

12. Glenn Defends Himself Against the Charge of “Selective Scholarship”

Glenn Moore responded to my charge that he employs “Selective Scholarship” with his use of Josephus’ writings with what appears to be, on the surface, a lengthy display of dating finesse, which he believes “seals the deal.” Let’s take a look at what Glenn has to say:

Josephus

Josephus "was a first-century Jewish historian and apologist of priestly and royal ancestry who survived and recorded the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. His works give an important insight into first-century Judaism." (Josephus, *Wikipedia*) He is a well known Jewish writer who was captured by the Romans and later released to serve as historian of the Roman-Jewish war about a generation after Messiah came. His historical statements are considered generally reliable. Again, while he is a Jewish historian he is also connected with the Romans, as he even became a Roman Citizen--so his viewpoint may tend to favor the Romans above the Jews in certain matters. He is not inspired, and he is not infallible. He is a generally reliable historian of the first century CE.

Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of authors and their works. However, before continuing I am certain that there is even disagreement regarding these brief biographies concerning who is more or less reliable in religious or historical matters. While this is true, and we may disagree on how much "weight" of authority each of these should have, let us focus on the basic fundamental point that I am attempting to make here--none of these are inspired and none of them are infallible.¹

Thus far into Glenn’s response, it appears that he has mended his ways. The above represents what I regard as an unbiased look at Josephus ... generally reliable, but not inspired and not infallible. Glenn continues with his defense:

Answering the Charges

Let's start with the book of Jubilees. I have stated that this book offers proof that the Jubilee cycles were understood by most Jews of the temple and post temple era as being 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles. Since the book of Jubilees is such a well known book, written prior to the time of the division of the various sects of Judaism (proto-Essene), we have reason to think that his understanding of the cycles is probably accurate. However, the unusual calendar which he introduces (364 days per year) marks his work as being based upon the book of Enoch--a book which Larry has curiously left out of his list of books to consider, which leads me to wonder. . . ?²

Well, Glenn was off to a great start, but then, in the above paragraph, his mind began to wander. First, he returns to his previous ways, upholding *The Book of Jubilees* as “probably accurate.” Glenn apparently felt he needed to throw that part in to help give the book some needed weight, since he later agrees that it wasn’t inspired (which, in turn, runs counter to a previous commentary in which he implied that it should have been included with the canon of Scripture). So as to bring Glenn “back down to earth,” I will refresh his memory that 1st century Judaism rejected *The Book of Jubilees*:

¹ Moore, W. Glenn, “Selective Scholarship?”, (summer 2009), http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/select_scholarship.htm.

² Ibid.

The book of Jubilees was evidently held in high regard, and sometimes quoted, by the Early Church Fathers of the Christian Church. There is no record of it in Rabbinic sources, and it was among several books that were left out of the canon established by the [Sanhedrin](#) (possibly at [Yavne](#), ca. 80 AD).³

Back in chapter five of Part I, we analyze in considerable detail Glenn's claim that *The Book of Jubilees* was popular within Judaism. A significant element that Glenn ignores in his defense of this work is the fact that scholars have determined that *The Book of Jubilees* could not have been authored by either Sadducees or Pharisees, which eliminates mainstream Judaism altogether. This suggests that any popularity that the book enjoyed could only have been within the ranks of those who shared the author's theological understanding. Some folks are of the opinion that *The Book of Jubilees* must have been very popular because some 15 copies were found in a Qumran cave.⁴ Has anyone considered the possibility that the reason those copies were in the cave is because, to coin an expression, "sales were down"? If I understand marketing correctly, when sales are down, inventory runs high. According to the above *Wikipedia* source, *Jubilees* was held in high regard among the early Church Fathers. Of course, that proves nothing, and it was certainly never regarded as inspired, either by Christianity or Judaism. Why not? Was it because Judaism rejected the author's method of reckoning the Jubilee cycle?

Glenn also takes aim at the fact that I do not address his use of *The Book of Enoch*. He writes, "the book of Enoch--a book which Larry has curiously left out of his list of books to consider, which leads me to wonder. . . ?"

I would never want to make Glenn wonder about why I might occasionally not address a particular topic or why, in this case, I didn't address his references to *The Book of Enoch*. As it turns out, I have never read the entire *Book of Enoch*, which leaves me in a position of being unqualified to offer any pertinent commentary as it relates to the claims that Glenn makes about it. Furthermore, I do not remember being exposed to any previous attempts by Glenn to discredit this text. It would require an effort on his part to discredit either the text or the author, followed by a subsequent commentary upholding its authoritative merits to qualify it as a satisfactory example of *selective scholarship*.

As it turns out, however, as the year 2009 wore on and Glenn expanded his Jubilee claims into the realm of the calendar originally ordained at Creation, I noticed that *The Book of Enoch* was completely *missing* from Glenn's otherwise lengthy commentary. Finding it odd that he would go to such lengths to offer it as evidence supporting the 49-year Jubilee cycle, I wondered why he didn't cite it as supportive evidence validating his proposed "fall-to-fall" calendar, especially since it is widely known that the topic of the calendar comprises a major portion of this ancient work. To my surprise, upon reviewing *The Book of Enoch's* treatment of the calendar, I found yet *another* example of Glenn's tendency to employ *selective scholarship*, for *The Book of Enoch* clearly recognizes a "spring-to-spring" calendar – the very same calendar ordained by Yahweh in Exodus 12:2.⁵ Once again, keep in mind that Glenn upholds *The*

³ Cf., **Book of Jubilees**, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jubilees>.

⁴ *Ibid*, where we find the following comment: "Between 1947 and 1956 approximately 15 Jubilees scrolls were found in five caves at [Qumran](#), all written in Hebrew. The large quantity of manuscripts (more than for any biblical books except for Psalms, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Exodus, and Genesis, in descending order) indicates that Jubilees was widely used at Qumran." I maintain that, since it has been demonstrated that *Jubilees* could not have been authored by either Pharisees or Sadducees, it could only have been popular among those who agreed with the precepts that it supports. This understanding is shared by such references as *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, Mercer University Press, Macon, GA, 1997, p. 474, where we read, "The fact that at least twelve copies of *Jubilees* have been recovered from the Qumran caves attests to its popularity [there](#)."

⁵ For a detailed review of Glenn's omission of the *Book of Enoch* from his "original calendar" study, please see Part III, ch. 7, "[When Did the Author of The Book of Enoch Understand the Year to Begin?](#)"

Book of Enoch when it comes to supporting his stand pertaining to how the Jubilee cycle should be reckoned:

And if you want to find a truly "ancient" Jewish writing which gives examples of how Jubilee cycles were typically understood, please do some research into [The Book of Jubilees](#) (from the **second century BCE**) and regarding the "seven days equals seven thousand years" theory see [The Book of Enoch](#).⁶

To be fair to Glenn, we need to point out that he wisely recognized, even when he cited *The Book of Enoch*, that it should not be considered an inspired work:

These historical documents are important because they 1) Provide valuable historical information, and 2) Provide valuable cultural information regarding the Jewish people, which gives us background information regarding the life of the Jewish people in Bible times. Other writings which fall into this category would include the writings of Josephus and Philo, as well as the books of Enoch and 1 & 2 Maccabees. So, when studying Scripture in light of Jewish history and culture, (and when Scripture clearly and directly contradict something in these writings) we should accept the Scriptural account as of supreme importance above all others. Please note, however, that there are always possible **conflicts** in our *interpretation* of Scripture as well as passages from these key historical/cultural writings. And please note also that historical documents (such as the book of Enoch, the writings of Josephus, etc.) have their own particular biases and potential errors--so we must examine **many** historical documents before coming to final conclusions, especially in regard to Bible chronology and calendar issues.⁷

In fact, Glenn devotes a small amount of space towards explaining to his readers what *The Book of Enoch* is, while emphasizing that he does not consider it to be inspired:

The Book of Enoch

"The Book of Enoch (also 1 Enoch[1]) is a pseudepigraphic work ascribed to Enoch, the great-grandfather of Noah and son of Jared (Genesis 5:18). While this book today is non-canonical in most Christian Churches, it was explicitly quoted[2]:8 in the New Testament (Letter of Jude 1:14-15) and by many of the early Church Fathers. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church to this day regards it to be canonical. . . .It is argued that all the writers of the New Testament were familiar with it and were influenced by it in thought and diction.[5]" ([The Book of Enoch, Wikipedia](#)) Like the other writings listed above, I do not believe that the book of Enoch is inspired or infallible.⁸

While it is significant that Glenn concedes that ancient texts such as *The Book of Jubilees* and *The Book of Enoch* are not inspired, this understanding does not prevent him from exhibiting *selective*

⁶ Moore, W. Glenn, "Is the Jubilee Cycle 49 or 50 Years?", April 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/49_vrs_50_cycles.htm. NOTE: Glenn later added the following sentence to his original commentary: "While I do not believe that these books are without error, nor that they are inspired, I have reason to believe that they are very useful in helping us know how the Jews felt about such subjects."

⁷ This quote was copied and pasted from the April 2009 edition of W. Glenn Moore's "Answers to Objections" page on his web site, originally located at http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/answer_objections.htm, but later incorporated into a separate page entitled "Selective Scholarship?", which may be read by accessing the following URL: http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/select_scholarship.htm.

⁸ Moore, W. Glenn, "Selective Scholarship?", summer 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/select_scholarship.htm.

scholarship with regard to his treatment of these and other books. I would agree with Glenn that *The Book of Enoch* is not inspired, but certainly it can be used as a reference demonstrating how certain Jews of antiquity believed. However, when we use this text as supportive evidence of how to reckon the Jubilee cycle while simultaneously *ignoring* its portrayal of when to begin the year – especially when the timing of the New Year has direct impact on an important facet of Glenn’s Jubilee doctrine – this can only be regarded as another classic example of *selective scholarship*.⁹

Glenn continues with his *Josephus Treatise*:

Well, anyway, the fact that the chronology of the book of Jubilees differs from that of my chronology is not a valid point, since there is no single chronology of Scripture (that I am aware of) which is in total agreement on every point. My chronology stands or falls based upon its own merit, and should be studied as such (not compared to either the book of Jubilees, the Sedar Olam, the *Septuagint*, or James Ussher). When you compare the chronologies in each of these works you will find that they **all** have differences, sometimes significant differences, and yet I am certain Larry will not (for instance) accuse the translators of the Septuagint of "selective scholarship"--even though the chronology of Genesis it contains adds several hundred years to the chronology found in the Masoretic Text. [Many scholars have reason to believe that the Masoretic text provides the most accurate chronology, for reasons we will not explore at this time.] And since I never claimed the book of Jubilees was inspired or inerrant, such an accusation as selective scholarship for that work is really not a valid charge.¹⁰

I will address Glenn’s last sentence first. He summarily dismisses the charge of *selective scholarship* while offering the rationale that he never claimed that the book was inspired or inerrant. Glenn doesn’t seem to understand that “Selective scholarship” has *nothing* to do with whether or not the guilty party believes the reference is inspired. *Selective scholarship* involves upholding a certain writer’s authoritative merits when it’s convenient for promoting a certain belief – while simultaneously ignoring or discrediting the same writing (or other writings by the same author) when they prove at odds with another cherished belief. A typical example of *selective scholarship* is when a preacher delivers a sermon on the importance of the tithing law (something most preachers appreciate) while ignoring the law pertaining to observing the weekly Sabbath. This is because most preachers believe the tithing law still applies to day, but they *don’t* believe observance of the weekly Sabbath is obligatory in this day and age – even though the Author says it *is*.

In Glenn’s case, he avidly promotes *The Book of Jubilees* insofar as its portrayal of a 49-year Jubilee cycle, but he initially *ignored*, then later *downplayed* its chronological disagreement with his proposed timeline. Glenn also ignored *The Book of Jubilees*’ “spring-to-spring” calendar – *until* this important discrepancy was revealed by this author. Glenn continues to ignore the fact that the author of *The Book of Jubilees* disagrees with his position that it was not a Jubilee Year when the children of Israel entered the Promised Land. Thus, as we can see, *selective scholarship* isn’t about whether or not the writing is inspired. It *is* about promoting a certain writing when it’s convenient for promoting a certain viewpoint while simultaneously ignoring that same writing when it is at odds with *another* viewpoint.

⁹ For those who would like a brief summary of why *The Book of Enoch* should not be considered “inspired,” here is a link to a short response to a believer’s question regarding this book: <http://www.gotquestions.org/book-of-Enoch.html>.

¹⁰ Moore, W. Glenn, “Selective Scholarship?”, summer 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/select_scholarship.htm.

With regard to the remainder of Glenn’s commentary displayed above, I’m not entirely sure what point he was trying to make. Why would he suppose that I might perchance accuse the Septuagint translators of “selective scholarship”? They were *translators*, not authors, of a biased work! Do I agree with the Septuagint’s chronology? No, I do not. This might be a good spot to remind Glenn that there is no such thing as an inspired *version* of the Bible. We hopefully agree that Scripture, in its original form, was inspired. The question is, how much of Scripture as we have it today has been tampered with, whether innocently or with wrongful motives? Glenn is aware that I do put a lot of stock in the Septuagint version of Scripture, but he also needs to be reminded that I have never claimed that the Septuagint is an inspired version.

For some reason, Glenn abruptly changes the subject from “Septuagint” to “Book of Jubilees,” concluding that my charging him with *selective scholarship* regarding his treatment of that resource is “not a valid charge.” In response, I feel that I need to remind Glenn that *The Book of Jubilees*, unlike the Septuagint, is *not* a translation of Scripture. An Essene Jew authored it, submitting his own personal spin on Scripture, and while that Essene Jew agreed with Glenn’s reckoning of the Jubilee cycle, he certainly didn’t agree with Glenn’s chronology, nor did he agree with the timing of the New Year ... nor did he agree with Glenn’s view that the Israelites didn’t enter the Promised Land during a Jubilee Year. Glenn knows all about these significant discrepancies, but he conveniently leaves them out of his *Jubilees* study.¹¹ You can bet he would have preferred that no one had ever addressed these huge discrepancies, but now that they’ve been brought to the forefront, Glenn must either address those discrepancies or ignore them.

In his commentary above, Glenn minimizes the significance of the chronological discrepancy between his timeline and the one presented within *The Book of Jubilees*. This is a mistake on his part because, when we really get down to “brass tacks,” this discussion isn’t *really* so much about the length of the Jubilee cycle as it is about Glenn’s chronological timeline and how he’s 99% certain that the 6,000th year of history begins in 2016, which in turn means that Creation must have been in the year 3985 BCE. The author of *The Book of Jubilees* would have had the 6,000th year begin at least 80 years *before* the date offered by Glenn. We are fairly certain the 6,000th year hasn’t yet arrived, so I believe we can rule out the timeline provided by the *Jubilees* author. We’ll just have to wait and see how accurate Glenn’s timeline is.

I believe the point I made above bears repeating: *This entire argument is not really about the length of the Jubilee cycle.* It’s about Glenn’s date-setting proposal that the 6,000th year of history will begin in the year 2016. Since the length of the Jubilee cycle plays a major role in Glenn’s determination of the 6,000th year, and since I disagree with both publicly setting dates *and* the belief that the Jubilee cycle consists of 49 years, *and* since Glenn wants to argue his point *ad infinitum*, I eventually found myself defending my view in opposition to date-setting while simultaneously demonstrating that the teaching at the very *core* of Glenn’s date-setting premise (*i.e.*, the reckoning of the Jubilee cycle) is not in line with the Scriptural command. One of Glenn’s major historical references supporting his view of the Jubilee cycle is *The Book of Jubilees*, a book authored by a man who, quite frankly, disagreed with Glenn’s

¹¹ As of November 1, 2009, Glenn had not acknowledged that *The Book of Jubilees* is at odds with his belief regarding when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. Glenn has acknowledged that *Jubilees* presents a “spring-to-spring” calendar, but he summarily dismisses it, claiming (in so many words) that the author didn’t know when to celebrate the Feast of Weeks, so how can he be trusted to know when the year begins? As we demonstrated in our previous chapter, the author of *The Book of Jubilees*’ presentation of the month during which the Feast of Weeks is observed coincides with the month presented in Yahweh’s Torah.

chronological reckoning, among other things. In other words, “*Houston, we have a problem!*” Was Glenn’s use of *The Book of Jubilees* in support of the length of the Jubilee cycle, while ignoring the huge timeline discrepancy, “selective scholarship” on his part? Absolutely.

Glenn continues:

Let's talk now about Philo. Philo says this regarding the Jubilees: "(114) Therefore, the law invites the man who is able to recover his original property within the period of fifty years, or any one of his nearest relations, to use every exertion to repay the price which he received, and not to be the cause of loss to the man who purchased it, and who served him at a time when he was in need of assistance." (Philo, *The Special Laws, II*, Chapter 22, Section 114) Because I said so very little about Philo's statement, this supposedly makes me guilty of selective scholarship. However, such an accusation as this proves nothing here-- for Philo is certainly granted his opinion in his commentary, just as he is granted to have many other opinions--some of which I agree with and others which I disagree with.¹²

In the above commentary, Glenn attempts to downplay his classic display of “selective scholarship” regarding his treatment of Philo’s writings. For those who aren’t sure about this, I can only recommend re-reading Part II, chapter 11 (*Selective Scholarship and Glenn’s Use of Philo’s Writings*). In that chapter, I reveal how Glenn gave Philo a glowing biographical sketch when it came to supporting his premise pertaining to the Jewish custom of wearing *tefillin*, but when it became apparent that Philo disagreed with Glenn’s reckoning of the Jubilee cycle, Glenn proceeded to give Philo a cross between a slam and a snub.

Glenn continues:

Just remember, when we are examining the works of historians we are not pitting one historian against another (unless there is a very good reason). We are examining **all** of the available evidence and then rendering a decision based upon the weight of evidence. If Philo says the cycles are 50 years, but the book of Jubilees, the book of Enoch and Maccabees (both of which Larry conveniently left out of the list), the Melchezedek Scroll, the chronology of the Sedar Olam, and the chronology of Josephus point to or outright declare the use of continuous seven (or even 49) year cycles--then what do we do? Can we make Philo right and all the others wrong? Is it good scholarship to accept the words of Philo and reject all of these other testimonies? Let us not forget that Philo was a "Hellenistic Jewish writer and philosopher." His view of Scriptural matters may not necessarily be the correct view, and we would certainly like to have more confirmation from other sources when considering his views.¹³

First, let’s take a look at Glenn’s comment about “pitting one historian against another.” While I agree that we should not do such a thing, this is precisely what Glenn does, including in the above commentary! Remember, if you will, that when Philo agreed with Glenn’s position pertaining to the wearing of *tefillin*, he had this to say about him:

He was a knowledgeable person, he upheld obedience to Torah, and would therefore be a general representative of Jews living at that time. The fact that

¹² Moore, W. Glenn, “Selective Scholarship?”, summer 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/select_scholarship.htm.

¹³ Ibid.

Philo agreed with the symbolic understanding provided by the Septuagint translators serves as a powerful witness that this was the understanding of normative Judaism at that time, especially when we consider how highly respected Philo was among his fellow Jews.¹⁴

By all accounts, the above review of Philo is nothing but complimentary. Philo would have been flattered! No one would guess that the author of this review *also* authored the previous review in which Philo is denigrated as a “Hellenistic Jewish writer and philosopher.” Now that Glenn has discovered that Philo could not have agreed with his Jubilee cycle reckoning, suddenly Philo is transformed from a knowledgeable person who upheld obedience to Torah to a “Hellenistic Jewish writer and philosopher” whose view of Scriptural matters “may not necessarily be the correct view.” The obvious (current) intent is to portray him as more loyal to Greek influence than to Yahweh’s law. Glenn’s use of Philo’s writings, then, serves as a classic example of *selective scholarship*. I don’t look for Glenn to admit to this because he understands that it would put another chink in his credibility armor. However, you can be assured that if Glenn felt that he could make a case that Philo exhibited an understanding of 49-year Jubilee cycles, he would expend as much or more space than that which he devoted to Josephus towards proving that Philo agreed with his position instead of referring to Philo as a “Hellenistic Jewish writer and philosopher.”

As I mentioned previously, I’m afraid that Glenn may not fully understand what *selective scholarship* is. This is illustrated by his comment that I “conveniently” left *The Book of Enoch* and Maccabees off of my “list.” I have previously explained that a trademark of selective scholarship is to call upon a scholar (or someone whom an author may *consider* to be a scholar) when something that scholar wrote may seem to validate a certain belief that we hold dear, but then ignore (or even disparage) that same scholar when he testifies against another equally precious conviction. For me to have charged Glenn with selective scholarship regarding either *The Book of Enoch* or Maccabees in early 2009 would have required my noticing examples in which he has previously disparaged or downplayed those books. At that time, I had not noticed any examples of Glenn ignoring or disparaging either of those two texts, so it would have been premature on my part of have included those texts in my charge. Of course, now that Glenn’s avoidance of *The Book of Enoch*’s opposition to his “fall-to-fall” calendar has come to light, it is clear that he exhibited *selective scholarship* with that ancient text as well, effectively “singing its praises” with regard to his view that it supports his method of reckoning Jubilee Years while ignoring the fact that it does *not* support his “fall-to-fall” calendar doctrine. The fact that Glenn **now** concedes this discrepancy is “too little, too late,” especially in view of the fact that he has claimed familiarity with *The Book of Enoch*, whereas I have only read select portions of it.¹⁵

Glenn proceeds with the introduction to his defense of his use of Josephus’ writings:

I have already mentioned in another place how the Sedar Olam used the prophecy of Daniel 9 (with its 490 year cycles) to establish jubilee cycles. While I mentioned the Josephus statement regarding "every seventh year," what I did not mention is the fact that Josephus gives various chronological dates upon which the Jews celebrated Sabbatical years. When those dates are determined and plotted on a timeline, they very clearly show continuously repeating seven year cycles over a period of about two centuries!! Obviously, if the Jubilee cycles were 50 years in duration, such a discrepancy would be clearly seen over a

¹⁴ From “Are Believers Commanded to Wear *Tefillin* as Taught by Rabbinic Judaism?”, by W. Glenn Moore, 2006, p. 33.

¹⁵ For more details pertaining to Glenn Moore’s opposition to *The Book of Enoch*’s “spring-to-spring” calendar, please see Part III, chapter 7 (“[When Did the Author of The Book of Enoch Understand the Year to Begin?](#)” (added to our study in early September 2009).

period of several centuries. [This does not include the additional evidence that can be found in the books of Maccabees, the Sedar Olam, and the Talmud] In addition, when properly understood, they agree completely with the Sabbatical years given in the Jubilee Calendar.¹⁶

Glenn makes some bold comments here, asserting that Josephus gives various chronological dates that, when plotted on a timeline, clearly demonstrate an understanding of continuously-repeating seven-year cycles that were not interrupted by a Jubilee Year. Let's see if Glenn's comments ring true:

Josephus Confirms Repeating 7 Year Cycles with his Own Recorded Chronology

Well, what about Josephus? First, Larry has said that my interpretation of Josephus' account of the destruction of the second temple in 70 CE is flawed. However, I disagree. While Josephus mentions the date of the 10th of Av for the destruction of the first and second temples--the context clearly suggests that the fire started on the 9th of Av (at least for that second temple). But let's save some time--I will simply provide the link to my explanation of that [here](#). What about the rest of Josephus' testimony? Does Josephus tell us that the sabbatical cycles are continuous--to be repeated "every seventh year?" Yes, he does--and he does it twice.¹⁷

This is a situation in which Glenn is simply in denial of what Josephus plainly wrote regarding the destruction of the second Temple. Rather than read Glenn's "explanation" of what Josephus meant, why not just read what Josephus plainly wrote in [Wars of the Jews Book VI, ch. 4, sec. 5](#)? He wrote that the Temple was set on fire on Av 10, and it was certainly *not* on fire on Av 9. However, Glenn, exhibiting his combination of extreme bias and poor exegetical skills, somehow concludes that Josephus wrote that the fire started on Av 9, even though Josephus never even *wrote* Av 9. Josephus *did* write Av 10, however. Should Glenn's propensity for distorting Josephus' words concern us with regard to other aspects of Glenn's writings? I believe it should. We have already seen where Glenn will [add words to Scripture](#) if he feels it will [add weight to his position](#), so the liberties he takes with Josephus' writings is simply another example of the lengths he will go to in order to persuade you or anyone who is not careful enough to catch Glenn at his [game](#).

In fact, in Glenn's very next paragraph, he provides us with yet another example of his propensity towards "adding to the Word. Back in [Part II, ch. 8](#), we addressed the fact that Glenn built on the King James Version's use of the added word "every" in Deut. 15:1 and 31:10, presenting it as a word that is translated from the Hebrew text, even though the Hebrew word commonly translated as "every" (כָּל, *kol*) is found in neither verse. Glenn continues this ploy in his exposé on how he believes Josephus only recognized a continuously-repeating Sabbatical cycle:

So, let us consider more of what Josephus has to say about the Sabbatical years--a subject that is paramount to this research. Josephus has much more information to share with us that many may not be aware of. He tells us something regarding another prior siege in Israel: "And as the siege was drawn out into length by this means, that year on which the Jews used to rest came on; for the Jews observe this rest **every seventh year, as they do every seventh day;**" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus, Book 13, Chapter 8, Section 1), and he

¹⁶ Moore, W. Glenn, "Selective Scholarship?", summer 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/select_scholarship.htm.

¹⁷ Ibid.

also says "And as the siege was delayed by this means, the year of rest came on, upon which the Jews rest **every seventh year as they do on every seventh day.**" (*Wars of the Jews*, Book 1, Chapter 2, Section 4) While the testimony of Josephus concerning *exactly* which day the fire began to engulf the temple is clearly in doubt (as I have more fully demonstrated in my answers regarding the 9th of Av), there **can be no doubt** regarding these two statements. Josephus is plainly telling us that the Sabbatical years were celebrated in **unbroken sequence** every seventh year, just as the seventh day Sabbath was observed in **unbroken sequence** every seventh day. Does this line up with what Scripture says?

And Moses commanded them, saying, **At the end of every seven years**, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before Yahweh thy Elohim in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. (Deuteronomy 31:10-11)

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. (Deuteronomy 15:1)¹⁸

Glenn here revisits a perspective that has already been addressed in the section entitled *Did Josephus Agree That the Jubilee Cycle Consists of 49 Years?* Sure, Josephus wrote that the “year of release” occurs every seven years, but then again, that’s what I had been saying, too! (I’ll be more careful, now, though, thanks to Glenn!) Philo, who agrees with our position that the Jubilee cycle consists of 50 years, *also* wrote that the Sabbatical years occur “every seventh year” and compares it to the same unbroken interval of the weekly Sabbath! This is because, during our lifetimes, we can only expect to experience *one* Jubilee Year (though two are certainly possible). Thus, from our perspective, the Sabbatical years *do* occur “every seventh year”; and when the Jubilee Year arrives, a double sabbatical is observed before starting the cycles all over again. It’s not really confusing, unless someone wants to make it such. Regrettably, Glenn doesn’t seem to get the connection.

An example of the common use of the word *every*, even though it isn’t intended to be taken literally, involves the topic of my favorite TV show while growing up. It only lasted three years, but during those three years, I looked forward to Wednesday evenings and the show called *Lost in Space*. Even now, when I reminisce about that program during discussions with friends, I find myself saying, “I used to watch *Lost in Space* every Wednesday evening.” Of course, if you want to get technical, that is not really true. For one, I remember the occasional disappointment of tuning in to CBS at 6:30 PM only to find that some crazy “special presentation” preempted *Lost in Space* that week. For another, I remember the even *worse* disappointment of having to go somewhere with my parents that evening, which absolutely *ruined* my week! Looking back, my affinity for *Lost in Space* was *misplaced*, just as is my reference to watching that show “every week”! Nevertheless, this is but one example of a common expression that very few people really intend to be understood *literally*.

The understanding that “every seventh year” is a reference to each sabbatical year within a particular Jubilee cycle (as opposed to Glenn’s position that it means “every seventh year in perpetuity without *any* interruptions whatsoever”) is exhibited in *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*. In this reference, we read the following understanding:

¹⁸ Moore, W. Glenn, “Josephus Confirms Repeating Cycles”, spring 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/josephus_cycles.htm.

• **Jubilee, Year of.** [joo'buh-lee] The year of Jubilee, or “the Jubilee,” refers to a special observance of every fiftieth year among the people of Israel. Scriptural references come primarily from Lev 25 and 27, with one other mention in Num 36:4. The year of Jubilee has the literal translation, year of the Ram’s Horn. Thus, the occasion received another designation, year of the Trumpet. The ram’s horn or trumpet, *yôbel*, was used by the priests for the year of Jubilee and very special occasions (cf. Exod 19:13; Josh 6:5; Isa 27:13). Jubilee became a transliteration of *yôbel*. By contrast *šôpār* indicates the horn used for less significant purposes and by others who were not priests. The appearance of *šôpār* in Lev 25:9 may indicate a later use of the other word for ram’s horn.

The time for the year of Jubilee began with “the trumpet sound throughout all your land” on “the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement” (Lev 25:9). Originally the day of atonement was a day of the New Year season in the autumn; later, the New Year started in the spring, so that the first month became the seventh month. The year of Jubilee came at the conclusion of “seven weeks of years” or forty-nine years (25:8). Lev 25:10, 11 schedules the observance of the special after the forty-nine years for each fiftieth year. The pseudepigraphical book of Jubilees, probably written in the second century B.C.E, places the year of Jubilee during the forty-ninth year.

Liberty under the Lord, Yahweh, stands out as the main theme. Lev 25:10 urges Israel to “proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants.” The theology of the land pivots around the statement of the covenant Lord in Lev 25:33, “the land is mine.” A great transition faced the Hebrews as they anticipated moving from Mount Sinai in the wilderness to the land of promise located among the Canaanites.

Every seventh year the land was to receive the benefit of a SABBATH and lie fallow (Lev 25:2-7). Then, in each fiftieth year, the land would not be tilled and planted for a second consecutive year (25:11-12). Everyone had an obligation to live on what the fields and vineyards produced “of themselves” (25:11). The people could not store produce that came from the land during this time. Ownership of land reverted to the original owner without exchange of money or other goods (25:25-55).¹⁹

As displayed by the above reference, the understanding is clearly exhibited that “every seventh year” must be understood as “every seventh year falling within the current Jubilee cycle.” Otherwise, as Glenn frequently points out to his readers, “every seventh year” would not make allowance for the 50th year to disrupt the continuously-repeating pattern. As with Josephus, so it would be with *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*. If the author of the above Jubilee item had not already established that the Jubilee cycle observance is “every fiftieth year,” Glenn would likely present him as another author who agrees that “every seventh year” is “proof” that the author agrees with his position that there can be no interruptions.

It is also worthy of note that Glenn, in his “bold” use of the word “every,” adds a word to the text of Scripture. Many Bible students are aware of the fact that the King James Version translators added certain words to the text of their translation, using italics when conveying their understanding of a word that didn’t actually appear in the original text, yet it was “obviously” intended. For example, when Yeshua performed the miracle of feeding four thousand hungry people in Matthew chapter 15, we read that He took seven loaves and a few fishes and “brake *them*.” The word “*them*” is not in the original text, but it makes more sense (at least in the English language) to say, “He took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake *them*” than to only say, that He gave thanks “and brake.” We thus see that sometimes adding a word of clarification, so long as it doesn’t change the meaning of the text, is helpful in conveying the understanding what the Author intended. The King James Version translators could have just arbitrarily incorporated the word “*them*” without the use of italics, all because they “felt” it

¹⁹ *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, Watson E. Mills, Gen. Editor, Mercer University Press, Macon, GA, 1997, p. 473.

belonged there, but thankfully, they had a conscience for not adding words without what they felt was “just cause,” and even then, they put those added words in italics so as to facilitate identification of such “added words.” With their use of italics, then, the translators conveyed the message that they *added* the word, but they only did so with the intent of helping the reader to understand what was meant by the original text.

It is one thing to add a word that you feel helps to **clarify** the intent of the text by putting it in *italics*, but it is another matter entirely when the word “every” is incorporated in such a way as to convey that it **belongs** in the original text. Glenn, in his quotation of both Deut. 15:1 and Deut. 31:10-11, chose to remove the italics from the added word “every,” thus conveying to his reading audience that the word “every” is found in the original text. Glenn knows better than to use this approach, yet he does it anyway (this isn’t the only instance we’ve noticed while composing our study).²⁰ Certainly, we’ve already demonstrated that it is natural to *say* (and write) “every seven years,” even though we understand that year #50 disrupts the continuity of the cycle, but it is wrong to use that word (without italics) to reinforce and even emphasize the *interpretation* of “every” when that word *isn’t even there in the first place!* Notice the Hebrew text (with English translation) of Deuteronomy 15:1-2 as it appears in the *ISA Interlinear Bible*:²¹

AV . At the end of **[every]** seven years thou shalt make a release.

The word “every” is in brackets to show that the actual Hebrew word for “every” (כָּל) isn’t actually written in the original text. However, notice that the Hebrew word for “every” *does* appear in verse two:

שְׁמִטָּה	שְׁבַע - שָׁנִים	תַּעֲשֶׂה	מִקֵּץ
shmtē	thoshe shnim - shbo		m·qtz
release	you-shall-make ^{do}	years seven	from·end-of

AV And this [is] the manner of the release. **Every** creditor that lendeth [ought] unto his neighbour shall release [it]; he shall not exact [it] of his neighbour, or of his brother, because it is called the LORD'S release.

אֲשֶׁר	יָדוּ	מִשֵּׁה	כָּל - בֹּעֵל	כָּל	שְׁמוֹט	הַשְּׁמִטָּה	דְּבַר	זֶה
ashr	id·u	mshe	bol - kl	kl	shmut	e·shmtē	dbr	u·ze
which	hand-of·him	loan-of	possessor	every-of	to-release	the·release	matter-of	and·this

As displayed by the Hebrew text, the Hebrew word for “every” (כָּל, *kol*) isn’t even *found* in Deuteronomy 15:1. It *is* found in the next verse, however, in reference to “every creditor.”

Interestingly, for those who might be interested in knowing how the Hebrew scholars who translated the Septuagint text into the Greek language understood the “seven years,” they, too, did **not** use the Greek word for “every” (πᾶν) in connection with the seven years. However, they **did** use the word πᾶν in verse two:²²

²⁰ See also Part II, ch. 8, “[Adding Two Words to the Same Verse](#),” as well as Part III, ch. 3, “[Does Joel 2:23 Indicate That the “First Month” of the Year is in the Fall?](#)”

²¹ Screen capture from the ISA (Interlinear Scripture Analyzer) Interlinear Bible, Copyright © 2002-2009 by Scripture4all Foundation - All Rights Reserved.

²² This screen shot is taken from *The Apostolic Bible Polyglot*®, an Interlinear Septuagint and Greek New Testament, Charles VanderPool, Editor-in-Chief, The Apostolic Press, Newport, OR, January, 2006, ISBN 0-9632301-1-5 Rev. 1.2, www.apostolicbible.com.

	1223	2033	2094	4160	859		2532
15:1	δι	επτά	ετών	ποιήσεις	ἀφείσω	15:2	καὶ
	For seven years you shall make				a release.		And
3779	3588	4366.2	3588	859	863		3956
οὕτως	το	πρόσταγμα	της	ἀφέσεως	ἀφήσεις		παν
thus is	the	order	of the	release;	you shall cancel		every
5532.3	2398	3739	3784	1473	3588	4139	
χρέος	ἰδίου	ο	οφείλει	σοι	ο	πλησίου	
[2loan	1private],	the one	which	[3owes	4to you	1your	2neighbor].

For Glenn Moore, the word “*every*” is critical to the premise that he attempts to make. However, as we have just seen, this critical word isn’t even found in the texts that he cites! Certainly, we understand the pattern that Yahweh gives for reckoning the Sabbatical years: Six years of sowing and reaping, followed by a year of rest, then repeat. The question is, “How many times do we repeat this cycle before it is interrupted?” If Yahweh had inspired the Hebrew word “*every*” to be written into the text of either Deuteronomy 15:1 or Deuteronomy 31:10-11, I could understand how someone might form the impression that Yahweh expects us to understand a *continuously-repeating* “cycle of sevens.” However, as we have just seen, the Hebrew word meaning “every” (כָּל *kol*) is not written in the text. Confirming that this word was never intended to have been read into the text is the fact that the Hebrew scholars who translated the Septuagint into the Greek language didn’t incorporate the Greek word for “every” into their translation of those verses.

Now that Glenn has *wrongly infused* the word “every” into the text of Deuteronomy 15:1 and Deuteronomy 31:10-11, he attempts to further reinforce and emphasize the validity of his point:

What does "every seven years" mean? Does it mean an unbroken sequence of seven year cycles? Or does it allow for an additional year after 49 of those years expire? Philo also said the sabbaticals came every seven years, but not as emphatically as Josephus--and the testimony of Philo I have already quoted above seems to indicate his agreement with fifty year cycles. Josephus tells us the same thing as Philo regarding the seven year cycles--only much more emphatically ("every seventh year, **as they do every seventh day**"), so all we need is evidence that Josephus spoke of Sabbatical years covering several centuries, plot their dates accurately, and line them all up in sequence. If they truly are consecutive unbroken cycles of seven years each, we will surely know. Let us not forget: Josephus is more of an historian, whereas Philo is more of a philosopher.²³

Glenn’s shallow research has led him to make another mistaken assumption. As he did with his broken vow, his over-confidence prompts him to assume things that he shouldn’t, subsequently exposing additional errors. In this case, he maintains that Josephus brought home the point that the Sabbatical cycles must be continuous (with no interruption at year #50) “more emphatically” than Philo did (“every seventh year, **as they do every seventh day**”). Perhaps Glenn needs to re-read what Philo wrote. Maybe Philo didn’t make the analogy to the weekly Sabbath in the *same clause* as Josephus did, but he did so in the same paragraph, and every bit as emphatically as Josephus did. Notice, again, what Philo wrote:

²³ Moore, W. Glenn, “Josephus Confirms Repeating Cycles”, spring 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/josephus_cycles.htm.

XIX. (86) In the next place Moses commands the people to leave the land fallow and untilled every seventh year, for many reasons; first of all, that they may honour the number seven, or each period of days, and months, and years; for every seventh day is sacred, which is called by the Hebrews the sabbath; and the seventh month in every year has the greatest of the festivals allotted to it, so that very naturally the seventh year also has a share of the veneration paid to this number, and receives especial honour.²⁴

Although I have previously cited the above reference, I feel it needs to be reinforced for those who may have missed it the first time. Regrettably, in making his remarks comparing Philo to Josephus, Glenn exhibited a combination of shallow research and over-confidence. Such individuals are prone to thinking so highly of their wisdom that they apparently don't think there is any need to double-check their work. As a result, the gullible will take Glenn at his word. Many will learn to ignore him, as June and I are about to do. Nevertheless, to drive home the point that needs to be made here, Philo was every bit as "emphatic" as Josephus was in comparing the Sabbatical cycle with the weekly cycle ... and yet he understood the Jubilee cycle as consisting of fifty years. Thus, Glenn's attempt to put a spin on Josephus' words gets him nowhere insofar as June and I are concerned, and his attempt to infuse the word *every* into Deuteronomy 15:1 and 31:10-11 underscores why we urge caution when reading Glenn's writings.

Benedict Zuckermann Disagreed With Glenn Moore's Dating of Maccabees Sabbatical Year

Glenn continues with his analysis of Josephus' references to Sabbatical years:

Josephus gives several references to Sabbatical years. In some of those references, we have enough historical and chronological information to determine when exactly each of those years were. Here are some of those references:

Judas Maccabees defeat at Beth-Sura

But Judas, seeing the strength of the enemy, retired to Jerusalem, and prepared to endure a siege. As for Antiochus, he sent part of his army to Bethsura, to besiege it, and with the rest of his army he came against Jerusalem; but the inhabitants of Bethsura were terrified at his strength; and seeing that their provisions grew scarce, they delivered themselves up on the security of oaths that they should suffer no hard treatment from the king. . . . But then their provisions failed them; what fruits of the ground they had laid up were spent and the land being not ploughed that year, continued unsowed, ***because it was the seventh year***, on which, by our laws, we are obliged to let it lay uncultivated. And withal, so many of the besieged ran away for want of necessaries, that but a few only were left in the temple. (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 12, Chapter 9, Section 5)

Here it says that the defeat of Judas Maccabees came at Beth-Sura in a Sabbatical year (seventh year). When did this take place? According to

²⁴ From *The Works of Philo*, "Special Laws, II," by Philo of Alexandria, ch. XIX, sec. 86. This reference may be read online by accessing the following URL:

<http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com/text/philo/book28.html>

Maccabees, it was the 149th year of the Seleucid era (fall of 164 to 163 BCE). Here is the evidence:²⁵

Please understand that Glenn, in the above commentary, is over-confidently throwing around dates. Scholars are by no means in agreement with the dates that Glenn is here promoting. Glenn here states that the Sabbatical year occurred from the fall of 164 to 163 BCE. According to Dr. Ernest Martin of Associates for Scriptural Knowledge, it was from the fall of 163 to 162 BCE:

We are told by 1 Maccabees 6:49 that Judas Maccabee's defeat at Beth-Zur was in a Sabbatical Year. And this can be dated to the Sabbatical Year from the autumn of 163 to autumn 162 B.C.E.²⁶

Not only do other scholars disagree with Glenn's proposed 164-163 B.C.E Sabbatical year, but curiously, so does the man whose dating Glenn is on record as stating as being "correct all along"! The scholar to whom I am referring is Benedict Zuckermann. Notice the following excerpt from *Wikipedia*:

Sabbatical years (shemitot) in the Second Temple period

The first modern treatise devoted to the Sabbatical (and Jubilee) cycles was that of Benedict Zuckermann. Zuckermann insisted that for Sabbatical years after the exile "it is necessary to assume the commencement of a new starting-point, since the laws of Sabbatical years and Jubilees fell into disuse during the Babylonian captivity, when a foreign nation held possession of the land of Canaan... We therefore cannot agree with chronologists who assume an unbroken continuity of septennial Sabbaths and Jubilees." The first instance of a Sabbatical year treated by Zuckermann was Herod the Great's siege of Jerusalem, as described by Josephus. Zuckermann assigned this to 38/37 BCE, i.e. he considered that a Sabbatical year started in Tishri of 38 BCE. Next, he considered John Hyrcanus's siege of Ptolemy in the fortress of Dagon, which is described both in Josephus (Ant. 13.8.1; Wars of the Jews 1.2.4) and 1 Maccabees (16:14-16), and during which a Sabbatical year started; from the chronological information provided in these texts, Zuckermann concluded that 136/135 BCE was a Sabbatical year. The next event to be treated was Antiochus Eupator's siege of the fortress Beth-zur (Ant. 12.9.6, 1 Maccabees 6:53), dated by Zuckermann to 163/162 BCE. However, he also remarked on the difficulties presented to this figure by the text in 1 Maccabees, which would seem to date the siege one year later, and so he decided to leave it out of consideration. The final text considered by Zuckermann was a passage in the Seder Olam that relates the destruction of the Second Temple to a Sabbatical year, an event that is known from secular history to have happened in the summer of 70 CE. Zuckermann interpreted the Seder Olam text as stating that this happened in a year after a Sabbatical year, thus placing a Sabbatical in 68/69 CE.

All these dates as calculated by Zuckermann are separated by an integral multiple of seven years, except for the date associated with the siege of Beth-zur.²⁷

²⁵ Moore, W. Glenn, "Josephus Confirms Repeating Cycles", spring 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/josephus_cycles.htm.

²⁶ This quote was taken from the Associates for Scriptural Knowledge web site, and may be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.askelm.com/star/star020.htm>. Note: My citing this scholar is purely incidental, as I am not familiar with any of his doctrinal stands. It is simply an example illustrating the uncertainty that exists among scholars regarding the dates that Glenn is so certain of. We have seen that over-confidence is one of Glenn's trademarks, so I urge caution when reading any of his writings. This same commentary regarding the dating of that Sabbatical year can also be read by accessing the following URL: <http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/index.php?showtopic=93379&st=113>.

²⁷ From *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, article "Shmita." This article may be read online by accessing the following URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Shmita&oldid=274699901>. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](http://www.wikimedia.org/)

As we can see, the man whose dating methods Glenn Moore trusts the most, Benedict Zuckermann, disagreed with Glenn regarding which year was a Sabbatical year at the time of the Beth-zur siege. Moreover, please notice that Zuckermann, although he dated the Beth-zur siege a year later than Glenn (163-162 B.C.E.), commented that the text of I Maccabees “would seem to date the siege one year later.” If his hunch was correct, this would put the siege *two years* after Glenn’s proposed date. As we can see, the dating process isn’t nearly as easy as Glenn tries to make it out to be. At least the renowned experts had the integrity to express their doubts about their calculations. This is something that Glenn, in his arrogance, will not do.

What is even *more* interesting about the above citation from Benedict Zuckermann is the fact that he expressed the belief that, *before* the exile, and *before* Sabbatical years and Jubilees “fell into disuse,” Judaism reckoned the Jubilee cycle as a 50-year cycle. He wrote, “We therefore cannot agree with chronologists who assume an unbroken continuity of septennial Sabbaths and Jubilees.” Keep in mind that Glenn is a self-proclaimed chronologist who assumes an “unbroken continuity of septennial Sabbaths and Jubilees.” Thus, as it turns out, Zuckermann seems to disagree with Glenn Moore regarding the “unbroken continuity.” If so, he would have agreed with June and me that, in ancient times, Judaism observed a 50-year Jubilee cycle!

We do not currently have access to Zuckermann’s *Treatise on the Sabbatical Cycle and the Jubilee*²⁸, but this one quote in and of itself explains that Zuckermann himself did not regard the Jubilee cycle as consisting of forty-nine years, nor was he as certain of his dating conclusions as Glenn would like to make him out to be. Regardless of Zuckermann’s true position regarding the originally prescribed length of the Jubilee cycle, the point remains that he disagreed with Glenn’s proposed Sabbatical year of 164 – 163 B.C.E. As for me, I’m not taking any official position regarding the dating of the Sabbatical year referenced by Josephus and the author of 1 Maccabees. My only point is this: It isn’t wise to rely on the chronological dating methods of *anyone*, including W. Glenn Moore, for proving or disproving the length of the Jubilee cycle.

We have decided to provide the remainder of Glenn’s commentary (as it appeared on his website on May 24, 2009 under the heading of “Josephus Confirms Repeating Cycles”). As you follow along, you can see for yourself the (over)confidence exhibited by Glenn as he promotes what he terms “solid dates” and “confirmed Sabbatical years.” Upon completing the review of Glenn’s treatise, we would like for you to compare Glenn’s “confirmed Sabbatical year” of 164-163 B.C.E. with the year that Benedict Zuckermann came up with:

A sabbatical year is also mentioned in 1 Maccabees 6:49 which took place at the same time as the battle of Beth-Sura (Maccabees 6:20). Also, Antiochus himself died that very same year (Maccabees 6:16). The siege is dated to the 149th year of the Seleucid Era according to 2 Maccabees 13:1. In 1 Maccabees 6:20 the same siege is declared to have taken place in the 150th year of the Seleucid Era, and that year is declared to have been a Sabbatical year.

In the ***hundred forty and ninth year*** it was told Judas, that Antiochus Eupator was coming with a great power into Judea, (2 Maccabees 13:1)

²⁸ Benedict Zuckermann, *Treatise on the Sabbatical Cycle and the Jubilee*, trans. A Löwy; (New York: Hermon, 1974); originally published as "Ueber Sabbatjahrcyclus und Jobelperiode," in *Jarhesbericht des jüdisch-theologischen Seminars "Fraenckelscher Stiftung"* (Breslau, 1857).

Now when the king had taken a taste of the manliness of the Jews, he went about to take the holds by policy, And marched toward Bethsura, which was a strong hold of the Jews: but he was put to flight, failed, and lost of his men: (2 Maccabees 13:18-19)

The context clearly suggests that the events between verse 1 and verses 18-19 took place in close proximity to each other, that is, in the 149th year of the Seleucid Era.

So king Antiochus died there in the ***hundred forty and ninth year.*** (1 Maccabees 6:16)

So they came together, and besieged them in the ***hundred and fiftieth year,*** and he made mounts for shot against them, and other engines. (1 Maccabees 6:20)

But with them that were in Bethsura he made peace: for they came out of the city, because they had no victuals there to endure the siege, ***it being a year of rest to the land.*** (1 Maccabees 6:49)

This last text identifies that the "year of rest" was in progress at the same time as the siege of Bethsura, which took place (according to 1 Maccabees) in the 150th year of the Seleucid era. The Seleucid Era is given in commemoration of the entry into Babylon by Seleucus (one of Alexander's four generals) in August of 312 BCE. (1 Maccabees 1:10). We know that the author of Maccabees is using that dating system for all of his dates, because he plainly says so in the beginning of his writings:

And there came out of them a wicked root Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king, who had been an hostage at Rome, and he reigned in the hundred and thirty and seventh *year of the kingdom of the Greeks.* (1 Maccabees 1:10)

But now, because of this *apparent* discrepancy, we now have a problem--for both dates (149 SE and 150 SE) are being used to describe the same series of events. If we accept the date 149 SE, it would be the year 164/163 BCE. If we accept the date of 150 SE, it would be the year 163/62 BCE. Indeed, Benedict Zuckermann *himself* (who established with his research what is considered the *standard* position on Sabbatical cycles, called *A treatise on the Sabbatical cycle and the Jubilee*. FYI: a book that can be found at Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas) was so perplexed by this apparent conflict that he chose not to include this event as supportive of his Sabbatical cycles. (Please see the reference to this in the [Wikipedia article Shmita--Sabbatical years \(shemitot\) in the Second Temple period.](#))

What we have to contend with (as we seek to resolve these conflicting dates) is the ***well known fact*** that various cities and states would each use different dating methods to calculate the Seleucid Era. [While we will be talking here about the two most common methods, there would actually be four methods to calculate the Seleucid era.]

According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, the problem with the dating of events between these two books (1st and 2nd Maccabees) is that in one book they are using a spring-to-spring calendar (starting from the month of Nisan), and in the

other book they are using a fall-to-fall calendar (starting from the month of Tishri). Please note what is said in this regard:

The Jews of post-Biblical times adopted the Greek era of the Seleucids. The Greek era . . . dates from the battle of Gaza in the autumn of the year 312 B.C. This was used by the Jews as early as the Book of Maccabees (I Macc. i. 11), though the author of the first Book of Maccabees deals with the year as beginning with Nisan, while in the second book the beginning of the year is placed in Tishri (see the elaborate discussion in Schürer, 'Geschichte,' i. 36-46; and the literature mentioned on p. 46). The Jewish Encyclopedia, under section entitled "Era".

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=438&letter=E>

So how do we reconcile these apparent differences between the account of 1 Maccabees and the account of 2 Maccabees? If one book is using a spring-to-spring calendar for that particular event (1 Maccabees) and the other (2 Maccabees) is using a fall-to-fall calendar, the solution is readily available:

<i>Event</i>	<i>Method of Dating</i>	<i>The Book Using This Method</i>	<i>Seleucid Date</i>	<i>BCE Year Date</i>
Judas Maccabees defeat at Beth-Sura	Fall-to-Fall (Tishri)	2nd Maccabees	149th Seleucid Era	Fall of 164 to 163
	Spring-to-Spring (Nisan)	1st Maccabees	150th Seleucid Era	Spring of 163 to 162

Please notice that the common point of reference in both of these dating methods is the spring of the year 163 BCE. Therefore, the only valid way to really harmonize these two dates is to place the defeat of Judas Maccabees at Beth-Sura in the year 163 BCE. This solution actually makes sense, because in the texts of Maccabees as well as the parallel text of Josephus' *Antiquities*, the people of Beth-Sura surrendered quickly when they were besieged by Antiochus Eupator. Evidently, they surrendered quickly because all of their stores of food had been used up by then, since that year *which was passing* was a Sabbatical year. There is other evidence to support the date for this siege, but we will not go into that lengthy explanation here.

In a fall-to-fall calendar, that would put the Sabbatical year mentioned by both Maccabees and Josephus in the year 164/163 BCE.²⁹

I feel I need to interrupt Glenn's commentary here in order to respond to his conclusion that the year 164-163 BCE could only have been a fall-to-fall calendar. Of course, we address Glenn's position that the originally ordained calendar went from fall-to-fall in Part III of our study, but for now, I would like to demonstrate that *if* the year 164-163 BCE was a Sabbatical Year, it could very easily have been based upon a spring-to-spring calendar. If the book of I Maccabees cites a spring-to-spring calendar that begins in Nisan, there is nothing in that book indicating that the Sabbatical Year didn't begin in the spring of 164 BCE. As that Sabbatical Year was about to end (in the winter of 163 BCE), the Jews had already used up all their stores of food.

Okay, back to Glenn's commentary

²⁹ Moore, W. Glenn, "Josephus Confirms Repeating Cycles", spring 2009, http://www.itsaboutthattime.net/josephus_cycles.htm.

Herod besieged Jerusalem

Now the Jews that were enclosed within the walls of the city fought against Herod with great alacrity and zeal (for the whole nation was gathered together... Now the three bulwarks were easily erected, because so many hands were continually at work upon it; for ***it was summer time***, and there was nothing to hinder them in raising their works. . . they were distressed by famine and the want of necessaries, for ***this happened to be a Sabbatic year***. The first that scaled the walls were twenty chosen men, the next were Sosius's centurions; for the first wall was taken in forty days, and the second in fifteen more... 3. And now Herod having overcome his enemies... 4. This destruction befell the city of Jerusalem when Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus were consuls of Rome on the ***hundred eighty and fifth olympiad***, on the third month, on the solemnity of the fast. . . . (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 14, Chapter 16, Sections 2-4)

. . . nor was there any end of the miseries he brought upon them; and this distress was in part occasioned by the covetousness of the prince regent, who was still in want of more, and ***in part by the Sabbatic year***, which was still going on, and forced the country to lie still uncultivated, since we are forbidden to sow our land in that year. (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 15, Chapter 1, Section 2)

Now one may ask, "How do we really know that this year-date was 37 BCE? Well, let's look more closely at this. Based upon this last statement from Josephus, Herod attacked Jerusalem throughout the spring and summer of what he *clearly* calls a sabbatical year. Here is some other information from Josephus which identifies that year more precisely.

This destruction befell the city of Jerusalem when Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus were consuls of Rome on ***the hundred eighty and fifth olympiad***, on the third month, on the solemnity of the fast, as if a periodical revolution of calamities had returned since that which befell the Jews under Pompey; for the Jews were taken by him on the same day, and this was after twenty-seven years' time. (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 15, Chapter 16, Section 4.)

Pompey put Jerusalem under a siege in 63 BCE, a fairly well known and accurate date. 27 years after this date (counting inclusively) would take us to the year 37 CE. We know, based upon Josephus' other two accounts (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 15, Chapter 5, Section 2; *Wars of the Jews*, Book 1, Chapter 19, Section 3), that the seventh year of Herod's reign was also when the Battle of Actium took place (the summer of 31 BCE). Since we know of another solid date in history (the date of the Battle of Actium), which is also declared to be seven years after Herod took control of Jerusalem (again, counting inclusively), we are able to accurately determine this Sabbatical year.

Olympiads were periods of four-year lengths which marked the Greek games. Historians and chronologists know for a certainty that the 185th Olympiad took place between July of 40 BCE and June of 36 BCE. This 185th Olympiad could not have taken place during the summer of 36 BCE, for halfway through the siege they would have entered into the 186th Olympiad. We know what year Gallus

and Agrippa were both consuls of Rome—that would be the year 63 BCE. Therefore, the ending of the 27 years, by using inclusive reckoning brings us to the year 37 BCE, a year in which Agrippa and Gallus were still consuls of Rome. The “fast” is in reference to the “fast of Tammuz” which took place on the 17th day of the fourth month of the year. (Wikipedia, Seventeenth of Tammuz, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeenth_of_Tammuz) While 36 BCE might still be considered a possibility, it cannot be 36 BCE because that would place it in the eighth year of Herod's reign, not the seventh. Therefore, the Sabbatical year Josephus speaks of can be none other than the fall of 38 to the fall of 37 BCE, for the statement of Josephus also says that “it was summer time,” and this additional clue lets us know it had to be the summer of 37 BCE--near the end of a Sabbatical year (as his description clearly shows).

In a fall-to-fall calendar, that would put the Sabbatical year of Herod's attack against Jerusalem (mentioned by Josephus) in the year 38/37 BCE.

The Battle of Actium

The Battle of Actium took place on September 2, 31 BCE. This date is well established in chronological history (please see the Wikipedia entry for 31 BCE, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/31_BC). According to Josephus, this was the seventh year of Herod's reign.

2. At this time it was that the fight happened at Actium, between Octavius Caesar and Antony, in ***the seventh year of the reign of Herod***⁽⁸⁾ and then it was also that there was an earthquake in Judea, such a one as had not happened at any other time, and which earthquake brought a great destruction upon the cattle in that country.

⁽⁸⁾The reader is here to take notice, that this seventh year of the reign of Herod, and all the other years of his reign, in Josephus, are dated from the death of Antigonus, or at the soonest from the conclusion of Antigonus, ***and the taking of Jerusalem a few months before***, and never from his first obtaining the kingdom at Rome, above three years before, as some have very weakly and injudiciously done. (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 15, Chapter 5, Section 2)

3. In a little time after this calamity, Herod came to bring them succors; but he came too late. Now the occasion of that blow was this, that the officers would not obey orders; for had not the fight begun so suddenly, Athenio had not found a proper season for the snares he laid for Herod: however, he was even with the Arabians afterward, and overran their country, and did them more harm than their single victory could compensate. But as he was avenging himself on his enemies, there fell upon him another providential calamity; ***for in the seventh***⁽²⁹⁾ ***year of his reign***, when the war about Actium was at the height, at the beginning of the spring, the earth was shaken, and destroyed an immense number of cattle, with thirty thousand men; but the army received no harm, because it lay in the open air.

⁽²⁹⁾This seventh year of the reign of Herod [from the conquest or death of Antigonus], with the great earthquake in the beginning of the same spring, which are here fully implied to be not much

before the fight at Actium, between Octavius and Antony, and which is known from the Roman historians to have been in **the beginning of September, in the thirty-first year before the Christian era**, determines the chronology of Josephus as to the reign of Herod, viz. **that he began in the year 37, beyond rational contradiction**. Nor is it quite unworthy of our notice, that this seventh year of the reign of Herod, or the thirty-first before the Christian era, **contained the latter part of a Sabbatic year**, on which Sabbatic year, therefore, it is plain this great earthquake happened in Judea. (Josephus, *War of the Jews*, Book 1, Chapter 19, Section 3)

We have already established that Herod took Jerusalem in a Sabbatical year, therefore the seventh year of his reign overlaps with a Sabbatical year also.

Charting the Sabbatical Years of Josephus

Now let's line all the dates up:

- **163 BCE (likely Spring)**
- **37 BCE (certainly Summer)**
- **31 BCE (certainly Fall)**

1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	Sabbatical Years
						164/163
163	162	161	160	159	158	157/156
156	155	154	153	152	151	150/149
149	148	147	146	145	144	143/142
142	141	140	139	138	137	136/135
135	134	133	132	131	130	129/128
128	127	126	125	124	123	122/121
121	120	119	118	117	116	115/114
114	113	112	111	110	109	108/107
107	106	105	104	103	102	101/100
100	99	98	97	96	95	94/93
93	92	91	90	89	88	87/86
86	85	84	83	82	81	80/79
79	78	77	76	75	74	73/72
72	71	70	69	68	67	66/65
65	64	63	62	61	60	59/58
58	57	56	55	54	53	52/51
51	50	49	48	47	46	45/44
44	43	42	41	40	39	38/37
37	36	35	34	33	32	31/30
30	29	28	27	26	25	24/23

Please notice that the amount of time between 163 BCE and 31 BCE covers 132 years (which is well over 2 Jubilee cycles of 50 years each. **Since these dates are confirmed Sabbatical years**, then there can be no way that Jubilee cycles of 50 years can fit within such a scheme. Therefore, Josephus demonstrates by his chronology that the Jubilee cycles in the Second Temple Era could only consist of continuous 49 year cycles, not 50 year cycles--if, of course, they ever even celebrated Jubilees.

There are other dates which we can confirm, but this is enough to show that Josephus and his chronology establishes continuous 7 and 49 year cycles. But

let's continue the chart beyond that date until the time of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE:

1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	Sabbatical Years
51	50	49	48	47	46	45/44
44	43	42	41	40	39	38/37
37	36	35	34	33	32	31/30
30	29	28	327	26	25	24/23
23	22	21	20	19	18	17/16
16	15	14	13	12	11	10/9
9	8	7	6	5	4	3/2
2	1 BCE	1 CE	2	3	4	5/6
6	7	8	9	10	11	12/13
13	14	15	16	17	18	19/20
20	21	22	23	24	25	26/27
27/28	28	29	30/31	31	32	33/34
34	35	36	37	38	39	40/41
41	42	43	44	45	46	47/48
48	49	50	51	52	53	54/53
55	56	57	58	59	60	61/60
62	63	64	65	66	67	68/69
69/70						

Based upon our knowledge of events during this time, the 15th year of Tiberius (which is the start of Yahushua's ministry) comes in the fall of 27 CE. His ministry is commonly believed to have lasted 3.5 years, which puts the crucifixion in the spring of 31 CE (exactly in the "midst of the week"). And finally, it is well known that the temple was destroyed in 70 CE, in the month of Av (which is the spring). That makes the time of the temples destruction a post-Sabbatical year, beyond question--**based upon Josephus himself, of all people.** And while some may be tempted to think that all of these Sabbatical and Jubilee year alignments are based strictly on Josephus, that is simply not the case (which they will discover when they read the entirety of my research into these issues).³⁰

As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the above commentary amounts to a lengthy display of “dating finesse,” which Glenn believes “seals the deal.” Glenn obviously feels quite certain of the accuracy of the dates (years) that he provides, and anyone glossing through his treatise without a heart to dig a little deeper will probably take Glenn at his word. After all, we can’t travel back in time to ascertain whether or not a certain event occurred in a certain year, so we rely on chronologists to do that for us. Only when we carefully examine the dates offered by expert chronologists do we find that they are in essence offering “best guesses.” We have already seen that chronologist Benedict Zuckermann, unlike Glenn, was uncertain of the dates that he came up with. Glenn insists that the year 164-163 B.C.E. was a Sabbatical Year. Zuckermann came up with 163-162 B.C.E., but actually thought it should be a year *later* (162-161 B.C.E.). *So which year is the correct year?*

Let’s not forget that Zuckermann arbitrarily chose to "to assume the commencement of a new starting-point, since the laws of Sabbatical years and Jubilees fell into disuse during the Babylonian captivity, when a foreign nation held possession of the land of Canaan.” In other words, Zuckermann decided to

³⁰ Ibid.

proceed with a dating method that would automatically *exclude* any consideration of the Jubilee cycle! In fact, he added the following disclaimer:

...We therefore cannot agree with chronologists who assume an unbroken continuity of septennial Sabbaths and Jubilees.

Although I previously mentioned the significance of the above quote from Benedict Zuckermann, it bears repeating because, to this point, Glenn Moore has “pulled all the stops” in presenting Zuckermann as a chronologist who supported his 49-year Jubilee cycle doctrine. Although Glenn has had full access to Zuckermann’s work all along, this is a quote that Glenn deliberately withheld from his reading audience, and for an understandable (though extremely biased) reason: It discredits his position.

Until recently, I had the understanding that Glenn’s favorite chronologist shared Glenn’s belief that the Jubilee cycle consists of forty-nine years. Now, however, I have a better understanding of Benedict Zuckermann’s *modus operandi*: He proceeded with the understanding that since there is no evidence that Judaism observed the Jubilee Year following the return from the Babylonian exile, there was no need to give the Jubilee cycle any consideration when dating various historical events. For this reason, since the presumption was that the Jubilee Year was lost anyway, Judaism began observing a continuously-repeating Sabbatical cycle that would remain uninterrupted by a Jubilee Year until Yahweh “set them straight.”

This understanding is also conveyed by *The Jewish Encyclopedia*:

The opinion of the Geonim and of later authorities generally prevails, that the jubilee, when in force during the period of the First Temple, was intercalated, but that in the time of the Second Temple, when the jubilee was observed only "nominally," it coincided with the seventh Sabbatical year. In post-exilic times the jubilee was entirely ignored, though the strict observance of the shemittah was steadily insisted upon.³¹

Again, to reinforce what the above author is explaining, during pre-exilic times, the Jubilee Year was intercalated (added on), but during the time of the Second Temple it coincided with the seventh Sabbatical year. Even this method is at variance with Glenn’s proposal. Glenn maintains that the Jubilee Year coincides with “Year 1” of the next Jubilee cycle.

In summary, in spite of Glenn’s immense dating exhibition, he proves nothing. If Judaism was skipping the observance of Jubilee Years, *and historians agree that they were*, then we can expect to see Glenn’s “continuously-repeating Sabbatical cycle” repeated over and over and over ... without interruption. Judaism *admits* that this is what was going on, so for Glenn to pretend that Judaism was actually “silently” acknowledging Jubilee years simply reflects yet another example of the liberties that he not only takes with Scripture, but also with historical data.

In citing the *Wikipedia* article “Shmita,” Glenn is careful to *exclude* Benedict Zuckermann’s admissions of uncertainty, and Glenn actually has to go to great pains to exclude a critical portion that outlines the difficulties of basing chronological dating on the writings of Josephus. Let’s take a look at a more complete presentation from this article, which includes a pertinent quote from Zuckermann:

³¹ From JewishEncyclopedia.com, article “Sabbatical Year and Jubilee,” Copyright 2002 . All rights reserved. The article may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL: [.http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=18&letter=S](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=18&letter=S)

Sabbatical years (shemitot) in the Second Temple period

The first modern treatise devoted to the Sabbatical (and Jubilee) cycles was that of Benedict Zuckermann.^[9] Zuckermann insisted that for Sabbatical years after the exile "it is necessary to assume the commencement of a new starting-point, since the laws of Sabbatical years and Jubilees fell into disuse during the Babylonian captivity, when a foreign nation held possession of the land of Canaan... We therefore cannot agree with chronologists who assume an unbroken continuity of septennial Sabbaths and Jubilees."^[10] The first instance of a Sabbatical year treated by Zuckermann was Herod the Great's siege of Jerusalem, as described by Josephus.^[11] Zuckermann assigned this to 38/37 BCE, i.e. he considered that a Sabbatical year started in Tishri of 38 BCE. Next, he considered John Hyrcanus's siege of Ptolemy in the fortress of Dagon, which is described both in Josephus (Ant. 13.8.1; Wars of the Jews 1.2.4) and 1 Maccabees (16:14-16), and during which a Sabbatical year started; from the chronological information provided in these texts, Zuckermann concluded that 136/135 BCE was a Sabbatical year. The next event to be treated was Antiochus Eupator's siege of the fortress Beth-zur (Ant. 12.9.6, 1 Maccabees 6:53), dated by Zuckermann to 163/162 BCE. However, he also remarked on the difficulties presented to this figure by the text in 1 Maccabees, which would seem to date the siege one year later, and so he decided to leave it out of consideration.^[12] The final text considered by Zuckermann was a passage in the Seder Olam that relates the destruction of the Second Temple to a Sabbatical year, an event that is known from secular history to have happened in the summer of 70 CE. Zuckermann interpreted the Seder Olam text as stating that this happened in a year after a Sabbatical year, thus placing a Sabbatical in 68/69 CE.

All these dates as calculated by Zuckermann are separated by an integral multiple of seven years, except for the date associated with the siege of Beth-zur. Furthermore, his chronology is consistent with that accepted by the geonim (medieval Jewish scholars) and the calendar of Sabbatical years used in present-day Israel. All of this would seem to be strong evidence in favor of Zuckermann's scheme. Nevertheless, some problems have been recognized, beyond just the question of the siege of Beth-zur, which was one year too late for Zuckermann's calendar. A consistent problem has been the ambiguity implied in some of the passages, notably of Josephus, where it is not clear, for example, when Josephus started the regnal years of Herod. Therefore many modern scholars have adopted a Sabbatical-year calendar for the Second Temple period that is one year later. Among those who have advocated this adjustment, the most extensive studies in its favor have been those of Ben Zion Wacholder.^[13] Wacholder had access to legal documents from the time of the Bar Kosiba revolt that were not available to Zuckermann. The arguments of Wacholder and others to support the calendar one year later than that of Zuckermann are rather technical and will not be presented here, except for one item to which Zuckermann, Wacholder, and other scholars have given great weight: the testimony of the Seder Olam relating the destruction of the Second Temple to a Sabbatical year.³²

We thus see that the experts understand and admit that there are “problems” regarding reliance on the writings of Josephus when it comes to the precise dating of historical events, and that doesn't include the fact that Judaism wasn't observing the Jubilee cycle anyway! Glenn, however, in exercising his self-proclaimed chronologist status, liberally uses Josephus as his defining source of “Jubilee cycle confirmation.” Although, on the one hand, we have uncovered another example of Glenn's shallow research methods, on the other hand, it is worth emphasizing that Judaism *admits* that, in antiquity, they intercalated the Jubilee Year, but discontinued doing so following their return from the Exile.

³² "Shmita," in *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*; (Wikimedia Foundation Inc., updated March 3, 2009, 15:26 UTC) [encyclopedia on-line]; available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Shmita&oldid=274699901>; Internet; retrieved 18 October 2009.