Timeline for the Life and Times of Jeremiah

721 Northern Israel (10 tribes) dispersed by Shalmaneser (2 Kings 17:3). Sargon I resettles the land of northern Israel (2 Kings 17:24).

701 Sennacherib invades Judah and his army is annihilated (2 Kings 18:13)

697 Manasseh becomes king of Judah

681 Isaiah sawed in two about this time (2 Chron. 33:10; 2 Kings 21:16; Hebrews 11:37)

650 Manasseh taken prisoner to Babylon by Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, because Manasseh joined Shamash-Shum-Ukin’s rebellion (652-648 BC) (2 Chron. 33:11)

648 Manasseh repents and is released to return to Jerusalem (2 Chron. 33:12) Manasseh attempts to reform and rebuild Jerusalem and Judah Manasseh’s son Amon has a son named Josiah. Jeremiah is born (?)

642 Manasseh dies and Amon begins an evil two year reign (2 Kings 21:19-22)

640 Amon is assassinated (2 Chr. 33:24-25; 2 Kings 21:23-26) Eight year old Josiah becomes king (2 Chr. 33:25-34:1-2; 2 Kings 22:1-2) Jeremiah is about eight years old Zephaniah is about eight years old Habakkuk is also a young boy or man

632 Josiah, 16 years old, begins to seek the Lord (2 Chr.34:3) Jeremiah has been growing up in Anathoth with the priests, prophets and the Levites who are the students of the Word

628 Josiah, 20 years old, begins to smash the idols in Judah (2 Chr.34:3-7) Daniel is born around this time

627 Jeremiah is called by God to stand in the office of a prophet to Judah and the nations Nabopolassar rallies the Chaldean tribes against the Assyrians Jeremiah chapters 1, 2, 3 Assyria’s last great king, Ashurbanipal, dies

626 Scythian invaders (from the north) invade Assyria and weaken Ninevah Nabopolassar drives Assyrians out of Babylon

625 Nabopolassar becomes King of Babylon

624 The prophet Zephaniah gives his book. He discusses:
   1) the present Scythian invasions into Judah,
   2) the coming Babylonian destruction, and
   3) the coming of the day of the Lord.
    Medes from the NE defeated the Scythians and began to pressure Assyria
Josiah repairs temple (age 26) (2 Chr.34:8-13; 2 Kings 22:3-7)
The priest Hilkiah finds the book of the Law (Deuteronomy) (2 Chr.34:14-20; 2 Kings 22:8-13)
Jeremiah 3:6-6:30
The prophetess Huldah prophecies for Josiah the same thing as Jeremiah (2 Chr.34:21-32; 2 Kings 22:14-20)
Josiah Renews the Covenant between the Lord and the people of Israel (2 Kings 23:1-3)
Josiah intensifies the purification of the land (2 Kings 23:4-27)
April 14-21 Josiah celebrates the Passover for the first time since the days of the judges (2 Kings 23:22) (2 Chr.35:1-19)

Josiah tries to purify the land

Combined Egyptian-Assyrian army stops Nabopolassar movement to the North and West of Babylon

Medes capture and destroy the Assyrian city of Asshur.
612  Medes and Babylonians combine to conquer Nineveh
The last Assyrian ruler, Ashur-uballit II retreats west into Haran.
Ninevah is destroyed according to Nahum’s prophecy from 663-654 BC
Babylon and King Nabopolassar become the world power

610  Ashur-uballit II (Assyria) and Pharaoh Neco II (Egypt) unsuccessfully defend Haran against Medes and Babylon. Assyria retreats to Carchemish

609  General Nebuchadnezzar (also, crowned prince) strikes the death blow to Assyria at Carchemish. Egypt continued to support Assyria; Judah supported the new Babylonian power Josiah dies slowing down Pharaoh Neco who was trying to pass through the Megiddo Valley to move his troops north to assist the Assyrians against Nebuchadnezzar.
(2 Chr.35:20-27; 2 Kings 23:29-30))
Jeremiah composes laments for Josiah according to 2 Chronicles 35:25, and portions of these are found in Jeremiah 22:10, 13-17
Pharoah Neco drives General Nebuchadnezzar out of Carchemish.
Carchemish becomes an Egyptian stronghold and Egypt controls Syria and Israel.

608  Jehoahaz, 23 years old, becomes king for three evil months. Jehoahaz is Josiah’s middle son.
(2 Chr. 36:1-2)
Jehoahaz goes up to Riblah (on the Onontes River in Syria) to appear before Neco, but is put in chains by Neco because of his and Judah’s pro-Babylon position. He is taken to Egypt never to be released. (2 Kings 23:33-34)
Pharoah Neco places a heavy tax/tribute on Judah (2 Kings 23:35)
Jeremiah is about 40 years old; Daniel is about 20 and Ezekiel is about 14
Jeremiah 22, 26
Citizens of Jerusalem are taxed heavy by Jehoiakim to appease Neco.
607  Jehoiakim opposes Jeremiah
   Egyptian forces battle Babylonian forces near the Euphrates River

606  Habakkuk is written

605  General Nebuchadnezzar moves up the east bank of the Euphrates early in August to surprise
   attack Pharaoh Neco at Carchemish
   General Nebuchadnezzar drives Pharaoh Neco back into Egypt
   Nebuchadnezzar takes control of Syria and Israel (2 Kings 24:1)

August 16 Nebopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar's father, dies.
   Nebuchadnezzar stops pursuing Neco in order to begin a 3 week race 580 miles back to Babylon
   Nebuchadnezzar sets his newly acquired lands in order and takes Jews, Phoenicians, Syrians,
   Egyptians and others captive and send them back to ABabylon with his heavily armed military.
   Daniel (age 23?) is taken captive to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-13; Jeremiah 46:2; 52:28-30)
   King Jehoiakim is also taken to Babylon, but he will return.
   September 7, Nebuchadnezzar has arrived in Babylon and secured the throne
   October 1, King Nebuchadnezzar is back in Syria
Jeremiah chapters 35, 45 (to Baruch), and 46-49 (to the nations)
Jeremiah prophecies to Baruch (ch. 45)
Prophet Uriah flees and is killed (Jer. 26:20)

Jeremiah chapters 25 and 36:1-8
Jeremiah chapters 13-20
Aramean, Moabite, Ammonite, Chaldean raiders invade Judah because of the famine mentioned in Jeremiah 14 and Second Kings 24:2, 3 (and, again in 599):
“The Lord sent Chaldean, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against him. He sent them to destroy Judah, in accordance with the word of the Lord proclaimed by his servants the prophets.”

February, Nebuchadnezzar returns to Babylon
In Babylon Nebuchadnezzar calls for some of his captives (including Daniel) to make an appearance before him (Daniel 1:14-20)
Daniel is placed into the service of Nebuchadnezzar’s palace.
Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of the statue with the head of gold and body of silver, bronze, iron and clay. Daniel interprets the dream (Daniel 2:1-49)
Nebuchadnezzar’s younger brother, Nabu-suma-lisir, rebels against him
Nebuchadnezzar orders that a statue be created and bowed down to, but Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refuse (Daniel 3:1-30)

Egypt and Babylon meet on the Plain of Gaza
Egypt is driven out of Asia, but Babylon suffers heavy losses
Nebuchadnezzar and his troops have to return to Babylon to recover
Jehoiakim sees this as a chance to rebel and stops paying his annual tribute which he had paid three times beginning in 605 BC. (2 Kg 24:1)
Darius the Mede is born.

Nebuchadnezzar stays in Babylon all year rebuilding his military

Due to the void of power in the Middle East (Assyria fallen, Egypt driven back, Babylon retreated) tribal raiders from the east such as Arameans, Ammonites, Moabites and Chaldeans resume raiding Judah.
Second Kings 24:2, 3:
“The Lord sent Chaldean, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against him. He sent them to destroy Judah, in accordance with
the word of the Lord proclaimed by his servants the prophets."

Cyrus is born
December, Nebuchadnezzar marches out to begin collecting his delinquent tributes from all the countries he had taken but who had withheld payment in his absence. He begins in Syria.

598 Jehoiakim is three years delinquent on his Babylonian tribute payment. Nebuchadnezzar is ready to head south into Judah to collect his tribute. Jehoiakim dies on December 7 and due to the eastern raiders his body is thrown over the wall and is not buried since people can't risk going outside the city walls. This fulfills Jeremiah's prophecy to Jehoiakim in Jer.22:18-19. Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin becomes king at age 18 (2 Kings 24:6, 8-9) Jeremiah prophecies to Jehoiachin in Jeremiah 22:20-30

597 February, Nebuchadnezzar arrives in Jerusalem and begins to besiege the city (2 Kings 24:10-16) March 10, Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem
2 Chronicles 36:9-10
2 Kings 24:11-16 – "Nebuchadnezzar removed all the treasures from the temple…and from the royal palace…he carried into exile all Jerusalem: all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans…only the poorest people of the land were left."
Jehoichin is removed as king and Josiah's third son, Zedekiah, becomes king at the age of 21 (2 Kings 24:15-18)
April, Nebuchadnezzar heads back to Babylon with 10,000 more captives which include Ezekiel and Jehoiachin (2 Chron. 36:10; 2 Kings 24:15-17))
Ezekiel is 25 years old
Ezekiel settles in the captives colony on a canal of the Euphrates River called Tel-Abib. Here Ezekiel will work with other captive craftsmen and artisans for the next five years. When Ezekiel is 30 years old in 593 the Lord will appear to him and call him to be a prophet (Ezekiel 1)
Jeremiah 24
Jeremiah writes a letter found in Jeremiah chapter 29 and send it to the recent captives in Babylon

596 Nebuchadnezzar fulfills Jeremiah 49:34-39 when he marches to Carchemish to drive out the Elamite raiders. He drives them down the Tigris River.
Nebuchadnezzar begins a 13 year siege on Tyre He never finishes the siege. Alexander the Great does so in 332 BC. These prophecies are recorded in Ezekiel 26:2-21.

594 Jeremiah 27, 28, 23, 50 and 51
Zedekiah begins to plan a revolt against Nebuchadnezzar along with Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon (Jeremiah 27:3) as described in 2 Chronicles 36:12-14 and 2 Kings 24:20b).
Zedekiah "did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke the word of the Lord. He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him take an oath in God's name." (2 Chron. 36:12-13)
Nationalistic and patriotic conservative prophets are whipping up support for the revolt by generalizing scriptures such as:
- Isaiah 37:21-35
- Psalm 2
- Psalm 20
- Psalm 21
- Psalm 72
August, the prophet Hananiah gives a false prophecy of Jeremiah 28
October, Hananiah is dead according to Jeremiah’s words in Jeremiah 28:16
Nebuchadnezzar sends for Zedekiah to be brought to Babylon to interrogate him concerning the rumors he has heard concerning a Judean revolt.
Burach’s brother, Seraiah, accompanies King Zedekiah to Babylon.
Jeremiah gives Seraiah (Burach’s brother) a scroll that contain prophecies concerning Babylon’s eventual fall. Seraiah is to read these prophecies out loud in Babylon, tie them to a rock and throw them into the Euphrates (Jeremiah 50-51)

593 July 5, Ezekiel sees his first vision and is placed in the office of prophet by God
Ezekiel is 30 years old. Ezekiel has been in Babylon 5 years (along with King Jehoiachin)
Jeremiah is 55 years old
Daniel is 35 years old. Daniel has been in Babylon 12 years

592 Ezekiel 8, 9, 10 – The glory of God leaves the Temple in Jerusalem
Ezekiel 12 – Ezekiel digs through the wall
Ezekiel 13 and 14 – Ezekiel condemns false prophets
Ezekiel 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

591 Ezekiel 20, 21, 22, 23

589 Jeremiah 21
January 10, Ezekiel 24 – Ezekiel sees the boiling kettle and Ezekiel’s wife dies.
Pharaoh Hophra promises Judah and King Zedekiah that Egypt will be there to help Zedekiah’s revolt against Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon.
2 Chronicles 36: 15-17, “The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. But they mocked God’s messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord was aroused against his people and there was no remedy. He brought up against them the king of the Babylonians…”
Zedekiah joins Pharaoh Hophra/Apries, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon in a revolt against Babylon when Pharaoh Hophra/Apries marches north to Tyre and Sidon.

588 January 15, Babylon marches against Judah (Jeremiah 25:3; 2 Kings 25:1) and the siege begins
According to Jeremiah 34:6-7 and a Hebrew ostraca found at Lachish (number IV and ANET, 322)
Nebuchadnezzar first attacked the cities in the Shephelah: Lachish and Azekah.

587 Nebuzaradan begins reigning with Nebuchadnezzar
Nebuzaradan is in charge of the Jerusalem siege
January 12, Ezekiel 29
Egypt comes to Jerusalem’s aid and the Babylonians leave Judah to fight Pharoah Hophra
Jeremiah attempts to leave Jerusalem during the break in the siege to go to the territory of Benjamin to buy some property (Jeremiah 37)
Jeremiah 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 and 37
Jeremiah is put in a vaulted cell in a dungeon (Jeremiah 37:16)
Jeremiah is put in the courtyard by Zedekiah (Jeremiah 37:21)
Jeremiah has a dream of Israel’s pleasant future while he is in the courtyard (Jeremiah 30-31)
Jeremiah buys the field while he is in the courtyard (Jeremiah 32)
Jeremiah promises restoration (Jeremiah 33)
Zedkiah sends for Jeremiah (Jeremiah 21)
Jeremiah is thrown into the cistern (Jeremiah 38:6)
Jeremiah gives Zedekiah final warning and the slaves are released, but taken back (Jeremiah 34)

586 July, there is no food left inside Jerusalem.
July 18, Babylon breaks through the walls. It had been a 2 ½ year siege.
Ezekiel prophecies that Zedekiah will come to Babylon but he will not see Babylon in Ezekiel 12:13.
Jeremiah chapter 39 occurs
Jeremiah 52 occurs
August 14, Nebuzaradan returns to burn Jerusalem.
Jeremiah writes Lamentations
Jeremiah 40:1-6 occur
Nebuzar-Adan finds and releases Jeremiah from chains when he found him at Ramah (Jer. 40:1)
Jeremiah is invited to go to Babylon as a royal guest (Jer. 40:4)
Jeremiah elects to stay in Judah and is given provisions and a gift (money) from King Nebuchadnezzar by Nebuzaradan (Jer. 40:4-6)
Gedaliah is made governor in Judah to represent King Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 40:7-16)
Gedaliah is assassinated by the Ammonites on October 7 (Jer.41:1-8)
Remaining Jews flee to Egypt for safety.
Jeremiah prophecies against the Jews in Egypt and to Egypt itself. He says that Nebuchadnezzar will be back to take Egypt. (Jer. 41:16-42:30)
Psalm 74 is written
Psalm 79 is written
Psalm 94 is written

571 April 26, Ezekiel 29:19, Ezekiel prophecies that Nebuchadnezzar would invade Egypt

570 Ezekiel’s last recorded prophecy at the age of 52
Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of a great tree. Nebuchadnezzar is warned of his pride.

569 Nebuchadnezzar invades Egypt in fulfillment of:
  - Jeremiah 43:8-13
  - Jeremiah 46:13-26
  - Ezekiel 29:19
Jeremiah is not heard from again. His final fate is:
  - Stoned by the Jews in Egypt
  - Dies in Egypt
  - Taken by Nebuchadnezzar back to Babylon after Egypt is conquered.
Jeremiah is 79 years old.
Daniel is 59 years old.
Nebuchadnezzar returns to Babylon after defeating Egypt and utters the fateful words of Daniel 4:28-33:
  “Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?”

569-563 Nebuchadnezzar is in exile and goes insane.
562  August, Nebuchadnezzar repents and glorifies God
Nebuchadnezzar is restored to his throne
September, Nebuchadnezzar dies

561  Evil Merodach, Nebuchadnezzar's son, begins to reign
Evil Merodach releases 55 year old Jehoiachin from a 36 year prison term
on March 22 (2 Kings 25:27-30)

560  If Jeremiah wrote the final verses of his book while in Babylon then he would be 88 years old
Jeremiah 52:31-34 is written closing the book of Jeremiah with the beginning of God’s promise to
restore Israel beginning to blossom

559  Cyrus begins to reign in Persia

556  Nebuchadnezzar’s son-in-law, Nabonidus, begins to reign. Nabonidus had married
Nebuchadnezzar’s daughter Nitocris and they have a son named Belshazzar. (Nitocris will become
the aged queen mother who advises Belshazzar at his drunken feast to call on Daniel to interpret the
writing on the wall in 539)

553  Daniel chapter 7, Daniel’s dream of four beasts
Belshazzar begins reigning for his dad (Nabonidus) because his dad has gone west into Arabia to
gain more land.

551  Daniel chapter 8, Daniel’s vision of a ram and a goat (or, Darius and Alexander from the 300’s BC)

539  Daniel chapter 5, Cyrus overthrows Babylon at Belshazzar’s party.
Daniel 9, 10 and 11

538  Cyrus allows the Jews to return to Judah
Daniel chapter 6, Daniel is thrown into the lion’s den
Daniel is 90 years old
Ezra chapter 1 occurs

536  Rebuilding of the temple begins. Altar is built and the foundation is laid
Daniel’s last recorded year. He dies at about 92 years of age

516  The temple is completed by Zerubbabel

476  Queen Esther is still in Persia
457  Ezra returns and has a revival to the Law and to God
445  Nehemiah returns to rebuild the wall
440  Ezra is written
432  Malachi is written
430  Nehemiah is written
586 BC - Bullae from Jeremiah 38:1 belonging to:
1) Gedaliah son of Pashhur
2) Jehucal son of Shelemiah

A bulla (or, bullae plural) is a piece of clay pressed with an impression from a ring that served as a symbol or signature of an individual, generally only used by royalty or high-ranking officials in government. The small piece of clay would be attached to a rolled up document (scroll) that had been wrapped with a string. The moist clay would be used to seal the scroll and then stamped or pressed with the seal (or, signet ring). The bullae in Jerusalem that were on sealed documents were burned in the fire set to the city by the Babylonians in 586. The clay bullae where baked or “fired” in the heat causing them to be harden which preserved them like small pieces of glazed tile. Once these two bullae were discovered in 2005 and 2008 they still legible after 2,500 years. It would appear that these two officials of Judah’s last king, Zedekiah, had left some “paperwork” on their desk tops or in the royal “files” (archives) that fateful day that Nebuzaradan set fire to the royal palace as described in 2 Kings 25:8 and Jeremiah 52:12 on Aug 14, 586. The scrolls were consumed in the flames, but the small drops of clay with the “signature” of these two men who opposed Jeremiah in the very royal palace where they were found where preserved. They are now on display.

Figure 1 Gedaliah son of Pashhur. The ancient text reads: “Le Gedaliyahu Ben Pashhur”

Figure 2 - Jehucal son of Shelemiah. The ancient text reads: “Le Yehuchal Ben Shelemiyahu Ben Shavi”
Figure 3 - Galyn stands by display of the Gedaliah (L) and Jehucal (R) Bullae

Figure 4 - Biblical text from Jeremiah 38:1

Figure 5 - Gedaliah Bulla discovered in 2008 in the City of David below the palace of David

Figure - Gedaliah Bulla. The bullae measure about 1 cm.
Figure 7 - Jehucal Bulla – discovered in 2005 in the palace of David and the kings of Judah.

Figure 8 - Jehucal Bulla

Figure 9 - Sample of Bullae on a sealed scroll

Figure 10 - Location of the find
Figure 11 - Gedaliah son of Pashhur (left) and Jehucal son of Shelemiah (Right)