

The Berean Ecclesial News

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Upholding the Truth since 1923.

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God Willing, The Berean Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

AUSTIN, Texas -- Memorial Meeting 11:00am in home. Bro. Jim Phillips, 16601 FM 1325 # 1911, Austin, TX. 78728; phone (512) 218-0920

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Sis. Kay, Sis. Naomi, Bro. Matthew and myself have found it necessary to form our own meeting in Austin, Texas. We will meet at 11:00 AM, each Sunday morning in our home, until further notice. All are very welcome to come visit.

We are happy to announce that Bro. Lee Smith has visited our Meeting.

With love to all,

Bro. Jim Phillips, Austin Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia

Ecclesial Correspondence

Stephen Njoka

PO Box 1

KITUI, Kenya, East Africa

30 August, 2000

Dear Bro. Fred, Loving Greetings in Our Master's Name,

How are you and the other faithfuls over that end? In our immediate family, we are all OK. Progressing well with our Master's business. And so is with everyone in our ecclesia.

Enclosed with this short note is a hand written exhortation which I hope can contribute in our Berean Ecclesial Monthly Magazine.

Truly we are pleased to receive them each month and know what is happening in other parts of the world. It is a pleasure for us to read exhortations, ecclesial news etc. Sometimes I feel as if a Brother is exhorting himself.

We Christadelphians have been blessed in being given the True Knowledge of God's plan and purpose with the earth. We can look at the turmoil in the world today and be encouraged that it heralds the looked return of Our Master to set up His Kingdom on this troubled earth, which will extend forever.

Oh, here I've a tape of Hye Gathering 1987 whereby I listen to your talk on "Biblical Customs" and the other side "Suffering and Pain" by N. Mammon. I do get a lot of pleasure out of listening and reading the Word of God.

I close now and hope this finds you in health and happiness too.

Please convey my love to Ruth and the rest of the Ecclesia.

Love from all the family,

Bro. Stephen

P.S. On 1g, ^{2nd} and 3rd September, we held our Bible School

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

CANTON FRATERNAL GATHERINGOctober 7 & 8, 2000

Bro. Beryl Snyder, 4095 Prosway SW, Massillon, OH 44646, 330-837-1956

The World We Live In

We get up in the morning, we go to our jobs, our wives may stay home to care for children, we look at the news and we see all sorts of horrid crimes, murderers released from prison, and we see no justice left in the world. We see crazy, terrible things happening all around us. In the turmoil of today's world, it isn't easy to understand or accept that the most wonderful blessing of life are experienced during the worst of times. When we are suffering, or in pain, whether our pain is physical, emotional, or spiritual — this is the time when the glory of God can be revealed to us in many exciting ways.

In the midst of suffering, we may find ourselves wondering "why this is happening to us." It is so natural for us to become discouraged and even bitter. At times, it may seem life isn't fair and that God doesn't care. Sometimes "bad" things happen to "good" brothers and sisters, and we may ask "why." We have all been through times when we deal with grief: we've lost a dear member of the family, failed in business, or family matters, or friendships, or morals. Sometimes we are overcome with inferior or negative thoughts. This is all common to man. We know from the pages of Scripture that there is a ray of hope for each and everyone. We all know, no matter what we may be going through, that God loves us and He cares deeply. The entire book of Job, for instance, was written to dispel the false notion that bad things happen to bad people.

Let us look at the 9th chapter of John. We find Jesus dealing with the same subjects. While he and his disciples were walking in the streets of Jerusalem, they came upon a man who'd been born blind. The disciples ask, "*Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents that he was born blind?*" As far as they were concerned, those were the only options available: the man was blind, therefore, some misbehavior must have taken place. Jesus quickly sets them straight: "*Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*" This was for the glory of God. Then, he healed the man.

Adversity is a time we can lean on God and find out how much He cares. It's a time to grow in faith and trust and to see God's strength more clearly in our own weakness. The Scriptures tell us "the rain falls on the just and the unjust" alike.

A great analogy, for example, is if we walk long enough, we're bound to stub a toe or hurt a foot: or in riding a bike, we will eventually fall off. No matter what we do in life, there are bound to be occasional negative consequences. We'll experience some bad times and tough challenges. All these things are part of every day living. The simple fact is that every 195

day we live is one more day God has given. It's a gift from Him! How much happier we would all be if that is how we viewed it.

The prophet Isaiah said (in chapter 40, verses 6 & 7), *"...All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."* And yet, the Bible tells us that our *"sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us."* (Rom. 8:18) We find also in verse 28, *"...we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* Our suffering or adversity may last for a moment or a lifetime, but the blessings of God will last for all eternity.

Not one of us knows our brother or sister's heart, but God does. The Bible tells us throughout the Scriptures that He delights in giving us of His good pleasure. He will always bring together things in just the right way for us. We, at all times, must trust and honor Him; love Him with all our might, heart, mind, and soul.

Sometimes blessings come in most unexpected ways. It is not always easy to see the blessings of God as they unfold. They may come in the way of annoyance. Let's think about this for a moment. We all have gone through times we thought were tough; and when we look back, we discover it wasn't so bad after all. Young married couples have very little starting out, or we may now have very little, and have a slew of financial problems. But, as we look back, we can see that even though the particulars of the moment may not have been pleasant, it was a pretty good time after all. We recognize God was there, and we were helped through hard times. Whatever happens in our lives, God is watching over us. You can be certain, when you have not the strength to stand, God will help you through: when we know not the way, He will lead us. The blessings of the world last for only a season, but God's blessings last for ever and ever.

Let's look at the words of the first Psalm: *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sin, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinner in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."*

We seek God as those who honor Him. God cannot honor those who never speak His name except to use it as a curse, or those who are always ready to blame Him when something goes wrong and never give Him credit or even say "Thank you" when things go right. We all know the blessings (pleasures) of the world fade. They are never what they are made out to be, but the blessings of God are always at our side.

Let's look at what it means to be truly blessed. We should all have peace of mind to know we've done the best we can do; to know our motives are beyond reproach; to know we are honored in God's eyes; to have the love and respect of those closest to us – especially our brethren and sisters.

God wants to give us everlasting blessings. He wants to give us His blessings so that we may help others who are in trouble or need help. God's Word is full of His promises for those who serve Him. To those of us who live by His rules, we are promised a place in His great and glorious kingdom. Jesus says, *"Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together..."* (Luke 6:38) We are also told, *"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek,) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Matt. 6:31-33) In other words, we're told to live for God and He will surely bless us.

Mark 10:29-30, Jesus tells us, *"... Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."* And in Revelation 22:12, he said, *"...Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."* In the remaining life we have, it doesn't really matter who or what is against us, because we know God is always on our side and blesses us, if we follow His laws in our daily lives.

We all have had bad times, and some of us may be going through trials at the present time. Because we are suffering doesn't mean He is not by our side, nor does it mean He doesn't hear us. Let's look again at David: he certainly went through some terrible times – his infant son died, his children's lives are a mess, one of his sons tried to take the kingdom from him, etc. There are few days in David's life when some sinister intrigue was swirling about him, and yet, he knew the blessed covenant of 197

God's promise in those times of trouble. That's why he wrote, *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; the rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

The Psalmist knew the Lord was with him, and blessed him, even in times of deep trouble. He knew he could trust God to deliver him from the clutches of his enemies, whether those enemies were personal or impersonal forces of nature. He knew that God was in control, and as long as that was the case, everything would ultimately work out just the way it was supposed to.

Sometimes we might feel God has forgotten us. (We all know He hasn't.) Here's what Jeremiah tells us, *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."* So, if we stop to think (during the lowest times of our lives) of all the promises and daily blessings God has given, how can we allow ourselves to become depressed or give up hope? God is our compass. Nothing can separate us from God's love. He will bring us peace even during turmoil. The Bible refers to the "peace of God" as the "peace which passeth understanding" (Phil. 4:7). This tells us we can be calm and peaceful no matter how desperate life looks at present. When things have gotten us down, we can always look up. *"The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace."*

Giving control of our lives to God is the most critical thing we can do to feel the blessings now. Every day is a gift from God.

God will give us peace, if we ask for it. The power of prayer is amazing. If we pray with our hearts, He knows our needs. He knows if we are sincere. He knows our every thought. This is why we should always try to do our best at all times.

Yes, we all make mistakes: we are all sinners, but we know God is willing to forgive if we forsake evil. *"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."* (Psa. 32:1-2) *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* (Rom. 3:23-24) *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*

We are sometimes weighed down by guilt and regret (which is how we should feel), but God is gracious and as the Psalmist tell us in Psalm 198 03:12-14 *"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed*

our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." We see that God knows our frailties; He knows we are prone to stumble. He is compassionate enough to forgive when we ask. We should all be able to confess those things we have done wrong, and stop making excuses for ourselves. Both Old and New Testaments stress the need to confess. It was only when David confessed his transgressions that the Lord forgave him. (Psa. 32:3-5) *"When I kept silent, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."*

Brothers and sisters, as we all leave and go our separate ways, let us leave with full hearts, knowing that God is with us. And let us do the very best we can no matter what our circumstance may be.

Bro. Tony Marsico

The Year of Christ's Birth/Crucifixion

Among the more fascinating problems to unravel is the date of Christ's lifetime. Probably, it is not possible to know with certainty when the actual dates were, but it is an interesting study to look at the question.

There are no shortage of clues. First the firm and solid clues.

- 1). Jesus was born before Herod the Great had died. (Mat. 2:1)
- 2). Jesus was born in the days of the taxing by Cyrenius, and Joseph and Mary had gone to Bethlehem for this purpose. (Luke 2: 1-5)
- 3) Jesus began his ministry at about 30 years of age. (Luke 3:23)
- 4). The word of God (Jesus?) came unto John the Baptizer in the 15th year of Tiberius. (Luke 3:1)

Next are the clues which are more open to interpretation. These are clues generally accepted, but must be admitted to having potentially different meanings than that generally suggested.

- 5). The first Passover after Jesus' baptism was 46 years after the start of building the Temple. (John 2:20)
- 6). Jesus was crucified on the fourth Passover following his baptism, after 3 'A yeats.
- 7). Jesus was crucified on Friday

Lastly are the clues which are only derived from interpreting prophesy.

8). Jesus was crucified at the end of the 70 weeks of Daniel's prophesy (Dan. 9:27).

9). Jesus was crucified 280 years before the development of the man-child Constantine. (Rev. 12:1-2)

10). Jesus was crucified a generation before the destruction of Jerusalem (Mat. 24:34).

It is a curious thing that with as many clues as we have, and with so much historical evidence surrounding these clues, not one of these items can be settled to one's complete satisfaction as to an historical date. Let's start at number one. The Roman histories record that Herod reigned for 36 years. But when did this reckoning begin? Did it begin when he fled to Rome and won the approval of the Roman Senate (40 BC) or did it begin when he actually conquered Antonigus, and took by force the Kingdom Rome had granted him (37 BC)? The difference would be whether Jesus was born prior to 4 BC, or around 0 BC?

The Roman histories suggest that Herod began his reign on the Senate's decree in 40 BC and died 36 years later in 4 BC. This also would seem to agree with the testimony of Josephus. Josephus says that Herod died soon after the following event.

"But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon." - Antiquities 17:6:4

Josephus further records that this event happened after a "fast day" and he also records that Herod died shortly thereafter, before the following Passover (Ant. 17:9:3). The key, historically speaking, is the eclipse of the moon. Josephus appears to regard the eclipse as a divine sign of disapproval towards Herod for his actions in dealing with the High Priest. While accuracy in the historical record can prove quite elusive, astronomical events are easy to calculate mathematically to within a day. This is because the Jewish calendar is always tied into the new moons, which can be mathematically calculated for any year. The first day of the Jewish month was always the new moon, and the first month (of the religious calendar) always began with the first new moon of Spring. The Jews were so meticulous in this, that they actually built a tower on a hill to be able to more accurately determine the new moon.

During the time frame in question for Jesus' birth, (7 BC through 6 200 AD) there were only two eclipses of the moon. One was in 5 BC,

and the other on March 13th, 4 BC. Of these, only the 4 BC date would be after a fast day, that is, after the fast of Purim. (Est. 9: 20-32). Herod's death, according to Josephus, would have to occur between March 13th, 4 BC and Passover, which would have been on April 11th, 4 BC. This would indicate that Jesus must have been born prior to the spring of 4 BC.

This brings us to our second clue, which was the days of the taxing referenced in Luke's account. "Cyrenius the governor" was the Senator P. Sulpicius Quirinius, who is considerably well known from Roman documents. The Emperor Augustus recognized his outstanding ability both as soldier and administrator.

In AD 6 Quirinius went as Legate (which means the Deputy answering directly to Caesar) to Syria. Coponius was sent with him from Rome to be the first Procurator of Judea. Between AD 6 and 7 they carried out a census, which is what the Romans called their taxing. This was a very famous taxing in history, as the Jews loathed it intensely. But this taxing in 7 AD would be much too late for the one that brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. By all accounts, Herod would have been long dead by this time.

The Roman historian Tacitus records that the census took place in the Empire every fourteenth year. Tacitus wrote that it affected not only the Roman citizens, but also Spain and Gaul. It covered Egypt as well as Syria and Palestine.

If we consider what Tacitus says concerning the census, and go back 14 years from the well known taxing in 7 AD, we come to 7 BC, but it is clear from Roman records that Saturninus, not Quirinius was Legate at that time. Before trying to resolve this, we would first point out that Tertullian, an apostate North African Christian writer around 200 AD appears to quote from Luke 2:1 and substitutes Saturninus for Cyrenius. Why he makes this substitution is not clear. Did he have an earlier manuscript with Saturninus, or did he simply make a mistake? We have no manuscripts that say Saturninus.

But what we do have is a fragment of a Roman inscription discovered at Antioch proving that Quirinius (Cyrenius) had been the Emperor's Legate in Syria on a previous occasion in the days of Saturninus the pro-consul. At that time, Quirinius' assignment had been purely military. He led a campaign against the Homonadenses, a tribe in the Taurus mountains in Asia Minor. Quirinius established his seat of government as well as his headquarters in Syria between 10 and 7 BC.

This fact would place Quirinius (the Cyrenius of Luke) in Syria, in the days of the taxing of 7 BC *implied* by Tacitus. If this was the date for 201

birth of Jesus, it would be consistent with the 4 BC date for Herod's death, and the well known taxing by Quirinius in 7 AD.

This clue would seem to exclude all other possible dates except the 7 BC date, and consequently fix the 27 AD date for Jesus' crucifixion. If there is another taxing in the year 0, or thereabouts, nothing is known of it. Those who support the later dates argue that we know nothing of a taxing in 7 BC, beyond Tacitus' comments that this was the custom of the Romans to tax every 14 years, and that Cyrenius was a General in the region in 7 BC. Therefore, it is not at all impossible that a separate tax was required at this time of which history has left no record. This, of course, is true.

Skipping down to the third and fifth, and sixth clues, we see that Jesus was "about 30" when he began his ministry, and that there were four Passovers over 3 'A years. At his first Passover following his baptism, Jesus overturned the tables of the money changers in the Temple.

John 2:13-16, "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

When this event occurred, the Jews confronted Jesus and we see this discourse:

John 2:18-20, "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?"

The question becomes, when was the Temple building begun, that this first Passover after Jesus' baptism at about the age of 30 would be the 46th year of building the Temple. Josephus tells us in one place (Bell. Jud., I, xxi, 1), that the Temple was begun in the fifteenth year of Herod, and in another (Ant., XV, ii, 1) in the eighteenth. This is understood by some as one date being a correction of the other, but the fact (as we explained earlier) is that the 18th year of his lawfully ordained reign beginning in 40 BC, and the 15th year of his practical reign beginning in 37 BC, would be the same year. If this is what Josephus intended, the year for the beginning 202 of the Temple would be 22 BC, and the first Passover following

Christ's baptism would be 24 AD, exactly 30 years following the year 7 BC. (This assumes Jesus was not born before Passover, 7 BC, but after.) If this is not the correct understanding of Josephus' two dates, then the possible dates (taking into consideration the two possible starting points for Herod's reign) for the completion of the temple are 21 AD, 24 AD, and 27 AD.

Clue 6 indicates that the first Passover was 3 years prior to the crucifixion. In other words, there are four Passovers recorded, which comprise 3 years, a concept which confuses some writers. From the first Passover to the second is 1 year, not two. From the first to the fourth is three years, not four. Combining these three clues would indicate either the 7 BC date (24 AD being the first Passover following his baptism) or 4 BC, (27 AD being the first Passover following his baptism.)

Those who hold that the date of Christ's birth was 0 AD, argue differently. Their line of thinking says that this verse is not a clue at all, but merely a statement of fact. The Jews were 46 years in building the Temple. The 46 years were already expired, but when they expired is unknown and not relevant. It might have been two years previous, it might have been 9 years previous. They suggest that all this verse says is that it took the Jews 46 years to build the Temple.

Next we come to the day of the Passover itself. The (almost) universally accepted day for the Crucifixion is Friday, the 15th of Nissan. This is the date from the earliest tradition, and many symbolical aspects appear to fit it best. For instance, the cleansing of the dead took three days. The Law taught:

Numbers 19:11-12, *"He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean."*

If Jesus was to be washed with the ceremonial "living water," which of course was the Holy Spirit, on the third day, and since we know from the Scriptures that this happened on Sunday, he must have been defiled by death on Friday. He would be unclean Friday, Saturday, and washed with the antitypical water of separation on Sunday, the third day.

A simple reading of the Scriptural account supports the idea of a Friday crucifixion as well.

John 19:31, *"The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away."*

The reference John makes to this sabbath being a high day, meaning a feast day, shows it was both a Sabbath and a feast day, which was not always the case. This idea is thought to be undermined by Jesus' prophesy concerning himself: Jesus said:

Matt. 12:40, *"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

It is reasoned that if Jesus went into the grave on Friday, and was resurrected on Sunday, that he was in the grave only three days and two nights. These then argue that the crucifixion must have occurred on Thursday. But this does equal violence to the literal meaning of the prophesy. If Jesus entered the grave on Thursday, then he was in the grave four days and three nights. Further, then the offerings for cleansing under the law from the uncleanness of death on the third day doesn't fit.

So Friday appears to be the day of the crucifixion. The daylight hours of Friday, the fifteenth of Nissan of the Jewish Civil Calendar would correspond to the 14th day of Abib on the Religious Calendar that began on sunset on Thursday night and continued to sunset Friday night. The daylight hours for the 14th of Adar, which is also the 15th of Nissan would be the day of the preparation when the lamb would be slain. They would then eat it at sundown following the preparation day. This is when Jesus was crucified.

Again, it is possible to astronomically figure in what years the 15th of Nissan fell on Friday. Those years would be Friday, April 11, 27 AD; Friday, April 7, 30 AD; Friday, April 3, 33 AD; and Friday, April 23, 34 AD. As all four of these dates are the most popular dates for the crucifixion, this adds little to the discussion.

There is a further objection raised by those who feel the crucifixion requires a later date, that Jesus was not actually 30 years old at his baptism, nor 33-34 at his crucifixion. The text, Luke 3:23, says Jesus was "about" 30 years of age, allowing for a question as to his actual age.

While acknowledging that the word "about" does leave the matter open for discussion, there is no doubt that the Priest's themselves began their ministry at age 30. (See Numbers 4:23). Jesus being the complete antitype of the priesthood, it would seem most fitting that he, too, began his ministry at 30 years of age.

Nor does there seem to be much doubt that Jesus was crucified at age 34. The cleansing for childbirth makes this point clearly. A woman who 204 as unclean by reason of motherhood, was to remain unclean 33 days

for a son, and 66 days for a daughter. After the 33 or 66 days of uncleanness, she was to offer for her cleansing. (Lev. 12:1-8). As the son represents the Christ-groom, and the daughter, the Ecclesial-bride, we see Christ cleansed from sin after 33 days, or years from his nature, the bride requiring a two fold cleansing of 66 days, the first 33 days for the cleansing of her nature, and the second 33 days for her committed sins. Again, this would seem to indicate that the Jesus-lamb was offered after 33 days, or in his 34th year.

Moving now into the more prophetic aspects of the clues surrounding Jesus' crucifixion, we see that there is the gestation period of a woman, or 280 days, or years (on the principle of a day for a year) for the birth of the man child of Revelations 12:2, from the crucifixion of Christ. This we know to be the development of Constantine the Great. There are two possible dates for when the man child was "pained to be delivered." First, Constantine took control of his father Constantious' third of the empire in 306 AD, (280 years after 27 AD) and second, the death of Diocletion elevated Constantine in power in AD 313, and would correspond to the 34 AD date for the crucifixion.

Next we consider Jesus prophesy that this generation shall not pass till all the things (the things described in the Mt. Olivet prophecy of Matt. 24, Mark, 13, and Luke 21) be fulfilled. A generation is generally (but not exclusively) understood to be 40 years. The 40 year period appears to be the most logical for this prophesy, as Jerusalem is destroyed approximately 40 years after the giving of this prophesy, which was merely days before Jesus' crucifixion.

Jerusalem was sacked in 70 AD, which would correspond to the 30 AD date for the crucifixion. Those who would argue for the earlier date say that the sacking of Jerusalem, while the eventual subject of this prophesy, is not included in the prophesy. Rather, the prophesy describes all the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. The fulfilling of these events brought the first Roman siege of Jerusalem by Gaius in 67 AD, corresponding to 27 AD date for the crucifixion. Those who argue for a later date (33 or 34 AD) point out that Jesus did not say when the generation has passed, but that generation shall not pass, meaning that the sacking of Jerusalem would have occurred within that generation, or 37 - 38 years from their date for the crucifixion.

The final prophetic date is that Jesus was crucified at the end of the prophesy of 70 weeks. Historically speaking, the dates for the Persian reigns are some of the worse we have. Archeologists have been moving these dates back, but they have not yet settled on a date consistent 205

with Bible history. They think their dates disprove the Bible, while in reality, it proves archeology has a ways to go yet on this subject. Part of the problem is that since better archeological techniques have been available, Iran (former Persia) has been controlled by a government hostile to any archeological dig which may verify the Scriptural accounts of ancient history.

The Bible prophesied that Israel would be subject to Babylonian control for 70 years. As we showed last month in the discussion of the Seven Times which passed upon Israel, Babylonian control began in 603 BC. This means that Babylon continued until 533 BC. Twenty years ago, archeologists had fixed the date for the fall of Babylon at 542 BC. Today, it has been moved back to 539 BC. This is an improvement, but there is obviously still work to be done in this matter.

This makes all the dates for Persia's control difficult and questionable. The decree that began the prophecy of 70 weeks to rebuild Jerusalem, was a decree given by a later Person ruler, Artaxerxes. But the dating of Artaxerxes is also confused in history. Some historians argue that Xerxes reigned 21 years, while others argue he only reigned 10, placing the last 11 years of Xerxes reign to his son Artaxerxes. This would be of no importance to us, except that the dating of the decrees to rebuild Jerusalem are from the 4th or 20th years of Artaxerxes' reign. As we have no sure starting point, choosing the exact year is very difficult. In his Chronikon Hebraikon, Bro. Thomas had to choose a date not supported by any historian or chronology, and we find ourselves in a similar situation. So really, this prophecy is of little help in settling the question of Jesus' crucifixion.

We saved the fourth clue above for last. To this point, it appears that 7 BC is the date which fits all scriptural clues the best, and that would result in Christ's crucifixion in 27 AD. A birth in 4 BC, would be possible. The 0 date becomes difficult to justify in the light of the dates given for Herod's life, and the discussion of the "taxing." The fourth clue unhinges the matter.

The fifteen year of Tiberius would properly be 29 AD. This appears from the text to be the day when John came preaching, which would be 4 Passovers before Jesus' crucifixion. Now Tiberius did receive the rule from Augustus two years earlier, and so Luke could be dating this from his actual rule, instead of his legal rule, but that only takes us back to 27 AD for the years of Jesus' baptism. Earlier dates, while suggested by various historians, including the Catholic Dictionary, strain certain facts pertaining 206 to Tiberius, and are impossible, because there seems to be no room

for doubt that Pilate, mentioned in Luke 3:1 was not in Palestine before 26 AD. Luke 3:1 clearly points to the 33-34 AD dates for the crucifixion, as clearly as the matter concerning Herod points to the **7 BC, 4 BC dates.**

The only possible way to harmonize the earlier dates, is that Luke 3:12 is not intended to be the first verse of chapter three, but the last verse of chapter 2. If that is the case, the verse should be translated as a concluding thought, rather than an introducing thought. The verse would then have been translated:

Luke 2:52, *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."*

Luke 3:1-2, *"Until (de) in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, was fulfilled (egeneto) the topic/subject (rima) of God from (epi) John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."*

If translated in this manner, the verse is discussing the date of Christ's death, not his baptism, and the 7 BC date would again fit, the crucifixion being 27 AD. But as we said from the start, it is impossible to say with any surety exactly when these things occurred.

There is one further, and perhaps merely sensational or coincidental point pertaining to the 7 BC date for the crucifixion. In 7 BC, there was a conjunction (a lining up) of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, causing an unusually bright "star" in the sky. The conjunction was seen three times that year, May 29, Oct. 3, and Dec. 4. The second time was on the Jewish Day of Atonement for that year. The third time, early December, was low in the southern sky.

The wise men said, Matt. 2:2, *"Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."* Could the star they had seen in the East been the conjunction of the planets on the Day of Atonement? And would not Jesus' birth on the Day of Atonement and death on the Passover be quite fitting in the over all plan of God?

Having seen the star, and knowing that a King was born, they possibly came to Jerusalem to Herod. From there, they are said to have been led by the star. If they proceeded due south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem on the night of the third conjunction, the "star" would have been directly in front of him. The wise men appear to have arrived after the birth of Jesus, because he is no longer in the Inn, but now in a "house." This

would explain how the "star" appeared over the house, without agitating the whole city to come out to see this celestial sight.

As we say, this may be just coincidental, but it is interesting, as is the over all discussion about the times in which our Lord and Saviour lived.

Bro. Jim Phillips

DANIEL - IN BABYLON

*"The population was immense, and comprised people from every country, for Babylon had been the conqueror of all kingdoms, and was the centre of all traffic and the headquarters of everything honourable and important in the earth. Behold the picture, then, of this wealthy, **populous** and powerful city; and consider Daniel — in the midst of this busy mass of **human life**. **How did God look upon one and upon the other? We know, for He has told us.** (Brother Roberts — *Seasons of Comfort*)*

We have all at some time or other in our lives, been placed in strange surroundings, and felt quite strange ourselves! It may have been the first day "in the new school", or the first day at work. We probably have vivid recollections of how we felt at the time. Our feelings vary depending on our personalities, but we probably felt apprehensive to say the least. We possibly felt nervous, and even quite scared, though realising that there was nothing really to be scared about. It's just the fear of the unknown! Or it may be fear based upon what we do know! Fear based upon what we have heard "goes on", or what we may have seen. Whatever, our experiences may have been, we can possibly *begin* (and only begin), to understand how Daniel, Hannaniah, Mishael and Azariah felt as they entered the city of Babylon.

It would have been a long trip, some 350 miles, and without the comforts of modern travel. Prisoners would not have been entitled to any comforts of course. How painful that journey must have been, physically, and mentally. How often we complain about the most trivial of things. How ashamed we should be when we compare the sufferings of Yahweh's servants recorded for us in the scriptures.

Approaching Babylon they would have been struck with the magnificence of this great metropolis. Its hanging gardens were among the seven wonders of the world. The city was set in a square and measured 15 miles each way. It was enclosed by walls 87 feet thick, and 350 feet high. In each of the four sides were 25 solid brass gates leading to streets which divided the city into squares. The Euphrates ran through 208 the city, its banks being formed into solid quays. Isaiah refers to

Babylon as *"the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency"* (chapter 13:19).

It must have been very impressive – at least to the natural eye. We have all perhaps been impressed by the appearance of architecture, and many of the edifices we have observed have been testimonies to the skill and ingenuity of man. However, all must be kept in perspective. The disciples were eager to show Jesus the magnificence of Herod's Temple. It must have been quite a damper to their enthusiasm to hear the Lord responding "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt.24:2). That was perspective and perception! The outward appearance of splendour, was not matched by inner purity. The building itself did not house the true glory which it should have done. It is recorded in Mark chapter 11 that as Jesus taught his disciples, he said, (*"Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? But ye have made it a den of thieves"* verse 17).

But the captives would perceive and realise how wicked Babylon was, would'nt they? After all, their sojourn in Babylon has been described as the most wonderful and complete conversion in human history! After their captivity in Babylon, they never again bowed down to an idol, not even to this day.

However, how many succumbed to its powerful influences? How many were overwhelmed by this great city? Its beauty and elegance; its luxury and opulence; its modern lifestyle. As the head of gold, it was undoubtedly the richest Empire, and provided its inhabitants with all the pleasures and entertainments that flesh could wish for.

Faith is tried in Babylon! Faith is not really tested in the ecclesial hall, at the Gatherings, or in the company of our brethren and sisters. It is when we are on our own in Babylon – in the world. When we are in unusual circumstances that can impress us in so many different ways; when we can be caught off our guard. Daniel, (like Joseph before him, and the Israelitsh maid in the house of Naaman the Syrian), was wrenched from his home environment, and thrust into the heaving, busy, godless pleasure seeking world of Babylon. Its very presence, its atmosphere, its pride and self sufficiency, would be a severe test in itself. The people in captivity had to settle there, they were expressly told to do so (Jeremiah 29:4-7); but would they become conformed to its ways and practices? Would they imbibe the "spirit of the age", and lose their separateness?

Do *we* get the message? We are in a similar position. Man's achievements, his environment, his busy lifestyle etc, etc., are constantly around us. It is inevitable that we will be impressed with them, but 209

we must get things into perspective. Babylon is attempting to choke our spiritual development. The pressures upon us to conform to its ways are tremendous and must be resisted with every fibre of our being. We are in the world, but not of it.

How did Daniel view this great city of the ancient world? We feel sure that he would have seen below the "glitter", the noise and "bright lights". He would have seen it as the Land of the "Enemy's Tooth". The enemy of Yahweh and his servants. The city that Nimrod had established in defiance of the command of the One True and Living God. Nimrod was the "mighty hunter against Yahweh," and who had left his idolatrous stamp on the religious systems of Babylon. Daniel was not going to be impressed by this worldly city, no matter how magnificent its buildings, or how advanced its learning, or how great its wealth and developed its culture. As he went through the massive Ishtar Gates, and beheld the Temple of Marduk; as he cast his eyes upon the Etemenanki Tower (suggested as being the Tower of Babel), a shudder must have run down his spine. This was the world. Its glory and pleasures were not lasting, they did not honour Yahweh. Daniel's eyes saw below the surface of things. Some years ago a number of us visited the British Museum, and saw the great winged lions. It was strange to think, as one brother commented, that Daniel's eyes would have looked at the same sculptures so many years ago, that we were looking at then! He did not estimate Babylon to be "great," or permanent, for *"he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"* (Heb.11:10). We must look for that city too!

That was not the sum total of the pressures upon Daniel. With his three companions, he was chosen because of his ability to "stand in the King's palace," and be taught "the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans" (Dan.1:4). Inscriptions show that there was a palace school with elaborate arrangements for special education. The "Chaldeans" belonged to South Babylonia and were the most influential class — the "wise men" of Babylon who had a monopoly of national learning. Daniel was placed amongst this elite class, to be instructed in the wisdom and tongue of Babylon. He had no choice. Here was the world forcing its ways upon him and his companions. What was Nebuchadnezzar trying to do? He was, of course, making the best use of those young men to further the development of his kingdom. In reality, he was endeavouring to destroy the identity of Yahweh's servants, and absorb them into Babylonian society, just as the world does, or attempts to do to each one of us. Far fetched? Taking things too far? Consider the policy of

Nebuchadnezzar. He knew exactly what he was doing, and actually changed the names of these captives!

Have we thought of the reason why he did this? There was a reason for it. Let us examine the meaning of their names:-

Daniel – "Judgement of El" (God)

Hananiah – "Yah hath been gracious"

Mishael – "Who is like unto El"

Azariah – "Helped of Yah"

All of these Hebrew names honoured the God of Israel, Yahweh. What were they changed to?

Beltshazzar – "Keeper of the hid treasures of Bel"

Shadrach – "Inspiration of the Sun"

Meshach – "Given to the goddess Shachah"

Abednego – "Servant of the shining fire"

All these Babylonian names honoured the gods of Babylon! Nebuchadnezzar was eradicating all references to Yahweh, the El (Power) of Israel, and exalting his own pagan deities. It was a kind of "brain washing," which sought to wean the individual from all connections with their origins. A process of assimilation, which broke down the differences, because the world hates anyone being different from it, and will seek to mould them into its own evil pattern (Romans 12:2). Its ways appear innocent enough on the surface, but there are no doubts as to the ultimate aim.

As we read through Daniel chapter one the pressure steps up again. The servants of Yahweh are appointed the King's meat. No doubt ceremonially "unclean," and offered to idols. But they could have argued, "does it really matter?" "Are we perhaps being a little extreme here?" "We know that an idol is nothing!" "We are no longer in Israel now, and it is difficult to put into practice what the law teaches."

Daniel was in Babylon, he had been chosen for special instruction, he had even found himself with a new name which did not honour the God he still faithfully served – but he had no control over these issues. Where he had control, he saw clearly where his duty lay. He could not, and would not partake of the King's meat and disobey the Law which he had been brought up to believe and practice. This is a glowing testimony to his early years, as well as to his faithfulness. As a teenager, he 211

refused conform to this world's pressures, and he stands before us as a superb example of separation from the world.

Daniel chapter one also provides us with the key to Daniel's success. The study of his character is a very rewarding one, and the first attribute we observe in this man of God is *determination*. An uncompromising determination to hold fast to what he knew to be right, not worrying about the consequences, but placing his faith in Yahweh. He is revealed to us as a disciplined man. "Daniel *purposed* in his heart that he would *not* defile himself with the portion of the king's meat..." (verse 8). He made up his mind that he was not going to compromise the Truth in any way. Isn't that the attitude we must have when faced with issues that can compromise our faith and obedience? When Barnabas was sent as far as Antioch to confirm the spread of the Gospel, he exhorted the believers "that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23). As we sojourn in "Babylon," let us make up our minds that we will not defile ourselves with the "king's meat." Let the purpose of our hearts be to serve Yahweh, resisting the pressures of the world around us.

Bro. Phillip Hughes

As Ye See The Day Approaching

The Russian submarine accident up in the arctic in the Barents Sea on August 12th has focused world attention on the deteriorating conditions within the former Soviet Empire. Since the collapse in 1991, there has been an inexorable corrosion in the industrial and military infrastructure. For nine years the world has watched in amazement as this has been happening. The military has shrunk from forces of 5 million down to just over 1 million! The military budget has dwindled from \$200 billion in the early 1980's to the current allotment of just \$5 billion! By way of comparison, the U. S. defense budget is \$280 billion at present.

The loss of the Kursk, the Akula class nuclear submarine, emphasizes the shrinking size of the once numerous sub fleet of about 100 nuclear subs which used to circle the earth with stealth beneath the waves. For years that fleet has been dwindling as it lay tethered and rusting in the ports of the far north. The United States has been paying some of the costs to cut up and destroy these old subs to help satisfy arms reduction treaties. Hundreds of Russian Naval ships have been decommissioned since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is our understanding that there are about eight top-of-the-line nuclear subs left in the Russian fleet, compared to 64 212 subs (I don't know how many are nuclear powered) in the American

fleet. The tremendous expenses to fuel and maintain the nuclear submarines and surface vessels is what has so greatly reduced the size of the Russian Navy. It is interesting to note that currently the Russians have only one aircraft carrier!

The Russian military is dogged by a number of serious problems. Desertions, draft-dodging (conscription is mandatory), lack of sufficient sophisticated weaponry, aging equipment and weaponry, insufficient supplies and spare parts, and poor morale are some of the main ones. Military personnel go months at a time without pay! Operational and maintenance expenses, as well as training expenses, have severely handicapped the armed services of the Russian Federation. All of these factors are clearly evidenced in the Russian Air Force which claims that it has not received a new plane since 1992! It expects none until 2001. Reports out of Russia state that 70 percent of Russian Naval ships need repair! This is indeed interesting, as this indicates the condition of the fleet actually in service! The Russians are still bogged down in Chechnya after eleven months of fighting to put down the rebellion. Chechnya is the tiny southern republic where the Russian Army was humiliated so badly in the 1994-1996 Chechen War. Thousands of young Russians died in that first conflict. It still is a thorn in their side, raging on with continued loss of life.

Clearly, there will have to be changes. Russia cannot continue on the present course of disintegration. Mr. Vladimir Putin, Russia's newly elected President has promised to work toward revitalizing the military. The Russians are selling weapons and even warplanes for money for defense. Putin is encouraging reductions in the nuclear arsenal to rid the country of some of the enormous expense of maintaining it. He intends to divert the money saved into defense.

We know what is written of Russia that she must do in the latter days. She has an appointed destiny to fulfill. To do this, she must stand up.

"And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it FOR THE VISION IS YET FOR AN APPOINTED TIME. BUT AT THE END IT SHALL SPEAK. AND NOT LIE: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: 213

Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay! Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them? Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein. Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. (Hab. 2:2-10)

This that is written in Habakkuk must be fulfilled. First of all we realize that this prophecy has a first and then the secondary fulfillment. In the first instance, it referred to the Babylonian (Chaldean) power that invaded the land of Judah and overthrew it, carrying in successive stages or waves of invasion, Judah captive to Babylon. But in the second instance, it is doubtless a reference to the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, latter-day head and ruler of Russia. Notice the words of verses 2 and 3 of Habakkuk's second chapter. *"Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."*

These words certainly speak of these latter days. We know that we are living in the latter days by all we see going on around us, so clearly foretold in the Scriptures of Truth. We should take heart. The things written in this chapter of this man will surely come to pass. This covetous one shall enlarge his desire as hell and be as death, gathering to himself all people and all nations over whom he is destined to have dominion. He is spoken of as lading himself with thick clay, referring to the people that he gathers unto himself. These people gathered to him are of the earth, earthy. They are the earthly-minded, sensual and devilish multitudes that will do his behest to their own (and his) destruction! Do we not see in our mind's eye the image of Nebuchadnezzar, standing colossally upon its clay and iron feet? What is next sequentially in the timetable of Yahweh's prophetic word? Is it not the smiting of that image upon its feet by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands?

"Shall they not RISE UP suddenly that shall bite thee; and AWAKE that shall vex thee..." This would seem to indicate the resurrection and 214 immortalization of the faithful who execute judgment on the Russian

confederation which will have invaded Yahweh's land and people. We know of those things that are written of Russia in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. We realize what is written in Daniel 11:40-45. There is so much that has yet to be fulfilled.

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Yes, he shall come *"like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen and with many ships..."* All of these things must come to pass. What we have to be aware of is that we do not know how much of God's latter-day plan we will be allowed to see develop before we are taken to judgment at Sinai. We must not let down our guard. The tendency is to say, in light of what we see going on in Russia currently; "The Lord delayeth his coming." We must not be slack or lax. We must be ever vigilant and astute to our responsibilities in the Truth, unto God and His anointed.

We know how rapidly things can happen. Armies can move with blitzkrieg velocity. Intercontinental ballistic missiles can strike with little or no warning. Attack can be made with such stealth that an unsuspecting enemy can be dead before he knows what hit him. Brethren and Sisters, we are still dealing with the serpent-like sin nature. That can kill us instantly if we are not on guard. We must be as men who watch at their master's gate. He comes in an hour when we may not think he is coming. These are the most interesting of times. Let us be ever thankful to our heavenly Father that we have been given an understanding of the Truth as it is in Jesus our Lord. So vastly many have not this knowledge and are perishing in fear and anxiety.

What does that mean?

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:31)

How long was Paul's ministry at Ephesus: two years or three? As Paul was passing near Ephesus, he sent to the elders and reminded them that he had spent three years working with them. However, in Acts 19 we read of his work in Ephesus, and we are told he spent two years there:

"And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greek." (Acts 19:10)

How can this be? When we examine the whole account of Paul's missions to Ephesus in Acts 18 & 19, we find that he was there considerably longer than the two years mentioned in verse 10 of chapter 19. Chapter 18 records his initial visit, and that he did not spend much time with the Ephesians:

"When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus." (Acts 18:20-21)

Paul made good on his promise to return and spend more time with them, for on his next journey we find that he arrives at Ephesus (Acts 19). His activities there are detailed as follows: Verses 1-6 relate how he made his first approach to a group of about twelve disciples of John the Baptist. We have no idea how long this phase was, but he soon expands his efforts from personal teaching to publicly reaching out to all the Jews. In verse 8, we see his efforts expanded as he goes into the local synagogue for phase two of his preaching, which lasted three months:

"And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God."

Many Jews provided determined opposition to Paul's preaching, so he had to discontinue his work in the synagogue after those three months. But his followers had grown to significantly more than the original twelve, so they hired a meeting room at the school of Tyrannus. It was in this school that Paul continued preaching for another two years:

"But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." (Acts 19: 9&10)

As we total up the preliminary visit of Acts 18, the initial phase of working with John's disciples, the three months in the synagogue (the second phase of his preaching) and the two years in the school of Tyrannus, it becomes apparent that Paul's total time at Ephesus is very close to three years. However, there is no discrepancy between what Luke records of the visits and Paul's summation to the Ephesians Elders: He spent **two years at the school of Tyrannus, and three years total in Ephesus.**

