

Faithbuilders Fellowship

Proclaiming Christ's Parousia
and the coming Millennial Kingdom
November, December 2007

The Whole Creation

"The Whole Creation groans and travails in pain together ... the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God ... because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Romans 8:22, 19, 21).

At the very core of God's Plan of the Ages is the fact that there are two separate and distinct ages of redemption. This truth impacts all the vital doctrines of the Scriptures.

From the time of Christ, the Gospel Age and its "high calling" (Philippians 3:14) to be with Christ in heaven, has operated. It does still. But this age is drawing to a close, and the high calling will run for only another 36 years, as we ascertain the scriptural evidence.

But this will not be the close of salvation. Far from it. For then a second grand age of redemption will open for the entire world, which will endure for a thousand years. Then, as Paul explicitly affirms in our opening text, "the creation itself also shall be delivered." By "creation" Paul means the entire world of mankind — the billions upon billions of men, women and children from Adam to the present — who are not among those who consecrate their lives to God during the present Gospel Age.

Then, in that coming Millennium, Satan will be "bound ... a thousand years ... that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled" (Revelation 20:2, 3). Then the veil of ignorance "cast over all nations," which obscures to them the truth about God and His son, our redeemer, will be done away. As the world awakens to understand the wonders of living forever in a perfect world, they will respond in the words of Isaiah, "Lo, this is our God ... he will save us ... we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation!" (Isaiah 25:9).

The Truth Obscured So Long

For centuries, this truth was obscured. The promises of the blessed Kingdom to come were reinterpreted to mean that Christ was reigning through the Kings of Europe, and through the Pope at Rome. If they were to acknowledge that the promises of God were for a universal kingdom of righteousness, which would sweep away

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present governments and establish righteousness for all people, then the king and princes supposedly ruling by "divine right" would be recognized as really they are — part of the old arrangement, passing away, to be replaced by the real Kingdom of Christ, established on earth, ruled from heaven.

In fact, among the rulers of that Kingdom are the very saintly ones who were persecuted by the apostate systems of Christendom through the centuries.

Already that Kingdom is coming into executive authority. Christ has taken authority, together with the risen saints. With regal authority as the new sovereign of earth, since his return in 1874 according to the prophecies in Daniel chapter 12, Christ has been: (1) gathering his remaining saints, through the harvest message, (2) holding judgment over the nations, (3) regathering Israel to their former homeland, (4) supervising a great increase of knowledge and technology for the advancement of the human race. All of this is preparatory to the promised Millennium, so close at hand.

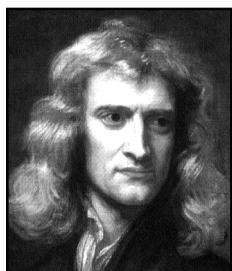
The Truth Recovered Gradually

Our present appreciation of the Millennial Kingdom as the heart and soul of God's Plan has been preached through the Bible Student Movement since the days of Pastor Charles Russell, and his publication "Zion's Watchtower," in 1879. This is the Harvest Message we referred to earlier.

At the time Bro. Russell preached, God had not yet made it apparent when that Millennial Kingdom, so earnestly anticipated, would at last appear. It was unforeseen in those days that after the passing of Bro. Russell, the Harvest Work would become fragmented, and much

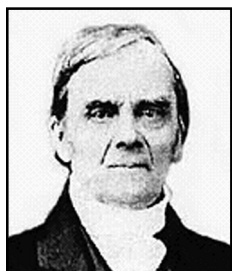
of the essential beauty of the Truth would be lost by various segments — as for example, the Jehovah's Witnesses, who have roots in the Harvest Truth, but have lost the appreciation of the scope and grandeur of that Kingdom. Nevertheless, the preaching of the Truth continues to this day among Bible Students, still a few thousand strong throughout the world.

Present Truth did not spring fully matured just in a moment. The restoration of the Millennial hope for the world was regained gradually. We do not know all the studies and writings which contributed to the restoration of the Truth, but below is a resume of some of them. These are gleaned from the Special History Issue of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom."¹



Isaac Newton — (1642-1727) — born in Lincolnshire on Christmas day nearly two months premature, posthumous to his father. His keenness of mind permitted him to see truths that we might believe were little-known until the time of the harvest. In "Of the World to Come," Newton clearly distinguishes the heavenly salvation (of the present) and the earthly salvation (of the Millennium). "The mystery of this restitution of all things is to be found in all the prophets; which makes me wonder with great admiration that so few Christians of our age can find it there ... the final return of the Jews from captivity ... the setting up of a peaceable, righteous, and flourishing kingdom at the Day of Judgment is this mystery ... the earth shall continue to be inhabited by mortals after the day of Judgment and not only for a 1,000 years, but even forever."

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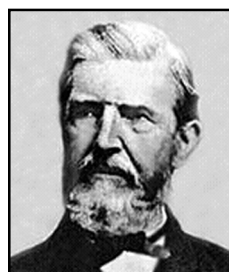
Henry Grew — (1781-1862) — Born in Birmingham, England, he moved to Boston with his parents at the age of fourteen. At the age of twenty-three he was elected deacon in the local Baptist Church, later licensed to preach in Hartford, Connecticut. There he served over a decade until he was dismissed for views the church deemed heretical. From the Bible alone, Henry Grew determined that the doctrines of the immortal soul, hell-fire, and trinity were not scriptural. He wrote several books against these doctrines. One of them was picked up by George Storrs, who was later convinced of Grew's views regarding the state of the dead. Grew's expositions later influenced the Adventists, others such as George Stetson and George Storrs, and indirectly through these, Pastor Charles Russell. He gave half his moderate income in charity, both to missionary work and to the poor of the city.

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Henry Dunn — (1801-1878) — Four articles by Henry Dunn appear in Bro. Russell's journal, *Zion's Watchtower*. All came from Dunn's book, *The Study of the Bible*

(1871). "Bros. George Storrs, Henry Dunn and others were preaching and writing of *The Times of Restitution*" (Charles Russell, 1879). Dunn was secretary of the British and Foreign School Society. After retirement he devoted his life to a study of the Scriptures. He published the magazine, *The Interpreter* in 1860-61 and expressed his obligation "to a remarkable book, never much known and now almost forgotten: Dunbar Isidore Heath's *Future Human Kingdom of Christ*. It was this book that inspired Dunn's *Destiny of the Human Race*, credited by both George Storrs and Charles Russell. Shortly before his death, Dunn wrote a series of articles for Storrs' magazine, *The Bible Examiner*.

Dunbar Isidore Heath — (1816-1888) — Elected scholar at Cambridge in 1836 and 1843. In 1852 he wrote *The Future Human Kingdom of Christ*, distinguishing the "saved nations" of the Millennium from the "glorified saints" of the Gospel Age, outlining an early concept of "the two salvations." He was prosecuted for heresy in 1861 by the Bishop of Winchester and sentenced by the Court of Arches for publishing these ideas. He suffered heavy financial loss and the loss of his profession.



George Storrs — (1796-1879) — He picked up a tract he found on a train floor. The tract was about the condition of the dead, by Henry Grew. After a few years of study, Storrs began to preach on the subject to Adventists in 1842. He wrote a book on the subject and began a periodical titled *The Bible Examiner*. At first he believed that the wicked dead would not be raised, but a decade after Grew's passing in 1862, Storrs reconsidered and determined the Scriptures taught they would be raised to an education in the knowl-

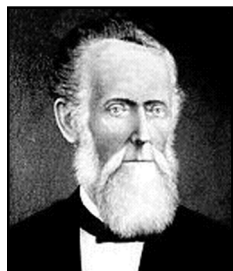
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edge of God, and thus “all the families of the earth” would be blessed. He was later surprised to find others teaching the same, such as Henry Dunn in England. Storrs’ friends forsook him and he published independently. Pastor Russell wrote for his magazine until Storrs’ death in 1879.



George Stetson — (1814-1879) — He associated with Henry Grew and George Storrs in his early ministry, and later with Jonas Wendell and Charles Russell. As a member of the Advent Christian Church, he worked with Wendell in several churches throughout Pennsylvania and Ohio in the early

1870s. They also wrote for George Storrs’ magazine, “The Herald of Life and the Coming Kingdom,” and for other magazines such as “The World’s Crisis.” His dying request was that Bro. Russell, who was 27 at the time, give his funeral sermon, attended by over 1200. “Our brother was a man of marked ability, and surrendered bright prospects of worldly and political honors to be permitted to preach Christ, when the glories and beauties of the word of God dawned upon his heart. The truth cost him much, yet he bought it gladly” (Charles Russell).

The Truth Worldwide

During the Millennium, the Truth will become worldwide. “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9). That will be a day of universal opportunity. Not only the living generations, but all the dead of past ages, will be raised into a Kingdom of Righteousness, here, on Earth. This was what Jesus taught us to pray for — “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in Earth, as it is done in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

Even the people of Sodom and her sister city Gomorrah will return to life, and be led to God. “I shall bring again ... the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters [and] ... the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them” (Ezekiel 16:53). The prophet speaks here of the resurrection from the dead — the “captives” are captive in their graves.

Even the wicked dead from Judah, says Ezekiel, will return to life at that time. Because of God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets of Israel, God will greatly favor the Jewish Race, using them and their capital city Jerusalem as the foundation of the Kingdom on earth. “I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then you will remember your ways, and be ashamed, when you receive thy sisters [Sodom and Samaria] ... I will give them unto thee for daughters [to be nourished, helped, blessed] ... I will establish my

covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah” (Ezekiel 16:60-62).

Of course the leaders of that nation will be the Ancient Worthies, from Abel to John the Baptist and all the other faithful ones before the Gospel Age. They will be raised at the outset of the Millennium to deliver Israel from their oppressors (Gog and his allies, as explained in Ezekiel 38 and 39). Then these “Ancient Worthies” will lead Israel to their savior Jesus. Then Israel will mourn severely, and humbly accept the savior so long denied — even with tears and anguish (Zechariah 12:10).

And then ... then ... this humbled race will be the agent of God to extend the blessings of the Kingdom outward to a weary world, who will gradually come to perceive the opening of a Golden Age such as the world dared not even dream was possible.

“In that day ... living waters shall go out from Jerusalem ... and Jehovah shall be king over all the earth” (Zechariah 14:9, 10). “The ransomed of Jehovah [ultimately the whole human race] shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away!” (Isaiah 35:10). Truly, “the whole creation shall be delivered!” (Romans 8:22).

(1) This is a highly recommended, 32-page periodical issued six times a year (\$5 per year, free to the Lord’s poor on request). You may request it through us, or visit their website at HeraldMag.org.

Daniel’s Last Vision

A final, long-range vision, consisting of three chapters.

Our continuing series in the book of Daniel now takes us to the 10th chapter. Whereas each chapter in Daniel so far has treated one episode, one prophecy, or one vision, now there is a change. The final three chapters — 10, 11, 12 — together record a single, continuous occasion. Chapter 10 is an introduction to the most comprehensive, far-reaching, and remarkable vision that God ever gave to this noble prophet. That vision continues through the end of chapter 12, closing out the Book of Daniel in dramatic fashion.

The scope of this vision is remarkable. Beginning in the days of Daniel, it traces highlights of Jewish and Christian history down to the establishment of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom. It includes three remarkable time prophecies — 1260, 1290, 1335 years — which culminate in the Second Advent of Christ in 1874 at the close of the 1335 years of Daniel 12:12.

In this article we discuss the 10th chapter and the opening verses of the 11th chapter, which take us through the time of Alexander the Great. The remainder is resumed in succeeding issues.

Third Year of Cyrus

“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose [Babylonian] name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long; and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision” (Daniel 10:1).

Of course Daniel did not understand the details of the vision, nor the time prophecies it contained. These were impossible to grasp until history would unfold in later centuries to make their meaning apparent. For this reason the angel who gave the vision to Daniel told him “the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end” (Daniel 12:9). Therefore, when in 10:1 it says Daniel understood, it evidently means that he understood in overview that the vision portended a lengthy struggle of God’s people against their enemies, to result at last in a victory of the righteous.

The third year of Cyrus, when the vision was given, began in the spring of 536 BC. The armies of Cyrus took Babylon in October of 539 BC, and Cyrus himself rode triumphantly into Babylon less than three weeks later. “On the sixteenth day (of Tasritu), Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, and the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle ... On the third day of the month Arahsamnu, Cyrus entered Babylon ... There was peace in the city when Cyrus spoke greetings to all of Babylon” (Babylonian Chronicle, pages 224-225, cited from *The Reign of Nabonidus*, Beaulieu, 1989).

That year became the year of Cyrus’ accession as “king of lands,” and commercial texts of the time were dated accordingly. His first regnal year commenced the following spring with the month Nisan, 538 BC. Thus year number two commenced in 537 BC, and year number three commenced in Nisan of 536 BC.

“In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled” (verse 2). These three weeks evidently began on the third of Nisan, for the next verse says an answer came in the 24th day “of the first month,” Nisan, “as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel” — the Tigris River.

That Daniel was at the Tigris River suggests he was away from Babylon (which is on the Euphrates River), perhaps on business of state. Cyrus the Persian, that is Darius the Mede, had raised him to a charge over all the princes of the kingdom (Daniel 6:1, 2), so he would have been about, here and there, doing the business of the king. Probably there is some spiritual meaning to the mention of the Tigris, as with the mention of “the river of Ulai” in Daniel 8:1, but we have not been able to pierce its meaning as yet (Proverbs 25:2).

Three Weeks of Delay

For three weeks Daniel fasted with a simple vegetarian diet, while praying regularly to God. Daniel clearly



Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem.

had some burden on his heart. We can estimate what it may have been by understanding what was happening in the opening of the third year of Cyrus.

In his first regnal year, Cyrus had decreed liberty for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple. Cyrus funded the enterprise, and even specified the dimensions of the temple to be constructed, so specific was his decree (Ezra 6:3-10).

In that first regnal year the Jews returned to Jerusalem. By the seventh month they resumed sacrifices, but at that time “the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was not yet laid” (Ezra 3:6). By the following spring, in the second month, the work did begin (Ezra 3:8-13). It brought tears of joy to most; but also some tears of sad remembrance of the former glory (Ezra 3:12, 13).

But then the accusations began to fly. The enemies of Israel launched a campaign of accusation against the Jews which at last resulted in abandoning the rebuilding. “Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia” (This Darius of Ezra 4:24 is referred to by historians as “Darius Hystaspes,” for he was the son of Hystaspes).

This cessation of rebuilding was probably the concern which led Daniel to fasting and prayer for 21 days, until an angel arrived with a message from God. The angel later explained that “from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before God, thy words were heard ... But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days” (verses 12, 13).

Probably the “prince of Persia” refers to Satan, the “prince of the power of the air,” the “God of this world,” who leads the nations by usurpation (Ephesians 2:2, 2 Corinthians 4:4). Who else would be adequate to the task of delaying a messenger from the divine courts?

Of course, God could have prevented such a delay. That it was permitted by God suggests there are some good reason, and three such reasons come to mind.

(a) Daniel was about to receive a vision of such magnitude and importance, that the preparatory three weeks of fasting and prayer were an appropriate predicate for such an honor. Not only did it prepare Daniel himself to appreciate this blessing, but the record of it helps all of us later readers appreciate the solemnity of the occasion, and ac-

cordingly esteem both the sacredness of the message, and the high privilege we have, to see into these deep things spoken for our understanding. Do we, then, appreciate it? Does our interest in the things of the spirit engage us? Do we wish to know the mysteries God is willing to reveal?

(b) The duration of the delay was relevant to Daniel’s concern about the Temple at Jerusalem. The temple was at last completed at the close of the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes, in the year 515 BC (Ezra 6:15).¹ Thus from the time of Daniel’s prayer in 536 BC, there would be a delay of 21 years before the temple would be completed — just as there was a delay of 21 days in answer to Daniel.

(c) This delay has an even deeper meaning for the Spiritual Temple, namely the Church Class, which God has been “building” from the time of Christ until today. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16). “Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:5). In this deeper meaning, there is also a delay in completing the Church. The work began with fervor in the days of the Apostles, but after their passing the work slowed. Satan roused his minions, first to persecute the Church from outside, then to corrupt it from inside. As we can now see, the work in total takes parts of 21 centuries to complete — from 33 AD to 2043 AD.

The Number Three

Daniel gives the time of his praying as three weeks. This occurred in the third year of Cyrus. Daniel began his prayer on the third day of the month. Three times the number three appears.

This number occurs later respecting the ransom for our sins that was given by our dear Redeemer. Jesus was 30 years at Jordan, he died at the age of 33, he was three days in the tomb, betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, anointed for his death with 300 pence worth of spiced ointment, and when he redeemed the Church on Pentecost day, 3000 persons believed.

Three is the number of redemption, for there are three parties to it — God, man, and Jesus who mediates to reconcile man to God. So the numbers prominent in this episode in Daniel 10 are fitting to picture the first age of redemption, the present Gospel Age, during which the Church Class is “built up” to become the temple of God in the Millennium.

Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah

The connection between Daniel’s prayer and fasting, and the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, is strengthened by observing the dates involved when the Scriptures speak of that rebuilding work. For example, the temple was completed on the third day of the month (Ezra 6:15), just as Daniel began his prayer on the third day of the month.

Ezra 5:1 says that the prophets who encouraged the completion of the work were Haggai and Zechariah. When we read their writings in the books Haggai and Zechariah, it is all about encouraging Israel to resume and complete the building of the temple. Even the dates which appear there reflect the numbers reported in the experience of Daniel.

Haggai — this book opens in the 2nd year of Darius Hystaspes, the year Ezra says the work was resumed. The work was resumed in the 24th day of the month (in this case month six), just as the answer to Daniel’s prayer came in the 24th day of the month. Haggai’s exhortation in Haggai 2:10 also came in the 24th of the month (in this case month nine), which was the day the foundation of the temple was laid again.

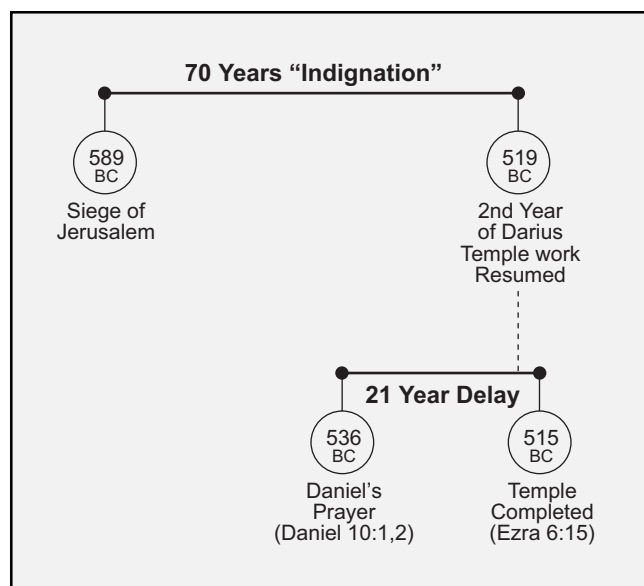
Zechariah — his exhortation to the people in Zechariah 1:7 also commenced on the 24th day of the month (in this case month eleven). The conspicuous repetition of the 24th day links all these passages to each other, and to the fulfillment of Daniel’s prayer.

The Second Year of Darius

As mentioned above, the temple reconstruction resumed under Darius Hystaspes. There were several kings named Darius — the earlier “Darius the Mede” (Cyrus), then Darius Hystaspes, a later Darius II Nothus, and even later a Darius III Codomannus. See the box below for a list of kings of the Persian Empire, and the years of their reign. (A dash means a reign of some months which did not augment the count of years.)

Kings of Persia	
(Cyrus “Year One” Begins Nisan, 538 BC)	
9	Cyrus the Great
8	Cambyses (son of Cyrus)
—	Smerdis (alleged brother of Cambyses)
36	Darius I (son of Hystaspes)
21	Xerxes I (son of Darius)
41	Artaxerxes I Longimanus (son of Xerxes)
—	Sogdianus (half brother of Artaxerxes)
19	Darius II Nothus (half brother of Sogdianus)
46	Artaxerxes II Memnon (son of Sogdianus)
21	Artaxerxes III Ochus (son of Memnon)
2	Artaxerxes IV Arses (son of Ochus)
6	Darius III Codomannus (great grandson of Darius Nothus)
1	Artaxerxes V Bessus (killed Darius, resisted Alexander)

According to Zechariah 1:7, it was near the end of the second year of Darius — at the approach of spring in 519 BC — that God said it was time to revive the work. Seventy years of “indignation” against “Jerusalem and the cities of Judah” had passed (verse 12). This “indignation” against Jerusalem began in 589 BC with a three-year siege of Jerusalem. Now, 70 years later, in 519 BC, the prophets were to tell Israel that God would bless their labors again.



The Angel Gabriel

Daniel 10:5,6 describes the Angelic Messenger sent to answer Daniel's prayer. "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude."

He made an imposing sight. Daniel was struck with awe. Only he saw the vision, but his companions sensed enough that "a great quaking fell upon them" and they fled to hide themselves (verse 7). Daniel had no strength. He heard the voice of the angel, but overcome with weakness Daniel had his face to the ground "in a deep sleep" (verses 8,9).

The angel touched Daniel, set him on his knees and hands, and spoke some remarkable words to the aged prophet. "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent" (verse 11). So Daniel stood, trembling, humbled, weak, but ready.

We think this angel was Gabriel. Gabriel had appeared to Daniel in the vision of chapter nine, identified by name (Daniel 9:21). Gabriel also appeared to Daniel in the vision of chapter eight, again identified by name (Daniel

8:16). So it is not unlikely that it was the same angel appearing to Daniel in the vision of Chapter 10.

But there is more evidence than merely this simple inference. The appearance of Gabriel in chapter nine was in the "first year of Darius the Mede" (Daniel 9:1). In Daniel 11:1, the majestic visitor says something cryptic about that year — "Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood to confirm and to strengthen him [Michael, see 10:21]." Presumably this means that as this angel and Michael now cooperated to bring Daniel a message, so they had cooperated also in the first year of Darius. Which suggests that this angel is the same that appeared to Daniel in that year — namely, Gabriel.

If this is Gabriel, then it is appropriate to the subject of the vision. For Gabriel was used in chapter nine to give Daniel a vision respecting the first advent of Christ, and now the same messenger is used here to give Daniel a vision respecting the second advent of Christ.²

Michael

Michael is the angel who assisted Gabriel, freeing him to proceed on his errand to Daniel. Most brethren of the Bible Student Movement hold that Michael is the name by which we know the son of God, Jesus, in his pre-human existence. Thus in Daniel 12:1 when Michael "stands up" — language which in Daniel 11:2,3,4,7,20,21 denotes a king coming to the throne — this fits our Lord Jesus at his second advent. But it would not fit some other angel lesser in rank.

Daniel 10:13 in our common version says Michael was "one of the chief princes." This seems an odd way to refer to the Logos, the son of God through whom all things came into being. But Young's Literal Translation renders this, "Michael, first of the chief heads." In other words, Michael was not merely one of a leading band, he was first of them all. This more aptly describes the position of the Son of God. Jesus is referred to as the "messenger [angel] of the covenant" in Malachi 3:1, and Hebrews 1:9 refers to him as superior to other angels, anointed "above thy fellows."

Twice Strengthened

Gabriel tells Daniel in verse 14 that his message to Daniel is about what will happen to his people "in the latter days." The vision is "for many days." As Daniel listened, even this beginning of the message overpowered Daniel, and together with his humble spirit, made him speechless, and he "set [his] face towards the ground" again (verse 15).

In verse 16 another angel strengthened Daniel, but the prophet still was too drained and weak to receive the message. "There remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me" (verse 17). So a second time an angel strengthened Daniel and also encouraged him, "O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me,

was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me" (verse 19).

Earlier in our series on Daniel, we saw that he represents the Gospel Age Church. Perhaps that point fits here as well. In Jesus' messages to the seven Churches in Revelation, to only two of them does he use the word "strength" — to the fifth and sixth Churches, which precede the Second Advent of Christ. (The texts are Revelation 3:3 to Sardis and 3:8 to Philadelphia.) Perhaps the two strengthenings of Daniel represent the encouragement to these two Churches, as the saints recovered from the dark ages of Papal domination.

The Church of Sardis represented the Church during the time of the Reformation, and the Church of Philadelphia the Church during the Protestant expansion. As Daniel was strengthened to receive the vision which takes us to the second advent of Christ, so Sardis and Philadelphia were strengthened to prepare for the second advent of Christ — which commenced at the opening of the seventh church, Laodicea.

In verse 20, Gabriel says the "prince of Grecia" would come later. Perhaps this is an intimation that following Persia, Greece would next take the mantle of dominion. Satan as usurper of the power of this world has a general control over them all. Probably he is the spiritual "prince of Persia" and also, later, the "prince of Grecia."

But now Gabriel is prepared to deliver his remarkable message. Only he and Michael were privy to this (verse 21), which must have impressed Daniel all the more with the honor of the revelation coming to him. Let the honor of our privilege of understanding the vision, likewise impress, and humble, us.

The Message Delivered

The message is delivered beginning in chapter 11, verse 2. "And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia."

Cyrus was the king of Persia when this prophecy was given. Therefore the "three kings in Persia" to stand up after him refer to Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius Hystaspes. You can see from the list of kings in the box earlier, that these were the immediate successors of Cyrus.

Cambyses was the son of Cyrus and reigned 8 years. During this time he invaded and conquered Egypt. He died during his return from this venture — possibly by his own hand, possibly by an accident, or as some suspect assassinated — after hearing that his brother Smerdis had usurped the throne in his absence.

Smerdis is sometimes referred to as "pseudo-Smerdis," because of a later report that he was an imposter. Smerdis is also known as Bardiya, the name used

for him on commercial tablets of the day. He reigned only a few months, but he was the recognized king during this time and the prophecy correctly numbers him among them.

Darius, or "Darius Hystaspes," was his successor. He was the son of Hystaspes, who may have been a governor of Parthia appointed by Cambyses. Darius was one of seven nobles who assassinated Smerdis on 29 September, 522 BC. Darius claimed that his predecessor was an imposter named Gaumata, and that the real Smerdis had been secretly killed some years before. Darius had to resubdue much of his empire when rebellion broke out following the disturbances which led to his ascension. He reigned for 36 years.

Late in his life he prepared for war against Greece and Egypt, but died before he could execute either. However, his preparations raised the question of an heir, "for according to Persian law the king may not march with his army until he has named his successor" (Herodotus Book Seven, paragraph 2). There was a dispute on the subject, which he resolved by choosing his son Xerxes, his son by Atossa, a daughter of Cyrus.³

Xerxes was the king identified in the prophecy as "the fourth" — that is, the fourth king after Cyrus. The prophecy says he would have great wealth, and would invade Greece. Xerxes is remembered for his wealth, and renowned for his invasion of Greece. To the amazement of all, it proved unsuccessful. It became a turning point in history, which allowed Greece, a century and a half later, to invade and subdue Persia and become the next great empire. It is thus altogether fitting that the prophecy should take us to this important part of history before jumping in the following verse to the time of Alexander the Great.

Xerxes in Esther

This Xerxes, invader of Greece, is known in the book of Esther as Ahasuerus. Xerxes is a Greek version of his name, Ahasuerus a Hebrew form. He ascended the throne in November 486 BC and his first regnal year commenced with Nisan in 485 BC. He ruled for 21 years until assassinated in his bedchamber in August 465 BC.



Esther in the palace of Xerxes.

Esther 1:3,4 says in his third year of reign "he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him: When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty ... 180 days." As Daniel predicted, this king would have "strength [and] riches."

This lavish six-month display celebrated his recent suppression of revolts in Egypt and Babylon, and probably also promoted his upcoming invasion of Greece. At the close of these days queen Vashti, perhaps queen of the harem (for his royal queen was named Amestris), was deposed for disobedience, and a search was initiated for a replacement. But it was not until year seven that Esther filled the vacancy (Esther 2:16). The interim is explained by Xerxes' absence on his ill-fated Grecian campaign. The depletion of resources thus endured perhaps was a cause for laying "a tribute upon the land and upon the isles of the sea" (Esther 10:1).

On to Alexander the Great

The remaining rulers of the empire are passed over in Daniel. It is not the purpose of this prophecy to touch each reign — the prophecy would then stretch impossibly long. The passage shows divine foreknowledge by numbering the successors of Cyrus until the failed campaign against Greece under Xerxes, and then jumps to the next major development in world history.

"And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those" (Daniel 11:3, 4).

All students of this passage see this refers to Alexander, first ruler of the Grecian Empire. He died at the height of his power. The son born to Alexander after his death had no continuing domain. After some years the empire split into four parts — Cassander (Macedonia), Lysimachus (Thrace), Seleucus (Syria), and Ptolemy (Egypt). Daniel chapter seven showed this in the four heads on the Grecian Leopard, and Daniel chapter eight showed this in the four horns which rose on the Grecian goat.

The Remainder of the Vision

Thereafter, from Daniel 11:5 forward, Gabriel revealed various specifics about six generations of rulers who would govern the two parts of the Grecian Empire which straddled Israel on the north (Syria) and south (Egypt). The sixth generation in Syria introduces Antiochus Epiphanes in verse 21, the infamous persecutor of the Jews.

Subsequently the vision jumps to Pagan Rome, which would break the nation of Israel in 70 AD, and then to Papal Rome, the fierce persecutor of spiritual Israel.

The study of this prophecy is inspiring, riveting, and engaging. It has attracted the attention of some of the most devoted students of Scripture for centuries. As we will see, this vision yields abundant evidence of Divine Foreknowledge, even attracting the notice of unbelievers. We will continue next issue at Daniel 11:5.

(1) As an aid to memory, we observe that the completion of the temple, and the completion of the walls of Jerusalem, are both in a text numbered 6:15 — Ezra 6:15 for the temple, Nehemiah 6:15 for the walls.

(2) Later in our study of chapter 12 we will connect Daniel 12:7 with Revelation 10:1-6, where the angel there also precedes and refers to the second advent of Christ (Revelation 10:7).

(3) Thus clearly there was no coregency between Darius and Xerxes. Not that any historians propose any such coregency — but some others do. The motive is to change the dates of the successor of Xerxes, namely Artaxerxes, in order to change the dates of Ezra and Nehemiah, who lived during his reign. The purpose for this is to accommodate a different view of the seventy week prophecy of Daniel chapter nine.

This is most unfortunate. By neglecting the facts, or rather reforming facts according to whatever opinion we hold dear, we refuse the very agents by which our Heavenly Father leads us to Truth — namely, the facts of history which prophecy predicted in advance. By this means we not only dim the Truth in our own minds, and set up barriers to any further progress, but whatever influence we exert likewise blunts the progress of those we serve.

The proper solution is to use sound dates for Artaxerxes. This puts the return of Ezra in 458 BC, exactly 490 years before 33 AD when Jesus died on the cross.

The Period of the Kings

From the Temple of Solomon to its burning by the Babylonians — part of our continuing series on Bible Chronology.

We can readily trace Bible Chronology from Adam up to the fourth year of Solomon, when he began building the Temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. We have done this in the previous articles in this series. As a reminder of the results, here is a summary.

The generations listed in Genesis chapter five tell us there were 1656 years to the close of the Flood. The generations listed in Genesis chapter eleven yield 427 years from the end of the flood to God's covenant with Abraham after the death of his father Terah. Exodus 12:40, 41, together with Galatians 3:17, tell us that 430 years passed from that covenant until the Exodus. Finally, 1 Kings 6:1 says that 479 years passed from the Exodus until the spring of Solomon's 4th year, when work began on the Temple. These periods total 2992 years.

There is a broad consensus, among historians who credit the testimony of scripture, that the spring of Solomon's 4th year fell in the year 966 BC. If this date is accepted, then to compute the date of Adam's creation we have but to add 2992 years backward from 966 BC — producing the year 3958 BC.

6000 years forward in time yields the date **2043 AD** for the beginning of the seventh millennium from Adam — the Millennium of Revelation 20. Thus our confidence that the culmination of our hopes may be anticipated within the next 36 years.

But how is the date 966 BC determined? This is done (a) by calculating from the scriptures the **length of time** the kings ruled Israel, from the days of Solomon through the reign of Judah's last king Zedekiah — then (b) fixing that period to **sound historical dates**. In this article we focus on determining the length of time during which the Kings ruled Israel. (We will discuss how those dates are applied in another issue.)

The United Kingdom

Saul was Israel's first king. The only direct testimony we have respecting his reign length is from the New Testament. "God gave unto them Saul ... by the space of forty years" (Acts 13:21). Evidently this figure was retained as a memory within Jewish culture, as it is not specified in the Old Testament itself.

David was Israel's second king, and he also reigned 40 years (2 Samuel 5:4, 1 Kings 2:11, 1 Chronicles 29:27). Solomon was Israel's third king, and he also reigned 40 years (1 Kings 11:42, 2 Chronicles 9:30). Thus it was easy for the Israelites to remember that each of their first three kings reigned a like period — 40 years. Perhaps it was this fact that allowed the memory of Saul's duration to be retained so readily from ancient times.

Thus the duration of the United Kingdom was 120 years. It is an engaging observation that this was also the lifespan of Moses, and that those 120 years also were segregated into three periods of 40 — Moses spent 40 years in the courts of Pharaoh, 40 years as a shepherd, and 40 years as a deliverer. Both series of 40 have spiritual meaning, representing the three ages from Moses' time forward — the Jewish Age, Gospel Age, and Millennial Age. But that is another subject.

The Divided Kingdom

Because Solomon allowed pagan influences into the kingdom through his foreign wives, God allowed the kingdom to be divided as a punishment. This occurred after Solomon died. Ten tribes in the north adopted as their king Jeroboam, and continued to be known as "Israel." The tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the south were ruled by Solomon's son Rehoboam, and came to be known as "Judah." Most of the Levites retained allegiance to this southern kingdom.

The scriptures gives us the reign lengths of each sovereign of each kingdom, from beginning to end. In the column to the right is a list of them all.

The two kings of Judah for which years are missing are Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin. Each of them reigned three months. The four kings of Israel for which years are missing are Zimri (reigned seven days), Tibni (he had a rival reign of four years which are included in the 12 years of Omri), Zachariah (reigned six months), and Shallum (reigned one month). Because of their brevity, or in the case of Tibni that he had no independent years of reign, we have omitted their numbers in the listing.

Reign Lengths

JUDAH		ISRAEL	
17	Rehoboam	22	Jeroboam
3	Abijah	2	Nadab
41	Asa	24	Baasha
25	Jehoshaphat	2	Elah
8	Jehoram	—	Zimri
1	Ahaziah	—	Tibni
7	Athaliah	12	Omri
40	Joash	22	Ahab
29	Amaziah	2	Ahaziah
52	Uzziah	12	Joram
16	Jotham	28	Jehu
16	Ahaz	17	Jehoahaz
29	Hezekiah	16	Jehoash
55	Manasseh	41	Jeroboam
2	Amon	—	Zachariah
31	Josiah	—	Shallum
—	Jehoahaz	10	Menahem
11	Jehoiakim	2	Pekahiah
—	Jehoiachin	20	Pekah
11	Zedekiah	9	Hoshea
—	—	—	—
394		241	

Athaliah, the sixth ruler in Judah, was not a king but ruled as a queen by usurpation after the passing of her husband Jehoram, and then her son Ahaziah. 2 Chronicles 22:12 refers to six years of her reign. But 2 Chronicles 23:1 speaks of a seventh year, in which she was dethroned and killed, by which we know her reign was allotted seven years. All the other figures are listed as given in direct scriptures in Kings and Chronicles.¹

As one can readily see, the sum of years reported from the division of the kingdom through the last king Zedekiah is 394 years.² This seems straight forward and clean. Meanwhile, in the 10 tribe kingdom begun with Jeroboam, there were coincidentally the same number of individuals as in the list for Judah. But the sum of 241 shows this kingdom lasted considerably shorter than Judah. Israel was taken captive by Assyria in 723 BC. Judah was taken by Babylon, and the Temple burned, more than a century later.

The Problem

The problem comes when comparing these two scriptural lists carefully. 2 Kings 18:10 tells us that the last king of Israel, Hoshea, lost his kingdom in the 6th year of Hezekiah of Judah. But if we sum the years of Judah,

from Rehoboam through the 6th year of Hezekiah, the result is **261 years** — whereas in Israel the total is **241 years**. We are 20 years off.

One might avoid the problem by simply dismissing the scriptural record of the Kingdom of Israel. In years past, when a ready solution did not seem apparent, this was a common thing to do. But it is most unsatisfying to dismiss one list of scriptures, in deference to another.

The proper thing to do is compare the two lists generation by generation, to determine where the discrepancies enter in. This can readily be done, because in addition to the reign lengths for each king, the scriptures also synchronize the two kingdoms every time a new king came to the throne.

For example, when Rehoboam of Judah died after 17 years, we are told that his successor Abijah began to reign in the 18th year of Jeroboam of Israel (1 Kings 15:1, 2 Chronicles 13:1). When Jeroboam of Israel died after 22 years, his successor Nadab began to reign in the 2nd year of Asa of Judah (1 Kings 15:25). The reign of each king in both kingdoms is linked to his contemporary in the other kingdom — all the way down the list.

On the right appears another list — first each king of Judah, and then each king of Israel. To the right of each king is a second entry which tells you the year in which this king came to the throne. For example, note Abijah, king of Judah, in the list. The first number tells you he reigned three years. Then, in the column on the right side, appears “18 Jeroboam.” This means that the year Abijah came to the throne in Judah, it was the 18th regnal year of Jeroboam of Israel. To the far right is the scripture which tells us this information.

Kings of Judah

In the study of this information, four factors come into play which harmonize these scriptures into a coherent history of the Period of Kings. These four factors are discussed in the four subheads following. Each one will be illustrated with a scriptural example.

(1) Counting System

First, the two kingdoms differed in how they recorded regnal years. In both kingdoms, the last calendar year of a monarch was credited to the outgoing king. In Judah, that year was counted as the “accession year” of the new king, and his “year one” began with the following calendar year. (This is called “accession-year reckoning.”) But in Israel, the calendar year in which a new king came to the throne was called his “year one.” (This is called “non-accession-year reckoning.”)

What this means is that each year in which there was a change of king in Israel, that year was counted twice — once for the outgoing king, once for the incoming king. So at every change of monarch, one year is double-counted.

Kings of Judah *(with synchronisms)*

3	Abijah	18	Jeroboam	1 Kings 15:1
41	Asa	20	Jeroboam	1 Kings 15:9
25	Jehoshaphat	4	Ahab	1 Kings 22:41
8	Jehoram	5	Jehoram	2 Kings 8:16
1	Ahaziah	12	Jehoram	2 Kings 8:25
		11	Jehoram	2 Kings 9:29
7	Athaliah		Jehu	2 Chr. 22:8-23:1
40	Joash	7	Jehu	2 Kings 12:1
29	Amaziah	2	Jehoash	2 Kings 14:1
52	Uzziah	27	Jeroboam	2 Kings 15:1
16	Jotham	2	Pekah	2 Kings 15:32
16	Ahaz	17	Pekah	2 Kings 16:1
29	Hezekiah	3	Hoshea	2 Kings 18:1

Kings of Israel *(with synchronisms)*

22	Jeroboam			
2	Nadab	2	Asa	1 Kings 15:25
24	Baasha	3	Asa	1 Kings 15:28, 33
2	Elah	26	Asa	1 Kings 16:8
—	Zimri	27	Asa	1 Kings 16:10, 15
—	Tibni			
12	Omri	31	Asa	1 Kings 16:21-23
22	Ahab	38	Asa	1 Kings 16:29
2	Ahaziah	17	Jehosh.	1 Kings 22:51
12	Joram	18	Jehosh.	2 Kings 3:1
		2	Jehoram	2 Kings 1:17
28	Jehu	1	Athaliah	2 K9:24-27, 11:1-3
17	Jehoahaz	23	Joash	2 Kings 13:1
16	Jehoash	37	Joash	2 Kings 13:10
41	Jeroboam	15	Amaziah	2 Kings 14:23
—	Zechariah	38	Uzziah	2 Kings 15:8
—	Shallum	39	Uzziah	2 Kings 15:13
10	Menahem	39	Uzziah	2 Kings 15:17
2	Pekahiah	50	Uzziah	2 Kings 15:23
20	Pekah	52	Uzziah	2 Kings 15:27
9	Hoshea	20	Jotham	2 K 17:1,6, 15:30
		12	Ahaz	2 Kings 17:1

Additional Information

Athaliah and Jehu began the same year
Tibni and Omri were rival rulers (1Kings 16:21, 22)
Omri reigned 6 years in Tirzah (1Kings 16:23)
Asa was diseased in his 39th year (2Chron. 16:12)
Amaziah outlived Jehoash 15 yrs (2Chron 25:25)
Hezekiah 4 = Hoshea 7 (2Kings 18:9)
Hezekiah 6 = Hoshea 9 (2Kings 18:10)

For example, the first three kings of Judah ruled for 17, 3, and 41 years — 61 total. That third king (Asa) died in the fourth year of Ahab of Israel. The total of regnal years in Israel up to the fourth year of Ahab was 22, 2, 24, 2, 12, 4 — 66 total. That is a difference of five years. But notice — there were five changes of kings in Israel in this period. So five years were double-counted. Thus the actual length of time in Israel was 61 years — which matches the time in Judah.

If one charts out these first few reigns — as we have done many times over the years — it is clear that each time a new king of Israel took the throne, the count in Israel accumulates another year of difference as compared to the count in Judah.

(2) Calendar Years

When charting out these reigns, another factor becomes apparent — the calendar years of Judah, and those of Israel, were staggered by six months. (As it turns out, Judah used Tishri years and Israel used Nisan years.) For example, three regnal years are ascribed to Abijah. His year of accession preceded these, meaning Abijah actually reigned in parts of four calendar years in Judah. But he began to reign in the 18th year of Jeroboam, and died in the 20th year of Jeroboam — which includes only three calendar years in Israel. As the diagram below illustrates, this shows that the years of Judah and the years of Israel were staggered. (There are many examples throughout the divided kingdom.)

JUDAH		ISRAEL	
Abijah accession •		18 Jeroboam	
1		19	
2		20	
3	•		

Abijah reigned in parts of four Judean years, but in parts of only three years of Israel. This means the calendar years (regnal years) of the two kingdoms were staggered. (Judah used Tishri years, Israel used Nisan years.)

(3) Cross Reckoning

When Judah used accession-year reckoning, and Israel used non-accession-year reckoning, each kingdom used their own system when numbering the regnal years of the other kingdom. For example, Baasha is said to begin his reign in the 3rd year of Asa. This record about Baasha, a king of Israel, would have been recorded by a scribe in Israel. The year he termed “3” of Asa is the same year the scribes in Judah referred to as “2” of Asa. Each scribe numbered the years — both their own and those of the other kingdom — using the method customary in their own kingdom.

This sounds complicated. Actually it was very natural and regular for the scribes who recorded the information

as it occurred. Recognizing this factor explains the testimony about Jehoahaz of Israel. He reigned 17 years. This is said to begin in year 23, and end in year 37, of Joash of Judah. But from year 23 to year 37 there are only 14 years — or 15, counting inclusively. How can these 15 years match a reign of 17 years?

Part of the answer is the staggered years of the two kingdoms. Jehoahaz began early in year 23 of Joash, and ended late in year “37” of Joash — which means the 17 years of Jehoahaz covered parts of 16 calendar years of Judah rather than only 15. But that still leaves a disparity of one year.

The answer for that is that Israel, at the close of the reign of Jehoahaz, adopted the cleaner accession-year system for numbering the years of their kings. (They retained the new system thereafter.) Thus the year they now counted as 37 of Joash, was the same year they would have numbered as 38 had they continued their previous system. This yields another year in the count — matching the 17 years reported for Jehoahaz. The chart below illustrates how the reign of Jehoahaz actually fell in relation to the reign of Joash of Judah.

JUDAH	ISRAEL	
23 Joash	• 1 Jehoahaz	Israel is using their customary non-accession-year reckoning (Judah is also, as a result of the influence of Athaliah). So Jehoahaz begins to reign in year numbered “23” of Joash.
24	2	
25	3	
26	4	
27	5	
28	6	
29	7	
30	8	
31	9	
32	10	
33	11	
34	12	
35	13	
36	14	
37	15	
38 (37)	16	
39	• 17	
40		Israel changes to accession-year reckoning. What was formerly numbered Joash “38” now becomes Joash “37” beginning with the successor of Jehoahaz.

There are four occasions where a particular year is numbered differently in separate texts of Scripture (see the box on the page following). These are not mistakes. They are simply drawn from records which used different numbering systems — accession-year reckoning in the first case, and non-accession-year reckoning in the second.³

Double Numbered Years

Accession-Year Reckoning in top texts

Non-Accession-Year Reckoning in bottom texts

2 Kings 9:29	Ahaziah in year 11 of Jehoram
2 Kings 8:25	Ahaziah in year 12 of Jehoram
Daniel 1:1	Year 3 of Jehoiakim
Jeremiah 46:2	Year 4 of Jehoiakim
Jeremiah 52:28	Year 7 of Nebuchadnezzar
2 Kings 25:8	Year 8 of Nebuchadnezzar
Jeremiah 52:29	Year 18 of Nebuchadnezzar
2 Kings 25:8	Year 19 of Nebuchadnezzar

(4) Coregencies

The last factor to consider is coregencies. Coregencies were not uncommon in ancient kingdoms. This usually occurred when a king associated his son as a coregent while the father still lived.

There were various reasons for this. For example, in the time of Ahaz, there was a plot against his throne by two opposing kingdoms (Isaiah chapter seven). This prompted Ahaz to elevate his son Hezekiah as a coregent to ensure that Hezekiah became the lawful successor in case Ahaz was deposed. Ahaz did this when Hezekiah reached the age of 12, the age of responsibility (the age of Jesus when he inquired of “my father’s business”).

Hezekiah, knowing the year he would die (Isaiah 38:5), did the same with his son Manasseh when he became 12, in order to groom him for the kingship.

In an earlier case, Jehoshaphat of Judah made his son Jehoram coregent before Jehoshaphat went to battle, to establish the succession in case of disaster, which almost occurred. (His ally Ahab in fact did die in that battle.) The years of this coregency are referred to in 2 Kings 1:17 — thus 2 Kings 3:1 and 2 Kings 1:17 refer to the very same year, differently described.

In these cases, naturally the years of the coregency are numbered to the reign of the senior king. But are they also included in the years of the junior king? The answer to this can only be determined by looking at the numbers themselves, charting out the years, and resolving each case independently. (For example, Jehoram’s eight years do not include his coregency. Hezekiah’s 29 years do not include his coregency, but Manasseh’s long reign of 55 years does include his coregency.)

Keep in mind that the books of Kings and Chronicles were compiled after the fact, from records made in each kingdom over parts of three centuries for Israel, and parts of four centuries for Judah. During these centuries, the records were not always kept in a consistent fashion.

When the various records were later collated in the books we presently have in our Old Testament, the compilers faithfully transmitted the information. But the compilers themselves did not always know how the information connected.⁴ It is for us to determine by thoughtful and reverent application to the scriptures, the actual history of Israel and Judah which these records describe.

Preserved, Yet Veiled

By this unique method, supplying us two inter-twinning accounts of the same period, God preserved the facts so that a resolution of Bible Chronology could be determined when it was His due time. But through the inherent complexities of the information, this method also obscured the answer until it was due time. Thus the wisdom of God arranged all the facts, yet withheld the resolution until it would prove valuable for the last members of the Church.

Results, and Confirmation

The result of this investigation is that the Period of Kings is reduced by 51 years, compared to a strict sum of the regnal years of Judah. This reduction accumulates from five amounts of 4, 4, 24, 8, and 11 years. We will identify each of these in our next issue. We will also see that God has provided an **independent** means of double checking the results.

— *To be continued*

(1) A complete list of scriptures appears in *The Stream of Time*, page 103. A free copy of this study is available to any requestor. Most of these reign lengths are also given in the scriptures listed in the next box, giving the synchronisms between Judah and Israel.

(2) This is sometimes supposed to be 393 by using only six years for Athaliah, but this is one year deficient inasmuch as 2 Chronicles 23:1 specifically identifies a seventh year.

(3) Two systems are applied to the accession of Ahaziah, because about this time in Judah a change was being made from one system to another. This was from the influence of Ahaziah’s mother, Athaliah. She was a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel of Israel, and took the opportunity to implement their customs in Judah.

The three remaining cases are because Judah used a non-accession-year method for their last king Zedekiah. For consistency, Jeremiah’s writings employed this method for all the kings of Judah who came to the throne during his ministry. The first date in each of these last three couplets is according to the Babylonian custom, which was accession-year reckoning. (The two texts cited from Jeremiah 52 are from a later addition to the book, by a scribe living later in Babylon. This is evident from the inclusion in Jeremiah 52:31 of a late record of something which occurred in Babylon. Jeremiah himself did not write chapter 52 — see Jeremiah 51:64.)

Jeremiah 46:2 dates the famous “Battle of Carchemish” in year four of Jehoiakim. It was in the aftermath of this battle that Nebuchadnezzar chased the Egyptians to their border, and meanwhile sent a contingent to Jerusalem, at which time Daniel was taken into captivity. Thus Jeremiah 46:2 and Daniel 1:1 refer to the same year.

(4) See a compiler note at the end of 1 Chronicles 4:22, for a comment about the antiquity of some of the records.