

## The Proof of the Bible

What is the Bible? Is it truly the inspired Word of God? How do we know? Does it have any characteristics that make it different and superior to all other “holy books”? Does it have a uniqueness, or an attribute, that sets it apart from all other pen and paper? Actually, it does and in a very surprising way. That way is a dimension we call **time**. I refer to time as a dimension because today, in modern physics, that is exactly the way time is treated.

In 1929, astronomer Edwin Hubble discovered that the universe *was expanding*<sup>1</sup>. Before this, it was universally believed, by pagans and scientists alike, that the universe was static and eternal. Being extrapolated, if the expansion were run backward, like re-winding a movie, eventually, the universe would shrink back to a point known as the initial singularity, an infinitely dense, infinitely small point of high energy and matter. It is widely accepted by scientists that the universe, including time and space, arose out of this singularity in a process known as the Big Bang<sup>2</sup>. This indicates that the universe had a beginning.

This is not a surprise to those who know the Bible, because the first verse, Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”<sup>3</sup> This denotes that the dimension of time, the three dimensions of space, and matter were created at some definite point in time. Thus, that “beginning” the Bible refers to is actually the beginning of time, which began at the creation of the universe.

In 1905, Albert Einstein shocked the scientific community by introducing his Special Theory of Relativity<sup>4</sup>. He postulated that time would dilate (slow down), depending on the velocity and reference frame of the observer. If this were true, as an observer approached very high speeds, time itself would slow down. Thanks to Einstein’s theory we now know that space and time are fundamentally linked. This is defined mathematically as the space-time continuum, which is constituted by the three dimensions of space (length, width, and height) and the dimension of time.

God and His angelic beings exist in another dimension, a dimension from which they can enter into ours. Although we are limited to the physical realm and cannot leave our space-time dimension, God is not. He is outside time.

So if God is outside of time and He wishes to authenticate the Bible, He can use an attribute that is unique to Him and Him alone. He can predict future events. Isaiah 46:9-10 says, “... I am God and there is no one like Me, who *declares the end from the beginning*, and things which have not been from ancient times ...” We call these kinds of declarations “predictive prophecies,” and the Bible is filled with them. I will present just two such prophecies to illustrate my point. I chose just these two among literally hundreds, not only because their historical accuracy can be verified, but also because of the amazing precision contained therein.

First, in **539 B.C.**, Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, did what everyone thought impossible. He conquered the massive, fortified city of Babylon, the pride of the Chaldean Empire. Everyone was stunned, but no one more so than Cyrus himself. You see, it had been predicted over a century before he accomplished it, and in amazing detail. But before we get to this momentous event, let me lay out some historical details.

In 605 B.C., a brilliant general named Nebuchadnezzar, the crown prince and co-king<sup>5</sup> of Babylon, defeated the combined forces of the Assyrian and Egyptian armies in the famous battle of Carchemish. This victory brought in a new empire, the Babylonian Empire, and later that year, after the death of his father, Nebuchadnezzar became king in his own right. The year before, in **606 B.C.**<sup>6</sup>, Nebuchadnezzar had come to Judah and taken “some of the sons of Israel” back to Babylon (Dn. 1:1-6). After Nebuchadnezzar became king of the empire, he laid his first siege upon the city of Jerusalem, the capital of Judah (2 Kgs. 24:10-16), and took thousands of Jews as prisoners, deporting them to Babylon in **597 B.C.** A report of this historical event can be found in the Babylonian Chronicles<sup>7</sup>.

Nebuchadnezzar then appointed a new king of Judah (2 Kgs. 24:17) and made a treaty with him (Ezek. 17:12-14). In the treaty, the king agreed to surrender and become humble and servile to the new empire. However, he later rebelled. The king unwisely listened to his so-called prophets and made the decision to fight (Ezek. 17:15,18). The problem was that they were not the true prophets of God, but false prophets (Jer. 28). It was a terrible decision with tragic consequences. This king had been warned by God’s true prophet, Jeremiah, that Babylon was going to destroy Jerusalem (Jer. 37). Jeremiah further prophesied that Babylon was going to be the instrument of God’s judgment and the Jews would be taken into captivity to Babylon for seventy years (Jer. 25:9-12). Exactly as was prophesied by Jeremiah, Jerusalem once again came under siege by Nebuchadnezzar’s army (2 Kgs. 25:1-17). His army burned the Temple and the city, broke down the walls around the city and took the rest of the people remaining in Jerusalem into exile to Babylon in **586 B.C.**

Among the captives he brought back with him was a young teenager named Daniel, the author of the Old Testament book by the same name. Because of his loyalty to God and his intimate relationship with Him, he was enabled to interpret a number of the king’s troubling dreams. It so impressed King Nebuchadnezzar that he made Daniel his second in command of the entire kingdom. Under Nebuchadnezzar’s reign the city of Babylon was built into the fortress it became. The size was unimaginable. The city straddled the Euphrates River, making it virtually siege proof. There was also a broad and deep moat, full of water surrounding the city. The moat was aligned by inner walls that were fourteen miles long on each side of the river, and hundreds of feet high. The walls were so thick that chariots could race four abreast on the top. There were also hundreds of gates of brass (bronze) fortified with iron bars throughout such walls and also across the entrances to the city from the Euphrates River<sup>8</sup>. Thus, an attack by troops seemed impossible.

Years after Nebuchadnezzar's death, his grandson Belshazzar became co-king of the empire. Now here's where the story gets really interesting. Belshazzar was a brash and arrogant young ruler. One night he decided to throw a lavish banquet for his subordinate princes of the realm. During the feast, he instructed his servants to get the golden vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, and used them in his drunken revelry. God would not tolerate this desecration. A hand suddenly appeared out of nowhere and began writing on the wall next to him. Not a body or even an arm was seen. Just a disembodied hand! He was terrified. Daniel 5:6 says, "Then the king's countenance changed and his thoughts alarmed him; and the joints of his hips loosened, and his knees began to knock together." In other words, he was so terrified that his knees began knocking and he soiled himself. No doubt it was a huge embarrassment.

He immediately summoned all his magicians and soothsayers to interpret the writing, but none could tell what the writing said. The queen mother, however, remembered that a Jewish captive named Daniel had interpreted dreams for Nebuchadnezzar and told the young ruler. Daniel was summoned and promised immense fortune if he could interpret the writing. Daniel told Belshazzar to keep his wealth, but that with God's assistance he would read and make known to him the writing on the wall. What was written was not good news. It said "... God has numbered your kingdom and brought it to an end; ... You have been weighed in the scales and found to be lacking ... Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. 5:26-28). In other words, your time is up.

Now let us return to Cyrus the Great. Unknown to anyone in Babylon, Cyrus' army had been very busy miles up the river working to divert it by digging a large number of enormous canals right next to its banks. Since the water level dropped to such an extent that Cyrus' army could march in it, and also since the reckless Babylonians left the gates of the city open while they were feasting and celebrating a pagan festival, Cyrus was able to quickly take the city during the very night that Daniel had interpreted the writing on the wall. That very night Belshazzar was killed by Cyrus' army which took the city without a fight, marking the end of the Babylonian Empire (Dan. 5:30). In the British Museum is a clay cylinder known as "The Cylinder of Cyrus." On it, Cyrus' reporter brags how Cyrus conquered the city of Babylon without even a skirmish. Now for the most amazing and important part of the story.

In October of **539 B.C.**, Cyrus made his triumphal entry into the city of Babylon and he left his maternal uncle, Darius the Mede, to rule as co-king in Babylon in his place while he went forth to other campaigns to conquer other territories (Dan. 5:31)<sup>6, 9</sup>. Darius died of natural causes two years after the fall of Babylon and Cyrus then took over to reign with full supremacy in the year **536 B.C.**<sup>6, 9</sup> The Jewish historian Josephus, who wrote for the Roman Empire in the first century, states in *The Antiquities of the Jews*<sup>10</sup> that in the first year of his reign, Cyrus read Isaiah's scroll and came to understand the prophecies concerning himself. Isaiah wrote approximately between 760 to 696 B.C., which was long

before Cyrus was even born. Here is the astounding quote from Isaiah 45:1-4, which Cyrus read:

“Thus says Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him; and I will loosen the loins of kings; to open before him the double doors so that the gates shall not be shut: I will go before you, and make level the rough places; I will shatter in pieces the doors of bronze, and cut through the bars of iron: And give to you the treasures of darkness, and the hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I am Jehovah, who calls you by your name, the God of Israel. For the sake of My servant, Jacob, and Israel, My chosen one, I have also called you by your name; I have surnamed you, although you have not known Me.”

How astonishing it is that so many years before Cyrus was even born, Isaiah prophesied with so much detail concerning him, speaking forth the words of God, mentioning him by name, and detailing his success in conquering the Babylonian Empire!

Cyrus was overwhelmed! It is a matter of record that after he became sole king of Babylon, he freed all of the Jewish captives enabling them to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild their Temple. His decree concerning this as recorded in Ezra 1:2-4 and 2 Chronicles 36:23 is quite outstanding (see also Josephus' writings<sup>10</sup>). Remarkably, this action by Cyrus fulfilled Jeremiah's prophecies that the captivity of the Jews in Babylon would last seventy years (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10): from **606** to **536 B.C.** Even the non-religious archeologists can't explain this. The more honest ones simply scratch their heads and admit they have no idea how such an accurate foretelling of future events could happen. The less honest try to post-date both the books of Daniel and Isaiah, even though all evidence suggests otherwise. The only possible explanation is that the Author of these biblical prophecies had to be outside of time!

The second predictive prophecy that I would like to highlight relates a very tragic outcome for the participants. While Daniel was in Babylon, he realized at one point that the seventy years of captivity foretold by Jeremiah were almost completed (Dan. 9:1-2). He thus engaged in one of the most passionate, heartfelt prayers for himself and his people that you will ever read. It can be found in the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel, in the Old Testament. While he was in such earnest prayer, he was interrupted by someone who introduces himself as Gabriel, an archangel sent by God. Gabriel gave him one of the most important prophecies in the Bible. Verses 25-26 read,

“Know therefore and comprehend: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until the time of Messiah the Prince will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with the street and trench, even in distressful times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah will be cut off and will have nothing; the people of the prince who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary ...”

Scholars have studied this passage for centuries and tried to decipher and interpret its meaning but failed. It wasn't until Sir Robert Anderson, head of Scotland Yard, figured out the math involved in these verses that it finally became clear. He published his book, *The Coming Prince*<sup>1</sup>, concerning his interpretation of the prophecy in Daniel 9 in Great Britain in 1894.

Verse 9:24 tells us that the prophecy encompasses a period of 70 weeks, but for the purposes of our discussion here I will focus on *a particular period* within the 70 weeks that is mentioned in verses 25-26. Most Bible scholars and commentators agree that the weeks in the prophecy of Daniel 9 should be interpreted as weeks of years (with one "week" equaling 7 years). In Daniel 9:25, Gabriel speaks of a period of 7 weeks (i.e., 49 years) and 62 weeks (i.e., 434 years), for a total of 69 weeks. If you multiply 69 weeks of years by 7 (taking one week to equal 7 years), this comes out to 483 years (according to the ancient Jewish calendar). Let us proceed carefully to see how this fits in with the biblical prophecy.

King Cyrus gave the Jewish captives the freedom to go back to Jerusalem and to rebuild their *Temple*, but not *the city* itself. The book of Ezra details the struggle the Jews had trying to rebuild, while their defenses were in ruins. They were continually harassed by their enemies and made little progress. Eventually, they completed the rebuilding of the Temple. It was not until much later, in **445 B.C.**, that Artaxerxes I, the new king of Persia at the time, finally issued a decree allowing the Jews to rebuild the walls and gates of Jerusalem. This is recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-6. This is the "decree" that is mentioned in the prophecy recorded in Daniel 9:25-26 concerning the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah. After the issuing of this decree, the walls and the city itself were finally rebuilt, "with the street and trench, even in distressful times" (Daniel 9:25), under the leadership of Nehemiah<sup>10</sup>. According to Bible scholars, the first 7 weeks (49 years) mentioned in Daniel 9:25 correspond to the time it took to rebuild Jerusalem<sup>12-13</sup>.

Artaxerxes' decree is thought to have been issued on March 14, 445 B.C. (see Nehemiah 2:1). Daniel 9:25 predicted that Messiah would be cut off "69 weeks" (i.e., 483 years according to the ancient Jewish calendar) after the time of the issuing of the decree in 445 B.C. to rebuild Jerusalem. Converting the 483 years (according to the ancient Jewish calendar) into the period of time to which it corresponds when adjusted to our modern calendar, we come to 476 years. Was this prophecy fulfilled precisely? The end of this 476-year time period corresponds to **32 A.D.**<sup>1</sup>, a pivotal point in all human history. It was during this time that *Jesus of Nazareth was walking the earth*. Precisely as was prophesied by Daniel, "Messiah the Prince" had come to mankind.

Now let's continue with the rest of the prophecy. It reads that the "Messiah will be cut off and will have nothing ..." Even the words "cut off" are intriguing. In Hebrew, the word

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<sup>1</sup> Subtracting 445 B.C. from 476, we come up with 31 A.D., to which we have to add 1 because there is no zero year between the B.C. and A.D. timeline. Thus, the date prophesied would be 32 A.D.

used and translated as “cut off,” also means to be executed, usually for a capital crime. Josephus tells us in his writings<sup>10</sup> that at this time there was a man named Jesus, who was accused of sedition by the Jews, and executed by the Roman Magistrate. Historical Roman writings of the time also refer to the crucifixion of one named as “the Christ” by those who believed in Him. Thus, historically there was actually a Jesus of Nazareth, who walked the earth at that time, and this person was executed. The historical fact of His existence is undeniable. And He was “cut off.”

Let us continue with the prophecy. The next part tells about the people of the prince that will come and “destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Here we have the benefit of historical hindsight. We know exactly who destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the Temple after these had been rebuilt centuries earlier. They were destroyed by the fifth, tenth, twelfth and fifteenth Roman Legions under Titus Vespasian, the prince of the Roman Empire. But before we look at the precise fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel, let us pause for a minute and look at an interesting statement made by Jesus before his death on the cross. The Gospel of Matthew, which was written and circulated around 40 A.D., records the event in the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter. Jesus was departing from the Temple when his disciples came to show Him the buildings of the Temple. He remarked to them, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, there shall by no means be left here a stone upon a stone, which shall not be thrown down” (v. 2). Now, let’s continue.

In **70 A.D.** the Roman army under the command of Titus captured the city of Jerusalem after a long and bloody siege. The carnage, described by Josephus in *The Wars of the Jews*<sup>14</sup>, recounts the details of the battle in gruesome detail. Titus, however, only wanted to capture and punish the rebellious Jews who were holding out, restore peace, and once again subjugate the city to Roman rule. He had no desire to damage, let alone *destroy* the Jew’s religious Temple. But God, who “declares the end from the beginning” (Isa. 46:10a), knew that this event would have a different ending; the prophecies in Daniel 9:26 and Matthew. 24:2 had to be fulfilled.

Toward the end of the furious battle, the last of the Jewish rebels took refuge in the Temple, assuming themselves to be safe. However, some Roman soldiers disobeyed Titus’ direct orders not to destroy the Temple and shot flaming arrows directly into the Temple, setting it on fire. The Temple was built of finished stones and its walls, its floor, and some of its furnishings were made of cedar, cypress and olive wood, overlaid with pure gold (1 Kgs. 6:7, 15, 22, 23, 28, 31-33). The blaze was so intense that it not only incinerated the last of the rebels but melted all of the gold inside. Finally, the siege was over and peace restored, but there was a fortune in melted gold to be had. However, the melted gold had seeped into the spaces between the stones of the walls of the Temple. Since the Temple was already lost, Titus ordered his men to dismantle the stones one by one and retrieve the gold. During the plundering of the Temple, the soldiers broke up these gigantic stones so that they could obtain the gold. It was in this unanticipated way that not only Jerusalem was destroyed, but not one stone of the Temple was left standing upon another, exactly fulfilling Jesus’ prophecy recorded in Matthew 24:2 and the

prophecy in Daniel 9:26 concerning “the people of the prince who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Upon his return to Rome, Titus reportedly declined the victor’s Wreath of Honor, declaring that he did not win the victory on his own but was just the instrument of God’s wrath against His people<sup>15</sup>.

How can the telling of future events be so accurate and precise? How can anyone explain the fulfillment of these two prophecies highlighted here, let alone hundreds of others, unless the prophets that foretold these historical accounts were influenced by something or someone who is *outside of the domain that we call time*? Consider that the events presented here documented in the Bible concerning Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Artaxerxes I and Titus are events that span the history of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Roman Empires, respectively, which are also recorded in secular history. Who is the ultimate Author of the prophecies I have mentioned herein? We would have to say, that the author is someone outside our space-time dimension who could communicate with the prophets in their present time and give them words concerning future events, events that the Author alone knew would occur. I would submit that the Author is God Himself, who exists outside of time.

In writing this document delving into just a few of these predictive prophecies, my sincere hope and prayer are that you have found this reading helpful in understanding how to answer the fundamental question of whether the Bible is the inspired Word of God. I would say that the Bible was conceived in another dimension. God conceived the Bible outside of time.

*Written by SSB - a former proponent of evolution and scoffer of creation and the Bible, who came to know God’s mercy and saving grace, and am now one who defends the faith that I once did my best to discredit and mock.*

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(See timeline of historical events below.)

## Appendix Timeline of Events of the History of the Jews

**Babylonian Empire**  
Nebuchadnezzar  
(reign, 605 – 562 B.C.)

Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied from 760 to 696 B.C. and 628 to after 586 B.C., respectively. As prophesied by them, Jerusalem came under siege by Nebuchadnezzar in **606** (a small attack), **597** and **586 B.C.**, eventually resulting in the burning of the city and of Solomon's Temple and the exile (in three waves) of thousands of Jews to Babylon. (Dan. 1:1-6; 2 Kings 24:10-16; 2 Kings 25:1-11; Isaiah 39:5-8; Jeremiah 25, 37, 52)

**Medo-Persian Empire**  
Cyrus the Great  
(reign, 559 – 530 B.C.)

Cyrus led the Medo-Persian army and diverted the Euphrates River. His army marched into the city of Babylon, conquering it as prophesied by Isaiah. This marked the end of the Babylonian Empire in **539 B.C.** (Isaiah 13:1, 17; 44:27; 45:1-4; Daniel 5:30)

During the first year of Darius the Mede in **539 B.C.**, who ruled in Babylon under Cyrus, Daniel understood that the time of the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah was almost up, and thus started to pray earnestly. In response to Daniel's earnest prayer, the archangel Gabriel appeared to him and gave him the prophecy of the 70 weeks. (Daniel 9:1-3, 20-27)

After Darius' death, Cyrus became king with full supremacy in **536 B.C.** and then declared his decree to release the Jewish captives so that they could go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. This fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy referring to Cyrus as God's shepherd for His people, who would accomplish His desire of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. (Isaiah 44:28; 45:13; Ezra 1:2-4; 2 Chronicles 36:23)

As predicted by Jeremiah's prophecies, the Jews were in captivity in Babylon for seventy years (from **606** to **536 B.C.**), after which time Babylon was destroyed becoming "an eternal desolation." (Jeremiah 25:11-12; Jeremiah 29:10-14)

Darius the Great  
(reign, 522 – 486 B.C.)

The rebuilding of the Second Temple in Jerusalem was completed in **516 B.C.** during the reign of Darius the Great. (Ezra 5-6)

Artaxerxes I  
(reign, 465 – 425 B.C.)

Nehemiah, the cupbearer of Artaxerxes I, requests that the king let him return to Jerusalem to restore and rebuild the city (**445 B.C.**). The decree of Artaxerxes I marks the "clock" given to Daniel by Gabriel for the cutting off of the Messiah. (Nehemiah 2:1-5; Daniel 9:25-26)

Nehemiah oversees the rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem. Eventually the city is rebuilt completely, "with street and trench, even in distressful times." (Nehemiah 2:7; Daniel 9:25)

**Roman Empire**  
Tiberius Caesar  
(reign, 14 – 37 A.D.)

Jesus Christ was crucified around **32 A.D.** during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, fulfilling the prophecy in Daniel 9:26. (Mathew 27; Mark 15; Luke 3:1, 23; John 19)

Titus Vespasian  
(reign, 79 – 81 A.D.)

Siege of Jerusalem by the Roman Empire and the destruction of the Second Temple in **70 A.D.** by Titus' army as prophesied by Jesus and by Daniel. (Daniel 9:26; Mathew 24:2; Luke 19:41-44)