, **“At length it occurred in the twelfth year, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month of our exile, that there came to me the escaped one from Jerusalem, saying: “The city has been struck down!””**

It has been pointed out that the above verse is reporting events which happened *after* Jerusalem's destruction and also *after* the last Jews fled to Egypt. Hence, the desolation had already begun. Yet, verse 24 of the same chapter states, **“Son of man, the inhabitants of these devastated places are saying even concerning the soil of Israel, 'Abraham happened to be just one and yet he took possession of the land. And we are many; to us the land has been given as something to possess.’”**

So, how should we understand this? How can there be inhabitants if the land is supposed to be **“desolated”** and without any inhabitants according to other prophecies? Is it proof that during the **“desolation”** there were still people living in Judah?

The short answer is a simple ‘no’. The long answer is this:

As far as the exiles in Babylon knew, Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed. This was in the days before CNN, and news took as long to travel as it took to walk, run, or ride a chariot.

For Ezekiel and the other exiles in Babylon, the knowledge of the situation in Judea had a great time-delay. It wasn't for several months after the destruction of Jerusalem that they learned about it. However, the night before the messenger arrived, Jehovah told Ezekiel in advance that the city had been devastated. These are the scriptures under scrutiny here.

So, due to the time-delay of the Babylonian exiles, after the messenger arrives they will only know that Jerusalem has been destroyed, and that the land has been devastated. The news of its total abandonment, which has also already occurred, will not reach them for some time more. The escaped one can only report that the city has been conquered — he doesn't know anything else.

However, Jehovah gives Ezekiel a bit more information about what has happened after the destruction. **“Son of man, the inhabitants of these devastated places are saying even concerning the soil of Israel, ‘Abraham happened to be just one and yet he took possession of the land. And we are many; to us the land has been given as something to possess.’”**

This information is time-delayed. Although the last **“inhabitants of these devastated places”** have long since fled to Egypt, from the perspective of the exiles in Babylon, as far as they know Jerusalem is conquered and there are still survivors amongst the ruins of Judah.

Jehovah now directs Ezekiel to make a speech in front of the other exiles in Babylon. He is directed to speak metaphorically, as if he is talking to those very ones who have survived the destruction of Jerusalem and who are now living amongst the ruins.

In front of the Jewish exiles in Babylon he says, **“This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: ‘With the blood you keep eating, and your eyes you keep lifting to your dungy idols ... you have defiled each one the wife of his companion. So should you possess the land?’”**

By metaphorically directing his question to those survivors who wind up living amongst the ruins of Judah, it would move to shame his audience of exiles in Babylon. They would be reminded of why they are in exile, and told why Jehovah has destroyed their city and why he will not allow any survivors to remain in the devastated land.

Now the prophet directs his words to his audience of exiles: **“This is what you should say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: ‘As I am alive, surely the ones who are in the devastated places will fall by the sword itself’”**” Yes, for a certainty, those living amongst the ruins will not remain living there for long.

Jehovah continues, **“I shall actually make the land a desolate waste, even a desolation, and the pride of its strength must be made to cease and the mountains of Israel must be laid desolate, with no one passing through. And they will have to know that I am Jehovah when I make the land a desolate waste, even a desolation, on account of all their detestable things that they have done.”**

Here Ezekiel again justifies the destruction to his fellow exiles, showing how they deserve it. He also confirms that the survivors of the desolation will not remain there, for soon there shall be **“no one passing through”**.

Of course, in reality the desolation had already begun and the land was already without any inhabitants — the last survivors having fled to Egypt a few weeks earlier. However, from the perspective of the Jewish exiles in Babylon, only Jerusalem had been destroyed and there were still Jewish survivors living in Judah. No doubt some Jews thought those survivors would be able to remain in the land, possessing it as they have done continually since ancient times.

Ezekiel confirms this will not be the case — the land will be taken off them and no Jews will remain there. Eventually other messengers would have inevitably come and updated the exiles with the latest news — confirming that Ezekiel was right, that the land became completely abandoned just as Jehovah said.

Indeed, Jehovah had already provided proof that Ezekiel is a true prophet. The account says that Ezekiel spoke the above words the *day before* the escaped one came and reported Jerusalem's destruction. No doubt, the next day when the report did arrive, the Jewish exiles would see that Ezekiel really was speaking from God. Likewise, when the next messenger arrived to confirm the complete abandonment of the land, Ezekiel's words will have been vindicated a second time. The chapter ends by saying **“And when it comes true — look! it must come true — they will also have to know that a prophet himself had proved to be in the midst of them.”**

Appendix J: Ezekiel 33:24, 27 — Ten years prior?

At least one critic has wrongly claimed that this passage was written *“written ten years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem,”* hence it is evidence that *“the devastations of Jerusalem”* had already begun before the destruction of the city. This, of course, requires you to ignore all the evidence we have already considered.

Such is easily disproved. Open your Bible to Ezekiel chapter 33 where the verses appear. See verses in question (24 and 27), and then simply glance up at the earlier verses, particularly verse 21. You can see that the words were not said *“ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem”* at all. It is nonsense.

The passage tells us exactly when the words were said: **“in the twelfth year, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month of our exile, that there came to me the escaped one from Jerusalem, saying: “The city has been struck down!”**” Yes, it was in the twelfth year of Ezekiel's exile, several months after the city had been destroyed. That is when Ezekiel starts to say, **“And the word of Jehovah began to occur to me, saying: “Son of man, the inhabitants of these devastated places are saying...”**” and the account goes on.

That is why Ezekiel and Jehovah referred to **“these devastated places”**, because it was written *after* Jerusalem's destruction — not 10 years before it. It is not clear why critics ever thought such a thing in the first place.

Appendix K: Jeremiah 29:10 — eighty years at Babylon?

Jeremiah 29:10 states: **“For this is what Jehovah has said, ‘In accord with the fulfilling of seventy years at Babylon I shall turn my attention to you people, and I will establish toward you my good word in bringing you back to this place.’”**

The argument is made that Jeremiah was speaking to those who went into exile with Jehoiachin, saying that they would be there 70 years. However, according to the 607-chronology of Jehovah's Witnesses, those people were there 80 years.

Here is an answer. Notice that Jeremiah does not say *‘you people in Babylon right now will be there for 70 years’*. He says the words, **“In accord with the fulfilling of the seventy years at Babylon”**. These words are the key. Just what was the fulfilling of the 70 years? Not only does Daniel tell us at Daniel 9:2, **“for fulfilling the devastations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.”**, but we are also shown this in 2 Chronicles 36:21, **“All the days of lying desolated it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.”**

The 70 years at Babylon coincide with the 70 years of desolation of Judah and the 70 years of servitude. The 70 years could only commence when Jerusalem was devastated. The prophet was not speaking to the first batch of exiles. Besides, even if we accepted their wrong argument, their 587-based chronology would still contradict — for it would be 60 years instead of 80. So the promoters of 587 chronology are shooting themselves in the foot.

Appendix L: Ezekiel 28:3 — Why was Daniel already famous?

Ezekiel 28:3 states: “look! you are wiser than Daniel. There are no secrets that have proved a match for you.” Since these words were written after only six years of Daniel's exile, at least one apostate has argued that Daniel must have interpreted the King's dream in the 2nd year. Otherwise, he claims, Daniel could not have had sufficient fame to be mentioned by Ezekiel in this way.

One simple scripture proves this wrong. At the end of his 3-year training, “**the king began to speak with them, and out of them all no one was found like Daniel... he even got to find them ten times better than all the magic practicing priests and the conjurers that were in all his royal realm.”**

Yes, he was recognized as being 10 times wiser than all others, and he still had another 3 years to prove himself even more wise before Ezekiel penned his words. After all, the Bible does not record all the events during these first 6 years of his exile. Also, considering that the Jewish community in Babylon only numbered 3,023 at this time (Jeremiah 52:28), Ezekiel would surely have heard of Daniel – the wise Jewish lad praised by the King for being wiser than his own priests.

Appendix M: Rolf Furuli on Vat 4956

The JW scholar Rolf Furuli of Oslo University has been investigating the Vat 4956 tablet, the ancient document which many tout as proof that 587 is the correct date for Jerusalem's destruction.

Along with his other research, he may have found an explanation for the 20-year gap with secular history. More details will be seen in his upcoming Volume II of *Babylonian Chronology* which is currently being written.

A letter from Bro Furuli did appear here, but has been withdrawn at the author's request as he does not wish his research to be made public until it is fully investigated and verified.

Appendix N: Daniel's gross inconsistency?

To get around the problems caused to their theories by the book of Daniel, some 587 promoters have come up with an extremely complex way of “explaining” the problems. It causes Daniel's book to suffer from gross inconsistency, for those who believe in 587 anyway.

Daniel 1:5 says, “Furthermore, to them [Daniel and his friends] the king appointed a daily allowance from the delicacies of the king and from his drinking wine, even to nourish them for three years, that at the end of these they might stand before the king.” That may seem straightforward, but no – for self-proclaimed “chronologists” are on hand to tell you what it *actually* means.

They claim Daniel's so-called “**three years**” of training was actually somewhere between one year, two months and two years, two months. That way, they can say Daniel was brought to Babylon in the artificial exile they have invented (which Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, and others all forgot to mention), can finish his training, be brought before the King, and become known as one of the wise men of Babylon – all in time to interpret the dream before Neb's 2nd year ends.

How? By claiming that *Daniel's training is counted in the manner of a Jewish King, but linked to the years of Neb's kingship, but counted in the manner of a Babylonian king.*

Neb began his reign in August 605; Daniel began his training in February 604, and just two months later in April, he has completed 1 year of training. But it's only been two months, why? Because it is reasoned that Neb's first year as king (after his accession year) begins in April 604, and therefore so does Daniel's second year of training. When April 603 arrives Daniel has completed 2 years of training (even though it has only been 1 year and two months). Neb now starts his 2nd year in Spring, 603. It is during this 2nd year that Daniel will complete his training and interpret Neb's dream and become district ruler. So, even if Daniel interprets the dream on the very last day of Neb's 2nd year, Daniel's 3 years of training would at the very most be 2 years and 2 months, or as little as 1 year 2 months. Confused? –*See charts 12 and 13 on page 81 to see how this looks on a time-line.*

Keep in mind that the Babylonians do not count the accession year as the first year. Only Jewish Kings were known to be counted in that way. So we must assume that for some odd reason, when Daniel penned the words “**three years... at the end of**”, he was using the years of Neb's reign to count the years of his training, but in the manner that the years of Jewish kings are counted. Oh, and this is after doing the opposite four verses earlier (in Daniel 1:1) where he counts Jehoiakim's reign in the manner the Babylonians use.

Do you really think all of this is what Daniel was thinking when he said, “**the king appointed a daily allowance from the delicacies of the king and from his drinking wine, even to nourish them for three years, that at the end of these they might stand before the king**”? Or do you rather think it is an example of someone with an agenda going to extremely complicated lengths to strain out of the scriptures what they *want it to say*? Besides, using such logic, if today was December 31st, and you asked me a question, I could say “*I will answer you at the end of two years*”, and then answer you the very next day on January 1st.

I was unable to find a single Bible translation that agrees with such an idea in this part of Daniel.

Holman Christian Standard Bible: “They were to be trained for three years, and at the end of that time they were to serve in the king's court.”

New American Standard: “...and appointed that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.

King James Version: "...so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king."

New Living Translation: "They were to be trained for a three-year period, and then some of them would be made his advisers in the royal court."

God's Word: "They were to be trained for three years. After that, they were to serve the king."

Young's Literal: "...so as to nourish them three years, that at the end thereof they may stand before the king."

If the "explanation" offered is correct, then this scripture should imply that the training was to end in Nebuchadnezzar's third year (if counted in the manner of a Jewish king) – but it doesn't. All translations are quite clear. When something happens "**at the end**" of three years, that is three years later. It's really simple.

As we mentioned in the main article, Daniel uses the word "*lemiktzat*" for describing the end in time period of something. Interestingly, this word is derived from word 'ketz' which means end to something or someone. To claim that three years are not actually three years is like to claim ten days are not actually ten days."

Furthermore, this explanation causes such weird inconsistency on Daniel's part. First Daniel uses the Babylonian method of counting years for the Jewish King, then four verses later the Jewish method for counting the years of the Babylonian King, then reverts back to the Babylonian method again a few verses after that for counting the years of Neb once more.

| Scripture | 587's "explanation" |
|--|--|
| Daniel 1:1, "in the third year of Jehoiakim" | Babylonian method of counting years – ascension months <u>not counted</u> |
| Daniel 1:5 "end of " three years | Jewish method of counting years – ascension months <u>are counted</u> as a year |
| Daniel 2:1, "in the second year of Neb" | Babylonian method – ascension months <u>not counted</u> |

Why such inconsistency? Because it's the only way 587-promoters can cling on to their theories. In other words, they want to treat Daniel's training *as if it were a king's reign!* And they want to count his "accession year" in training, as one year. Who ever heard of such a thing? However, they do not want to count Neb's accession year as one year, and they do not want to count Jehoiakim's accession year as one year. That is the only way their dates fit. Yet the 607 interpretation does not have this inconsistency.

That's not the only inconsistency they create in the book of Daniel. When Daniel 10:1 says in the "**third year of Cyrus the king of Persia**", 587-promoters revert back to the 607 method of dating. See the chart below:

| <i>Scripture</i> | <i>587 interpretation</i> | <i>607 interpretation</i> |
|---|--|--|
| Daniel 1:1 – “ <i>the third year of the kingship of Jehoiakim the king of Judah</i> ” | Jehoiakim's Kingship of Judah | Babylonian Kingship over Jews |
| Daniel 2:1 – “ <i>the second year of the kingship of Nebuchadnezzar</i> ” | Neb's Kingship of Babylon | Babylonian Kingship over Jews |
| Daniel 10:1 – “ <i>third year of Cyrus the king of Persia</i> ” | Babylonian/Persian Kingship over Jews | Babylonian/Persian Kingship over Jews |

In other words, they want to count Jehoiakim's kingship from the start of his reign, and the same with Nebuchadnezzar, but they do not want to do the same with Cyrus.

By placing the events of Daniel 10 in the “**third year of Cyrus the king of Persia**”, Daniel demonstrates that all of his time keeping must refer to the Babylonian Kingship over the Jews. Otherwise, if 587-promoters were consistent in their methods of counting, they would have to insist that Daniel was actually serving under the King of Persia many years earlier during the third year of Cyrus. Obviously that is impossible. So the only way for them to avoid this problem is to make Daniel's methods of dating inconsistent – *a second time*.

If the 587-promoters abandon this theory, and go back to saying Daniel interpreted the dream during his 2nd year of training – before the three full years ended, they simply swap one set of inconsistencies for another. As covered in the main article, that theory makes the story appear silly, and breaks the chronology of the narrative. So if you are a 587 promoter, you have a choice – either defend one set of inconsistencies, or defend another set instead. It's just a matter of deciding which is your personal favorite. Promoters of 607, on the other hand, have no such headaches because that interpretation is consistent throughout the book of Daniel.

This is often the case with the “explanations” of how 587 supposedly fits with the Bible. When the inevitable fatal problems are pointed out, defenders of 587 conjure up ever more lengthy and complicated “explanations”, to patch-up the problems caused by the last set of “explanations”. Which is followed by explanations of the explanations. What one eventually has is a great patchwork of interpretation and explanation many pages long. No doubt at this moment someone, somewhere, is cooking up more lengthy, complex and highly strained patchwork to “explain” the problems with their theory that we've pointed out here.

However, the simple 607 chronology keeps both Daniel's dating methods and the narrative consistent throughout the book. We don't need to explain away any inconsistency – because there is none. All we need to explain is that Daniel *uses the same method of counting years throughout his book* – that of Babylonian Kingship over the Jews. Just as he does the same thing with the Persian Kingship over the Jews in Daniel 10. This 607-based interpretation also harmonizes with the dates of the first exile given in other Bible books such as Jeremiah, which in turn harmonizes with the prophecies of the 70 years for Jerusalem, Tyre, and the 40 for Egypt. The 587 interpretation, on the other hand, is disharmonious with all of this.

Appendix O: Another example of counting from vassal kingships

There is another place where the Bible counts the years of a King as starting from the beginning of their vassal Kingship.

King Pekah of Israel reigned 20 years before he died. Three years before his death, in his 17th year, the neighboring nation of Judah gained a new King, Ahaz. Logically, therefore, when Pekah of Israel died after his 20 years of service, his successor must have been crowned during the 4th year of neighboring Ahaz, right?

This is correct. Israel's next King was enthroned in the 4th year of Judah's Ahaz. The new King's name was Hoshea. It describes how he ascended the throne, he **“formed a conspiracy against Pekah ... and struck him and put him to death; and he [Hoshea] began to reign in place of him.”** –2 Kings 15:30

Yet, there is something wrong. The next chapter of the book gives a *different date* for the start of Hoshea's reign – in 2 Kings 17:1 it doesn't say he came to the throne after killing Pekah during the 4th year of Ahaz, but during the 12th year of Ahaz! **“In the twelfth year of Ahaz the king of Judah”** Hoshea **“became king in Samaria over Israel”**. Is this a contradiction?

The answer is simple. 2 Kings 17:3 answers, **“It was against him [Hoshea] that Shalmaneser the king of Assyria came up, and Hoshea came to be his servant and began to pay tribute to him.”**

Yes, when 2 Kings 17:1 says **“In the twelfth year of Ahaz the king of Judah”** that Hoshea **“became king in Samaria over Israel”**, it is counting from the start of Hoshea's vassal Kingship to Assyria – not from the time several years earlier when he **“formed a conspiracy against Pekah ... and struck him and put him to death; and he began to reign in place of him.”**

So here we have another example of the dates of a King's reign starting from the beginning of their vassal Kingship, with years prior to it being left out. This is similar to how Daniel counted the years of Jehoiakim in Daniel 1:1.

607-based Timeline

- 628 King Jehoiakim begins his 11-year rule in Jerusalem.
- 625 Nebuchadnezzar begins his Babylonian rule.
- 624 Jeremiah warns that Babylon will come up against Jerusalem.
- 620 Jehoiakim becomes vassal King to Babylon.
- 618 (**December**) Jehoiakim rebels, Nebuchadnezzar lays siege, kills King. Nebuchadnezzar takes exiles including Daniel and Ezekiel, some temple treasures, and temple utensils. Jehoiachin placed on throne.
- 617 (**March**) Nebuchadnezzar returns, takes Jehoiachin exile, all temple treasures and gold temple utensils taken. Zedekiah's 11-year rule in Jerusalem as Babylonian vassal King begins.
- 614 Daniel's 3-year training ends.
- 609 Zedekiah rebels.
- 607 (**August**) Jerusalem destroyed, temple burned. This is the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar, the 11th year of Zedekiah. Ezekiel makes the final prophecy against Tyre.
- 607 (**October**) Last Jews in land flee to Egypt. Land now totally uninhabited. 70-year period begins.
- 606 Tyre sieged by Nebuchadnezzar. 70-year period for Tyre begins.
- 605 Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream in his 2nd year since destroying Jerusalem and becoming direct King of the Jews.
- 590 Ezekiel makes last prophecy against Egypt in 27th year of his exile. Also states that siege of Tyre is completed, which lasted 13 years according to Josephus. It began 16 years earlier.
- 588 Egypt desolated by Nebuchadnezzar in his 37th year. 40 year period begins.
- 548 Egypt's 40 year period ends.
- 547 Egyptian King Amasis II forges alliance with last Babylonian King, Nabonidus.
- 539 Cyrus conquers Babylon, Darius the Great becomes King.
- 538 Cyrus makes decree for Jews to return home
- 537 (**October**) Jews repatriated in cities, back in land after exactly 70 years of vacancy. Desolation ends.
- 536 Tyre supplies timber for the rebuilding of the temple. Its 70 year period ends.
- 535 Daniel has his final recorded vision.
- 455 The word goes forth to rebuild Jerusalem. 70-week prophecy begins.
- 29 CE Jesus baptized, becomes Messiah.
- 33 CE Jesus executed.
- 36 CE Gentiles receive holy spirit, 70-week prophecy ends.

Charts

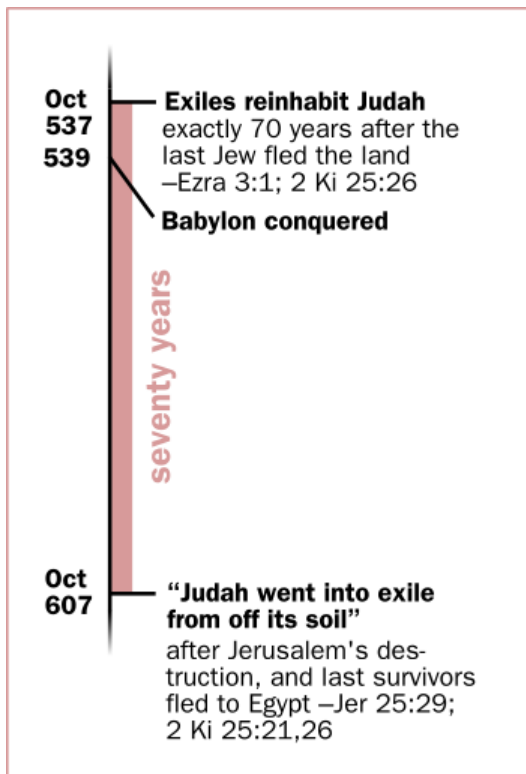


Chart 1: The 70 year desolations of Jerusalem, 607 based chronology

Notice how the bible's own chronology allows for the 70 year desolation to begin and end in the same month.

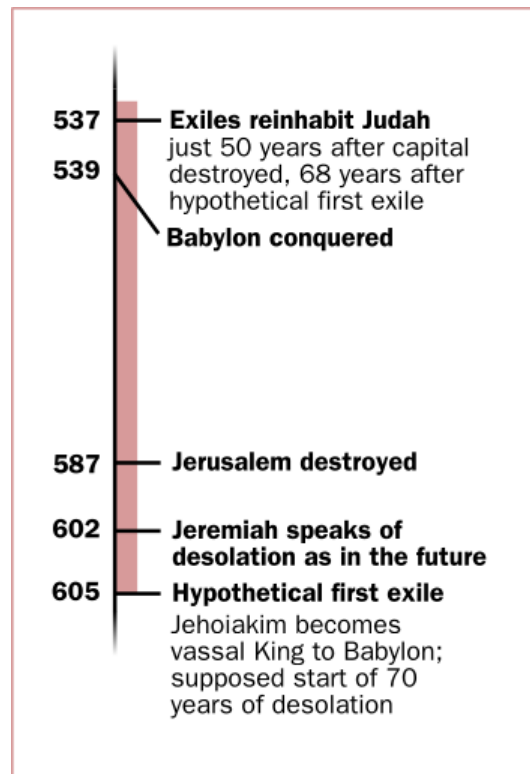


Chart 2: The 70-year “servitude” of Jerusalem, secular chronology

This is the favorite “reinterpretation” of the Bible’s clear and inspired prophecies, to account for fallible secular records. Notice how the “seventy” years become 68 and how it contradicts several Bible passages.

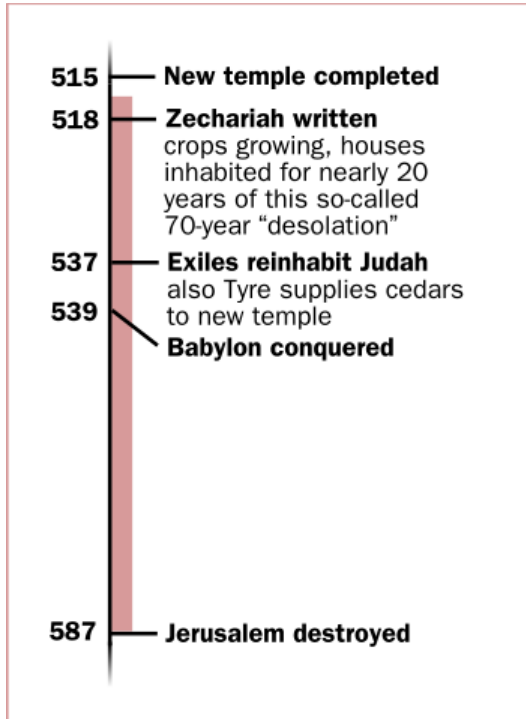


Chart 3: The 70 years of "figurative desolation" in secular chronology

A less popular "reinterpretation" of the Bible to account for secular history. Notice it does not last 70 exact years, and it contradicts many Bible passages.

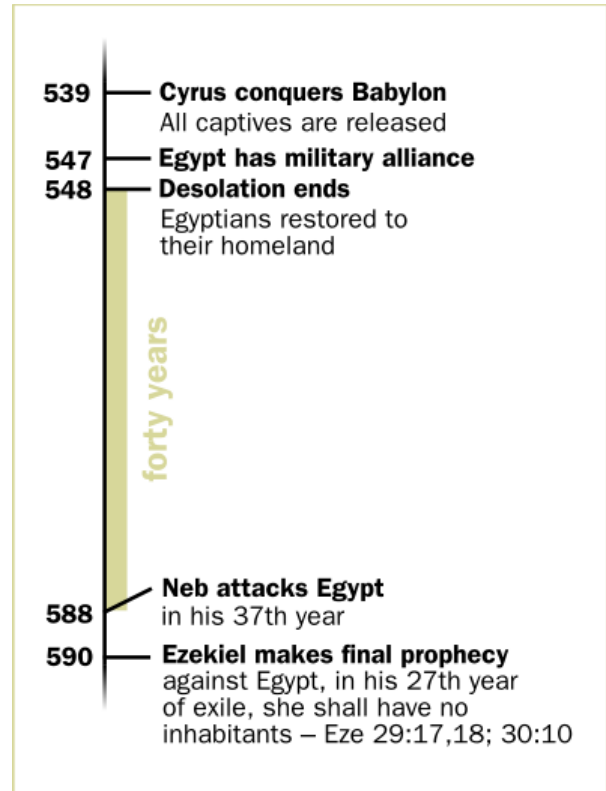


Chart 4: Egypt's 40-year desolation in the 607-based chronology.

Notice how the dates all fit together perfectly, and harmonize with both the bible record and secular history.

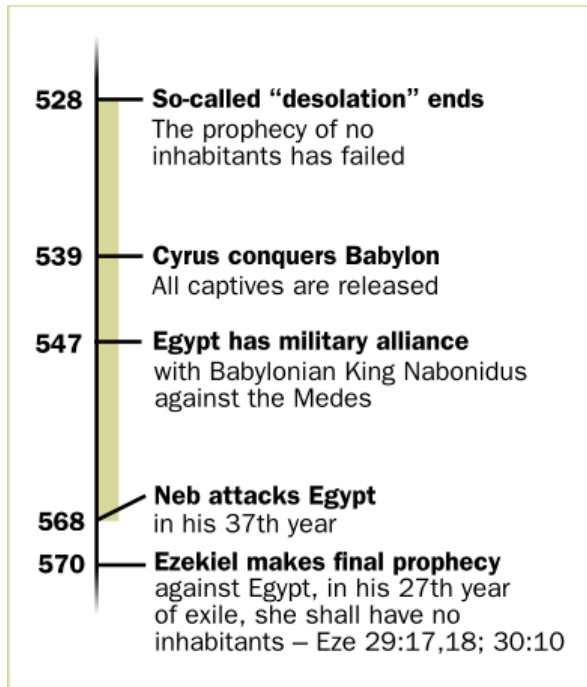


Chart 5: Egypt's 40-year desolation in the 587-based secular chronology.

See how the dates directly contradict the prophecies in the Bible, and also causes a new additional conflict between the scriptures and secular history's record of Egyptian King Amasis II and his military alliance with Babylon.



Chart 6: One 587 proponent's "explanation" of the Egypt problem.

See how this still contradicts both the scriptures and even secular history.

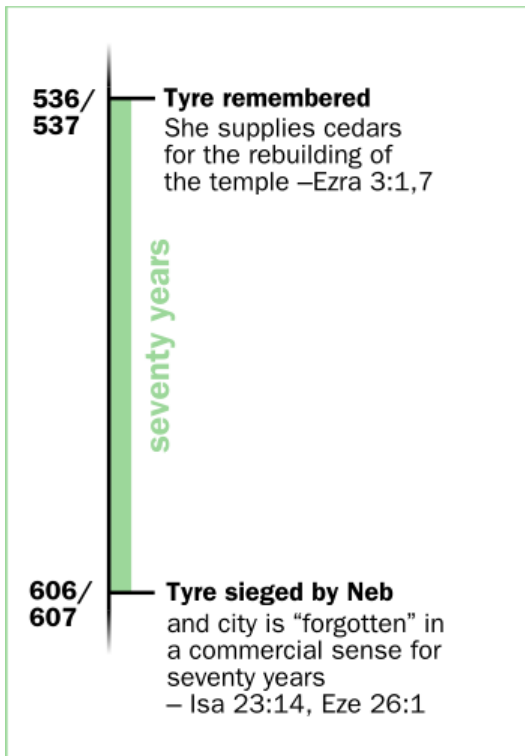


Chart 7: Tyre's 70 years in the 607-based chronology.

Only the 607-based chronology can account for the fulfillment of the prophecy for Tyre. Isaiah specifically says the period will end when Tyre's profit becomes holy to Jehovah. This is fulfilled when Tyre provides materials for Jehovah's holy temple in 537/536 BCE.

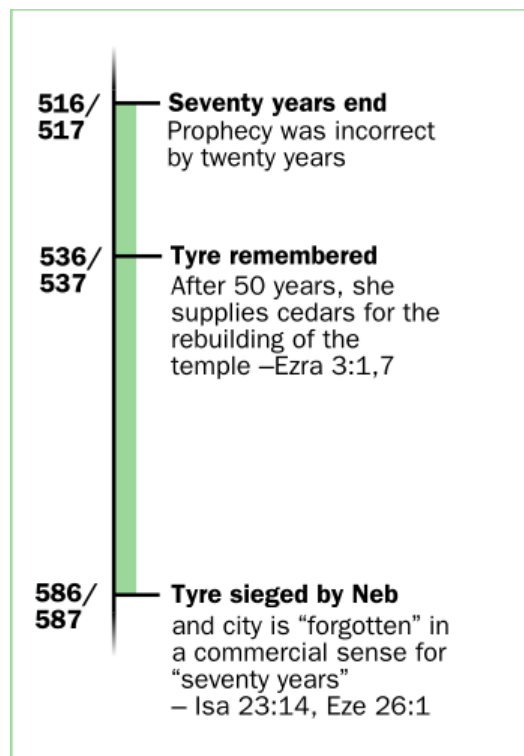


Chart 8: Tyre's 70 years in 587-based secular chronology.

Notice how the secular chronology causes the prophecy to fail by twenty years, or simply be render it's words meaningless.

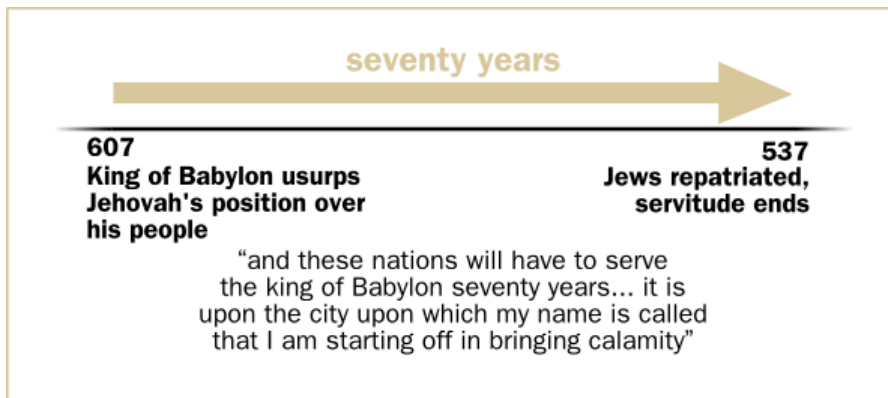


Chart 9: The 70 years of servitude

All the nations serving Babylon is clearly symbolic. When Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and took the remaining Jews into exile, there was no longer a King sitting on Jehovah's throne. Babylon had, in effect, been permitted to usurp Jehovah's position as rightful sovereign. Thus Babylon appeared to be in control of all the nations – even controlling God's people.

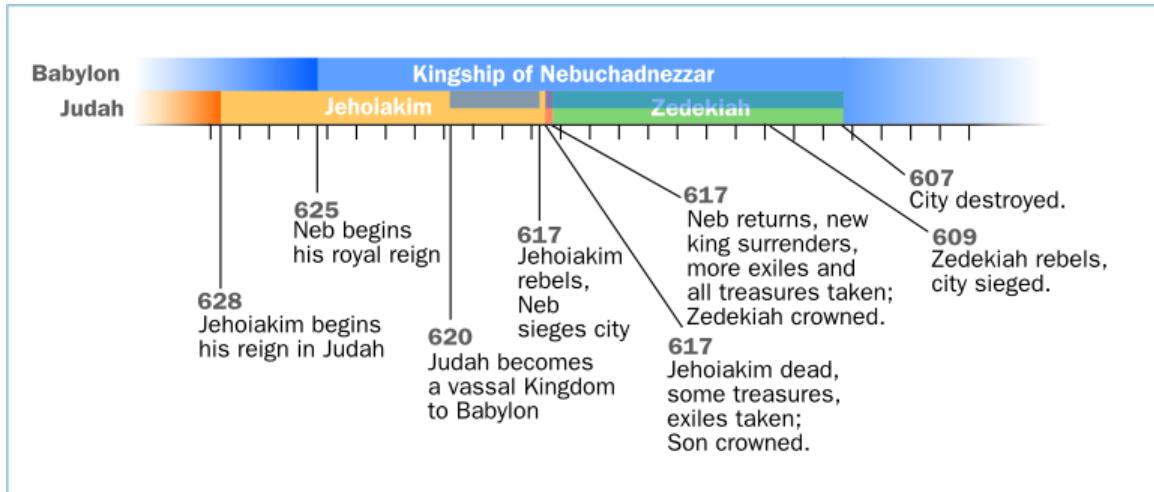


Chart 10: The Judean Kings in 607-based chronology

Some have claimed that the 607-based chronology does not add up when considering the reigns of the Judean Kings. As we can see above, they fit together perfectly.

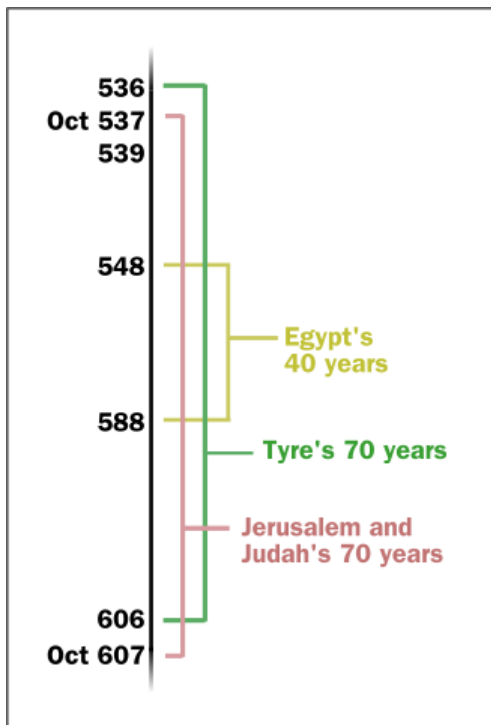


Chart 11: The perfect fit of Bible chronology

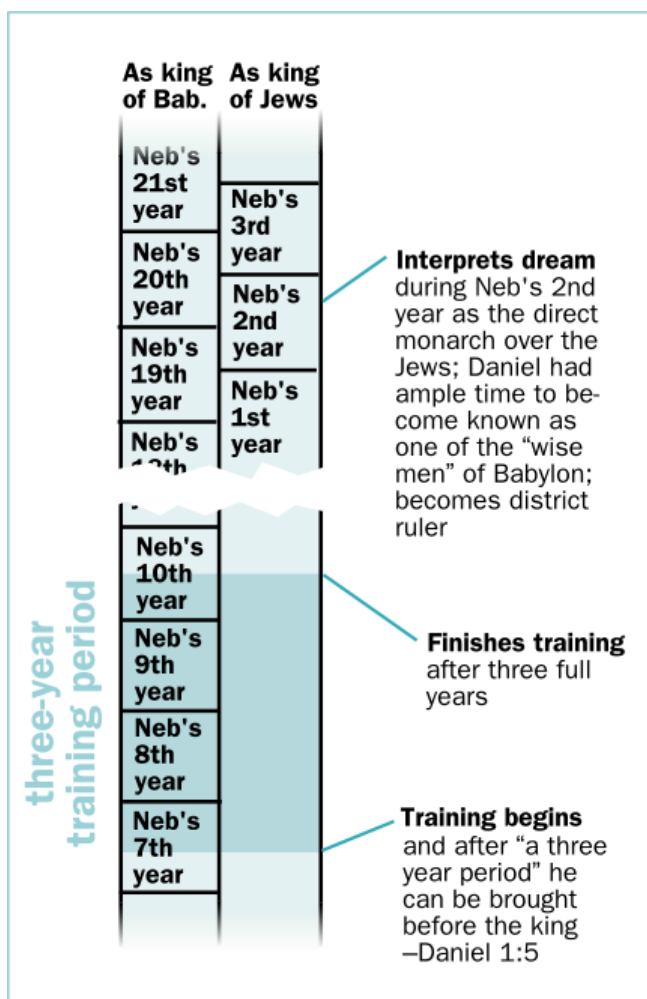


Chart 12: Daniel's three full years of training

This 607-based chart allows Daniel a full three years for his training, plus ample time for him to become known as one of Babylon's wise men, as the narrative states he was prior to interpreting the King's dream. It also places his exile in the only first exile mentioned by Jeremiah.

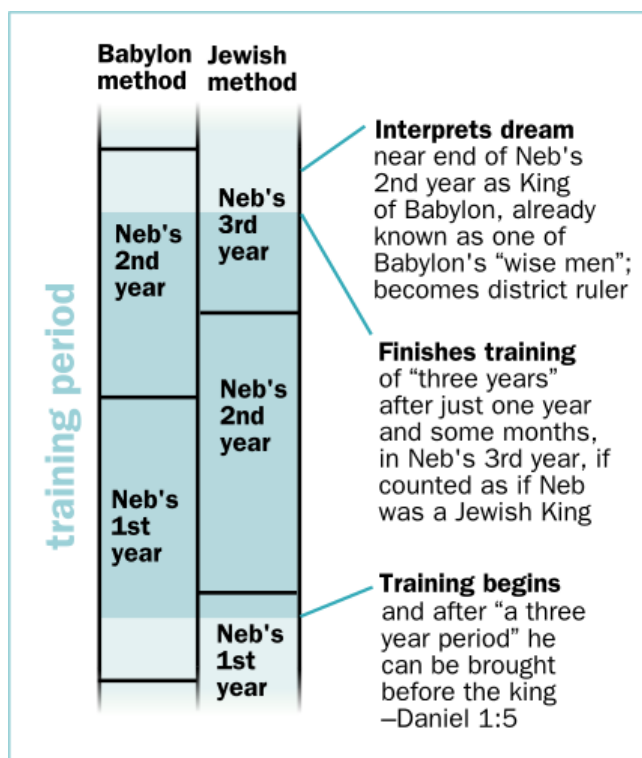


Chart 13: Attempt to reduce Daniel's three years to less than two

This attempt to "explain" the problem of Daniel still being in three years of training while interpreting the King's dream (a highly unlikely scenario), demands the ridiculous rule that you count the years of Daniel's training alongside the years of Neb, but in the manner that the years of Jewish Kings are counted. It also assumes Daniel was exiled during a fictitious exile that Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, and others all strangely forgot to mention.

Jerusalem 607 BCE Vindicated