

## DANIEL 1:1 AND JEHOIAKIM'S THREE YEARS OF SERVITUDE

MARK K. MERCER  
Irving, Texas 75062

Scholars have identified three problems with the statement in Dan 1:1-2 concerning a siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of Jehoiakim. First, some claim that it contradicts the statement in Jer 25:1 that Nebuchadnezzar did not become king until the fourth year of Jehoiakim.<sup>1</sup> Second, the third year of Jehoiakim was 606 B.C., during which time Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar was not involved in any campaigns in Judah.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the only clearly attested sieges of Jerusalem which took place near the time of Jehoiakim were perhaps the incursions mentioned in 2 Kgs 24:2 and the siege which commenced shortly after his death during the brief reign of Jehoiachin (2 Kgs 24:10-16).

### 1. *Preliminary Considerations*

Most scholars explain Dan 1:1 as a derivation of 2 Kgs 24:1 and 2 Chr 36:6-7.<sup>3</sup> A possible motivation behind this dating may have

<sup>1</sup>R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford, 1929), p. 4; S. R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge, Eng., 1900), p. 2; Arthur Jeffery, "The Book of Daniel: Introduction and Exegesis," *IB* (New York, 1956) 6:361; James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh, 1927), p. 113; Norman W. Porteous, *Daniel: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia, 1965), p. 25; D. S. Russell, *Daniel*, The Daily Study Bible Series (Edinburgh, Philadelphia, 1981), p. 229.

<sup>2</sup>John J. Collins, *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, Forms of Old Testament Literature (Grand Rapids, MI, 1984), p. 45; Raymond Hammer, *The Book of Daniel*, Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge, Eng., 1976), p. 18; Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB (Garden City, NY, 1978), p. 47; Jeffery, p. 361; André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, trans. David Pellauer, Eng. ed. rev. (Atlanta, 1979), p. 24.

<sup>3</sup>Robert A. Anderson, *Signs and Wonders: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, International Theological Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI, 1984), p. 1; Aage Bentzen, *Daniel*, Handbuch zum Alten Testament, 2d ed. (Tübingen, 1962),

been the desire to provide the seventy years of exile (Jer 25:11) with an exact *terminus a quo*.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Otto Plöger believes that Dan 1:1 and the other dates in Daniel are stereotyped phrases.<sup>5</sup>

Various proposals have been made to emend the text in order to derive a more historical sense out of the passage. Lacocque suggests that Jehoiachin be substituted for Jehoiakim, thus dating the incident to 594.<sup>6</sup> A. Malamat emends the text from *šlwš* "third (year)," to *šš* "sixth (year)," and thus places the incident in the winter of 603 (second year of Nebuchadnezzar).<sup>7</sup> G. Ricciotti, following Josephus, emends the numeral to *šmnh* "eighth (year)."<sup>8</sup> As attractive as these emendations may be, however, there is no external evidence to justify changing the text.

Several commentators take the third year of Jehoiakim as being the last of the three years of servitude to Babylon mentioned in 2 Kgs 24:1.<sup>9</sup> This solution is unlikely, for the text of Daniel states that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem "in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim" (*bšnt šlwš lmlkw*), not "in the third year of the servitude of Jehoiakim" (*bšnt šlwš l'bwđh*)—as one might expect if the statement in Dan 1:1 were derived from 2 Kgs 24:1.

Various attempts have been made to relate the text as it stands to what is known about the period. H. C. Leupold, who inac-

p. 17; A. A. Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Cambridge, Eng., 1892), pp. 57-58; Collins, p. 45; Hartman and Di Lella, pp. 128-129; Gilles Gaide, *Le Livre de Daniel* (Tours, 1969), p. 29; Hammer, p. 18; Jeffery, pp. 361-362; Montgomery, pp. 72-73, 113-114; Porteous, p. 25; Russell, p. 229, n. 1. Lacocque suggests that the author of Daniel also may have combined Jer 25:1, 11 with 2 Chr 36:6 (pp. 25-26).

<sup>4</sup>Hammer, p. 19; Jeffery, p. 362; Lacocque, p. 25; Montgomery, p. 114; Russell, p. 229.

<sup>5</sup>O. Plöger, *Das Buch Daniel*, Kommentar zum Alten Testament (Gütersloh, 1965), pp. 38-39.

<sup>6</sup>Lacocque, pp. 7 (n. 29), 24. Cf. Gaide, p. 29.

<sup>7</sup>A. Malamat, "The Twilight of Judah in the Egyptian-Babylonian Maelstrom," in *Congress Volume: Edinburgh 1974, VTSup*, no. 28, p. 130, n. 15.

<sup>8</sup>Giuseppe Ricciotti, *The History of Israel*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning to the Exile*, trans. Clement Della Penta and Richard T. A. Murphy (Milwaukee, 1955), p. 407.

<sup>9</sup>Iben Ezra, Jephth, Pseudo-Saadi, Rashi; cited by Judah J. Slotki, *Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah*, Soncino Books of the Bible (London, 1951), p. 1; E. G. Kraeling, *Commentary on the Prophets*, vol. 3, *Daniel-Malachi* (Camden, NJ, 1966) p. 25; and perhaps M. Delcor, *Le Livre de Daniel*, SB (Paris, 1971), p. 60.

curately dated the battle of Carchemish to 604, placed the siege mentioned in Daniel at a time preceding that battle, holding that there was no strong garrison at Carchemish in 605 to hinder a siege of Jerusalem.<sup>10</sup> C. F. Keil translated *b<sup>3</sup>* (Dan 1:1) to mean "to set out"<sup>11</sup> and interpreted the verse as conveying that Nebuchadnezzar set out in Jehoiakim's third year but did not besiege the city until the latter's fourth year (Jer 25:1).<sup>12</sup> Dan 1:1 seems to suggest, however, that it all happened at once.<sup>13</sup>

The purpose of this article is to reexamine Dan 1:1-2 exegetically and historically and to propose a solution as to how the chronological data of this passage might conform to the history of the times during which it was purported to have been written. It is my contention that the passage may be adequately related to the campaign of Nebuchadnezzar in Palestine, which took place from the summer of 605 through the late winter of 604, and to the notices in 2 Kgs 24:1 and 2 Chr 36:6-7. The article begins by tracing the history of the Neo-Babylonian Empire from the end of the reign of Nabopolassar to the beginning of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

## 2. *An Historical Introduction to the Relationship between Jehoiakim and Babylon*

In the third month of 607 (4 May-2 June)<sup>14</sup> both Nabopolassar and Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar campaigned in a mountainous region not identifiable from the text.<sup>15</sup> Nabopolassar, however, returned to Babylon the next month, whereas Nebuchadnezzar stayed on until sometime during the sixth month (1 Aug.-30 Aug.).<sup>16</sup> A month or two later (29 Sept.-28 Oct.) Nabopolassar set

<sup>10</sup>H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1969), pp. 51-53.

<sup>11</sup>Some passages cited by Keil in defense of this meaning are Gen 45:17; Exod 6:11; 7:26; 9:1; 10:1; Num 32:6; 1 Sam 20:19; 2 Kgs 5:5; Jonah 1:3 (*Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, trans M. G. Easton [Grand Rapids, MI, 1959], p. 62).

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>13</sup>E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1949), pp. 268-269.

<sup>14</sup>All dates have been taken from the tables in Richard A. Parker and Waldo H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology: 626 B.C.-A.D. 75* (Providence, RI, 1956).

<sup>15</sup>A. K. Grayson, [trans. and ed.], "Chronicle 4: Chronicle Concerning the Later Years of Nabopolassar," lines 5-11, in *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Texts from Cuneiform Sources, vol. 5 (Locust Valley, NY, 1975), p. 97.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, lines 8, 12, p. 97.

out with his army for Kimuḫu, a strategic city south of Carchemish,<sup>17</sup> and was able to capture it near the end of 607 (27 Nov.-26 Dec.), also leaving a garrison there before going home in early 606 (25 Jan.-23 Feb.).<sup>18</sup>

In the spring or early summer of the same year, the Egyptians laid siege to Kimuḫu for four months and eventually recaptured it.<sup>19</sup> When Nabopolassar heard of this, he returned to Syria and there made the city of Quramatu his base of operations against the cities of Shunadiru, Elammu, and Daḫammu before returning home in the early part of 605 (15 Jan.-12 Feb.).<sup>20</sup> The Egyptians, however, besieged the Babylonian garrison left at Quramatu shortly thereafter and forced the Babylonians to withdraw from the city.<sup>21</sup> In response, Nabopolassar dispatched Nebuchadnezzar to Carchemish shortly after the beginning of his own twenty-first year of reign, which began on 12 April.<sup>22</sup>

In contrast to the previous Babylonian encounters with the Egyptians, Nebuchadnezzar defeated them soundly at Carchemish and subsequently routed the remnant which had fled southward to the province of Ḥamath.<sup>23</sup> At this time the Babylonian forces conquered Ḥamath,<sup>24</sup> but they apparently also continued moving southward within Ḥattu (i.e., Syria-Palestine<sup>25</sup>), as evidenced by the fact that later (when he returned from Babylon after the death

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., lines 12-13, p. 97. The location of Kimuḫu is disputed. D. J. Wiseman places it south of Carchemish (*Chronicles of the Chaldean Kings (626-556 B.C.) in the British Museum* [London, 1956], p. 83), whereas J. D. Hawkins places it north of Carchemish ("Kummuḫ," *RLA*, 6:338).

<sup>18</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 4," lines 14-15, p. 98.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., lines 16-18, p. 98.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., lines 19-23, p. 98.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., lines 24-26, p. 98.

<sup>22</sup>A. K. Grayson, [trans. and ed.], "Chronicle 5: Chronicle Concerning the Early Years of Nebuchadnezzar II," obv. 1-2, in *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Texts from Cuneiform Sources, vol. 5 (Locust Valley, NY, 1975), p. 99.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., obv. 2-7, p. 99.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., obv. 8, p. 99. The middle of line 8, which has been restored by some (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, pp. 68-69) to (māt)Ḥa[-at]-tú, is read instead by others as kurḤa-[ma-a]-tú (Grayson, "Chronicle 5," p. 99). Grayson's reading seems to be the best. Ḥattu always appears as Ḥat-tú in this chronicle (ibid., p. 99), and the syllables ḥa-[ ]-a-tú, as well as part of the syllable ma (not at or ḥat), are clearly visible on the tablet (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, Pl. XIV).

<sup>25</sup>Wiseman, *Chronicles*, p. 25.

of his father) Nebuchadnezzar returned not to Ḥamath, but to Ḥattu (even though the Chronicles mention only the conquest of Ḥamath and not the conquest of Ḥattu). Upon learning of Nabopolassar's death (15 August 605), Nebuchadnezzar hastened back to Babylon and ascended the throne on 7 September.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. *Babylon and Jehoiakim (605-598)*

#### *The Beginning of Jehoiakim's Three-year Submission to Babylon (605-604)*

Nebuchadnezzar's probable movement to Ḥattu can be connected with Dan 1:1, which states: "In the third year of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon<sup>27</sup> came to Jerusalem and besieged it" (*b<sup>2</sup> . . . yrwšlm wyšr ʿlyh*).<sup>28</sup> The text indicates that an actual siege took place, since each time *šwr* is used with the preposition *ʿl*<sup>29</sup> it means "shut in, besiege."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," obv. 9-11, pp. 99-100.

<sup>27</sup>Proleptic use of king (cf. "Tirhakah king of Ethiopia" [2 Kgs 19:9]).

<sup>28</sup>In *Antiquities* 10.87 Josephus skips from this point to the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar, thus omitting four years of his reign. This may suggest that his statement that "the king of Babylon passed over Euphrates and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, excepting Judea," may be summarizing the years between the fall of Carchemish up to the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar. If so, it has nothing really specific to say about the period following the fall of Carchemish.

<sup>29</sup>Deut 20:12; 2 Sam 11:1; 20:15; 1 Kgs 15:27; 16:17; 20:1; 2 Kgs 6:24, 25; 16:5; 17:5; 18:9; 24:11; Isa 29:3; Jer 21:4, 9; 32:2; 37:5; 39:1; Ezek 4:3; Dan 1:1; Cant 8:9.

<sup>30</sup>Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1906), s.v. II צור, p. 848; Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament*, 3d ed., ed. Walter Baumgartner, et al. (Leiden, 1983), s.v. I צור, pp. 951-952.

D. J. Wiseman's suggestion that the verb *šwr* "can denote action preliminary to, but not necessarily an actual siege" (*Nebuchadrezzar and Babylon* [Oxford, 1985], p. 23) is not convincing from the usage of the verb and in light of the fact that spoils were taken from the temple. Earlier he had suggested that *šwr* was a bi-form of *šrr* ("Some Historical Problems in the Book of Daniel," in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel* [London, 1965], p. 18, n. 57). While it is true that *šwr* is a bi-form of the hiphil preterite of *šrr*, "cause distress (to)" (Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, eds., *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* [Leiden/Grand Rapids, 1958], s.v. I צור, p. 818), it is unlikely that *wyšr* in Dan 1:1 is from the root *šrr*, because the hiphil of *šrr* is never followed by the *ʿl* preposition. The preposition *ʿl*, however, is common in conjunction with *šwr*.

If the third year of Jehoiakim fell between 19 September 606 and 6 October 605,<sup>31</sup> then the latter part of the third year would have fallen into the period after 12 April, after which time Nebuchadnezzar had been dispatched to Syria. This would have left a sufficient amount of time between the conquest of Ḥamath and his return to Babylon for him to begin a siege of Jerusalem.

Two passages must be connected with the siege of Jerusalem mentioned in Dan 1:1: (1) 2 Kgs 24:1, which states that Nebuchadnezzar “came up” (<sup>ʿ</sup>lh) in the reign of Jehoiakim, and (2) 2 Chr 36:6, which claims that Nebuchadnezzar “came up against him [Jehoiakim]” (<sup>ʿ</sup>lyw <sup>ʿ</sup>lh). While <sup>ʿ</sup>lh does not necessarily include a siege, it does not exclude it either.<sup>32</sup>

After Nabopolassar’s death on 15 August 605,<sup>33</sup> Nebuchadnezzar was forced to return to Babylon and to leave the siege of Jerusalem in the hands of his subordinates. He arrived by the first day of the following month (7 Sept.) to claim the throne.<sup>34</sup> By leaving his army in Palestine and returning with only a small escort,<sup>35</sup> Nebuchadnezzar was able to cross the desert in only twenty-three days. After he secured the throne, Nebuchadnezzar immediately returned to Palestine where he rejoined his army and completed “mopping-up” operations.<sup>36</sup>

Thus the result of the siege was that “the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his [Nebuchadnezzar’s] hand” [*wytnn ʿdny byd̄w*] (Dan 1:2)—a depiction of the surrender of Jehoiakim to the Babylonians.<sup>37</sup> A similar meaning is conveyed in 2 Kgs 24:1ab:

<sup>31</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI, 1983), p. 183. D. J. A. Clines objects to the Tishri dating system because it does not fit in the book of Jeremiah (“Regnal Year Reckoning in the Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah,” *AJBA* 2 [1972]:23-25). Thiele would concur, and that is why he also sees the Nisan system in Jeremiah (pp. 52-53). For a survey of the various solutions to the chronological problems associated with Jer 46:2, see Alberto R. Green, “The Chronology of the Last Days of Judah: Two Apparent Discrepancies,” *JBL* 101 (1982): 68-73.

<sup>32</sup>Note the usage of <sup>ʿ</sup>lh in 1 Kgs 14:25 and 2 Kgs 18:25 (cf. vs. 17).

<sup>33</sup>Grayson, “Chronicle 5,” obv. 10, p. 99.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, obv. 10-11, pp. 99-100.

<sup>35</sup>Berosus; quoted in Josephus, *Against Apion* 1. 137.

<sup>36</sup>Grayson, “Chronicle 5,” obv. 12-13, p. 100. The Wadi-Bissa inscription may be descriptive of this campaign, but its historical value is limited (Anthony Spalinger, “Egypt and Babylonia: A Survey (c. 620 B.C.-550 B.C.),” *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 5 [1977]: 228).

<sup>37</sup>Note the similar phrase in Lam 5:6; cf. also Deut 20:13; Jer 21:7, 10; 32:3, 4.

"Jehoiakim became his [Nebuchadnezzar's] servant for three years." This latter passage refers to Jehoiakim's position as a vassal,<sup>38</sup> which involved his paying of tribute three times.

We find in 2 Chr 36:6 that Nebuchadnezzar "bound him [Jehoiakim] with bronze to take him to Babylon." This situation is analogous to that of Manasseh, who also was bound and taken to Babylon (2 Chr 33:11),<sup>39</sup> and perhaps also to the circumstances of Zedekiah, who went to Babylon in his fourth year (Jer 51:59). Using Manasseh as an example, we see two reasons why Jehoiakim may have been taken to Babylon. First, he may have been brought to represent Judah at the confirmation of a vassal treaty<sup>40</sup> or to swear a new oath of loyalty.<sup>41</sup> Second, he may have been accused of being in a rebellion. Manasseh, for example, is thought by some to have been implicated in the rebellion of Shamash-shum-ukin.<sup>42</sup> Leupold believes that 2 Chr 36:6 describes an incident that took place in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, during which he took 3023 Jews into exile (Jer 52:28).<sup>43</sup> But the exile of Jer 52:28 must refer to a time after the death of Jehoiakim (9 Dec. 598), because Nebuchadnezzar started out for Hattu in the month of Kislev of his seventh year (18 Dec. 598-15 Jan. 597).<sup>44</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiakim, "along with some of the vessels of the house of God, and he brought them [*wyby<sup>3</sup>m*] to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god,<sup>45</sup> and he brought the vessels

<sup>38</sup>For the usage of *'bd* ("servant") as a term of vassalage, see J. C. Greenfield, "Some Aspects of Treaty Terminology," in *Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Papers* (Jerusalem, 1967), 1:117-118. For examples, see 2 Kgs 16:7 and 1 Sam 27:12.

<sup>39</sup>Some believe that this was a legend that grew out of Manasseh's journey to Nineveh during the reign of Esarhaddon (e.g., W. O. E. Oesterley and T. H. Robinson, *A History of Israel*, vol. 1, *From the Exodus to the Fall of Jerusalem*, by T. H. Robinson [Oxford, 1932], pp. 400-401). There is nothing, however, to contradict the possibility that it actually took place.

<sup>40</sup>E.g., D. J. Wiseman, "Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon," *Iraq* 20 (1958): 3-4.

<sup>41</sup>E.g., R. Frankena, "The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon," *OTS* 14 (1965): 152.

<sup>42</sup>John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3d. ed. (Philadelphia, 1981), pp. 311, 314. For other views concerning the possible reasons for Manasseh's deportation to Babylon, see J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 374-376.

<sup>43</sup>Leupold, p. 41.

<sup>44</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," rev. 11, p. 102.

<sup>45</sup>Hartman and Di Lella (p. 127) and Montgomery (p. 116) omit the four words after "Shinar" because they consider them to be a dittography. They thus read: "He

into the treasury of his god" (Dan 1:2; cf. 2 Chr 36:7). The antecedent of the suffix on *wyby<sup>3</sup>m* must be both Jehoiakim and the temple vessels, otherwise the latter part of the verse becomes redundant.<sup>46</sup> If our interpretation is correct, then both Jehoiakim and the vessels were taken to a temple of Marduk in Babylon. That would not be unusual, since booty was often deposited in temples,<sup>47</sup> which also served as depositories for treaties and other documents.<sup>48</sup>

The text of Dan 1:1-2 does not specify the time of Jerusalem's capitulation to Nebuchadnezzar, only that the siege began in the third year of Jehoiakim. But one would expect that it was short, since the penalty was not harsh. This interpretation might account for the fact that it is not mentioned in the Babylonian Chronicles.

During the eleventh month (2 Feb.-2 Mar. 604), Nebuchadnezzar took the spoils back to Babylon.<sup>49</sup> That was most likely the time when Jehoiakim, Daniel, and others were taken to Babylon (2 Chr 36:6-7).<sup>50</sup> Jehoiakim, however, returned to Jerusalem to

carried them into the land of Shinar, (and) he brought (them) into the treasure house of his god."

<sup>46</sup>Montgomery objects to the suffix referring to both the king and the vessels, because he believes it was improbable that the captives were taken to the temple (p. 116). Charles also holds that it must refer to the vessels alone, because the captives have not yet been mentioned (p. 7). Lacocque, in order to avoid the nonhistorical exile of Jehoiakim, states that it must refer to the vessels alone (p. 21). Keil also believes that it only refers to the vessels (p. 72). He claims that the application to Jehoiakim is excluded by the connection of *wyby<sup>3</sup>m* with *byt-<sup>2</sup>lhyw* ("house of his god"). Jeffery, however, states that it refers to the prisoners, since the disposition of the vessels is subsequently explained (p. 363).

Saadia Gaon interprets the word *h<sup>2</sup>lhyw* as a reference to the judges (cited in Lacocque, p. 21). Some, based on the usage in Hos 8:1 and 9:15 (cf. LXX Dan 1:2), have taken "house of his god" to be the land of Babylon. But Keil disputes that interpretation (p. 72).

<sup>47</sup>Temples had treasuries. Cf. 1 Kgs 7:51; *būt niširti* in Mesopotamian temples (CAD 11, pt. 2:279).

<sup>48</sup>Wiseman, "Vassal-Treaties," p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," obv. 13, p. 100.

<sup>50</sup>This is supported by the Chronicles. They state that *after* Nebuchadnezzar returned to Palestine following his succession, "he took the vast booty of Ḥattu to Babylon" (ibid.). Berossus' statement (Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.137) concerning Israelite exiles taken to Babylon at the time of Nabopolassar's death does not refer to this deportation, but rather to a deportation of the prisoners taken from the Egyptian forces defeated at Carchemish and Ḥamath. This Egyptian force no doubt consisted of Egyptian vassals, among which was Israel.

continue reigning as a (hopefully) loyal vassal of Nebuchadnezzar. This he succeeded to do for three years.

D. J. A. Clines has several objections to a siege of Jerusalem in the midsummer of 605 and to the veracity of Dan 1:1.<sup>51</sup> First, he believes that there was not sufficient time for the Babylonians to march from Hamath to Jerusalem and to begin a siege between May-June and 15 August—the time at which Nebuchadnezzar had to return to Babylon.<sup>52</sup> However, even at a slow rate of march, the Babylonians could have arrived at Jerusalem in less than a month.<sup>53</sup>

Second, Clines claims that a siege and deportation of Daniel in the third year of Jehoiakim (Dan 1) are not consistent with Dan 2:1, which implies that Daniel had already completed his three-year term of instruction in the Babylonian court in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar (cf. 1:18-21).<sup>54</sup> That difficulty, Clines holds, is especially weighty if the three years of instruction were three full years.<sup>55</sup> Daniel was taken to Babylon and began his instruction in the spring of 604. The second year of Nebuchadnezzar, according to the Book of Daniel, was Tishri of 604 to Tishri of 603. Thus the episode in Dan 2 took place after Daniel had finished only about one-half to one and one-half years of his training.

It should be noted, however, that Dan 2 does not necessarily follow Dan 1 chronologically.<sup>56</sup> In addition, the text of Dan 2 suggests that he was *not* finished with his training. After all, Daniel was evidently not among those who were unable to interpret

<sup>51</sup>Three of his objections presuppose a Tishri new year and a nonaccession year for the Book of Jeremiah (objections [i], [iii], and [iv], Clines, pp. 23-25). Since we see an accession-year system and a Nisan new year in the book of Jeremiah, these three objections do not apply to the present study. Cf. n. 31 above.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>53</sup>Compare the rates cited by Clines, p. 34.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 25, 28.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 28. Some commentators hold that the three years of Dan 1:5 were not three full years (e.g., Driver, p. 17; Young, pp. 55-56). They would say that Daniel was trained during the latter part of Nebuchadnezzar's accession year, all of his first year, and part of his second year. That then would harmonize Dan 1:5 and 2:1. The fact that the three years were a specific period of time set up for education would suggest, however, that the years were three whole years, not a part of three. There is also some evidence that in the Persian period the length of training was indeed three full years (Montgomery, p. 122).

<sup>56</sup>In fact, Daniel is not arranged chronologically, but symmetrically (cf. A. Lenglet, "La structure littéraire de Daniel 2-7" *Bib* 53 [1972]: 169-190).

the dream (vv. 2-11; cf. v. 27), nor had he even been informed of the matter (v. 15). Thus it is entirely possible that Dan 2 records an incident that took place after the story in Dan 1:8-17, but before the end of the three-year period.

In the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar conducted campaigns in Palestine during the years of 604-600. In the third month of 604 (30 May-28 June), Nebuchadnezzar went back to Palestine to collect tribute.<sup>57</sup> After capturing and plundering the city of Ashkelon, he returned to Babylon in the eleventh month (23 Jan.-20 Feb. 603).<sup>58</sup> This same basic pattern was repeated in his second (603-602)<sup>59</sup> and third years (602-601).<sup>60</sup> At an unspecified time in his fourth year (30 Mar. 601-18 Mar. 600), Nebuchadnezzar returned to Palestine.<sup>61</sup> It was during this campaign (in late 601) that Babylon and Egypt fought to a standstill, and Nebuchadnezzar withdrew to Babylon with no tribute.<sup>62</sup> It was also during this campaign that Jehoiakim of Judah, who had paid tribute for the past three years, rebelled against the Babylonians. This understanding fits 2 Kgs 24:1, which states: "In his [Jehoiakim's] days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years; but then he turned and rebelled against him."

### *The Time of Jehoiakim's Submission to and Rebellion against Babylon*

The beginning of the three-year period of Jehoiakim's submission is not stated, and various starting points have been proposed. Some start the three years in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar after his defeat of Ashkelon in December 604<sup>63</sup> (cf. Jer 36:9), after

<sup>57</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," obv. 15-17, p. 100.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., obv. 18-20, p. 100.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., obv. 21-23, p. 100. Wiseman has recently argued that the lacuna describes a siege of Tyre (*Nebuchadnezzar*, pp. 24-29). For a survey of the views, see Malamat, "The Twilight of Judah," p. 131, n. 18.

<sup>60</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," rev. 1-4, p. 101.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., rev. 5, p. 101.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., rev. 6-7, p. 101.

<sup>63</sup>K. T. Andersen, "Die Chronologie der Könige von Israel und Juda," *ST* 23 (1969): 110; Bright, p. 327; Klaus Dietrich Fricke, *Das zweite Buch von den Königen* (Stuttgart, 1972), pp. 345-346; Siegfried Herrmann, *A History of Israel in Old Testament Times*, rev. ed., trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia, 1981), p. 277; J. Philip Hyatt, "New Light on Nebuchadnezzar and Judean History," *JBL* 75 (1956): 280-281; Leupold, p. 50; A. Malamat, "A New Record of Nebuchadnezzar's

which there was purportedly a siege of Jerusalem. The end of the three years would therefore be in Kislev 601, probably after Nebuchadnezzar fought against the Egyptians. The problem with this view is that there is no specific evidence for a siege of Jerusalem during the first year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Second, some hold that Jehoiakim became a vassal in late 603 in connection with a campaign of Nebuchadnezzar in his second year. Jehoiakim then rebelled in 601/600 after the unsuccessful battle against the Egyptians.<sup>64</sup> But it is not known what should be supplied in the lacuna of the Babylonian Chronicle which discusses the campaign of Nebuchadnezzar in Palestine late in his second year.<sup>65</sup>

Third, the three years are said to have started in 601. Then Jehoiakim paid tribute in 600, 599, and 598, at the end of which time he rebelled, and Nebuchadnezzar subsequently marched against Judah.<sup>66</sup> The problem with this view is that one would expect the

Palestinian Campaigns," *IEJ* 6 (1956): 251; Miller and Hayes, pp. 406-407; B. Oded, "When Did the Kingdom of Israel Become Subject to Babylonian Rule?" *Tarbiz* 35 (1965-66): II; Plöger, p. 38; Martin Rehm, *Das zweite Buch der Könige: Ein Kommentar* (Würzburg, 1982), p. 235; E. Vogt, "Nova chronica Babylonica de pugna apud Karkemiš et expugnatione Ierusalem," *Bib* 37 (1956): 395; idem, "Die neubabylonische Chronik über die Schlacht bei Karkemisch und die Einnahme von Jerusalem," in *Volume de Congrès: Strasbourg 1956, VTSup* 4, pp. 90-91; Ernst Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige: 1. Kön. 17-2. Kön. 25* (Göttingen, 1984), p. 468. David Noel Freedman holds to this view, but places the submission in connection with the campaign in Nebuchadnezzar's first year, not necessarily in connection with the fall of Ashkelon ("The Babylonian Chronicle," *BA* 19 [1956]: 53, n. 14).

<sup>64</sup>W. F. Albright, "The Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar Chronicles," *BASOR* 143 (1956): 31; Hartman and Di Lella, p. 47; G. H. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI, 1984), 2:634; A. Malamat, "The Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah," in *The Age of the Monarchies: Political History*, ed. Abraham Malamat, The World History of the Jewish People, First Series: Ancient Times (Jerusalem, 1979), 4, pt. 1:208; idem, "The Last Kings of Judah and the Fall of Jerusalem: An Historical-Chronological Study," *IEJ* 18 (1968): 142, esp. n. 10; idem, "The Twilight of Judah," pp. 131-132; J. T. Nelis, "Note sur la date de la sujétion de Joiaqim par Nabuchodonosor," *RB* 61 (1954): 391; V. Pavlovský and E. Vogt, "Die Jahre der Könige von Juda und Israel," *Bib* 45 (1964): 345-346, n. 3; Bezalel Porten, "The Identity of King Adon," *BA* 44 (1981): 49; Elizabeth N. von Voigtlander, "A Survey of Neo-Babylonian History" (Ph.D. disser., University of Michigan, 1963), p. 97.

<sup>65</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," obv. 23 ff., p. 100. Cf. n. 59 above.

<sup>66</sup>John Gray, *1 & 2 Kings: A Commentary*, 2d ed., Old Testament Library (Philadelphia, 1970), pp. 756-757; Oesterley and Robinson, 1:434-435; Russell, p. 14; and Josephus, *Antiquities* 10.87-88, 97.

vassals to withhold tribute following Nebuchadnezzar's unsuccessful battle against Egypt rather than to submit faithfully to him. On the other hand, if the vassals in Hattu were paying their tribute, it might explain why Nebuchadnezzar did not campaign there during his fifth and sixth years and most of his seventh year.

Fourth, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem between the campaign in Hamath and his return to Babylon in August of 605. That was followed by Jehoiakim's three years of servitude.<sup>67</sup> (A similar view sees the siege of Jerusalem after Nebuchadnezzar's return to Jerusalem from Babylon instead of before his return to claim the throne.)<sup>68</sup>

A fifth view, the one which appears to integrate all of the data most successfully, is that Jehoiakim's three years of vassalage began after his brief deportation to Babylon in the late winter of 604 (Dan 1:1-3; 2 Chr 36:6-7).<sup>69</sup> If Jehoiakim was not subservient to Nebuchadnezzar in the latter part of his third year (summer of 605) and was subsequently taken to Babylon at the beginning of his fourth, then the three-year period of vassalage must have started from the imposition of tribute<sup>70</sup> which followed that brief deportation to Babylon in the winter of 604. That particular tribute was collected in the campaign of 604, which began in the third month (30 May-28 June).<sup>71</sup> Tribute was subsequently collected in the spring of 603<sup>72</sup> and in the year 602-601.<sup>73</sup> In summary, Jehoiakim submitted to Nebuchadnezzar as a vassal by paying tribute in 604, 603, and 602 (the first through the third years of Nebuchadnezzar), but in 601 he rebelled by failing to pay tribute.

The impetus behind Jehoiakim's rebellion was probably his renewal of ties with his original overlord, Necho of Egypt, who had made him king (2 Kgs 23:34-35). Jehoiakim's ability to extradite gives evidence that he was at one time a vassal of Egypt (cf.

<sup>67</sup>Wiseman, "Historical Problems," pp. 17-18.

<sup>68</sup>Berosus; cited by Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.134-138; G. Larsson, "When Did the Babylonian Captivity Begin?" *JTS* 18 (1967): 417-423.

<sup>69</sup>For this view, see Alberto R. Green, "The Fate of Jehoiakim," *AUSS* 20 (1982): 108-109; J. Robinson, *The Second Book of Kings*, Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge, Eng., 1976), p. 233; Wiseman, *Chronicles*, pp. 28, 30.

<sup>70</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," obv. 13, p. 100.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, obv. 15-16, p. 100.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, obv. 21-23, p. 100.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, rev. 2-4, p. 101.

Jer 26:22-23).<sup>74</sup> Necho also imposed a very modest amount of tribute.<sup>75</sup> Jehoiakim was a part of the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem and probably hoped that Necho would help him against the Babylonians. This renewed alliance would explain Nebuchadnezzar's march to Egypt in 601.<sup>76</sup>

Aware of the alliance between Jehoiakim and Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar marched for Egypt in the tenth month of 601 (21 Nov.-19 Dec.). When Necho heard of Nebuchadnezzar's action, he mustered his army and marched out to meet him.<sup>77</sup> Both armies suffered heavy losses, and Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon with no tribute.<sup>78</sup> The subsequent effect on both armies was significant: Nebuchadnezzar did not campaign the following year,<sup>79</sup> and the Egyptians never regained any semblance of the control that they once exercised over Syria-Palestine.<sup>80</sup>

### *The Events Following Jehoiakim's Rebellion*

Having stayed at home to refit his horses and chariots in the year following his failure against the Egyptians,<sup>81</sup> in the ninth month of 599 (29 Nov.-27 Dec.) Nebuchadnezzar marched to Hattu, which became his base of operations.<sup>82</sup> From there he dispatched his army for a desert campaign against the Arabs<sup>83</sup> and (secondarily)

<sup>74</sup>Extradition was a standard clause in vassal treaties (cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, [ed. and trans.], "Sf III," lines 4-7, in *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire* [Rome, 1967], pp. 96-97).

<sup>75</sup>Malamat, "The Twilight of Judah," p. 127, n. 8.

<sup>76</sup>Most explain the impetus behind the revolt as the *defeat* of Nebuchadnezzar instead of a *coalition* between the Egyptians and Jehoiakim (e.g., Freedman, p. 55, n. 17; Malamat, "The Twilight of Judah," p. 132, n. 20). The idea of a renewed alliance between Jehoiakim and Necho, however, would explain why Nebuchadnezzar undertook a campaign against the Egyptians at this time.

<sup>77</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," rev. 6, p. 101. Lipinski believes that the battle took place at Migdal and that it was followed by an attack on Gaza by Necho ("The Egypto-Babylonian War of the Winter 601-600 B.C.," *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli* 32 [1972]: 240-241).

<sup>78</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," rev. 7, p. 101. Cf. obv. 13, 17; rev. 4.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, rev. 8, p. 101.

<sup>80</sup>2 Kgs 24:7. See Spalinger, p. 232.

<sup>81</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," rev. 8, p. 101.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, rev. 9, p. 101.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, rev. 10, p. 101.

against the outlying regions of Judah.<sup>84</sup> After obtaining much booty, the army returned to Babylon three months later (25 Feb.-26 Mar. 598).<sup>85</sup> Jehoiakim died on 9 December 598<sup>86</sup> and was succeeded by Jehoiachin.<sup>87</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

This article has elaborated on (1) a possible link between the siege of Jerusalem in Dan 1:1 and the subjugation of Jehoiakim in 2 Kgs 24:1, and (2) the connection between the deportation of Jehoiakim in Dan 1:2 and the deportation in 2 Chr 36:6-7. It was concluded that Nebuchadnezzar began a siege of Jerusalem (which was completed at an unspecified time) in the midsummer of his accession year (605). In the eleventh month of Nebuchadnezzar's accession year (Feb.-Mar. 604), Jehoiakim, Daniel, and others were taken to Babylon. Following three years of servitude (604-602), Jehoiakim rebelled against the Babylonians in Nebuchadnezzar's fourth year (601-600), prior to his battle against the Egyptians in November-December of 601.

<sup>84</sup>2 Kgs 24:2; cf. Jer 35:11; also perhaps the Ramath-Negeb ostrakon from Arad (Yohanan Aharoni, "Three Hebrew Ostraca from Arad," *BASOR* 197 [1970]: 16-28). This passage refers to "bands" (*gdwdy*) of Chaldeans. The term *gdwd*, when used in the plural, refers to a division or portion of an army (2 Sam 4:2; 2 Kgs 5:2; 6:23; 13:20, 21; 2 Chr 26:11). Therefore, this passage refers to raids, and not a major thrust by the entire Babylonian army.

<sup>85</sup>Grayson, "Chronicle 5," rev. 10, p. 101.

<sup>86</sup>2 Kgs 24:7; Jer 22:19; 36:30. For the chronology of Jehoiakim's death, see Green, "Fate of Jehoiakim," pp. 107-108.

<sup>87</sup>According to Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 10. 96-97, Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city and killed Jehoiakim. But since nothing is mentioned in the Babylonian Chronicles concerning Nebuchadnezzar's presence in Palestine during the latter part of 598, we must conclude that Josephus has confused his sources. For details, see E. J. Smit, "Josephus and the Final History of the Kingdom of Judah," in *Studies in the Chronicler*, Ou-testamentiese Werkegemeenskap in Suid-Afrika, no. 19, pp. 53-56.