Putting things in Putting things in Putting the CTIVE PERSPECTIVE Megillas Esther tells of how King Achashveirosh made a party in the third year of his reign and the

Megillas Esther tells of how King Achashveirosh made a party in the third year of his reign and the gemara, in Masechta Megillah, explains that this party was to celebrate Achashveirosh's erroneous belief that the 70 years of exile that Hashem had decreed on His people had lapsed without our being redeemed and that Hashem had, chas v'shalom, abandoned us. Achashveirosh wasn't the first to come to this conclusion and to make a celebration; Balshatzar, a previous ruler, had done the same thing. Let's take a closer look at the miscalculations by Balshatzar and Achashveirosh, as well as the correct calculation of the 70 year period of exile. BY ROBERT SUSSMAN

0 (3318) Nevuchadnetzar becomes king by conquering Ninveh, which was where the head of the Kingdom of Assyria, Esser Chidon, was located. *Malchus Bavel* (the Kingdom of Babylonia) begins.

1 In the second year of his reign, Nevuchadnetzar conquers Yerushalayim, plunders the *Beis HaMikdash* (the Temple), but doesn't destroy it, and exiles Yehoyakim, the king of Yehudah (Judea), to Bavel, along with Daniel, Chananya, Mishael, and Azaria. This took place during the third year of the reign of Yehoyakim. Nevuchadnetzar subsequently returns Yehoyakim to Yerushalayim to rule over Yehuda. under his dominion.

4 After three years, Yehoyakim rebels against Nevuchadnetzar.

7 Three years after it began, Nevuchadnetzar crushes Yehoyakim's rebellion, killing him and appointing his son, Yehoyachin, in his place.

8 (3327) Yehoyachin rules for only 3 months before rebelling against
Nevuchadnetzar.
Nevuchadnetzar exiles
Yehoyachin to Bavel, thus beginning *Galus Bavel*, the Babylonian Exile, and appoints Tzidkiyahu in place of Yehoyachin.²

19 (3338) Nevuchadnetzar destroys *Bayis Rishon* (the First Temple), which stood for 410 years, and takes all of the vessels from there. Nevuchadnetzar blinds and exiles Tzidkiyahu. Only a small number of Jews remain in Eretz Yehuda (Judea), with those who weren't killed or died of hunger and disease being taken into exile to Bavel. 3

45 After reigning for 45 years, Nevuchadnetzar dies and is succeeded by his son, Ehvil M'rudach.⁴

74 Following the death of Koresh, who reigned for 3 years*, Achashveirosh becomes king.

76 (3395) At the start of the third year of his reign, convinced that the 70 years of the Jewish exile has passed* and wanting to celebrate the Jews having not been redeemed, Achashveirosh makes an elaborate banquet at which he dons the clothing of the Kohen Gadol and uses the vessels from the *Beis HaMikdash* that had been previously captured by Nevuchadnetzar and used by Balshatzar.

86 In the twelfth year of Achashveirosh's reign, the events of Purim take place.

88 After reigning for 14 years, Achashveirosh dies and his son from Queen Esther, Daryavash II (aka Daryavash HaFarsi, Koresh II, and Artachshasta) becomes king.

89 (3408) Daryavash II gives permission for the building of *Bayis Sheini* (the Second Temple) to resume.

3412 *Bayis Shein*i is completed. Daryavash II insists that an image of Shushan, the capital city, be displayed there.

69 (3388) In the third year of his reign, convinced that the 70 years of exile has expired and that the Jewish people have not been redeemed, Balshatzar makes a banquet and uses the holy vessels from the *Beis HaMikdash* that had been previously captured by Nevuchadnetzar. On that night, the Medians under Daryavash I and the Persians under Koresh engage the Babylonians in battle and Balshatzar is killed. ⁵ Daryavash I becomes king. ⁶

71 Following Daryavash I, Koresh becomes king and

grants permission for the Jews living in Bavel to return

to Eretz Yisrael and to rebuild the Beis HaMikdash (what

will be the Second Temple). Over 40 000 people return

with Zerubavel, but the majority remain behind. Three

nevi'im (prophets) rise up: one testifies as to the location of the *Mikdash* (the Temple); one testifies as to the

location of the *mizbeyach* (altar); and one testifies that they could begin offering *korbanos* (offerings) in the

absence of the actual Temple structure. Zerubavel and

Yehoshua, the Kohen Gadol, build the altar and begin

The Kutim (aka Samaritans) disrupt and sabotage the

rebuilding, eventually convincing Koresh to withdraw

his authorisation to build, resulting in the construction

being halted. For 18 years – until the completion of the 70 year period from the destruction of the First Temple

70 Daryavash I (aka Daryavash HaMedi) rules for one year.

- the construction is put on hold.

offering the *korban tamid* (the daily offering). The rebuilding of the Temple structure subsequently begins.

67 Ehvil M'rudach reigns for 22 years*, after which his son, Balshatzar, becomes king.

Balshatzar's calculation: 70 years from Malchus Bavel (the Kingdom of Babylonia)

Achashveirosh's calculation: 70 years from Galus Bavel (the Babylonian Exile)

The correct calculation: 70 years from Churban Bayis Rishon (the destruction of the First Temple)

The numbering 0 to 89 refers to the counting of the years from the beginning of Malchus Bavel, the Kingdom of Babylonia, which began with the reign of Nevuchadnetzar (numbers in brackets refer to years in the Hebrew Calendar).

Based on Megillah 11b (with Rashi), The Jewish Timeline Encyclopedia, Charts For Learning The Daily Daf by Kollel Iyun Hadaf, and Seder HaDoros Footnotes and * on pg 44

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