

DANIEL UNSEALED



וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי עַד
עֶרֶב בִּקְרֵי אֲלֻפִּים
וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת
וְנִצְדָּק קֹדֶשׁ

—DANIEL 8:14

*Study Edition for Chapters 4 and 7-12
with Notes and Commentary*

DAN BRUCE

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with Notes and Commentary*

Updated, July 2026

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THE PROPHECY SOCIETY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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wisdom and tireless feedback helped shape these pages.*



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OVERVIEW CHART

(located at the end of this book for quick reference)

Reader's Notes

Basic definitions: for terms used in the text of this book ...

- CHRONO-: (*prefix*) derived from the Greek *khronos*, time.
- SPECIFIC: (*adjective*) explicitly set forth, definite.
- PREDICTIVE: (*adjective*) foretelling something in the future.
- PROPHECY: (*noun*) words viewed as revelation of divine will.
- EXEGESIS: (*noun*) a critical explanation of a sacred text.
- EXPOSITION: (*noun*) a detailed explanation of a sacred text.
- INTERPRET: (*verb*) to discern the meaning of a sacred text.
- INTERPRETATION: (*noun*) the meaning of a sacred text.
- COMMENTARY: (*noun*) a systematic discourse on a subject.

Format for dates: Dates for events before October 4, 1582 CE on the Julian calendar are displayed in this book as proleptic Gregorian dates, followed by a BCE or CE era notation. Dates for events after October 15, 1582 CE are displayed as standard Gregorian dates, usually without the CE era notation. Gregorian dates for Hebrew festivals shown throughout this book were generated by using the *Jewish Calendar Conversions in One Step* calendar-conversion utility created by Stephen P. Morse and made available at <www.stevemorse.org>.

Accuracy of dates: Chronological references found in ancient manuscripts do not always reflect a precise moment when an event occurred. However, accuracy in interpreting a chrono-specific biblical prophecy does not require knowing the exact moment of each event. Precision can be determined in two ways: (1) if both the beginning and ending events can be identified and located in relation to the Jewish festivals, or (2) if at least one end event is known, along with the time interval specified in the prophecy, which then allows the other end event to be located in history. In such prophecies, at least two of the three key chronological parameters—starting point, ending point, and time interval—are revealed in the biblical text. Once two are known, the third can be calculated with confidence, allowing for a precise interpretation of the prophecy's fulfillment.

Counting years: Nisan is designated as the first month in the Bible. Passover, which God commanded to be observed as an annual memorial, always happens on the 14th day of that month. As a general rule in calculating the passage of time

in Bible chronology, counting the number of Passovers between two events is the most reliable method for determining how many years have elapsed.

Chronological markers: God commanded all Israelite males to appear before him three times a year (Exodus 23:14–17; Deuteronomy 16:16). After the Temple was built and dedicated, these appearances became mandatory pilgrimages to Jerusalem. During the Babylonian captivity, however, Temple-based pilgrimages and observances were no longer possible, yet they were not forgotten by Daniel. Each festival shows up embedded in one of his prophecies as a time marker, with its most important day represented in somewhat cryptic terms so as to keep the prophecy sealed. Recognizing the role played by the three Jewish pilgrimage festivals and the way they were used by the prophet Daniel as time markers in the text of his chrono-specific prophecies is critical to their interpretation.

PASSOVER AND FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (Pesach/Chag HaMatzot)—A festival period that begins on the 14th of Nisan, with the Passover lamb slain late that day and the meal eaten after sunset at the start of 15 Nisan. It commemorates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on 15 Nisan (Leviticus 23:5–6) following the Passover meal. In Daniel chapter 8, Passover is represented by the phrase “evening-mornings.”

FEAST OF WEEKS (Shavuot/Pentecost)—Observed for fifty days with the count beginning on the day after the Sabbath within the Feast of Unleavened Bread, culminating on the Day of Pentecost. It celebrates the wheat harvest and in Jewish tradition the giving of the Torah (Leviticus 23:15–21). In Daniel chapter 9, the Feast of Weeks is represented by the word “weeks.”

FEAST OF TABERNACLES (Sukkot)—Beginning on the 15th day of the seventh month Tishri, it is observed for seven days, the seventh day being a solemn assembly called the Great Day (Hoshana Rabbah). Prayers for salvation reflecting messianic hope are expressed on the last day (Leviticus 23:34–36). In Daniel chapter 12, the Great Day is represented by the word “day.”

Scripture quotations: The King James Version is used for quotations if not noted otherwise, chosen because, as a public domain document, its use simplifies copyright considerations. Other important factors include its familiarity to both Jewish and Christian readers, the relative consistency in translating Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek into English, and the abundance of study aids and commentaries based on it. Scripture quotations are usually italicized.

Abbreviations

AT	<i>The Apocrypha: an American Translation</i>
Au	Translation or paraphrase by this book's author
b.	Born in (<i>with year</i>), e.g., b. 1922
BCE	Before the Common Era (<i>same as B.C.</i>)
BDB	<i>The Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> , available online in PDF format at <hebrewcollege.edu>
BHS	Denotes Hebrew (Masoretic) text reproduced herein verbatim from the <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> (<i>Leningrad Codex</i>) published by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (German Bible Society)
ca.	Latin <i>circa</i> - about (<i>with year</i>), e.g., ca. 1920
CE	In the Common Era (<i>same as A.D.</i>)
CJB	<i>Complete Jewish Bible</i>
d.	Died in (<i>with year</i>), e.g., d. 1951
ESV	<i>English Standard Version</i>
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
KJV	<i>King James Version</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	<i>New American Standard Bible</i>
NIV	<i>New International Version</i>
NJB	<i>New Jerusalem Bible</i>
NJV	<i>New Jewish Version</i>
NT	New Testament
NTG	Denotes Greek text reproduced verbatim from <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , 26th ed., 1979; corrected, 1981; Erwin Nestle and Kurt Aland, eds., published by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (German Bible Society)
OT	Old Testament
p.	Page or pages (<i>with number or numbers</i>), e.g., p. 62 or p. 62-65
r.	Reigned (<i>with year or years</i>), e.g., r. 519-524
RSV	<i>Revised Standard Version</i>
Strong's	<i>Hebrew Strong's Dictionary</i> (version 2.9), <i>Greek Strong's Dictionary</i> (version 2.6), both included as part of ACCORDANCE 11 software published by OakTree Software
TWOT	<i>Theological Workbook of the Old Testament</i>
UBS	United Bible Societies

KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED

When the first edition of this book was published in 2010, it presented what I believed to be a new and potentially paradigm-shifting exposition of the predictive prophecies in the Book of Daniel. Naturally, I hoped its new approach would receive careful consideration from biblical scholars. That expectation rested on my conviction that its interpretations faithfully reflected both the biblical text and documented history.

As an independent researcher without academic credentials in the field, I nevertheless assumed that my interpretations of Daniel would be met with curiosity and thoughtful evaluation. Early on, one veteran Wycliffe Bible translator encouraged me with these words: “This outstanding exegesis is a book that has yet to be discovered by Jews and Christians alike. There are several authors who claim that their exposition deserves the title ‘Unsealed.’ This one is very likely to remain unsurpassed!”

Over time, however, most responses have focused on defending traditional interpretations originating in the nineteenth century rather than seriously evaluating the interpretations presented in this book. Fair enough. Every new exposition of Bible prophecy must be carefully tested. In practice, however, this work has often been perfunctorily dismissed rather than seriously examined. On the few occasions when it has received professional attention, the engagement has been cursory, treating it more as an uninformed challenge to established opinion than as a possible advance in prophetic understanding.

Yet one fact remains. Thousands of copies of this book have been placed into the hands of scholars, seminary professors, pastors, rabbis, and interested lay people. To date, no one has demonstrated that its interpretations of the Daniel prophecies contradict either Scripture or documented history.

If you detect a measure of frustration in these words, you are not mistaken. My disappointment is not rooted in wounded pride. Rather, it arises from a desire to see the biblical text taken seriously—especially God’s explicit statements concerning the sealing and eventual unsealing of Daniel’s predictive prophecies. Daniel was told that his visions would remain sealed “*until the time of the end*,” when “*knowledge shall be increased*” (Daniel 12:4, 9).

Yet for nearly two thousand years, respected expositors—including Matthew Henry, Albert Barnes, John Nelson Darby, C. I. Scofield, Sir Robert Anderson,

Arno C. Gaebelein, Clarence Larkin, H. A. Ironside, John F. Walvoord, Leon J. Wood, and many others—attempted to explain prophecies that, according to Scripture itself, were still awaiting unsealing for understanding. Each of these men made valuable contributions to biblical study, and I hold them in high regard. Nevertheless, they were attempting to do the impossible. The knowledge necessary for a definitive exposition simply did not yet exist.

This book argues that the increased knowledge that unlocked the Daniel prophecies came through the fulfillment of Daniel 8:13–14. On the third day of the Six-Day War in 1967, Israeli forces regained possession of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount—an event that corresponds precisely with the prophetic words: “*And [the angel] said to me, ‘For 2,300 evenings and mornings [overnights], then the sanctuary shall be victorious [justified, restored to its rightful ownership, cleansed in the KJV]’*” (JPS 1917, author’s notes in brackets).

Before that event occurred, a complete understanding of Daniel 8:13–14 was simply not possible. Even scholars far more learned than I could not have fully explained its meaning because God had determined that the prophecy would remain sealed until its appointed time. Once the prophesied events of history supplied the fulfillment, however, the prophecy could finally be understood.

The ideas presented in this book began taking shape in my mind fifty years ago, in 1973, shortly after I recognized the significance of the events that took place in 1967. Since then, this exposition has been read by thousands of people. Admittedly, responses have varied. Some have found the work thought-provoking. Others have remained cautious. A few secondary points remain open to discussion. Yet no one who has tested these interpretations against both Scripture and history has demonstrated a contradiction with either.

Let me be clear: My purpose in this book is not to persuade you to accept its conclusions simply because I have reached them. My confidence in the interpretations presented here rests on their consistent agreement with Scripture and documented history. Therefore, the only truly fair way to evaluate them is to examine them in that same light. If they are true, they deserve to be believed. If they are not, they deserve to be rejected.

Examine its claims carefully. Compare each interpretation with the biblical text and the historical record. Then ask yourself a simple question: Do these fulfillments correspond precisely to documented history? If your answer is yes, then you have evidence that the predictive prophecies in Daniel, once sealed by God, have now been unsealed by him in his appointed time.

EXPOSITION OF PROPHECIES



The Expositor's Prayer

*"Lord, forgive what is mistaken
and bless what is true."*

— Alfred Edersheim

Principles of Interpretation

On the general understanding of prophecy:

“There are, indeed, difficulties in understanding the meaning of the prophetic writings, but these are either owing to our ignorance of history and of the Scriptures, or because the prophecies are yet unfulfilled. The latter can only be understood when the events foretold in the prophecies have actually been accomplished. The former class of difficulties may be removed in many, if not in all, cases, and the knowledge, sense, and meaning of the prophets may, in a considerable degree, be attained by prayer, reading, meditation, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture.”—adapted from Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1856; Section II, p. 216)

On the centrality of Israel in prophecy:

“The prophecies concerning ancient Israel are the key to the rest. True principles of interpretation in regard to them will aid us in disentangling and illustrating all prophecy together. False principles as to them will most thoroughly perplex and over cloud the whole Word of God.”—adapted from Horatius Bonar, *Prophetical Landmarks* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1847; p. 273)

On the necessity of divine providence:

“Belief in divine providence is the foundation on which an understanding of biblical eschatology must be built. The reality of divine providence is demonstrated by the presence of predictive prophecy in the biblical text that has been exactly fulfilled at a time later than when it was revealed. The efficacy of divine providence is most evident when the history of God’s chosen people Israel is examined in terms of its chrono-prophetic context, which Scripture extends from ancient times down to the present day.”—Dan Bruce (1982)

On the definition of chrono-specific prophecy:

“A chrono-specific prophecy will always have a starting point in time, an ending point in time, and a finite period of time in between, with at least two of those parameters defined by the biblical text. Its fulfillment will match both the biblical text and recorded history exactly. Since chrono-specific prophecies were revealed by God for mankind’s edification, their fulfillments will never be arcane, approximate, incomplete, or unverifiable.”—Dan Bruce (2009)

I, DANIEL, UNDERSTOOD

The Book of Daniel contains some of the most enigmatic words in the Bible. The first half offers devotional narratives—Daniel and his companions exiled in Babylon, their refusal to compromise their faith, the fiery furnace, the handwriting on the wall, and the lion’s den. These stories of fidelity and divine deliverance are rightly beloved. But beginning with chapter 4, and continuing in chapters 7–12, the text assumes an entirely different character. In those chapters, Daniel has recorded visions unlike anything else found in Scripture—seven prophecies that are not only theological or thematic but explicitly chronological.

In this book, they are referred to as “chrono-specific” prophecies, predictive revelations that accurately trace the course of Jewish history across the ages. Their precision makes them extraordinary. Their resistance to interpretation for more than two millennia has made them perplexing. And their recent unsealing makes them relevant for today. The Preface has already set forth the fundamental claim that a definitive understanding of Daniel’s prophecies was impossible prior to what Scripture itself calls “*the time of the end*.” My purpose in this Introduction is not to repeat that argument, but to prepare you for the interpretive journey that follows in this book. To that end, I will explain why Daniel’s prophecies are unique in the biblical canon, why earlier interpreters could not succeed, how the process of unsealing occurred in recent history, how I came to recognize it personally, and finally why these prophecies matter in the present age.

It is important to keep in mind that the prophets of Israel were not mere soothsayers. They did not traffic in vague forecasts or speculative fortune-telling. They were anointed spokesmen for the God of Israel, proclaiming his holiness, his judgment, his mercy, and his sovereignty over the affairs of mankind. Their language was often poetic and symbolic, their temporal horizons stretching from imminent events to distant eschatological hope. Daniel, however, was entrusted with something distinctive. His visions contained numerical sequences, defined intervals, and measured spans of time. They did not simply declare, “In days to come, God will act.” Rather, they specified when—after this many days, an event will occur; after this many seasons, then another. They were precise.

For example, in Daniel 8:14 the angelic messenger specifies “2,300 *evenings and mornings*.” In Daniel 12 the numbers 1,290 and 1,335 are stated. These are not symbolic flourishes. They are precise chronological markers that tie prophecy to

documented history. This precision sets Daniel apart, but it also renders portions of the book difficult to interpret. In Daniel chapter 8 the prophecy that specifies the phrase “2,300 evenings and mornings” cannot be satisfied by relating it to an approximate time span in history. It must correspond exactly, or it fails. Likewise, the figures in Daniel chapter 12 cannot be allegorized without doing violence to the text. They either correspond to real spans of time, or they lose their meaning altogether. For centuries, interpreters struggled with these requirements. Ingenious interpretive schemes abounded, but they never quite fit. Their failure was not due to lack of intellect or devotion. It was due to divine restriction—the meanings of the prophecies were sealed until the appointed time.

A survey of the history of Daniel exposition makes that point abundantly clear. In Jewish tradition, the sages who wrote the Talmud attempted to calculate future events from Daniel’s numbers. Their attempts were tentative, contradictory, and ultimately inconclusive. Among the Church Fathers, Daniel was frequently spiritualized. His numbers were often read as allegories of the church’s struggle against the world (and all-too-often against itself) or as symbolic spans, not as chronological reality. In the medieval and later Reformation eras, scholars often attempted to apply Daniel’s figures to the events of their own time, producing calculations that pointed to imminent end events. Each such end-time prediction was eventually proven incorrect by the continuing passage of time.

In modern Protestant interpretation, numerous commentators have tried to find exactitude in such passages as Daniel 9:24-27 by hypothesizing the notion of a “prophetic year” of 360 days—an artificial construct not found in Scripture and contrary to Genesis 1:14, where a “year” is defined by the Earth’s orbital length of 365¼ days. Others, unable to reconcile the details with known history, have simply consigned fulfillment events to an undefined (and unverifiable) apocalyptic future. A further distortion arose when interpreters shifted the focus of Daniel’s prophecies away from the Jews, to whom the visions are explicitly addressed, and recast them as applicable to the church. These attempts at interpretation were often produced with sincerity and faith, and they provided comfort to generations of readers, especially in times of persecution. But the sheer multiplicity of contradictory interpretations demonstrates the truth of Daniel 12:9, that the words were sequestered from understanding until the appointed time.

Yet the sacred writings made it equally clear that the sealed prophecies would one day be unsealed, allowing their full meaning to be understood at the time of the end. So, does the Bible give any hint about when the predicted “*time of the end*”

will occur? Yes, it does. Scripture points to a series of events that indicate the “*time of the end*” is already underway. With hindsight we can trace the trajectory of its unfolding from event to event, starting with the rise of Zionism in the late nineteenth century, followed by the Balfour Declaration in 1917 expressing British support for a Jewish homeland; the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine in 1922; the unimaginable horrors of the Holocaust during WWII and the post-war influx of Jewish survivors into the Holy Land that resulted; the United Nations partition plan of 1947, giving legal status to the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine; the proclamation of the modern State of Israel in 1948; the Law of Return in 1950; and the climactic return of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to Jewish control in 1967. Taken together, those events constituted a prophetic progression indicating that the appointed time of unsealing had indeed arrived.

While the momentous events of Israel’s rebirth were taking place in the late 1940s, I was still a small boy. I had no comprehension of their prophetic importance, or that one day I would be writing about them. Only years later, in adulthood, did I realize that history was setting the stage for the unsealing of the Daniel prophecies. My spiritual awakening came when God gave me an insatiable hunger for understanding things sacred. During that period, I read the Bible day after day with a clarity of mind I had never before experienced. Again and again I was drawn to the Book of Daniel. Its visions intrigued me, and I could not turn away. They seemed to beckon with the promise of meaning yet unrevealed. I remember nights sitting with the text open, staring at the numbers in Daniel chapter 8 and chapter 12. They were like locked doors in a corridor I was compelled to walk.

My moment of insight came in 1974. While reading an account of the Six-Day War, I encountered a description of the Israeli paratroopers as they captured Old Jerusalem and the Temple Mount on June 7, 1967 (see page 205). I had seen photographs of their tears at the Western Wall, heard the accounts of jubilation. But this time a question struck me with force. Was this the fulfillment of Daniel 8:14: “*For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be victorious*” (JPS 1917). Commentators had been puzzling over this verse for centuries. Some assigned it to Antiochus Epiphanes in the second century BCE. Others pushed it into the future. None could demonstrate an exact fulfillment. Yet here, in 1967, the “*sanctuary*”—the Temple Mount—had indeed been restored to Jewish possession, precisely at the appointed time. My “discovery” seemed radical. Because I did not wish to spread error, I told no one. Instead, I resolved to test the matter quietly against the biblical text and history until I could either confirm or disprove it.

That decision inaugurated decades of research. I had to immerse myself in Jewish history and chronology, and especially in the study of calendars and historical dates. Gradually, the evidence accumulated. The liberation of the Temple Mount was not merely analogous to Daniel 8:14; it was the precise fulfillment. With Daniel 8 unlocked, Daniel 12 began to yield its meaning. The numbers that had seemed opaque now began to fit within the framework of Jewish history. The more I studied, the more consistently the prophecies aligned with documented events. This was not a matter of forcing history to fit a theory. On the contrary, it was a matter of letting the biblical text speak on its own terms, then verifying whether history corresponded. Again and again, the alignment of multiple timelines was exact.

Years turned into decades as I refined my interpretations, tested them against objections, and published them for scrutiny. I welcomed criticism, expecting that if error lurked in my conclusions, others would be quick to point it out. For me, this was more than an academic exercise—it was an exercise in spiritual obedience. As I prayed for understanding, insights came gradually, sometimes unexpectedly. Each discovery illuminated the next until the panorama of Daniel's prophecies stood in full view: a continuous chronology of Jewish history—precise, unbroken, exact. To this day, no critic of my chronology has demonstrated a contradiction with either Scripture or history.

Two guiding principles were ever-present during this process: First, a chrono-specific prophecy must be fulfilled in real time. The numbers given in Scripture correspond to actual spans, not symbolic approximations. Second, fulfillment must correspond to both the biblical text and recorded history without compromise of either. Anything less diminishes the authority of the prophecy. Those principles may appear self-evident, but they are often neglected. They guard against the tendency to over-spiritualize, which renders prophecy vague, and against speculative systems that twist chronology into artificial constructs to conform with tradition. They remind us that prophecy is not designed to confuse but to confirm—that God directs history with perfect accuracy.

This book will guide you through the seven chrono-specific prophecies of Daniel in the order in which I came to understand them, beginning with chapter 8. By following the same sequence, you will be able to retrace my process of discovery. You will see how each prophecy corresponds to identifiable events in Jewish history, from the reign of Solomon to the present era. You will see how the liberation of Jerusalem in 1967 fulfilled Daniel 8 precisely and provided the

interpretive key for understanding the remainder of the sealed prophecies. You will see that these prophecies are not approximations, allegories, or conjectures about future events, but precise predictions of events that have now been verified from history. But, be forewarned! The interpretations offered herein are not traditional. They challenge the assumptions embedded in most commentaries and study Bibles written before 1967. That may be unsettling, but it is necessary. If the prophecies were indeed sealed until the time of the end, as God commanded, then all earlier expositions that don't take into account the recent unsealing, however sincere, must be re-examined in light of the unsealing.

Some may ask, "Why devote so much attention to ancient prophecies in this modern age fraught with immediate challenges—wars, cultural upheavals, personal struggles?" Because their fulfillments demonstrate that the God of the Bible does in fact rule history. He sets the times and seasons, and he brings them to pass with exact precision. When Daniel's numbers align with events in our own time, they bear witness that the God of Israel is still active in human affairs. For the Jewish people, these prophecies testify that their history—including exile and suffering—is part of God's plan, and that their redemption is certain. For Christians, they provide the framework for understanding the unfolding of God's redemptive will for Israel and now the world. For everyone, they are an invitation to worship the God who declares the end from the beginning.

As you read my interpretations of the Daniel prophecies, I invite you to test every claim. Do not accept my word uncritically. Compare the interpretations with the biblical text. Examine their correlation with documented history. Ask whether the fulfillments are exact. If your answer is yes, then you will have seen what earlier generations longed to see, the full meanings of Daniel's prophecies. I have shared a glimpse of my own journey—my awakening, the recognition of 1967 as fulfillment, the decades of testing. Now it is your turn to walk the path. Read carefully. Think critically. Pray for insight. And be open to the possibility that God is speaking through these ancient words to our own day. My hope is that as you read, you will not only gain understanding but be moved to worship the living God who has revealed these things. For he is faithful. He is sovereign. And his plans, formed long ago, are being fulfilled before our eyes.

*"O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you; I will
praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, plans
formed of old, faithful and sure." – ISAIAH 25:1 (ESV)*



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Prophecy being fulfilled for the whole world to see!

On the morning of June 7, 1967, an Israel Defense Forces half track carrying soldiers from the 55th Paratroopers Brigade sped toward the Dome of the Rock atop the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War, fulfilling ancient prophecies recorded in the Book of Daniel. To relive that event as it happened, read “Liberation of the Temple Mount and Western Wall” on page 205.

THEN SHALL THE SANCTUARY BE VICTORIOUS

READ DANIEL 8:1-27 ON PAGE 215 | SEE ❶ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The interpretation of the prophecy recorded in Daniel 8:13-14 is the key to understanding all of the chrono-specific prophecies in the Book of Daniel. Why so? Because that prophecy extends the reach of prophetic fulfillment from ancient times into the modern era, signaling that the promised time when *“knowledge shall be increased”* has arrived. That insight provides the essential chronological foundation for interpreting the remaining chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel—some of which, as later chapters will show, have post-biblical fulfillments as well. In this chapter, however, we will focus entirely on the prophecy in Daniel 8. A correct understanding of its meaning is key. Without it, the rest of Daniel’s predictive timeline cannot be accurately understood.

The prophecy in Daniel chapter 8 has three separate parts, two predictive and one both predictive and interpretive:

THE FIRST PART is comprised of verses 1–12. It presents a vision showing the future of the Jewish people from the standpoint of an observer living in the Achaemenid Persian Empire of Darius III.¹ In the vision, a ram with two horns pushes westward, northward, and southward. As the ram stands by a river, a he-goat with a prominent horn comes from the west, attacks the ram, breaks its two horns, and casts the ram to the ground. The he-goat grows very powerful, but at the height of its strength, its notable horn is broken and replaced by four others. Out of one of those four horns arises a little horn, which grows strong toward the pleasant land. This little horn takes away the daily sacrifice, casts down the sanctuary² and its hosts, and prospers. These events comprise the first part.

THE SECOND PART is comprised of verses 13–14. It contains a prophecy foretelling that the sanctuary² will one day be *“victorious”* (JPS 1917) or *“cleansed”* (KJV), *i.e.*, restored to its rightful ownership; see discussion on page 23.

THE THIRD PART is comprised of verses 15–27. It provides an overview interpretation of the vision. The ram with two horns is identified in verse 20 as the throne of Media and Persia, and the he-goat with the prominent horn is

¹ Darius III Codomannus (r. 336-330 BCE), last king of the Achaemenid Persian Empire.

² The sacred Temple complex on Mount Moriah in what is now Old City Jerusalem.

identified in verse 21 is the first king of Greece.¹ Most Bible expositors agree that the little horn in verse 23 refers to the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes,² and that the “*holy people*” refers to the Jews under his rule. A time of severe oppression is foretold, but this portion of the chapter closes with a reaffirmation that the prophecy given in verses 13–14, the prediction that the sanctuary will be victorious after 2,300 “*evening-mornings*” (JPS 1917) (“*days*” in KJV)³ will surely come to pass. It is the eventual fulfillment of that two-verse prophecy in part two that extends the scope of Daniel’s vision from ancient to modern times.

Interpretive Schemes

Traditional expositors assign the fulfillment event— a victory associated with the sanctuary predicted in verse 14—to the time of Antiochus IV and the Maccabean revolt.⁴ None of them allow for a modern-day fulfillment.

In those expositions that assign fulfillment to the time of Antiochus, two main interpretive schemes are used, and both are employed mainly by conservative expositors who interpret the Bible literally and believe in predictive prophecy. The first postulates that the 2,300 evening-mornings define a period of persecution of the Jews lasting 1,150 days, a calculation based on assuming that the “*evening and morning*” period means 2,300 twice-daily sacrifices over a period of 1,150 twenty-four-hour days. The second postulates that the 2,300 “*evening-morning(s)*” are simply 2,300 normal twenty-four-hour days.

One oft-quoted conservative expositor, Dr. Leon Wood, late professor of Old Testament at Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary for many years, correctly rejected the 1,150-day approach in his commentary on Daniel,⁵ saying:

“The angel’s answer is a definite number of time units called *‘ereb bôqer*, literally, ‘evening-morning.’ Some expositors take the expression to mean 2,300 evenings and mornings totaled together, equaling 1,150 full days. They find supporting evidence in the mention in the immediate context of regular offerings and the fact that the regular

¹ Alexander the Great (r. 336-323 BCE), first king of unified Greece (all Greek city-states).

² Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175-164 BCE), king of the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire.

³ עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר *‘erev boqer* “*evening-morning(s)*”, translated as “*days*” in the KJV and other versions.

⁴ The Maccabees were a priestly family that led a revolt, beginning *circa* 167/166 BCE, against Antiochus IV, who was attempting to replace Judaism with Hellenism.

⁵ Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 1998), p. 217-218.

burnt-offerings came every morning and evening, asserting that the true intent is to designate 2,300 occasions of burnt offerings. The commentary on verse eleven [previously discussed in Wood's book] has shown, however, that all ceremonial observances are in view in the context, not merely the regular offerings."

Wood further dismissed the two-a-day sacrifice approach as follows:

"Moreover, that two half-days are intended by the expression is not likely in view of the order of mention: evening-morning, rather than morning-evening. The order of evening-morning suggests that part of the twenty-four-hour period at which a full day closes and a new one begins—a part which comes only once every twenty-four hours. Twenty-three hundred of these parts would mean the elapse of 2,300 full days."¹

On the other hand, Wood fails to address the most serious flaw in the 1,150-day interpretation, namely, that counting 1,150 days either from the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes on 25 Kislev in the 145th Seleucid year, or from its rededication by Judah Maccabee on 25 Kislev in the 148th Seleucid year—the two dates typically used as starting and ending points—does not result in any identifiable historical event on the other end. Moreover, both the desecration and rededication dates are firmly recorded and verifiable from historical sources.² A straightforward calculation shows that the interval between them is only 1,094 days—not the required 1,150. Therefore, using those two events cannot be accepted as a valid interpretation. The approach inevitably relies on approximating history to fit the prophecy, which is unacceptable when interpreting a chrono-specific predictive text.

¹ Throughout the Bible, the twice-a-day burnt offerings are always referred to in this order, as morning and evening sacrifices (cf. 2 Ki. 16:15, 1 Chr. 16:40, 2 Chr. 2:4, 2 Chr. 13:11, 2 Chr. 31:3, Ezra 3:3), *never* as "evening and morning" sacrifices. On the other hand, in Ex. 27:21 the exact Hebrew phrase עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר *erev boqer* "evening-morning" is used, the only other place that exact construct is recorded in Scripture. In that instance it is used to denote an overnight time period and makes no reference to sacrifices.

² According to Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12:5:4, the desecration of the Temple occurred on the 25th day of Kislev (*1 Maccabees* 1:54 gives the date as the 15th of Kislev) in the 145th year of the Seleucid Empire, which is equivalent to the modern Gregorian date December 13, 167 BCE, and according to Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12:7:6 and *1 Maccabees* 4:52, the rededication of the Temple occurred on the 25th of Kislev in the 148th year of the Seleucid Empire, which is equivalent to December 10, 164 BCE; also, see footnote 2 on page 73.

After reviewing the shortcomings of the 1,150-day approach, Wood then offers his exposition of verse 14 using the 2,300-day approach, as follows:

“How are 2,300 days to be fitted into the history concerned? The answer is that this amount of time was the duration of Antiochus’ period of oppression of the Jews. ***Historical data available are insufficient for a precise reckoning to the very day, but an approximation is definitely possible*** [emphasis added]. The closing point of this period is indicated in the verse to have been the restoration of the Temple. The date when this was accomplished, under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus, was December 25, 165 B.C.,¹ according to Barnes, who refers to Prideaux [Samuel Prideaux Tregelles]. Figuring back from this date 2,300 days brings one to September 6, 171 B.C.; which should be, then, the day when an event occurred that was of sufficient significance to mark it as a beginning of these atrocities, and such an event could easily have occurred on that date.”

Perhaps an event that would have satisfied Wood’s “to the very day” requirement could have occurred. But if it had and had been truly significant with respect to the interpretation of the Daniel 8 prophecy, it would almost certainly have been recorded by some ancient Jewish scribe. Yet no such mention can be found. Wood himself does not appear to be troubled by the uncertainty at the heart of his interpretation, but it cannot simply be dismissed. The lack of historically identifiable events to explain the prophecy means that his 2,300-day approach is no more precise than the 1,150-day interpretation he rightly rejected. Unfortunately, Wood is not alone in his reliance on an interpretive scheme that incorporates an approximation. Nearly all modern conservative expositors base their interpretations on the same or similar approximations.

Another example of an influential conservative expositor using approximation to interpret chapter 8 can be found in the commentary written by the late Dr. John F. Walvoord, long-time president of Dallas Theological Seminary, who offered the following comments for his exposition of the 2,300 days:

“... the best conclusion is that the twenty-three hundred days of Daniel are fulfilled in the period from 171 B.C. and culminated in the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 164 B.C. The period when the sacrifices ceased was the latter part of this longer period. Although

¹ See footnote 2 on page 13 showing that the December 25 date referenced in Leon Wood’s exposition is incorrect.

the evidence available today does not offer fulfillment to the precise day, the twenty-three hundred days, obviously a round number, is relatively accurate [emphasis added] in defining the period when the Jewish religion began to erode under the persecution of Antiochus, and the period as a whole concluded with his death.”¹

Curiously, Walvoord uses the death of Antiochus IV as the endpoint of the prophecy, an event which has nothing to do with the *terminus ad quem*, which is the restoration of the sanctuary stipulated by the biblical text in verse 14. Even more surprising, coming from a biblical literalist, are his comments saying that “relatively accurate” is good enough for understanding biblical prophecy.

More examples of the “approximation exegesis” method used by most expositors to interpret the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel 8 could be given, since there are many. However, the two examples already cited—by Wood and Walvoord—have been highlighted because they are representative of the many well-regarded but ultimately inaccurate interpretive schemes advanced in recent decades by mainly conservative expositors seeking to explain this prophecy. To date, none of these interpretations has successfully met the dual requirement of aligning precisely with both the biblical text and the historical record. In every case, either the time span does not equal 2,300 units, or the chosen starting or ending point fails to correspond with any event in documented history.

As for the interpretive schemes advanced by non-conservative expositors, many of whom hold academic posts in institutions of higher learning, their commentaries typically deny that the Book of Daniel contains any predictive prophecy at all. Rather than examining its predictive elements, they tend to focus exclusively on textual and literary criticism. As a result, their works avoid acknowledging that the chrono-specific prophecies in Scripture might have real, historical fulfillments. Instead, they assert that such passages are merely retrospective accounts—historical events written down after the fact by an unknown author. Almost without exception, these scholars attribute both the events described in chapter 8 and the composition of the book itself to the time of Antiochus IV and the Maccabees, insisting that nothing supernatural is involved. And more than a few expositors, unable to decipher the chronology in chapter 8, simply remain silent on its temporal-historical aspects. That latter approach, while eschatologically unsatisfying, is at least honest.

¹ John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), p.190.

Exact Fulfillment

That brings us to the interpretive approach employed in this book. It rests on the principle of exact fulfillment—a standard that disregards the approximation of history, chronological silence, or outright denial of divine providence that characterize most modern expositions of the Daniel prophecies. This approach can be summed up as follows: The chrono-specific predictive prophecies in Daniel will always have exact, verifiable, and understandable fulfillments located in measurable time and space. Therefore, the interpretation of Daniel chapter 8 presented in this chapter will align precisely with both the biblical text and the historical record.

To be fair, earlier expositors had little choice but to work with approximations or remain silent, because the Bible explicitly stated that the prophecies in Daniel were sealed until the time of the end. But today, that barrier no longer exists. A modern event—the liberation of Old Jerusalem and the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War—was used by God to unseal the prophecy in chapter 8 for our understanding.¹

Once the prophesied victorious restoration of the “sanctuary” had occurred on June 7, 1967, it was possible to identify that event as the fulfillment event described in verse 14. Seven years later, my eyes were opened to the correlation between that modern event and the biblical text. The eschatological significance was immediately clear. It was a thrilling discovery, one that affirmed God’s ongoing providence and faithfulness.

But, I also recognized that announcing a modern fulfillment of an ancient prophecy would face resistance, even among conservative expositors unless it could be shown to rest solidly on Scripture. So I turned to the Bible with a simple but uncompromising premise: the interpretation must match both the biblical text and documented history exactly.² And that is what I found. The keys to understanding the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel 8:13–14 are explained in the section that follows.

Keys to Interpretation

THE FIRST KEY to interpretation of the prophecy in verses 13–14 is to grasp the scope of the question being asked in verse 13, “*How long shall be the vision*

¹ See photograph on page 10 showing the prophecy being fulfilled.

² While comparing my interpretation against those in older commentaries, I found that Adam Clarke, in his *Commentary on the Bible* (1825), had interpreted chapter 8 similarly. Clarke’s calculations failed to take into account that there was no year zero “0” when going from BCE to CE, yielding 1966, not 1967, as the year for the restoration of the sanctuary.

concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?” Most past expositors have misunderstood the question, assuming it is asking only about the duration of the interruption of the daily sacrifices and other transgressions against the Temple. But that is not what is being asked. The question is broader—it refers to the entire span of the vision, not just the desecration by Antiochus IV.

Although no English translation is perfect, the COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE recognizes the intended scope more accurately: “*How long will the events of the vision last—this vision concerning the regular offering and the transgression which is so appalling, that allows the sanctuary and the army to be trampled underfoot?*” That rendering rightly reflects that the question encompasses all the events of the vision, including both the scenes described in verses 1–12 and the trampling of the sanctuary underfoot, which, as we now know from modern history, continued in one form or another from the Babylonian Exile until June 1967.

Once this broader scope is recognized, the starting point for the 2,300 “*evening-morning(s)*” becomes clear. The first definable action event in the vision occurs in verse 6, when the king of Greece moves against the king of Persia. That historical event—known to history as the Battle of Granicus in 334 BCE, when Alexander the Great first attacked the army of Darius III—marks the beginning of the vision’s timeline. Verse 14 then supplies the endpoint, predicting that the sanctuary will be restored after 2,300 “*evening-morning(s)*”. When all the pieces are assembled, the prophecy is saying that the restoration of the sanctuary will come 2,300 units of time after Alexander’s initial battle against the Persian Empire.

THE SECOND KEY to interpreting the prophecy is to identify the unit of time indicated by the Hebrew phrase ‘*erev boqer* עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר (BHS, Strong’s OT: 1242, 6153), literally “*evening-morning*,” as used in verse 14. The King James Version translates this phrase as “*days*,” drawing from similar wording in Genesis 1:5–31—“*the evening and the morning were the [first, second, third, etc.] day*.” Expositors who follow this translation, including the late Leon Wood, have typically interpreted “*evening-morning*” as referring to literal twenty-four-hour days. Yet no one has been able to make this interpretation align with the actual historical record. Other translations render the phrase as “*evenings and morning(s)*,” inserting the conjunction “and” that does not appear in the best Hebrew manuscripts. This has led to an alternate interpretation, that the 2,300 “*evening-morning(s)*” refer to the twice-daily sacrifices, giving a total span of 1,150 days during which the sacrifices were interrupted between the desecration

of the Temple by Antiochus IV in 167 BCE and its rededication by the Maccabees in 164 BCE. But none of the proponents of the 1,150-day approach have been able to make their expositions correspond to documented events.

Since the 2,300-day and the 1,150-day interpretive approaches have yielded only approximations as interpretations, I reasoned that a different approach was needed. Having had my eyes opened to the possibility that the ending event of the prophecy had occurred with the liberation of Old Jerusalem and the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War in 1967, and now understanding that the starting event had occurred when Alexander the Great defeated the Persian army of king Darius III for the first time, in 334 BCE, I did a quick calculation that revealed the interval between the two events to be essentially 2,300 years. Thus, I assumed that an “evening-morning” in verse 14 had to be equivalent to a year in actual time in some way. But, considering the two Hebrew words used, how could that be?

Scripture provides the answer. In Exodus 27:21, the Hebrew phrase (עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר *‘erev boqer* “evening-morning”) is used to designate an evening-until-morning time span, or, in other words, a night. But what night is associated with a year in Israel’s history? That question is answered in Exodus 12:6-10, 14: “*And ye shall keep [the Paschal lamb] up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it **in the evening**. ... And they shall eat the flesh **in that night**, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. ... And ye shall let nothing of it remain **until the morning**; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire ... And this day shall be unto you **for a memorial**; and ye shall keep it as [an annual] feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.*”

Passover, the annual memorial festival of the Jews, is defined as an evening-until-morning event (an overnight), commanded by God to be observed once a year. Thus, “evening-morning” does not represent a 24-hour day, nor does it have anything to do with the morning and evening sacrifices, but instead in this prophecy it means a night. More specifically, it means the Passover night, the annual reminder of God’s redemption of Israel from Egypt. So, 2,300 “evening-mornings” in the prophecy represents 2,300 Passover nights in history.

THE THIRD KEY to interpreting the prophecy is understanding how to count the 2,300 Passovers that define the time span in verse 14—specifically, knowing when to begin and when to end the count. The initial Passover must occur after the first action event in the prophecy, the Battle of Granicus specified in verse 6 (see Diagram 1.1 on the next page). That battle marked the first time

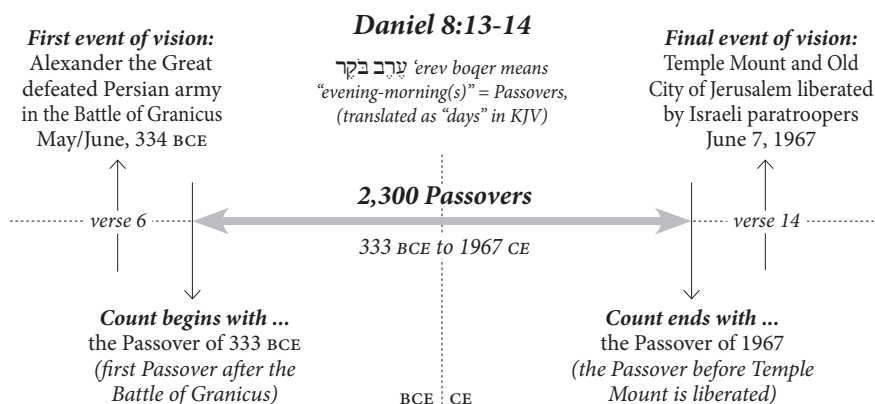


Diagram 1.1 – The 2,300 Passovers

Alexander the Great engaged an army of Darius III of Persia. While no exact date is preserved, Plutarch of Chaeronea¹ records that the battle took place in the Macedonian month of Daesius in 334 BCE. That places it in late May or early June. Since Passover was observed in late March that year, it occurred before the battle. Thus, the next Passover—the one celebrated in 333 BCE—is the earliest that qualifies as the starting point for the 2,300-Passover count. Equally important is identifying the endpoint. The count must conclude before the liberation of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount by Israeli forces on June 7, 1967. That means the 2,300th Passover must have occurred in 1967—and it did, on April 25.

Was the total number of Passovers between the spring of 333 BCE and the spring of 1967 precisely 2,300? There was only one way to find out: by counting them. So I did, and you can count them, too, as follows:

¹ Plutarch of Chaeronea, *Life of Alexander* (section 16, verses 1-3): "In the meantime, Darius' captains, having collected large forces, were encamped on the further bank of the river Granicus, and it was necessary to fight, as it were, in the gate of Asia for an entrance into it. The depth of the river, with the unevenness and difficult ascent of the opposite bank, which was to be gained by main force, was apprehended by most, and some pronounced it an improper time to engage, because it was unusual for the kings of Macedonia to march with their forces in the month called Daesius. But Alexander broke through these scruples, telling them they should call it a second Artemisius. And when Parmenion advised him not to attempt anything that day, because it was late, he told him that he should disgrace the Hellespont, should he fear the Granicus" ... translated by Mr. Evelyn for John Dryden's *Plutarch's Lives by Several Hands*, published in 1683.

Table 1.1, displayed on the opposite page, lists all 2,300 Passovers (“*evening-morning(s)*”) and shows how they are to be counted. Included in the count are every Passover that occurred after Alexander the Great moved against Persia at the Battle of Granicus in 334 BCE, and before Israeli paratroopers liberated Jerusalem and the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War in 1967. The count begins with the Passover of 333 BCE—the first one to occur after Granicus—and ends with the Passover which fell on April 25, 1967, immediately preceding the war,

Each Passover in the table is labeled “P-#” (where “#” represents its number in the sequence), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year. The first ten Passovers (P-1 through P-10) are shown on the top line; subsequent entries appear in ten-year increments to make manual verification easy. Readers are encouraged to verify the total for themselves. When completed, the count confirms that exactly 2,300 Passovers occurred between the vision’s starting event in verse 6 and its concluding event in verse 14—thus meeting the required exactitude for being accepted as a precise interpretation of the Daniel 8 prophecy.

Moreover, the historical dates for both the starting and ending events—the Battle of Granicus and the liberation of the Temple Mount—are firmly established in and can be easily verified from the historical record. This marks a significant improvement over the traditional interpretations discussed earlier, which consistently fail to identify one or both endpoints in documented history and therefore do not offer the precise fulfillment required to be a valid interpretation of Daniel 8. In contrast to such “approximation exegesis,” the interpretation presented herein aligns exactly with the prophecy’s timeline.

It is also worth noting that the precise agreement between Daniel 8:13–14 and documented history provides compelling evidence for the reality of supernatural predictive prophecy and the providential shepherding of history by God. That premise forms the foundation for everything that follows in this book.

Fulfillment in History

The chrono-specific predictive prophecy in Daniel 8 spans more than 2,300 years of Jewish history. It begins in verse 6 with the remarkably accurate prediction that Alexander the Great, first king of Greece, would defeat Darius III, the last king of Persia, in battle—a prophecy revealed more than two centuries before its fulfillment. In 334 BCE, after crossing the Hellespont into Asia, Alexander’s disciplined foot soldiers and cavalry clashed with the Persian forces near the

Table 1.1 – How to Count the 2,300 Passovers

P-1 333 BCE	P-2 332 BCE	P-3 331 BCE	P-4 330 BCE	P-5 329 BCE	P-6 328 BCE	P-7 327 BCE	P-8 326 BCE	P-9 325 BCE	P-10 324 BCE
P-10 see above	P-20 314 BCE	P-30 304 BCE	P-40 294 BCE	P-50 284 BCE	P-60 274 BCE	P-70 264 BCE	P-80 254 BCE	P-90 244 BCE	P-100 234 BCE
P-110 224 BCE	P-120 214 BCE	P-130 204 BCE	P-140 194 BCE	P-150 184 BCE	P-160 174 BCE	P-170 164 BCE	P-180 154 BCE	P-190 144 BCE	P-200 134 BCE
P-210 124 BCE	P-220 114 BCE	P-230 104 BCE	P-240 94 BCE	P-250 84 BCE	P-260 74 BCE	P-270 64 BCE	P-280 54 BCE	P-290 44 BCE	P-300 34 BCE
P-310 24 BCE	P-320 14 BCE	P-330 4 BCE	P-340 7 CE	P-350 17 CE	P-360 27 CE	P-370 37 CE	P-380 47 CE	P-390 57 CE	P-400 67 CE
P-410 77 CE	P-420 87 CE	P-430 97 CE	P-440 107 CE	P-450 117 CE	P-460 127 CE	P-470 137 CE	P-480 147 CE	P-490 157 CE	P-500 167 CE
P-510 177 CE	P-520 187 CE	P-530 197 CE	P-540 207 CE	P-550 217 CE	P-560 227 CE	P-570 237 CE	P-580 247 CE	P-590 257 CE	P-600 267 CE
P-610 277 CE	P-620 287 CE	P-630 297 CE	P-640 307 CE	P-650 317 CE	P-660 327 CE	P-670 337 CE	P-680 347 CE	P-690 357 CE	P-700 367 CE
P-710 377 CE	P-720 387 CE	P-730 397 CE	P-740 407 CE	P-750 417 CE	P-760 427 CE	P-770 437 CE	P-780 447 CE	P-790 457 CE	P-800 467 CE
P-810 477 CE	P-820 487 CE	P-830 497 CE	P-840 507 CE	P-850 517 CE	P-860 527 CE	P-870 537 CE	P-880 547 CE	P-890 557 CE	P-900 567 CE
P-910 577 CE	P-920 587 CE	P-930 597 CE	P-940 607 CE	P-950 617 CE	P-960 627 CE	P-970 637 CE	P-980 647 CE	P-990 657 CE	P-1000 667 CE
P-1010 677 CE	P-1020 687 CE	P-1030 697 CE	P-1040 707 CE	P-1050 717 CE	P-1060 727 CE	P-1070 737 CE	P-1080 747 CE	P-1090 757 CE	P-1100 767 CE
P-1110 777 CE	P-1120 787 CE	P-1130 797 CE	P-1140 807 CE	P-1150 817 CE	P-1160 827 CE	P-1170 837 CE	P-1180 847 CE	P-1190 857 CE	P-1200 867 CE
P-1210 877 CE	P-1220 887 CE	P-1230 897 CE	P-1240 907 CE	P-1250 917 CE	P-1260 927 CE	P-1270 937 CE	P-1280 947 CE	P-1290 957 CE	P-1300 967 CE
P-1310 977 CE	P-1320 987 CE	P-1330 997 CE	P-1340 1007 CE	P-1350 1017 CE	P-1360 1027 CE	P-1370 1037 CE	P-1380 1047 CE	P-1390 1057 CE	P-1400 1067 CE
P-1410 1077 CE	P-1420 1087 CE	P-1430 1097 CE	P-1440 1107 CE	P-1450 1117 CE	P-1460 1127 CE	P-1470 1137 CE	P-1480 1147 CE	P-1490 1157 CE	P-1500 1167 CE
P-1510 1177 CE	P-1520 1187 CE	P-1530 1197 CE	P-1540 1207 CE	P-1550 1217 CE	P-1560 1227 CE	P-1570 1237 CE	P-1580 1247 CE	P-1590 1257 CE	P-1600 1267 CE
P-1610 1277 CE	P-1620 1287 CE	P-1630 1297 CE	P-1640 1307 CE	P-1650 1317 CE	P-1660 1327 CE	P-1670 1337 CE	P-1680 1347 CE	P-1690 1357 CE	P-1700 1367 CE
P-1710 1377 CE	P-1720 1387 CE	P-1730 1397 CE	P-1740 1407 CE	P-1750 1417 CE	P-1760 1427 CE	P-1770 1437 CE	P-1780 1447 CE	P-1790 1457 CE	P-1800 1467 CE
P-1810 1477 CE	P-1820 1487 CE	P-1830 1497 CE	P-1840 1507 CE	P-1850 1517 CE	P-1860 1527 CE	P-1870 1537 CE	P-1880 1547 CE	P-1890 1557 CE	P-1900 1567 CE
P-1910 1577 CE	P-1920 1587 CE	P-1930 1597 CE	P-1940 1607 CE	P-1950 1617 CE	P-1960 1627 CE	P-1970 1637 CE	P-1980 1647 CE	P-1990 1657 CE	P-2000 1667 CE
P-2010 1677 CE	P-2020 1687 CE	P-2030 1697 CE	P-2040 1707 CE	P-2050 1717 CE	P-2060 1727 CE	P-2070 1737 CE	P-2080 1747 CE	P-2090 1757 CE	P-2100 1767 CE
P-2110 1777 CE	P-2120 1787 CE	P-2130 1797 CE	P-2140 1807 CE	P-2150 1817 CE	P-2160 1827 CE	P-2170 1837 CE	P-2180 1847 CE	P-2190 1857 CE	P-2200 1867 CE
P-2210 1877 CE	P-2220 1887 CE	P-2230 1897 CE	P-2240 1907 CE	P-2250 1917 CE	P-2260 1927 CE	P-2270 1937 CE	P-2280 1947 CE	P-2290 1957 CE	P-2300 1967 CE

Note that there was no year “0” (zero) when going from BCE to CE, so the count in the transition decade from 4 BCE to 7 CE is determined as follows: Passover number 330 in the count (P-330 above) occurred in the year 4 BCE, P-331 in 3 BCE, P-332 in 2 BCE, P-333 in 1 BCE, P-334 in 1 CE, P-335 in 2 CE, P-336 in 3 CE, P-337 in 4 CE, P-338 in 5 CE, P-339 in 6 CE, P-340 in 7 CE.

ancient ruins of Troy in modern-day Turkey. The battle took place on the banks of a river (the Granicus) as verse 6 had predicted it would. Alexander's outnumbered Greek forces won a decisive victory over the larger Persian army of Darius III. That victory was followed by two more victories, one in the Battle of Issus in 333 BCE and another in the climactic Battle of Gaugamela in 331 BCE, which effectively ended the Achaemenid Persian Empire. However, from a biblical standpoint, it is the Battle of Granicus in 334 BCE that marks the beginning of the prophetic timeline in Daniel 8. It was this initial clash that set in motion the long conflict between Hellenism and Judaism, a struggle that would shape the history of the Jewish people for centuries to come.

As previously demonstrated, the count of Passovers stipulated in the Daniel chapter 8 prophecy ended after exactly 2,300 Passovers had been observed in Jerusalem, the final one occurring on April 25, 1967. The Six-Day War began shortly after that 2,300th Passover was observed. In the morning hours of June 7, 1967, soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces 55th Paratroopers Brigade were poised on the Mount of Olives, ready to fight their way through the Lion's Gate into the Old City. Their commander, Colonel Mordechai "Motta" Gur, exhorted them with these words: "Soon we will enter the city, the Old City of Jerusalem, about which countless generations of Jews have dreamed, to which all living Jews aspire. To our brigade has been granted the privilege of being the first to enter it ... Now, on, on to the gate!"¹ Within the hour, the soldiers had captured the walled Old City and liberated the secured the Temple Mount. Five days later, on June 12, the men of Brigade 55 assembled in parade formation atop the Temple Mount to commemorate their victory and honor their fallen comrades. They were again addressed by Colonel Gur, who told them: "You have been privileged to restore to the people of Israel their capital and their sanctuary."²

There is no historical evidence that Alexander the Great understood the biblical significance of the role he played in Hebrew prophecy aside from the possibly fabricated account in Josephus (*Antiquities* 11:8:5 Whiston).

"When asked by one of his generals why he welcomed this group [the high priest and his entourage], Alexander replied: 'I did not adore him, but that God who hath honoured him with his high priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this

¹ Mordechai Gur, *The Battle for Jerusalem* (New York, New York: Popular Library, 1974), p. 354.

² Amos Alon, *Jerusalem: City of Mirrors* (London, England: Flamingo, 1996), p. 91.

very habit [garment], when I was at Dios in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians; whence it is, that having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering that vision, and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under the divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius [III], and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind.”

Likewise, there is no indication from subsequent interviews and books that Colonel “Motta” Gur or his troops recognized the exegetical importance of their heroic deeds during the battle for Jerusalem. They clearly understood the national and historical weight of what they had done, but perhaps not that their actions were the literal fulfillment of a specific biblical prophecy. They were not alone in that respect. At the time, no one, whether religious leader or biblical scholar, Christian or Jewish, appears to have recognized the end-time biblical significance of the return of Jerusalem’s Old City and Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty. Nevertheless, Gur and his men had carried out the prophesied fulfillment of the prophecy set forth in Daniel chapter 8.

Restoration of the Sanctuary

So, now that the prophecy in Daniel chapter 8 is shown to have been fulfilled exactly by the return of the “*sanctuary*” to Jewish sovereignty during the Six-Day War in 1967, what are we to make of that restoration? In Daniel 8:14, the Hebrew word מְצִדָּה (BHS, Strong’s OT: 6663 *tsadaq*) has been translated in a variety of ways, reflecting differing views on the meaning of the sanctuary’s restoration. The 1917 JPS edition of the *Tanakh* translates it as “*shall be victorious*.” The King James Version renders the word as “*cleansed*,” a choice followed by the ASV, though the latter includes a footnote clarifying that the Hebrew word *tsadaq* means “*justified*.” Modern translations are equally diverse:

- “*Properly restored*” (NASB)
- “*Restored to its rightful state*” (ESV, CJB, RSV)
- “*Reconsecrated*” (NIV)
- “*Have its rights restored*” (NJB)
- “*The sanctuary will be justified*.” (UBS Handbook)

Taking all of the above interpretations into account, and viewing them in light of the 1967 fulfillment specified in the prophecy, it is reasonable to conclude that the Hebrew word *tsadaq* in Daniel 8:14 refers, at the very least, to the return of the Temple Mount to Jewish possession in a providential and thus authoritative sense. Some critics have argued that the sacred platform area has not been fully restored to Jewish control, noting that no new Temple has been constructed and that individuals or groups of non-Muslim faiths are not permitted to openly pray on the platform without risking provocation, including possible riots by radicalized Islamic factions. That observation is accurate.

On the other hand, it must be emphasized that the “evening-morning” prophecy in Daniel 8 does not state that a new Temple will be built or that Jewish worship would immediately resume. It simply declares that the sanctuary would be “justified”—that is, returned to the possession and rightful stewardship of its God-ordained caretakers, the Jewish people. And that is precisely what occurred in 1967 and continues to this day.

Following Israel’s capture of the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War, the Israeli government quickly declared sovereignty over the site as part of its unified capital, Jerusalem. This claim was later codified by the Knesset (parliament) in the 1980 “Basic Law: Jerusalem, Capital of Israel,” which affirmed that the entire city, including the Temple Mount, constitutes the nation’s capital. Although day-to-day administrative oversight of the Mount was entrusted to the Islamic Waqf—a religious trust supported by Jordan and recognized by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority as custodian of Muslim holy sites today—the underlying political authority resides with the State of Israel. Since June 7, 1967, the Temple Mount has been under Israel’s exclusive sovereignty, and it is the Israeli government alone that determines who has access to the site.

Ultimately, the Jewish people in Israel are the ones who will determine the future status of the Temple Mount. In that sense—and in full harmony with both the prophetic text and the documented historical record—the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel 8 has been fulfilled. Yet the fulfillment is not the end of the story. It was not an isolated event. Rather, it marked an eschatological turning point in a larger divine plan—one that has been unfolding in history since that day in 1967 and will no doubt continue to do so in the years ahead.

Sovereignty over Jerusalem through history ...

David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites *circa* 1,038 BCE, making it Israel's capital. Solomon dedicated the First Temple there. Nebuchadnezzar II destroyed it in 586 BCE and exiled the Jews to Babylon. Cyrus the Great permitted their return to build the Second Temple. Hellenistic and Hasmonean eras followed, then Rome, which razed Herod's Temple in 70 CE. Hadrian changed the city's name to *Aelia Capitolina* in 135 BCE. Byzantine rule followed, then gave way to early Islamic caliphates, Crusaders, Ayyubids, Mamluks, and Ottomans. Britain administered it under the Mandate from 1920–1948. Palestine was partitioned by the U.N. in 1947. Israel declared independence in May 1948, but controlled only West Jerusalem while Jordan held the Old City. In 1967, Israel captured East Jerusalem and unified the city. Today, Jerusalem serves as Israel's capital and the spiritual center for world Jewry.

Jebusites until 1,038 BCE	Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: 1099-1187 CE
Kingdom of Israel: 1,038-961 BCE	Ayyubid Caliphate: 1187-1229 CE
Kingdom of Judah: 961-597 BCE	Sixth Crusaders-Moslems: 1229-1244 CE
Neo-Babylonian Empire: 597-539 BCE	Tatars-Egyptians-Ayyubids: 1244-1260 CE
Achaemenid Persian Empire: 539-333 BCE	Mongol Empire: April 1260 CE (disputed)
Empire of Alexander the Great: 333-312 BCE	Mamluk Sultinate: 1260-1517 CE
Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt: 312-198 BCE	Ottoman Empire: 1517-1625 CE
Seleucid Empire: 198-164 BCE	Mohammed ibn Faroukh: 1625-1627 CE
Hasmoneans-Kingdom of Israel: 164-63 BCE	Ottoman Empire: 1627-1703 CE
Roman Ethnarchy of Judea: 63-40 BCE	Naqib al-ashraf: 1703-1705 CE
Arsacid Parthian Empire: 40-37 BCE	Ottoman Empire: 1705-1825 CE
Roman Empire: 37 BCE-66 CE	Jerusalemite Moslems: 1825-1826 CE
Jewish rebels: 66-70 CE	Ottoman Empire: 1826-1831 CE
Roman-Byzantine Empire: 70 -614 CE	Egyptians-Mohammed Ali: 1831-1840 CE
Sassanid Persian Empire: 614-628 CE	Ottoman Empire: 1840-1917 CE
Byzantine Empire: 628-638 CE	British Empire: 1917-1948 CE
Umayyad-Abbasid Caliphate: 638-973 CE	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: 1948-1967 CE
Fatimids-Seljuks-Arab Bedouins: 973-1099 CE	State of Israel: 1967 CE to present

Above list partially based on data from Jerusalem Besieged by Eric H. Cline (U. of Mich. Press: Ann Arbor, 2004)

Historical events described in Daniel chapter 8 from the Fall of Babylon to the Six-Day War

- 559 BCE — Achaemenid Empire began with reign of Cyrus the Great.
- 551 BCE — (*verse 1*) The vision recorded in Daniel chapter 8, was revealed to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar, co-regent and eldest son of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon.
- 539 BCE — (*verses 3, 4*) Cyrus the Great captured Babylon; Achaemenid Persian Empire expanded for the next two-hundred years.
- 336 BCE — (*verse 20*) Darius III Codomannus became king of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, (*verse 21*) Alexander of Macedon became first king of a united Greece.
- 334 BCE — Passover was observed on April 9.
(*verses 5, 6*) Battle of Granicus: Alexander the Great, king of united Greece, defeated the army of Darius III of Persia for the first time in battle at the Granicus River (May/June).
- 333 BCE — (*verse 14*) Passover #1 in the count was observed on April 14.
Battle of Issus: Alexander the Great defeated the army of Darius III for the second time at the Issus River on November 5.
- 331 BCE — Battle of Gaugamela: Alexander the Great defeated the army of Darius III for the third and final time at Gaugamela on October 1.
- 175 BCE — (*verses 9, 23*) Antiochus IV Epiphanes became king of the Seleucid Empire, Hellenism was made the official religion of Judea.
- 167 BCE — (*verses 10-12, 24, 25a*) Antiochus IV Epiphanes banned Judaism, desecrated the Temple by erecting a pagan altar on the sacred altar and placing statue of Zeus atop the new altar, stopped daily sacrifices on December 13; revolt led by the Maccabees began as a result.
- 164 BCE — Judah Maccabee captured Jerusalem, rededicated the Temple and consecrated a new sacred altar on December 10 (not on December 25 as some expositors claim), began offering the daily sacrifices again.
- 163 BCE — (*verse 25b*) Antiochus IV Epiphanes died in January.
- 1967 CE — (*verse 14*) Passover #2,300 in the count was observed on April 25.
Israeli army paratroopers liberated the Temple Mount and restored it to Jewish sovereignty on June 7 during the Six-Day War.

WHAT SHALL BE THE END OF THESE THINGS?

READ DANIEL 12:8-12 ON PAGE 222 | SEE ❷ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The liberation of Old Jerusalem and the Temple Mount by Israel during the Six-Day War marked the fulfillment of the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel chapter 8. That singular event unsealed the prophecy and confirmed that the long-anticipated “*time of the end*” had finally arrived. It also demonstrated that Bible prophecy was not confined to ancient times, but extended with precision and relevance into the modern era. For me, understanding that development was both a breakthrough and a personal spiritual awakening. With the recent arrival of the time of the end now evident, and with confidence gained from correctly interpreting the prophecy in Daniel 8, I turned my attention to the other chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel. If one had been unsealed, perhaps all of them had been, and were now waiting to be understood. But, where to begin?

Without a clear answer to that question, I began a systematic review of the remaining chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel, searching for a clue that might help unlock their meaning. Though my initial efforts yielded no clear breakthroughs¹, one passage began to draw my attention, that being the final prophecy recorded at the end of Daniel chapter 12, in verses 8-12. Its unique combination of chronological precision and deliberate ambiguity stood out.

That passage reads: “*And I heard, but I understood not. Then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.*”

Because this prophecy was explicitly said to remain sealed until the “*time of the end*,” and since that period had now begun with the liberation of the Temple

¹ This period of searching actually spanned more than a decade, with final understanding of the prophecy in Daniel chapter 12 coming almost two decades after the interpretation of Daniel chapter 8 discussed in Chapter One of this book.

Mount in 1967, the juxtaposition of Daniel 12 with modern events in Israel provided the key that would initiate its unsealing. The interpretive keys to this final prophecy—and what they reveal—are explored in the section that follows.

Keys to Interpretation

THE FIRST KEY to interpreting the prophecy in Daniel 12:8–12 is to locate the starting point for counting the time periods of 1,290 “days” and 1,335 “days” mentioned in verses 11–12. That task is not as straightforward as it was in Daniel chapter 8, where the starting event—Alexander the Great’s move against Darius III at the Battle of Granicus—was explicitly described in the biblical text and confirmed by historical records. In contrast, Daniel 12 provides no such clear event to mark the beginning or end of the specified time periods. As I read and reread the passage looking for clues, though, I noticed that verses 8 and 9 offered two critical chronological markers.

The first marker comes from Daniel’s question in verse 8: “*What shall be the end of these things?*” (KJV), or in the NASB: “*My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?*” This indicated that the time periods must begin after “*these things*”—that is, after the events described in Daniel chapter 11. The most recent datable event mentioned in that chapter is the desecration of the Jerusalem Temple by Antiochus IV, described in verse 31. That event took place in 167 BCE, providing the earliest possible starting point for the prophecy in chapter 12.

The second marker is found in verse 9, where the angel says: “*Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.*” This indicated that the prophecy could not be understood until the arrival of the time of the end—and by implication, that the 1,290 and 1,335 time periods themselves must conclude sometime during that era. Otherwise, the sealed prophecy could have been deciphered prematurely. Together, those two markers frame the entire period covered by the prophecy: it must begin sometime on or after 167 BCE and conclude during the time of the end, which, as established in the previous chapter, began with the liberation of the Temple Mount in 1967. It was at that point that new insight provided a way forward.

Since the time of the end was already underway as of 1967, and since the time periods specified in verses 11–12 of Daniel 12 had to conclude during that period, it followed that the concluding event, if it could be identified and dated, might serve as the starting point for a backwards count in time. This was a shift

in methodology from that used to interpret the prophecy in Daniel 8. There, a starting event was identified—Alexander the Great’s advance against Persia—and Passovers were counted forward in time to uncover the prophecy’s meaning. In contrast, Daniel chapter 12 would need to be interpreted by counting backward in time from its endpoint. The only end-time event in the Book of Daniel with a specific, datable occurrence that I knew was the liberation of the Temple Mount in 1967—the same event that proved pivotal to understanding Daniel 8. Based on that event, I assumed that the liberation of the Temple Mount was also the concluding event of the prophecy in Daniel 12. That assumption would prove to be correct. Ironically, the starting point for interpreting the prophecy turned out to be its end point in history. The count of 1,290 “days” and 1,335 “days” would have to be traced backward in time to reveal the prophecy’s full meaning.

THE SECOND KEY to interpretation of the prophecy is to understand the unit of time meant by the word “days” in verses 11-12. The Hebrew word יום (BHS, Strong’s OT: 3117 *yowm*) is translated as “days” in the KJV, and in most other versions as well. It is almost always assumed to mean normal twenty-four-hour days by most expositors of Daniel. But that interpretation, applied to historical events, did not help to advance the interpretation. Since it was assumed that the concluding event of the prophecy was the liberation of the Temple Mount in 1967, counting backwards either 1,290 or 1,335 literal 24-hour days from that date yielded no significant event in the historical record as far as could be determined, so another interpretation of the word “days” was needed.

Sensing that the term “day” probably meant years—a justifiable assumption since Daniel’s contemporary in exile, the prophet Ezekiel, had established the day-for-a-year interpretive precedent in Ezekiel 4:5-6—I looked for a way in which the term “days” could be interpreted as marking the passage of years, and do so without being specifically prescribed in the biblical text as it had been in Ezekiel. It was then that the principle discovered during the exposition of Daniel chapter 8, in which the Passover night was cryptically denoted as an “evening-morning” and used to mark the passage of years, came to mind. The Hebrew words עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר *’erev boqer* used as a substitute for the word Passover in that chapter made it reasonable to consider the possibility that such a substitution, one using a time period associated with a Jewish festival instead of directly stating the name of the festival, was a pattern repeated by Daniel.

As I studied the terminology used in the Daniel prophecies containing references to calendric time periods, specifically those in the eighth, ninth, and

twelfth chapters, I saw a pattern began to emerge.¹ The terminology used in each of those chapters seemed to refer to a Jewish festival, and each to a specific Jewish pilgrimage festival that had rituals impossible for Daniel and the Jews to observe as specified in Scripture while in exile in Babylon and separated from Jerusalem and the Temple. Since the eighth chapter had used “evening-morning” to mean Passover, the next festival in the biblical order of festivals suggested that the ninth chapter was using the term “week” to mean Festival of Weeks (a concept to be expounded in chapters six and seven of this book). Carrying that association to its logical conclusion, the twelfth chapter was thus using “day” to refer to the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), which is called the Great Day (*aka* Hoshana Rabbah), considered the final day of judgment that began on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. In ancient Jewish liturgy it was seen as the day when the “sealed” judgment was delivered.² Chronologically, it all seemed to fit, so I felt confident in moving forward based on the assumption that the 1,290 and 1,335 “days” in verses 11-12 actually meant 1,290 and 1,335 Great Days.

THE THIRD KEY to interpretation of the prophecy is to understand how to count the 1,290 and 1,335 Great Days that determine the time span stipulated in verses 11-12, to know when to begin and when to end the count. In this case, the starting point for doing the backward count had to begin with the concluding event of the prophecy, an end-time event that was assumed to be the liberation of the sanctuary that had happened on June 7, 1967. It is generally agreed by most expositors that the 1,290 “days” time period is to be considered as part of the 1,335 “days.” In other words, there were not two separate time periods, one of 1,290 “days” and a second of 1,335 “days,” with no overlap, but only one time period extending forward in time for 1,290 “days,” and then for an additional forty-five “days,” the two together comprising a time period of 1,335 “days” in duration.

So, taking all of those requirements into consideration, the count would need to be done in two stages, a first stage counting backwards for forty-five Great Days from the assumed concluding event of the prophecy, the liberation

¹ God commanded that the prophecies in Daniel be sealed from understanding (encrypted or hidden). Your author’s military training in cryptography predisposed him to think in terms of coded language and patterns of thought.

² The coded words used to refer to festivals in the text of Daniel reflects the order that those festivals occurred on the ancient Hebrew calendar: Passover in the first month; Festival of Weeks (ending with the Day of Pentecost) in the third month; and the Festival of Tabernacles (ending on the Great Day) in the seventh month.

Daniel 12:8-12

יָמִים means “days” = Great Day(s)

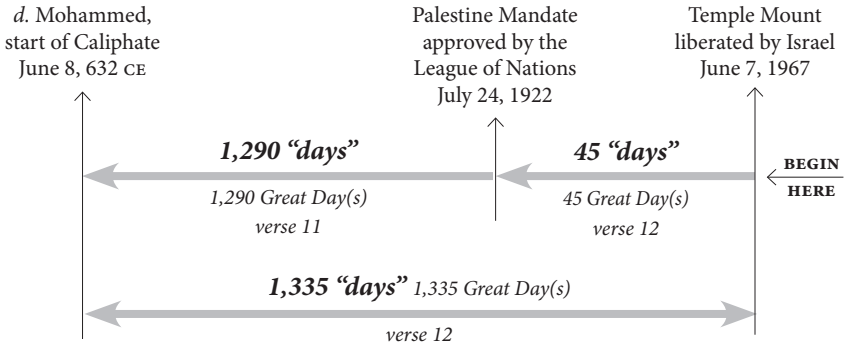


Diagram 2.1 – The 1,290 and 1,335 “days”

Note that June 8, 632 CE to June 7, 1967 is exactly 1,335 years to the day.

Old Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in 1967, to reveal an intermediate date somewhere back in time, and a second stage counting backwards from that intermediate date an additional 1,290 Great Day(s) to reveal a second date even farther back in history. Since that backwards count had to begin with the last Great Day observed before the liberation of the Temple Mount, the date for that festival in the year 1967 had to be determined. By checking a Hebrew calendar, the Great Day for that year was shown to have occurred on October 15, four months after the Temple Mount liberation event, so the festival that year could not be the one used to initiate the count. Thus, the preceding Great Day, the one observed on October 5, 1966, would be the initial Great Day from which the backward count for the first stage would have to be initiated.

Table 2.1 (page 33, top table) demonstrates how to count backwards for forty-five Great Days to reveal the intermediate time period that can be used to unravel the meaning of the prophecy. The count is initiated with the Great Day in the year 1966, which is the last Great Day observed before the liberation of the Temple Mount on June 7, 1967. The backwards count of forty-five Great Day(s) ends with the Great Day that occurred in the year 1922. Each Great Day in the table is denoted as “D-#” (where “#” is its number in the count), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year.

Table 2.2 (opposite page, bottom table) demonstrates how to continue the count backwards for another 1,290 Great Day(s) to reach the total of 1,335 “days” specified in the prophecy. It picks up the count with the Great Day in the year 1921, and terminates with the Great Day in 632 CE. Elements in Table 2.2 are denoted in the same manner as those in Table 2.1.

When you have completed verifying the counts for yourself, in both instances counting the specified number of Great Day(s) backwards in time, starting with the liberation of the Temple Mount by Israel in 1967, you will see that the forty-fifth Great Day backwards from that date occurred in the year 1922, and the 1,335th Great Day backwards from that date occurred in the year 632 CE. That means that there are three years that are identifiable and can be employed to interpret the prophecy in Daniel 12:8-12. Those three years are the starting (earliest) year of the prophecy in history, 632 CE; an intermediate year, 1922; and the concluding year, 1967.

The significance of the most recent year in that sequence is already known. The year 1967 is when the modern nation of Israel gained sovereignty over the Temple Mount, significant in Jewish history because it was the first time that a sovereign Jewish people living in *Eretz Israel* had exercised control over that piece of real estate since the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 CE.¹ But, what is the significance of the other two years in Jewish history? And, some ask, why look only at Jewish history? After all, many modern Bible scholars negate the eschatological importance of the Jews, who they contend were once but are no longer have a place in God’s eschatology in post-biblical times. However, I do not hold such an unbiblical view. It is obvious from the interpretation of the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel chapter 8, which was unsealed by events that took place in Jerusalem in 1967, that the Book of Daniel is about the destiny of the Jewish people, and that its primary message concerns the status of the Jewish people with respect to *Eretz Israel*, Jerusalem, and the Temple Mount (sanctuary) area. Focusing on Jewish history was the only logical way to find the prophetic meaning for the years 632 CE and 1922.²

¹ Historians debate whether Bar Kochba gained control of Jerusalem during the Second Jewish-Roman War. If not, then Jewish sovereignty was ended by Rome in 63 BCE.

² While the New Covenant inaugurated by Jesus (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6–13) has replaced the Old (Mosaic) Covenant as the operative framework for God’s redemptive plan for mankind, this does not nullify God’s enduring promises to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob regarding the land and their national identity.

Table 2.1 – How to Count the 45 “days”

D-1 1966 CE	D-2 1965 CE	D-3 1964 CE	D-4 1963 CE	D-5 1962 CE	D-6 1961 CE	D-7 1960 CE	D-8 1959 CE	D-9 1958 CE	D-10 1957 CE
D-11 1956 CE	D-12 1955 CE	D-13 1954 CE	D-14 1953 CE	D-15 1952 CE	D-16 1951 CE	D-17 1950 CE	D-18 1949 CE	D-19 1948 CE	D-20 1947 CE
D-21 1946 CE	D-22 1945 CE	D-23 1944 CE	D-24 1943 CE	D-25 1942 CE	D-26 1941 CE	D-27 1940 CE	D-28 29 CE	D-29 1938 CE	D-30 1937 CE
D-31 1936 CE	D-32 1935 CE	D-33 1934 CE	D-34 1933 CE	D-35 1932 CE	D-36 1931 CE	D-37 1930 CE	D-38 1929 CE	D-39 1928 CE	D-40 1927 CE
D-41 1926 CE	D-42 1925 CE	D-43 1924 CE	D-44 1923 CE	D-45 1922 CE	---	---	---	---	---

Table 2.2 – How to Count the 1,290 “days”

D-1 1921 CE	D-2 1920 CE	D-3 1919 CE	D-4 1918 CE	D-5 1917 CE	D-6 1916 CE	D-7 1915 CE	D-8 1914 CE	D-9 1913 CE	D-10 1912 CE
D-10 <i>see above</i>	D-20 1902 CE	D-30 1892 CE	D-40 1882 CE	D-50 1872 CE	D-60 1862 CE	D-70 1852 CE	D-80 1842 CE	D-90 1832 CE	D-100 1822 CE
D-110 1812 CE	D-120 1802 CE	D-130 1792 CE	D-140 1782 CE	D-150 1772 CE	D-160 1762 CE	D-170 1752 CE	D-180 1742 CE	D-190 1732 CE	D-200 1722 CE
D-210 1712 CE	D-220 1702 CE	D-230 1692 CE	D-240 1682 CE	D-250 1672 CE	D-260 1662 CE	D-270 1652 CE	D-280 1642 CE	D-290 1632 CE	D-300 1622 CE
D-310- 1612 CE	D-320 1602 CE	D-330 1592 CE	D-340 1582 CE	D-350 1572 CE	D-360 1562 CE	D-370 1552 CE	D-380 1542 CE	D-390 1532 CE	D-400 1522 CE
D-410 1512 CE	D-420 1502 CE	D-430 1492 CE	D-440 1482 CE	D-450 1472 CE	D-460 1462 CE	D-470 1452 CE	D-480 1442 CE	D-490 1432 CE	D-500 1422 CE
D-510 1412 CE	D-520 1402 CE	D-530 1392 CE	D-540 1382 CE	D-550 1372 CE	D-560 1362 CE	D-570 1352 CE	D-580 1342 CE	D-590 1332 CE	D-600 1322 CE
D-610 1312 CE	D-620 1302 CE	D-630 1292 CE	D-640 1282 CE	D-650 1272 CE	D-660 1262 CE	D-670 1252 CE	D-680 1242 CE	D-690 1232 CE	D-700 1222 CE
D-710 1212 CE	D-720 1202 CE	D-730 1192 CE	D-740 1182 CE	D-750 1172 CE	D-760 1162 CE	D-770 1152 CE	D-780 1142 CE	D-790 1132 CE	D-800 1122 CE
D-810 1112 CE	D-820 1102 CE	D-830 1092 CE	D-840 1082 CE	D-850 1072 CE	D-860 1062 CE	D-870 1052 CE	D-880 1042 CE	D-890 1032 CE	D-900 1022 CE
D-910 1012 CE	D-920 1002 CE	D-930 992 CE	D-940 982 CE	D-950 972 CE	D-960 962 CE	D-970 952 CE	D-980 942 CE	D-990 932 CE	D-1000 922 CE
D-1010 912 CE	D-1020 902 CE	D-1030 892 CE	D-1040 882 CE	D-1050 872 CE	D-1060 862 CE	D-1070 852 CE	D-1080 842 CE	D-1090 832 CE	D-1100 822 CE
D-1110 812 CE	D-1120 802 CE	D-1130 792 CE	D-1140 782 CE	D-1150 772 CE	D-1160 762 CE	D-1170 752 CE	D-1180 742 CE	D-1190 732 CE	D-1200 722 CE
D-1210 712 CE	D-1220 702 CE	D-1230 692 CE	D-1240 682 CE	D-1250 672 CE	D-1260 662 CE	D-1270 652 CE	D-1280 642 CE	D-1290 632 CE	---

Fulfillment in History

The events of Jewish history—both in the land of Israel and while scattered in the *Diaspora*—are fairly well documented for the key years indicated by the prophetic count: 1922 and 632 CE. According to the time framework revealed by the prophecy, the significant event associated with the 1,335 “*days*” had to occur between the last Great Day in the backward count of forty-five “*days*” and the first Great Day in the resumed count of 1,290 “*days*.” That defined the window as spanning from October 12, 1921 to October 2, 1922.

Within that time frame, several historical developments occurred that, in hindsight, proved consequential to Jewish history, some profoundly so. In Germany, Adolf Hitler had become chairman of the National Socialist German Workers’ (Nazi) Party) and began rallying popular support with speeches promoting virulent anti-Semitism. In August 1921, he addressed a crowd of 50,000 at Königsplatz in Munich. In Italy, his future Axis ally, Benito Mussolini, became the youngest prime minister in Italian history in October 1922. Meanwhile, in Russia, Josef Stalin—later both Hitler’s wartime adversary and genocidal counterpart—was appointed General Secretary of the Communist Party in April 1922.

Yet among these global shifts, one event stood out in direct relevance to Jewish destiny, and to the prophecy under consideration. In June 1922, the British government issued the Churchill White Paper, clarifying its interpretation of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and establishing Trans-Jordan as a territory distinct from Palestine. This redefinition of the region laid the groundwork for future territorial claims and disputes, including the area from which Israel would later liberate the Temple Mount in 1967.

However, the most significant event within the prophetic window between Great Day(s) took place on July 24, 1922, when the League of Nations ratified the Palestine Mandate. That act formally authorized Britain to facilitate “*the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people*,” as stated in the preamble of the Mandate. For the first time since the Jews were exiled from *Eretz Israel* by Rome, the international community had set in motion a process that would lead to the rebirth of a sovereign Jewish state in the historic land of Israel, a process fulfilled with the declaration of statehood on May 14, 1948.

Even so, that milestone did not include Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem or the Temple Mount. That would not come until forty-five years later, in 1967, when both the Old City and the Mount were reunited with the modern State of Israel,

exactly as foreseen by the prophecy in Daniel 12:12: *“Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.”*

The second time period specified by the prophecy, the one anchored in the year 632 CE, was relatively easy to define. It could be located by identifying the date of the Great Day (Hoshana Rabbah) in 632 CE and the preceding Great Day in 631 CE. The observance of those festivals defined the prophetic window as spanning from September 14, 631 CE on one end to October 2, 632 CE on the other end. Within that range, the prophecy indicated that a significant event in Jewish history would mark the beginning of the time period.

Historical records show that the decades leading up to that year had been especially turbulent for the Jews. The Sassanid Persian Empire, under King Chosroes II, was in a phase of aggressive expansion, having seized Anatolia and Syria from the Byzantine Empire. In 614 CE, as part of its campaign to conquer Egypt, the Persian army wrested Judea and Jerusalem away from Byzantine control. For the Jews, who had endured centuries of severe repression under Byzantine Christian rule, this conquest seemed to signal a miraculous turn of events. Many welcomed the Persians as liberators and joined their army. Chosroes II was even seen by Jewish leaders as a “second Cyrus,” especially after he appointed Nehemiah ben Hushiel, the son of the Exilarch (the leader of Babylonian Jewry), as a figurehead governor in Jerusalem.¹

Under Persian rule, the Jews were allowed to establish a semi-autonomous administration. Ben Hushiel led the civil government, while a council of elders oversaw both religious and community affairs. Hopes ran high. The Temple had not yet been rebuilt, but for the first time in centuries, Jewish self-governance in Jerusalem seemed possible. Preparations for rebuilding the Temple and consecrating a Levitical priesthood were begun. Before any serious rebuilding could begin, however, ben Hushiel was killed by a mob of youths seeking retribution for perceived atrocities committed against Christian holy places by Jews during the Sassanid assault.

After Nehemiah ben Hushiel’s murder, the Persians did an about-face and installed a Christian governor in Jerusalem as a way of placating the Byzantine majority still in the city. Thereafter, Jewish access to the city of Jerusalem was seriously curtailed. In 628 CE, the Byzantine emperor Heraclius invaded Judea

¹ Exilarch (“Head of the Exile”) was the title of the leader of the large Jewish community living in Babylon under the rule of the Sassanid Persian Empire.

and recaptured Jerusalem from the Sassanids. As punishment for their earlier siding with the Persians, Jews were banished from entering the city on pain of death as long as the Byzantines administered the city. Gradually, the decades of exhausting warfare between the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanid Persia Empire left both powers permanently weakened. That erosion of power set the stage for an event in 632 CE that would prove momentous for the destiny of the Jewish people and the future status of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

On June 8, 632 CE, Muhammad, the self-proclaimed prophet and founder of Islam, died in Arabia. From a prophetic standpoint, the significance of that event lies not in the demise of the man himself, but in the events that followed. His death marked the beginning of the Islamic Caliphate, launching a wave of military and religious expansion out of Arabia that would forever alter Jewish and world history. Six years later, in 638 CE, the Muslim army under Caliph Omar captured Jerusalem from the Byzantines. That conquest initiated more than thirteen centuries of non-Jewish control over the holy city and the Temple Mount, a situation that endured until Israeli forces restored Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel 12 is the exactitude of its fulfillment. From June 8, 632 CE—the date of Muhammad’s death—to June 7, 1967—the day Israel liberated the Temple Mount during the Six-Day War—is precisely 1,335 “*days*” (years) to the day. For those with eyes to see and ears to hear, such precision offers compelling evidence of the supernatural authorship of Daniel 12:8–12.

FOR A TIME, TIMES, AND AN HALF

READ DANIEL 12:5-7 ON PAGE 222 | SEE ❸ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The interpretive insights gained from Daniel chapter 8—recognizing the eschatological significance of the 1967 liberation of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount by Israeli forces, and discovering that the Passover festival served as the marker for counting years in that prophecy—proved to be the key that unlocked the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel chapter 12. From my experience in unlocking chapter 12, I came to understand that Daniel’s use of a time marker had shifted from Passover to the Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles, prompting further investigation into additional chronological clues embedded throughout the rest of the book. Equally important was the confirmation that progressive understanding was indeed taking place, just as the biblical text promised it would (Matt. 13:12). From the beginning of my quest to interpret the prophecies in Daniel, I had accepted by faith that God would reward those who diligently sought their meaning once the appointed time of unsealing had arrived. Trusting in that promise, I applied the insights gained from chapters 8 and 12 as interpretive keys to try to unlock other prophecies.

Realizing that the chronological details revealed in chapters 8 and 12 of Daniel were just two components of a much larger prophetic framework, I began drawing timeline charts to visualize how the various prophecies related to one another.¹ This visual representation proved immediately helpful, as it clarified where to focus my next search for interpretive clues. The timeline emerging from chapter 8 extended from the Battle of Granicus in 334 bce to the liberation of the Temple Mount in 1967. In contrast, the timeline derived from Daniel 12:8-12 began with that same 1967 event and extended backward to the founding of the Muslim Caliphate following the death of Mohammed in 632 CE.

Earlier, in studying the chronological details in Ezekiel chapter 4, I had identified a 430-year span stretching from 597 BCE (the year of Jehoiachin’s exile) to 167 BCE, when Antiochus IV Epiphanes desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem.²

¹ I reasoned that a sequence of years carefully drawn to scale on timelines would eliminate misalignment by approximation when comparing one timeline to another.

² See *Appendix Five: Chronology in the Book of Ezekiel* on p.157.

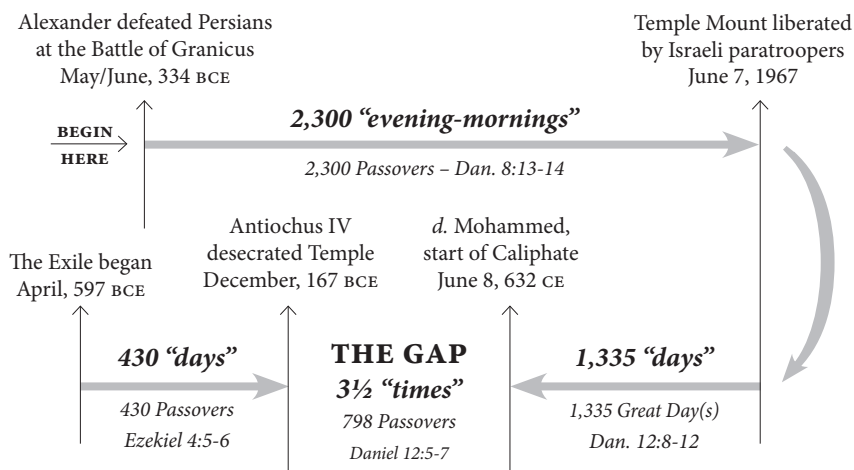


Diagram 3.1 – Chronology of Dan. 12:5-7

That desecration, an event of enormous theological weight in Jewish history, is emphasized twice in Daniel: first in 8:11, “Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down,” and in 11:31, “And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.” Because the desecration of the Temple plays such a prominent role in Daniel’s eschatological vision—and because Daniel and Ezekiel were contemporaries,¹ delivering complementary prophetic messages to the Jewish exiles in Babylon—I felt justified in integrating the Ezekiel 4 timeline with those drawn from Daniel 8 and 12. Once the three timelines were aligned, a noticeable gap in the overall timeline became apparent (see “The Gap” on Diagram 3.1 above), suggesting the presence of yet another hidden prophetic clue waiting to be uncovered.

Thus, prophecy by prophecy, the chronology of Jewish history described in the Bible was beginning to take shape. Based on the chronological information gained from the interpretations of the chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel chapters 8 and 12, together with that from Ezekiel 4, a timeline from 597 BCE to

¹ Ezekiel possibly mentions Daniel by name in Ezek 14:14, 20, but whether they met or corresponded is open to speculation. Both were exiled to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar II.

167 BCE could be traced on the timeline, along with another from 334 BCE forward to 1967 in the modern era and then back from 1967 to the year 632 CE. However, that left a gap in the chronology that stretched from 167 BCE to 632 CE, a time span of 798 years, and that 798-year gap was intriguing. It was possibly the key to even more understanding, but was such a time span specified anywhere in Daniel? What chrono-specific prophecy was involved?

Keys to Interpretation

THE FIRST KEY for interpreting the prophecy came when I realized that the 798-year “gap” was not a question to be answered, but was instead a key element in a prophecy’s fulfillment. The exegetical challenge then became one of identifying the specific prophecy for which this 798-year span serves as the fulfillment. Logically, such a prophecy would need to reference a time period of that exact length. But despite careful examination, I could find no such 798-year designation in the Book of Daniel. With no apparent textual match there, I expanded my search to the entire Bible, reading through every book over and over in hopes of uncovering a clue that might correspond to the mysterious span. Yet even after exhaustive study, no explicit reference to a 798-year interval appeared in any other passage. Eventually, my attention returned to the most recent source of interpretive insight, the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It was there that I had last encountered a meaningful prophetic clue, and it was there that I hoped to find the key that would explain the gap.

As I continued to pray and meditate on the timeline chart, the position of the 798-year gap—situated as it was just after the 430 “days” in Ezekiel 4:5-6 and before the start of the 1,335 Great Day(s) described in verses 8–12—began to demand my attention. It was then that a new insight emerged, one that ultimately led to identifying the prophecy associated with the gap. I realized that the earlier text in Daniel 12, specifically the prophecy about “*a time, times, and an half*” in verses 5–7, had preceded the description of the 1,335 “days” prophecy in the text. That observation prompted a question: Could the “*time, times, and an half*” in the text be the 798-year span depicted on my timeline?

Up to that point, I had assumed those chronological elements might overlap. Now I began to see them as sequential in time, just as they appeared on my chart, with the end of the gap leading directly to the start of the 1,335 Great Day(s). That shift in perspective was a breakthrough. For the first time, I felt confident

that the 798-year gap might indeed correspond to the prophecy of “*a time, times, and an half*” found in verses 5–7 of Daniel chapter 12. Before continuing, though, I had to verify that there were exactly 798 years between the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus in 167 BCE, the assumed starting point of the gap, and the death of Mohammed in 632 CE, the assumed ending point of the gap. That was accomplished by counting the number of Passovers that had occurred between those two events.

Table 3.1 (opposite page) demonstrates how to count the 798 Passovers. The count starts with the Passover of 166 BCE, the first Passover after the desecration of the Temple as specified in verse 11a: “*And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up ...*” The count ends with the Passover in spring of 632 CE, the last Passover that was observed before the death of Mohammed on June 8 and the beginning of the Caliphate after that date. Each Passover in the table is denoted as “P-#” (where “#” is its number in the count), followed by the corresponding Gregorian year. After the initial ten Passovers (P-1 through P-10), Passovers are shown in ten-year increments.

THE SECOND KEY to interpretation of the prophecy, now that the chronospecific prophecy being interpreted has been identified as the one in chapter 12, verses 5-7, is to calculate the duration of the time period called a “*time*” by Daniel in his prophecy. Since most Bible expositors agree that the phrase translated as “*a time, times, and an half*” means three and a half units of something called a “*time*,” and since the time span denoted by the phrase “*a time, times, and an half*” is assumed for our purposes here to be the 798-years shown by the diagram on page 38, a simple calculation reveals the following definition: A “*time*” is 798 years divided by $3\frac{1}{2}$, which equals 228 years or, stated in the ancient Hebrew way of marking the passage of years, a “*time*” is 228 Passovers.

Of course, the definition of a “*time*” by itself is nothing more than a mathematical calculation, with no inherent theological significance for explaining the meaning of biblical prophecy. So once I had established it, I knew that a Scripture-based explanation was needed—one that would show how defining a “*time*” as a span containing 228 Passovers served as a meaningful chronological unit by the ancient Jewish people observing the Mosaic Law. With that goal in mind, I began searching for evidence that such a marker was used for religious purposes, and I eventually found one that fits naturally within the context of precise timekeeping required to observe the Jewish festivals exactly as prescribed—and at the exact prescribed time.

Table 3.1 – How to Count the 798 Passovers

P-1 166 BCE	P-2 165 BCE	P-3 164 BCE	P-4 163 BCE	P-5 162 BCE	P-6 161 BCE	P-7 160 BCE	P-8 159 BCE	P-9 158 BCE	P-10 157 BCE
P-10 <i>see above</i>	P-20 147 BCE	P-30 137 BCE	P-40 127 BCE	P-50 117 BCE	P-60 107 BCE	P-70 97 BCE	P-80 87 BCE	P-90 77 BCE	P-100 67 BCE
P-110 57 BCE	P-120 47 BCE	P-130 37 BCE	P-140 27 BCE	P-150 17 BCE	P-160 7 BCE	P-170 4 CE	P-180 14 CE	P-190 24 CE	P-200 34 CE
P-210 44 CE	P-220 54 CE	P-230 64 CE	P-240 74 CE	P-250 84 CE	P-260 94 CE	P-270 104 CE	P-280 114 CE	P-290 124 CE	P-300 134 CE
P-310 144 CE	P-320 154 CE	P-330 164 CE	P-340 174 CE	P-350 184 CE	P-360 194 CE	P-370 204 CE	P-380 214 CE	P-390 224 CE	P-400 234 CE
P-410 244 CE	P-420 254 CE	P-430 264 CE	P-440 274 CE	P-450 284 CE	P-460 294 CE	P-470 304 CE	P-480 314 CE	P-490 324 CE	P-500 334 CE
P-510 344 CE	P-520 354 CE	P-530 364 CE	P-540 374 CE	P-550 384 CE	P-560 394 CE	P-570 404 CE	P-580 414 CE	P-590 424 CE	P-600 434 CE
P-610 444 CE	P-620 454 CE	P-630 464 CE	P-640 474 CE	P-650 484 CE	P-660 494 CE	P-670 504 CE	P-680 514 CE	P-690 524 CE	P-700 534 CE
P-710 544 CE	P-720 554 CE	P-730 564 CE	P-740 574 CE	P-750 584 CE	P-760 594 CE	P-770 604 CE	P-780 614 CE	P-790 624 CE	P-791 <i>see below</i>
P-791 625 CE	P-792 626 CE	P-793 627 CE	P-794 628 CE	P-795 629 CE	P-796 630 CE	P-797 631 CE	P-798 632 CE	---	---

Note that there was no year “0” (zero) when going from BCE to CE, so the count for the P-assovers in the transition decade from 7 BCE to 4 CE is determined as follows: P-assover number 160 in the count (P-160 above) occurred in the year 7 BCE, P-161 in 6 BCE, P-162 in 5 BCE, P-163 in 4 BCE, P-164 in 3 BCE, P-165 in 2 BCE, P-166 in 1 BCE, P-167 in 1 CE, P-168 in 2 CE, P-169 in 3 CE, P-170 in 4 CE.

Defining a (Danielic) Time

The word “time” was calculated to mean 228 Passovers in the previous section. Did that span of time have any usefulness as a chronological marker when employed by the Jewish people for religious purposes?¹ To answer that question, it is necessary to consider the historical context in which Daniel wrote. The biblical text says that he was living in exile in Babylon during the sixth century BCE, and for most of that time serving the king as chief of the governors with authority over the wise men, including the court astrologers and magicians who were the scientists of the day. As chief governor of the wise men, Daniel would have been well-versed in the sciences, especially mathematics and astronomy. Astronomy was the most important discipline in ancient times, because it was

¹ The Aramaic word ܥܕܢ (BHS, Strong’s OT: 5732 ‘iddân) is translated “time” in Daniel 7:12, whereas the Hebrew word מועד (BHS, Strong’s OT: 4150 *mow’ed*) means “time” in Daniel 12:7.

used to keep track of the reigns of kings and to predict the seasons, of which accurate knowledge was critical for the well-being of all ancient agriculture-based societies. On a spiritual level, the times and seasons, which were directly related to the movement of the heavens, were considered by Daniel as expressions of the power of God in human affairs. Daniel himself stressed that connection in Daniel 2:20-21: *“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever ... he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings.”* So, considering the milieu in which Daniel lived, it is not surprising to find that Babylonian astronomy, which was fairly advanced when judged even by the standards of today, plays an important role in the prophecies of Daniel.

In *Eretz Israel* prior to the Babylonian Exile, the Jewish calendar consisted of twelve lunar months, each with 29 or 30 days, yielding a year of 354 days. While the Bible makes no mention of a formal New Year’s Day, it clearly identifies Nisan as the first month of the year. A new month began with the visible appearance of the crescent new moon, observed with the naked eye by priests trained for that purpose. No special instruments were required. Passover was commanded to occur on the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan) and was intended to coincide with the “first fruits” of the barley harvest. However, the biblical text offers no explicit instruction for reconciling the 354-day Hebrew lunar year with the Genesis 1:14 solar year of 365¼ days. Without some form of adjustment, known as intercalation, Passover would have drifted backward by about eleven days each year, eventually cycling through all seasons and detaching from the spring harvest altogether. Yet we know from historical and agricultural realities that this did not occur. Passover was always observed in the spring in ancient Israel, which confirms that a method of intercalation, though not described in the biblical text, was indeed employed to maintain seasonal alignment.

More than likely, Abraham had brought the Babylonian lunisolar calendar with him when he left Ur and migrated to Canaan. Like the Hebrew calendar, it had twelve months of either 29 or 30 days, but it also had a unique feature, a leap month which was added to certain years on a fixed schedule. The leap month made sure that the seasons always occurred at the proper time in terms of climate, avoiding a drift through the seasons as follows:

“Babylonian astronomers, often called Chaldaeans, gradually developed rules to create the nearly perfect calendar. The key was the discovery, in the mid-eighth century BCE, that 235 lunar months are almost identical to 19 solar years. The difference is only about

two hours. The Chaldaeans concluded that seven out of nineteen years ought to be leap years with an extra month. [After that discovery], intercalary months were still announced by the king, but he was advised by an astronomer. After Babylon had been captured by the Persian king Cyrus the Great in 539 [BCE], priestly officials took over. The Chaldaeans now started to look for a standard procedure for the intercalation of months. It was introduced in 503 BCE by Darius I the Great if not earlier.”¹

Note the reference to the 19-year cycle, in which 235 lunar months equal 228 solar months, or nineteen solar years. There is ample evidence that the 19-year cycle was used in the Babylonian calendar as early as the time of Daniel’s exile. It is also important to note that the 19-year cycle is not exact, since 235 lunar months are not quite identical in length to 228 solar months, the difference being plus two hours and five minutes for every 19-year cycle. So, to keep a calendar based on that system in near-perfect synchronization, one 24-hour day (2 hours x 12 nineteen-year cycles) has to be subtracted at the end of each twelfth 19-year cycle, or, putting it in simple terms, one day has to be subtracted at the end of every 228 years (12 x 19 years) to ensure that the Passover continues to occur at the appointed time of the year over the centuries. Otherwise, the date of Passover would creep forward one day every 228 years and eventually progresses out of synchronization with respect to the spring barley harvest.

It is that 228-year span of time, an astronomical unit that Daniel most likely learned from the Babylonians, that is the basis for the word “time” being used as a chronological marker in the prophecy in chapter 12, verse 7, which specifies “a time, times, and an half.” So, for use in interpreting the chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel, a “time” can be defined with confidence as 228 years, or, stated in the ancient Hebrew way of marking the passage of years, as 228 Passovers, a span of time that specifies when to make the calendar adjustment needed to keep Passover and the other Jewish festivals perfectly aligned with their biblical and solar-based agricultural requirements forever, as commanded.²

Now that the chronological term translated “time” has been defined as 228 Passovers in duration, the Aramaic word ܕܡܢ (BHS, Strong’s OT: 2166 *zēman*),

¹ Jona Lendering, “The Babylonian Calendar” (from the *Livius.org* website: www.livius.org).

² The next increment of correction would yield an accuracy of less than half an hour of error every 5,472 years, but making such an adjustment would have been impossible for ancient astronomers without modern instrumentation. The one-day adjustment every 228 years is the final one that could have been accomplished using the sight and mind only.

translated as “season” in Daniel needs to be defined as well, since it is used as a chronological unit in Daniel 7:12 in combination with the word “time” עֵת (BHS, Strong’s OT: 5732 ‘iddân) as follows: “... *their lives were prolonged for a season and time.*”

The Hebrew word that is equivalent to the Aramaic word translated as “season” in Daniel 7:12 is translated in Esther 9:27 as the phrase “*appointed time*,” referring to the festival of Purim. As used there, it incorporates all three meanings, “appointed time,” “festival,” and “season.” That being the case, it is not unreasonable to deduce that the word “season,” when used as a chronological marker in combination with the word “time,” is referring to a Jewish festival. However, it cannot be referring to Purim since that festival did not exist until after Daniel’s lifetime, so the most likely festival being referred to is Passover, which is explicitly tied to the idea of having its “season” (appointed time) in the Book of Deuteronomy 16:6, which says: “*thou shalt sacrifice the passover ... at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.*” Thus, the word “season,” in combination with “time” as in Daniel 7:12, can be defined as meaning a single festival, or, as demonstrated in the next chapter, “season” can be used in a broader sense to represent a full year of ancient Jewish pilgrimage festivals beginning with the Passover-Feast of Unleavened Bread in the spring and ending with the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall.

In this contemporary age, the precise measurement of time is only rarely regarded as a central element in religious practice. In ancient Israel, however, exact timekeeping occupied a place of paramount importance in the service of God. Faithful observance of the divinely appointed festival necessitated rigorous preservation of an accurate sacred calendar, maintained with unbroken precision from generation to generation. This was no mere technical formality, but a covenantal imperative. To neglect or miscalculate an appointed time was to disregard the sovereignty of God and risk disrupting the divine rhythm upon which the nation’s life was ordered. Time itself was inextricably bound to worship, identity, and obedience. For this reason, Israel expended exceptional diligence to ensure that their reckoning of the “*seasons and times*” conformed to the chronological requirements established by divine command.

THAT WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED

READ DANIEL 7:1-28 ON PAGE 213 | SEE 4 5 ON OVERVIEW CHART

The seventh is the most historically comprehensive chapter in the Book of Daniel. Spanning more than eleven centuries, it presents three parallel timelines that trace key events affecting the Jewish people as they lived under the rule of ancient foreign powers. The narrative begins during the reign of Cyrus the Great and extends through the Achaemenid Persian kings, the conquests of Alexander the Great, the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties, the Hasmoneans, and the rise of Rome. It continues through the dominance of the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanid Persian Empire, concluding with the Muslim capture of Jerusalem in 638 CE. While many expositors have concentrated on the Gentile empires featured in this vision, interpreting the chapter primarily as a recap of world history, that view overlooks the central theme. The non-Jewish powers serve primarily as the backdrop for a deeper narrative: the suffering and survival of the Jewish people, their relationship to Jerusalem and the Temple, and the unfolding of God's redemptive plan through a promised Messiah.

The seventh chapter of Daniel can be divided into three distinct sections, each with its own timeline and focus:

THE FIRST SECTION (verses 1–12) records a prophetic vision Daniel received *circa* 553 BCE. In the vision, “*four winds of heaven*” stir the “*great sea*,” and four beasts—each different from the others—rise from it. The first appears as a lion with eagle’s wings. Daniel watches as its wings are plucked, it is lifted to stand like a man, and a man’s heart is given to it. The second beast is like a bear, raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth. It is commanded to arise and devour much flesh. The third resembles a leopard with four wings and four heads; dominion is given to it. The fourth beast is described as dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly strong, with iron teeth used to devour, crush, and trample its victims. Unlike the others, it has ten horns. Then a little horn arises, uprooting three of the ten. This horn has eyes like a man and a mouth speaking great things. In heaven, thrones

¹ Dates of Daniel’s dreams and visions: chapter 4 was written before 562 BCE; chapter 7 in the first year of Belshazzar, c. 553 BCE (Dan. 7:1); chapter 8 in the third year of Belshazzar, c. 551 BCE (Dan. 8:1); chapter 9 in the first year of Darius the Mede, c. 539 BCE (Dan. 9:1); chapters 10-12 in the third year of Cyrus the Great of Persia, c. 536 BCE (Dan. 10:1).

are set in place and the Ancient of Days takes his seat. A multitude ministers before him, the court convenes, and the books are opened. [On earth] the beast is slain and burned, while the dominion of the other beasts is taken away, though their lives are prolonged for a season.¹

THE SECOND SECTION (verses 13–14) is a parenthetical vision that interrupts the chronological flow. Daniel sees “*one like a son of man*” coming with the clouds of heaven and brought before the Ancient of Days. This figure is given dominion, glory, and an everlasting kingdom, so that all nations and peoples should serve him. Unlike the beasts, his kingdom will never be destroyed.

THE THIRD SECTION (verses 15–28) offers a partial interpretation of the earlier vision. Daniel, troubled by what he has seen, is given an explanation that sheds light on the four beasts, the ten horns, and the rise of the little horn. Though not all elements are explained in full, this section provides essential insight into the symbolic meaning of the first part of the vision and reinforces the ultimate victory of the saints under divine sovereignty.

In his vision, Daniel approaches an angel standing nearby, deeply grieved in spirit and troubled by what he has seen. He asks for the truth concerning the vision. The angel explains that the four beasts represent four kings who will rise from the earth, but ultimately the kingdom will be given to the saints of the Most High, who shall possess it forever. Daniel then requests more details about the fourth beast and the ten horns on its head, and the horn that rises afterward, displacing three of the others. This final horn, with eyes like a man and a mouth speaking boastfully, seemed greater than the rest. Daniel notes that it waged war against the saints and prevailed—until the Ancient of Days rendered judgment in favor of the saints, and the time came for them to possess the kingdom.

The angel elaborates that the fourth beast symbolizes a kingdom unlike any before it, one that will devour the whole earth, crush it, and shatter it. From this kingdom, ten kings will arise, followed by another who is different from the rest. This final king will subdue three others, speak blasphemies against the Most High, persecute the saints, and attempt to change set times and laws. The saints will be given into his hand for “*a time, times, and half a time*.” But the heavenly court will sit in judgment, and his dominion will be taken away and destroyed

¹ Some expositors get distracted by trying to give the beasts’ teeth, wings, and so on allegorical meaning. Those details accurately record what Daniel saw in his mind, but it is only the fact of four beasts (representing kings) that is pertinent to interpretation of the prophecy.

forever. In the climactic conclusion, dominion and kingship under the whole heaven will be granted to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is everlasting, and all other dominions shall serve and obey him. With that final promise, the vision comes to its close.

Keys to Interpretation

THE FIRST KEY to interpreting the prophecy in Daniel chapter 7 is to recognize that it unfolds in three distinct chronological segments: The first segment (verses 1–12) spans from the rise of the first kingdom to the end of a period described as *“a season and a time”* in verse 12. This section presents the vision of the four beasts and the initial unfolding of history through successive empires. The second segment (verses 13–14) introduces a new era marked by the establishment of an everlasting kingdom. Unlike the others, this timeline has no endpoint, as the dominion given to *“one like a son of man”* is eternal. The third segment (verses 15–26) returns to historical progression, beginning with the rise of the fourth kingdom and continuing until the end of a prophetic period described as *“a time, times, and the dividing of time”* in verse 25.

THE SECOND KEY to interpretation of the prophecy in the seventh chapter, composed of the three distinct prophetic timelines described above, is to remember that these prophecies are about Israel as the people and nation of God, and about God’s plan of redemption for all mankind through Israel. Maintaining that Israel-centric viewpoint is critical if a proper interpretation is to be derived from the three prophetic timelines.

THE THIRD KEY to interpretation of the prophecy is to pick the correct period in history as the starting point for the events mentioned in the first part of the prophecy. The first action event that can be identified as beginning in real time is the rise of the four kings. The most obvious place to look for the period in which those events take place is the historical period immediately following the time period when the vision was recorded. Daniel wrote down his vision in the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon,¹ which can be dated to sometime around the year 553 BCE. That year occurred in the closing years of the Neo-Babylonian Empire that had reached its apex under Nebuchadnezzar II. As we know from

¹ Belshazzar ruled as coregent in Babylon while his father King Nabonidus lived in Arabia.

history, Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon in 539 BCE, initiating a period of Persian rule over the region that had been predicted in the Book of Isaiah. Thus, the Achaemenid Persian Empire, beginning with Cyrus, is the logical period in history for locating the action events in the seventh chapter.

Fulfillment in History

The starting events of the prophecy in Daniel chapter 7 are described in verses 3–7 and verse 17, where four kings are said to rise from the earth. Verses 7b and 24 clarify that the fourth king is not a single individual but a composite figure representing a dynasty of ten kings. The most straightforward interpretation of this structure is that the prophecy envisions three individual kings, followed by a ten-king dynasty within the same empire. When this pattern is compared with the history of the Achaemenid Persian Empire—particularly the period during which it held sovereignty over the Jews—it aligns remarkably well. The first king in the prophecy, symbolized by a lion with eagle’s wings who is made to stand like a man and given a human heart, is Cyrus II the Great. He began his reign as King of Persia in 546 BCE. Scripture refers to Cyrus as God’s “anointed” (messiah), chosen specifically for the sake of the Jewish people. His most notable act was his decree *circa* 538 BCE that ended the Babylonian exile and permitted the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple.

Following Cyrus’s death in 530 BCE, his son Cambyses II became the second king, symbolized by the bear with three ribs in its mouth. Cambyses expanded the empire into Egypt and attempted further campaigns toward Cush (modern Sudan) and across the desert toward the Siwa Oasis. These ill-planned expeditions weakened his forces. During his absence, his brother Smerdis (also known as Bardiya) staged a coup and was recognized as king in the Asian territories of the

¹ Expositors have often incorrectly identified the fourth kingdom in verses 1-12 as the Seleucid Empire or as the Roman Empire. In recent years, some expositors have incorrectly deferred the fourth kingdom to a future end-time scenario involving an Antichrist.

² See Isa. 45:1-4; note that Cyrus is mentioned by name 23 times in the Hebrew Scriptures, including three times in Daniel.

³ In the Behistun Inscription, Darius I claims that Cambyses II executed Smerdis before leaving to conquer Egypt, and that, in his absence, an impostor named Gautama, a Magian priest, assumed the name Smerdis, led a coup to depose the absent Cambyses, and ruled as king. Darius I then claimed that he had killed Gautama to become king.

Kings of the Achaemenid Persian Empire

(showing only rulers exercising dominion over the Jews; all years BCE)

1. FIRST BEAST – Cyrus II the Great (r. 546-530), began rule over the Jews with defeat of Babylon in 539, Jews allowed to return to Jerusalem in 536.
2. SECOND BEAST – Cambyses II (r. 530-522), added Egypt to Persian empire.
3. THIRD BEAST – Smerdis (*aka* Bardiya, r. 522-521), son of Cyrus (throne occupied instead by Gautama, impersonating Smerdis?); killed by Darius I.
4. FOURTH BEAST (with Ten Horns) – Darian Dynasty with 10 kings as follows:
 - (1) Darius I Hystaspes (r. 521-486), “the Great,” crossed the Bosphorus in the year 512, expanded the Persian empire into Europe, initiated two centuries of Greco-Persian hostilities, defeated at Battle of Marathon in 490; Second Temple dedicated in Jerusalem in 515.
 - (2) Xerxes I (r. 486-465), invaded Greece, defeated Greek army at Battle of Thermopylae, burned the city of Athens and the Acropolis.
 - (3) Artaxerxes I Longimanus (r. 464-424), Egypt revolted, empire declined.
 - (4) Xerxes II (r. 424), killed by Sogdianus.
 - (5) Sogdianus (r. 424-423), killed by Darius II.
 - (6) Darius II Nothus (r. 423-404), troubled times in Egypt, the renegade Jewish Temple at Elephantine destroyed.
 - (7) Artaxerxes II Memnon (r. 404-358), oversaw further decline of empire.
 - (8) Artaxerxes III Ochus (r. 358-338), initiated minor resurgence of the Persian empire, Egypt reconquered.
 - (9) Artaxerxes IV Arses (r. 338-336), battled Phillip II of Macedonia.
 - (10) Darius III Codomannus (r. 336-330), deposed Artaxerxes IV, later defeated by Alexander the Great at Granicus River (331), Issus River, (333) and Gaugamela (331); last king of Achaemenid Persian Empire.

empire. Cambyses was unable to reclaim the throne and either committed suicide or was assassinated in 522 BCE. Smerdis, the third king in the prophecy, depicted as a leopard with four wings and four heads, ruled for only seven months before being overthrown in a coup involving Darius I, the son of Hystaspes.

In 521 BCE, Darius I became the fourth symbolic king—the dreadful and terrible beast with iron teeth and ten horns. He was the first ruler in a dynasty of ten Achaemenid kings, exactly matching the number described in the prophecy. (see list above.) As the Persian Empire evolved, it experienced frequent internal

strife, including conflicts in Egypt, Babylon, and the emerging Greek powers. The biblical record is largely silent on how these imperial events directly affected the Jewish population in Judah. The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are generally associated with the reign of Artaxerxes I, though determining precisely which Persian king is referenced in either book remains challenging. Fortunately, these unresolved details do not impact the overall interpretation of the chrono-specific prophecies found in Daniel chapter 7.

Now that the fourth beast has been correctly identified as the Achaemenid dynasty of ten kings, beginning with the reign of Darius I Hystaspes in 521 BCE, the “*little horn*” that arises and uproots three kings can be reasonably identified as Alexander the Great, the first king of Greece. In 334 BCE, Alexander launched his campaign against the Persian Empire, ultimately defeating its last ruler, Darius III Codomannus, and bringing the Achaemenid dynasty to an end.

As for the identity of the three kings symbolically “*plucked up by the roots*,” several possibilities emerge (and each will suffice for interpretive purposes):

Symbolic succession: One interpretation is that Alexander overcame the dynasty as a whole by defeating three kings named Darius—Darius I, II, and III—who collectively spanned the length of the Persian-Greek conflict.

Military leadership at Granicus: Another view holds that the “*three kings*” refer to the three satraps who led the Persian army of Darius III at the Battle of Granicus—Alexander’s first major battle on Asian soil. These were Arsites of Hellespontine Phrygia, Arsamenes of Cilicia, and Spithridates of Lydia and Ionia. Though technically satraps and not kings, they wielded significant regional authority on behalf of the Persian crown.

Threefold defeat of one king: A third possibility, and the one that most closely fits both the biblical imagery and historical record, is that Daniel’s vision symbolically refers to Alexander defeating Darius III three separate times—at the battles of Granicus (334 BCE), Issus (333 BCE), and Gaugamela (331 BCE). After the final defeat, Darius fled to Bactria, where he was killed. From that point forward, Alexander the Great and Hellenism reigned supreme over the former Persian Empire, including the land of Judah.

There is no credible evidence that Alexander ever visited Judea. The often-repeated story from Josephus—that Alexander came to Jerusalem and bowed before the high priest—is widely regarded by historians as legendary rather than factual. Regardless of whether he visited or not, Alexander’s conquests brought Hellenistic culture into Jewish life, initiating a cultural influence that would

provoke tensions in the land of Israel for generations. After Alexander's death in 323 BCE, his empire fragmented into several kingdoms. Two of these successor states—the Seleucid Empire to the north in Coele-Syria and the Ptolemaic Empire to the south in Egypt—would become rival powers vying for control of Judea, which lay between them. Their protracted conflict caused great suffering in the land of Israel and is described in remarkable detail in Daniel chapters 10 through 12, as will be discussed in the next chapter of this book.

Chapter 7 presents a more limited focus. The “*little horn*” in the vision, as indicated in verse 8b and verses 20b–21, represents the advent of Greek rule, starting with Alexander, but extends across time to later rulers in the Seleucid Empire during the period of sovereignty over the Jews. Verse 25a now describes this horn as having eyes and a mouth that speaks “*great things*” against the Most High. It wages war on the saints and seeks to change times and laws. This description aligns precisely with the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the aggressively Hellenizing Seleucid king.¹ In his effort to replace Jewish worship with Greek practices, Antiochus built a military fortress, The Akra, in the City of David, garrisoned it with soldiers to enforce his decrees, and appointed a Hellenistic high priest. He forbade circumcision and Sabbath observance under penalty of death, burned Torah scrolls, and desecrated the Temple by rededicating it to Olympian Zeus. The ultimate sacrilege came when a secondary altar was erected atop the Temple altar, and swine flesh was sacrificed on it. This defilement took place on the 25th of Kislev in the 145th year of the Seleucid era, corresponding to December 13, 167 BCE on the Gregorian calendar.

Verse 25: “until a time, times, and the dividing of time”

I had previously determined from Daniel chapter 12 that a “*time*,” when used as a prophetic unit of time in Daniel, represents a block of 228 Passovers. However, applying that definition to the phrase in Daniel 7:25b, “*a time, times,*

¹ Antiochus IV Epiphanes is identified clearly in Daniel 8:23-25: “*And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.*”

and the dividing of time,” was initially challenging. The logical approach was to assume that the phrase covers the same period in history as the nearly identical expression in Daniel 12:7, “*a time, times, and an half*” (see page 44). That made sense, especially since verse 25a clearly refers to Antiochus IV and his desecration of the Temple, which I had already identified as the starting point for the 3½ “*times*” in chapter 12. Yet, identifying the referents of the pronouns—“*they shall be given into his hand*”—proved more difficult.

To clarify the context, I turned to the history books to refresh my memory of events surrounding the desecration of the Temple in 167 BCE and the revolt that followed. The desecration itself marked a low point in Jewish history. The Maccabean revolt likely began the following year, in 166 BCE, and soon gained momentum. In late 164 BCE, the rebels captured Jerusalem, purified the Temple, rebuilt the altar of burnt offerings, and reinstituted the daily sacrifices. The rededication occurred on the 25th of Kislev in the 148th year of the Seleucid era, corresponding to December 10, 164 BCE. Not long afterward, probably in early 163 BCE, Antiochus IV died while campaigning in Media. His successor, Antiochus V, continued to face Jewish resistance as the Maccabees pressed forward in their fight for independence. This sequence of events helps frame the meaning of the prophetic phrase in Daniel 7:25b, anchoring it in the real-world historical struggle between Antiochus IV and the Jewish people during one of the most significant periods of persecution and deliverance in their history.

After the Battle of Adasa in early 161 BCE, during which Judah Maccabee and his irregular forces won a decisive victory over the Seleucid general Nicanor, the Jewish leadership recognized the inevitability of a harsh Seleucid retaliation. Realizing that Judean irregulars could not long resist the full might of the Seleucid army, Judah sought foreign support. He sent emissaries to Rome to request an alliance, hoping that Roman backing would deter further attacks. The Roman Senate received the Maccabean delegation, heard their appeal, and ratified a treaty of mutual friendship. This political pivot toward Rome occurred between the Battle of Adasa on March 4 and the Passover festival on April 4 in 161 BCE.

Judah’s appeal to Rome, though politically strategic, mirrored the earlier mistake of Asa of Judah, who had turned to Syria for protection rather than trusting in divine deliverance (see 2 Chronicles 16:7–9). The decision to appeal to Rome sheds light on the phrase in Daniel 7:25b: “*and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.*” In this context, the “*they*” refers to the Jewish people, and “*his hand*” can be understood symbolically as the

hegemonic power of Rome, under whose dominion the Jews would eventually suffer greatly. Rather than merely describing persecution, the passage also marks a transition in Jewish history, from resistance under Antiochus IV to dependence on the emerging world power whose influence would shape Jewish destiny for centuries to come. So, summing up, the chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel's vision predicted that the future of the Jewish people would be dominated by the power of Rome (and its later extension, the Byzantine Empire) for *"a time, times, and the dividing of time,"* which equals 798 Passovers.

Table 4.1 (see next page) demonstrates how to count the the 3½ "times" by counting 798 Passovers. The count begins with the Passover of 161 BCE, which is the first Passover observed after the appeal to Rome by Judah Maccabee. The count ends with the Passover of 637 CE, which is the last Passover before the capture of the Temple Mount by the Muslim Caliph Omar in February of 638 CE, the event which ended Roman-Byzantine dominion over the Jewish people for good and began centuries of Muslim sovereignty over the holiest site of the Jews. In the table, each Passover is denoted as "P-#" (where "#" is its number in the count), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year. After the initial ten Passovers (P-1 through P-10), Passovers are shown in ten-year increments, which allows you to quickly progress through the count.

Verse 12: "for a season and time"

In addition to the prophecy about the *"time, times, and the dividing of time"* that describes the Roman-Byzantine period, the seventh chapter contains another chrono-specific prophecy that incorporates the chronological markers *"season"* and *"time"* to describe a parallel period of Jewish history. That prophecy is found in verse 12, *"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."*

The key to understanding that prophecy is found in the phrase *"their lives were prolonged"* found in verse 12. It is an allusion to the last words spoken by Moses to the Israelites before they entered *Eretz Israel*, recorded in Deuteronomy, chapter 32, verses 46-47, *"And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it*

Table 4.1 – How to Count the 3½ “times” in Verse 25b

P-1 161 BCE	P-2 160 BCE	P-3 159 BCE	P-4 158 BCE	P-5 152 BCE	P-6 156 BCE	P-7 155 BCE	P-8 154 BCE	P-9 153 BCE	P-10 152 BCE
P-10 <i>see above</i>	P-20 142 BCE	P-30 132 BCE	P-40 122 BCE	P-50 112 BCE	P-60 102 BCE	P-70 92 BCE	P-80 82 BCE	P-90 72 BCE	P-100 62 BCE
P-110 52 BCE	P-120 42 BCE	P-130 32 BCE	P-140 22 BCE	P-150 12 BCE	P-160 2 BCE	P-170 9 CE	P-180 19 CE	P-190 29 CE	P-200 39 CE
P-210 49 CE	P-220 59 CE	P-230 69 CE	P-240 79 CE	P-250 89 CE	P-260 99 CE	P-270 109 CE	P-280 119 CE	P-290 129 CE	P-300 139 CE
P-310 149 CE	P-320 159 CE	P-330 169 CE	P-340 179 CE	P-350 189 CE	P-360 199 CE	P-370 209 CE	P-380 219 CE	P-390 229 CE	P-400 239 CE
P-410 249 CE	P-420 259 CE	P-430 269 CE	P-440 279 CE	P-450 289 CE	P-460 299 CE	P-470 309 CE	P-480 319 CE	P-490 329 CE	P-500 339 CE
P-510 349 CE	P-520 359 CE	P-530 369 CE	P-540 379 CE	P-550 389 CE	P-560 399 CE	P-570 409 CE	P-580 419 CE	P-590 429 CE	P-600 439 CE
P-610 449 CE	P-620 459 CE	P-630 469 CE	P-640 479 CE	P-650 489 CE	P-660 499 CE	P-670 509 CE	P-680 519 CE	P-690 529 CE	P-700 539 CE
P-710 549 CE	P-720 559 CE	P-730 569 CE	P-740 579 CE	P-750 589 CE	P-760 599 CE	P-770 609 CE	P-780 619 CE	P-790 629 CE	P-791 <i>see below</i>
P-791 630 CE	P-792 631 CE	P-793 632 CE	P-794 633 CE	P-795 634 CE	P-796 635 CE	P-797 636 CE	P-798 637 CE	---	---

Note that there was no year “0” (zero) when going from BCE to CE, so the count for the P-assovers in the transition decade from 2 BCE to 9 CE is determined as follows: P-assover number 160 in the count (P-160 above) occurred in the year 2 BCE, P-161 in 1 BCE, P-162 in 1 CE, P-163 in 2 CE, P-164 in 3 CE, P-165 in 4 CE, P-166 in 5 CE, P-167 in 6 CE, P-168 in 7 CE, P-169 in 8 CE, P-170 in 9 CE.

is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.” That admonition was preceded by the Song of Moses, which foretold that the Israelites would go whoring after strange gods, causing God to render judgment by removing the people from the land. Moses, in his dying words, stressed that the only way Israel could prolong its days in the land was to be faithful to God’s law, the observance of which was centered on the Tabernacle, and after the time of Solomon on the Temple in Jerusalem.

As foretold, the people forsook the law of God, so he used the Babylonians to render judgment on Israel by destroying the Temple and removing the people from the land, then brought them back after seventy years had been accomplished. Within two decades after their return, the Temple had been rebuilt and the people were once again observing the requirements of the Law, but soon drifted back to their old practices. When Antiochus IV banned the practice of Judaism in 167 BCE, he had the cooperation of many Jews, especially those from the privileged priestly families that had adopted the Hellenistic ways of their Seleucid overlords. However,

Table 4.2 – How to Count the “time” in Verse 12

P-1 161 BCE	P-2 160 BCE	P-3 159 BCE	P-4 158 BCE	P-5 157 BCE	P-6 156 BCE	P-7 155 BCE	P-8 154 BCE	P-9 153 BCE	P-10 152 BCE
P-10 <i>see above</i>	P-20 142 BCE	P-30 132 BCE	P-40 122 BCE	P-50 112 BCE	P-60 102 BCE	P-70 92 BCE	P-80 82 BCE	P-90 72 BCE	P-100 62 BCE
P-110 52 BCE	P-120 42 BCE	P-130 32 BCE	P-140 22 BCE	P-150 12 BCE	P-160 2 BCE	P-170 9 CE	P-180 19 CE	P-190 29 CE	P-200 39 CE
P-210 49 CE	P-220 59 CE	P-221 60 CE	P-222 61 CE	P-223 62 CE	P-224 63 CE	P-225 64 CE	P-226 65 CE	P-227 66 CE	P-228 67 CE
<i>Note that there was no year “0” (zero) when going from BCE to CE, so the count for the P-assovers in the transition decade from 2 BCE to 9 CE is determined as follows: P-assover number 160 in the count (P-160 above) occurred in the year 2 BCE, P-161 in 1 BCE, P-162 in 1 CE, P-163 in 2 CE, P-164 in 3 CE, P-165 in 4 CE, P-166 in 5 CE, P-167 in 6 CE, P-168 in 7 CE, P-169 in 8 CE, P-170 in 9 CE.</i>									

Jews in the more rural areas resisted Hellenization, and it was a rural priest named Mattathias, together with his five sons (strengthened by the archangel Michael, the protector of God’s people Israel; see Daniel chapter 12, verse 1), who began the revolt against Antiochus in 166 BCE that led to the liberation of Jerusalem from Seleucid rule, and to rededication of the Temple on December 10, 164 BCE.

In the following year, 163 BCE, the Seleucids, needing to placate their Jewish subjects so that their army could put down a rebellion elsewhere, granted religious freedom in Judea, allowing any Jew to once again legally practice Judaism. Early in 162 BCE, a decree was issued by Jewish leaders that required observance of the Law in the land, and the people celebrated Passover and the complete festival cycle that year. Thus, the condition God had stipulated for prolonging the lives of the Jewish people in their land (obedience to the Law and observance of the commandments) was met, initiating the “season” (the Passover of 162 BCE) and “time” (the 228 Passovers starting with the Passover in 161 BCE) that identified the period of prolonged life predicted in verse 12.¹

Table 4.2 (above) demonstrates how to count the “time” of prolonged life specified in verse 12. The count is initiated with the Passover of 161 BCE, the first Passover after Jewish religious practice resumed in Judea, and ends 228 Passovers later with the Passover of 67 CE. In the table for counting the Passovers observed during the “time” of prolonged lives, each Passover is denoted as “P-#” (where “#” is its number in the count), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year. Except for the initial ten Passovers (P-1 through P-10), and the final eight (P-221 through P-228), Passovers are shown in ten-year increments.

¹ This 228-year period is also the “time” in the “time of trouble” in Dan. 12:1.

The Passover of 67 CE marked the end of the period of prolonged lives in the land for the Jewish people. In that year the high priest Ananus ben Ananus was murdered by Zealots and Rome started mass deportations of the Jewish inhabitants in the Galilee. Josephus records the unusual portents, omens, and other events leading up to that year in his *The Wars of the Jews*, 6.5.2b-4:

2b. “A false prophet was the occasion of these people’s destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose on the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. Now a man that is in adversity does easily comply with such promises; for when such a seducer makes him believe that he shall be delivered from those miseries which oppress him, then it is that the patient is full of hopes of such his deliverance.”

3. “Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them. Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, a comet,¹ that continued a whole year. Thus also before the Jews’ rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus [Nisan, March/April], and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour. This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it. At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner court of the temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. Now those that kept watch in the

¹ A sighting of Halley’s Comet, which made an appearance on January 23, 66 CE.

temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it; who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty was able to shut the gate again. This also appeared to the vulgar to be a very happy prodigy, as if God did thereby open them the gate of happiness. But the men of learning understood it, that the security of their holy house was dissolved of its own accord, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies. So these publicly declared that the signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one and twentieth day of the month Artemisius [*Iyar, May/June*], a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun setting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, 'Let us remove hence.' But, what is still more terrible, there was one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a plebeian and a husbandman, who, four years before the war began, and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to God in the temple, began on a sudden to cry aloud, 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds [*cf. Dan. 7:2b*]. a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!' This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city. However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet did not he either say any thing for himself, or any thing peculiar to those that chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before. Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!' And when Albinus (for he was then procurator) asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till Albinus took him to be a madman, and dismissed him. Now, during all the time that passed before the war

began, this man did not go near any of the citizens, nor was seen by them while he said so; but he every day uttered these lamentable words, as if it were his premeditated vow, 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!' Nor did he give ill words to any of those that beat him every day, nor good words to those that gave him food; but this was his reply to all men, and indeed no other than a melancholy presage of what was to come. This cry of his was the loudest at the festivals; and he continued this ditty for seven years and five months, without growing hoarse, or being tired therewith, until the very time that he saw his presage in earnest fulfilled in our siege, when it ceased; for as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, 'Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!' And just as he added at the last, 'Woe, woe to myself also!' there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately; and as he was uttering the very same presages he gave up the ghost."

4. "Now if any one consider these things, he will find that God takes care of mankind, and by all ways possible foreshows to our race what is for their preservation; but that men perish by those miseries which they madly and voluntarily bring upon themselves; for the Jews, by demolishing the tower of Antonia, had made their temple four-square, while at the same time they had it written in their sacred oracles, 'That then should their city be taken, as well as their holy house, when once their temple should become four-square.' But now, what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how, 'about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth.' The Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular, and many of the wise men were thereby deceived in their determination. Now this oracle certainly denoted the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea. However, it is not possible for men to avoid fate, although they see it beforehand. But these men interpreted some of these signals according to their own pleasure, and some of them they utterly despised, until their madness was demonstrated, both by the taking of their city and their own destruction."

The Jewish rebellion had begun in the summer of 66 CE, when Eleazar, son of Ananias the high priest, reacting to insults by Roman soldiers in Caesarea, stopped the daily Temple sacrifices dedicated to honor Caesar, thus signaling the start of a revolt against Roman rule. Emboldened by that act of defiance, Zealots overran and killed the Roman garrison stationed in the Antonia Fortress in Jerusalem, and thereafter the revolt quickly spread throughout the city. The legate of Syria, Cestius Gallus, sent troops from Damascus to restore order, but

First Jewish-Roman War, 66-73 CE		
Year	Month	Important Events
66 CE	July	Sacrifices for emperor stopped by Temple authorities, spirit of rebellion spread throughout Jerusalem and Judea.
	September	King Agrippa sent troops to reinforce Jerusalem, Zealots led by Eleazar drove them out of the city; <i>Sicarii</i> led by Menahem seized Masada, captured large store of arms, headed to Jerusalem; Jewish rebels burned the High Priest's house, Agrippa's palace, and killed the defending Roman cohort while seizing the Antonia fortress.
	October	Jews defeated Roman forces led by Cestius Gallus at Beth Horon.
	November	Emperor Nero selected Vespasian to quell the growing rebellion.
67 CE	Spring	Vespasian assembled his army, began campaign in Galilee.
	Autumn	Vespasian subdued rebellion in Galilee, Josephus defected and became advisor to Vespasian; many Jews deported to Antioch and Rome to begin <i>Diaspora</i> ; Jewish rebels retreated to Jerusalem.
68 CE	June	Emperor Nero committed suicide beginning a year of turmoil back in Rome (known to historians as the "year of four emperors") and a year or so of relative calm on the battlefields of Judea.
69 CE	December	Vespasian returned to Rome to become emperor, left his son Titus in charge of prosecuting the war against the rebels in Judea.
70 CE	Spring	Titus prepared for final assault on Jerusalem, siege began; Jewish factions led by Simon bar-Giora, John of Gischala, and Eleazar the Zealot fought among themselves more than against Romans.
	May	Romans broke through outer defenses of Jerusalem.
	August	Roman forces captured Temple, destroyed the Temple buildings and burned the city of Jerusalem, Tenth Legion planted its standard (featuring an image of the emperor/god) on the Temple Mount.
73 CE	April	Romans captured Masada to end the First Jewish-Roman War

his forces were defeated in the Battle of Beth Horon, further encouraging the uprising of Jews in Galilee and Judea. Late in 66 CE, the Roman emperor Nero summoned one of his best generals, Vespasian, and commanded him to put down the rebellion in Judea once and for all. Vespasian moved deliberately, assembling sufficient forces in the seaport town of Caesarea to ensure eventual victory over the lightly-armed Jewish irregulars in the north. Beginning in 67 CE from his headquarters in Caesarea, Vespasian subdued the coastal plateau, then headed east to capture the Galilee and its surrounding territories. It was during

that part of the campaign that the Jewish general who would later be known as the historian Flavius Josephus defected to the Romans. For the better part of three years, the Roman legions, first under Vespasian and then under his son Titus after Vespasian was made emperor, captured cities in the countryside, enslaving and deporting Jews to other parts of the Roman empire. After Passover in 67 CE, which was celebrated in Jerusalem by more than 300,000 Jews, the Roman army began to close in around the city. Civil war soon broke out among the Jewish factions and the High Priest was dispatched. From 67 CE onward, the Jewish-Roman War resulted in the wholesale removal of Jews from the land as predicted by Daniel, thus bringing to an end the “*season and time*” of prolonged life for the Jewish people in their land and initiating their almost two-thousand-year *Diaspora* among the nations. In 70 CE, Titus ordered a final assault on Jerusalem, which ended with the destruction of the Temple, the city, and its people.

The period of 228 Passovers (a “*time*” in Daniel) from 161 BCE, soon after the deliverance of Israel by Michael, to 67 CE, soon after sacrifices ceased and the high priests was killed, comprise the “*time of trouble*” foretold in Daniel 12:1.

Verse 27: “an everlasting kingdom”

When God revealed the prophecies in the seventh chapter to Daniel, the things the prophet saw in his dream-visions caused him deep distress. As he put it in verse 28, “*my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me.*” His reaction was appropriate for an exiled Jew who was looking forward to Israel’s national redemption from Babylon and its restoration to the promised land. Instead, God was showing him that Jerusalem and the Temple—though destined to be rebuilt—would be destroyed yet again, and that the Jewish people would once more be exiled from the land to dwell among the nations. Daniel’s vision also revealed that Gentile nations would hold dominion over both the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary (Temple Mount) for a very long time. That news made Daniel physically ill. However, in the midst of those dire predictions, a message of hope was offered in verses 13–14, verse 17, and in verse 27—passages that foretold the coming of an everlasting kingdom given by the Ancient of Days to one like a Son of Man and to the saints of the Most High, to be possessed forever. It seems that the ultimate purpose of the seventh chapter of Daniel was to introduce the promise of that coming kingdom: an everlasting kingdom, to be ruled forever by the Anointed One of Israel.

WHAT SHALL BEFALL THY PEOPLE

READ DANIEL 10:1-12:4 ON PAGES 218-222 | SEE 6 ON OVERVIEW CHART

The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters of the Book of Daniel form the longest continuous prophetic section in the book. For interpretive purposes, the narrative can be divided into three parts.

THE FIRST PART includes all of chapter ten and the opening verse of chapter eleven, serving as a preamble to the prophecy that follows. Although it contains no predictions, it states the purpose of parts two and three—namely, *“to make thee [Daniel] understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days.”*

THE SECOND PART consists of the chapter 11, verses 2–35, and continues through the first four verses of chapter 12. It presents a direct historical forecast concerning the Jewish people, from their return from exile in 536 BCE to the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

THE THIRD PART covers Daniel 11:36–45, describing events that occurred between 70 CE and 638 CE. Many modern interpreters have mistakenly applied these verses either to the time of Antiochus IV or to a still-future fulfillment, leading to widespread misunderstanding about what the Bible actually teaches regarding the time of the end. This chapter will address and correct that interpretive error.

Fulfillment in History (before 70 CE)

In this section, verses 2–35 of chapter eleven and the first four verses of chapter twelve will be matched with their fulfillments in history, which are documented in the words of Polybius, Livy, and Josephus, and 1 and 2 Maccabees.

536-334 BCE

verse 2: *“And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”* ... This verse was written in 536 BCE, during the reign of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia,

¹ Some expositors claim that verses 2–35 are not prophecy at all but a later scribal record of events after they had happened in history; see related comments on page 22.

who had ended the Babylonian Empire three years earlier. The “yet three kings” are readily identified as the next three Achaemenid rulers: Cambyses II (r. 530–522), Smerdis (also known as Bardiya or possibly Gautama; r. 522–521), and Darius I Hystaspes (r. 521–486), later known as Darius the Great. Darius’s reign marked a golden age for Persia. He established Persepolis as a new capital, its walls rising sixty feet high. He built an extensive road network across the empire, connected the Red Sea to the Nile via canal, and significantly improved administrative systems. Although some sources suggest he mitigated harsh labor practices, slavery continued to exist in Persian society. Darius is also remembered for launching a military campaign across the Bosphorus, becoming the first Persian king to expand into Europe. In 490 BCE, seeking to punish Athens for supporting an Ionian revolt, he invaded Greece but was defeated at the Battle of Marathon. He was succeeded by his son Xerxes I (r. 486–465), who launched a full-scale invasion of Greece to neutralize Athenian influence. According to Herodotus, Xerxes commanded a massive army—allegedly over two million soldiers, including 10,000 elite Persian Immortals. After a costly victory at Thermopylae, Xerxes sacked and burned Athens in 480 BCE, sowing a deep and lasting hatred among the Greeks. That resentment would later fuel Alexander the Great’s campaign of revenge against Persia nearly two centuries later.

334-323 BCE

verse 3: “*And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.*” ... Now the action moves forward to the time of Alexander the Great, who avenged the burning of Athens by conquering the Achaemenid Persian Empire under the rule of Darius III Codomannus, defeating him three times, first at the Granicus River in 334 BCE, then at the Issus River in 333 BCE, and finally on the plains at Gaugamela in 331 BCE. Alexander went on to extend his empire as far north as the Hindu Kush (modern Afghanistan) and as far east as India, before returning to Babylon to plan the conquest of Arabia.

323-301 BCE

verse 4: “*And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.*” ... Alexander the Great died in Babylon in 323 BCE, at the

Seleucid and Ptolemaic Kings, 311-163 BCE

(shown in the order each reign began; all years BCE)

In Coele-Syria

In Egypt

Seleucus I Nicator, r. 311-281	Ptolemy I Soter, r. 305-284
.....	Ptolemy II Philadelphus, r. 284-246
Antiochus I Soter, r. 281-261	
Antiochus II Theos, r. 261-246	
.....	Ptolemy III Euergetes, r. 246-222
Seleucus II Callinicus, r. 246-225	
Seleucus III Ceraunus, r. 225-223	
Antiochus III the Great, r. 223-187	
.....	Ptolemy IV Philopator, r. 222-204
.....	Ptolemy V Epiphanes, r. 204-180
Seleucus IV Philopator, r. 187-175	
.....	Ptolemy VI Philometor, r. 180-145
Antiochus IV Epiphanes, r. 175-163	

height of his power. He did not designate an heir and his only legitimate son, Alexander IV, was not yet born when he died. Twenty-plus years of infighting among Alexander's generals followed his death, fracturing the empire. After the Battle of Ipsus in 301 BCE, Alexander's empire devolved into four main parts. Cassander ruled Greece, Lysimachus ruled Asia Minor, Seleucus I Nicator ruled Persia and Babylon, and Ptolemy I Soter ruled over Egypt and the Levant.

301-253 BCE, First Syrian War

verse 5: *"And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion."* ... By 281 BCE, two major Greek dynasties remained from the four remnants of the empire of Alexander, the Seleucids in Coele-Syria and the Ptolemies in Egypt (see list of kings above). For the next century, these two dynasties would dominate the lives of the Jews living in the land of Israel, which was located between the two regional powers. The king of the south is a reference to Ptolemy I Soter, and the prince who was strong above him refers to his son

and successor, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who expanded the influence and power of Egypt throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin, including Judea. The First Syrian War was fought between Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Antiochus I Soter from 274-271 BCE, and the result was a victory for the Ptolemies.

253-246 BCE, Second Syrian War

verse 6: *“And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.”* ... The Second Syrian War, a fight between Ptolemy II and Antiochus II Theos, began in 260 BCE. Seven years later, the two armies had exhausted each other. The back-and-forth warfare with no apparent winner showed both sides the futility of more war, so they made peace. As a symbol of reconciliation, Berenice Syra, the daughter of Ptolemy II, the king of the south, was given in marriage to the king of the north, Antiochus II, who was forced to set aside his wife Laodice I so that the marriage could take place. In 246 BCE, both Ptolemy II and Antiochus II died. Tradition says that Antiochus was poisoned by Laodice, who wanted the throne for her son Seleucus, while Berenice, now an Egyptian outsider at the Seleucid court, persuaded her brother, the newly crowned Ptolemy III Euergetes of Egypt, to come to Antioch to help install her infant son as king. By the time Ptolemy arrived, however, Berenice and her son had been assassinated. Ptolemy III then declared war on the new Seleucid king, Seleucus II Callinicus.

246-223 BCE, Third Syrian War

verses 7-9: *“But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.”* ... Berenice was the daughter of Ptolemy II, so his son and her brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, is the one being referred to as “a branch from her roots” in the prophecy. After his sister’s assassination in 246 BCE, Ptolemy III declared war against Seleucus II, thus beginning the Third Syrian War that continued from

246-241 BCE. At first, Ptolemy won impressive victories in Syria and Anatolia, and his army was successful as far east as Babylon. Later, Seleucus II was betrayed by his younger brother, Antiochus Hierax, who declared his independence from Seleucus after the latter had been persuaded by his mother Laodice to grant Antiochus a coregency. Weakened by defection and defeats, Seleucus II sued for peace in 241 BCE, in exchange giving Ptolemy III extensive territory along the coast of Syria, including Antioch, and large quantities of gold and silver in tribute. Ptolemy III was succeeded by his son, Ptolemy IV Philopator.

223-217 BCE, Fourth Syrian War

verse 10: *“But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.”* ... The narrative of the prophecy now switches back to the northern kingdom to focus on the Seleucids. After the death of Seleucus II, his eldest son, Seleucus III Ceraunus, became king and soon attacked Ptolemy III’s provinces in Asia, initiating the Fourth Syrian War from 219-217 BCE. Unsuccessful as a military leader, he was assassinated by members of the Seleucid army. His ambitious 18-year-old brother, Antiochus III, later known to history as “the Great,” was recognized as king in his place. Once established on the throne, Antiochus III set out to restore glory to the kingdom, his intention being to recover all territorial possessions lost since the days of Seleucus I Nicator. Antiochus first subdued the eastern provinces and Anatolia, then turned his attention toward Syria and Egypt. In 218 BCE, he marched his army through Judea to the border of Egypt, where he stayed for a year preparing for a major assault. Meanwhile, the new king of Egypt, Ptolemy IV Philopator, presided over a kingdom in disarray after years of imperial intrigue and maneuvering, and, because he was very young, was but a pawn of his counselor, Sosibius, who began training an army to repel the inevitable Seleucid attack. In addition to Greeks, Sosibius conscripted and trained Egyptians, the first time that native Egyptians had comprised part of a Ptolemaic army. By the summer of 217 BCE, the Battle of Raphia between the king of the north and king of the south was set to begin.

217-204 BCE, Battle of Raphia

verses 11-12: *“And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth*

a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it.” ... The Battle of Raphia was fought on June 19 in 217 BCE, between the armies of Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV. The battle took place on the sands of what is called Gaza today, near the modern town of Rafah. According to the historian Polybius, Antiochus III had superior forces, perhaps as many as 70,000 foot soldiers and 5,000 cavalry, with 73 war elephants of Indian stock. Ptolemy had fewer soldiers and cavalry, and his war elephants from Africa were easily spooked by the Indian elephants. At first the battle went heavily in favor of Antiochus, but, thinking he had victory in hand, he made a strategic blunder that allowed Ptolemy's better-disciplined army to counter-attack and rout his forces. Antiochus was forced to withdraw to Lebanon while Ptolemy consolidated his dominion over Coele-Syria. The native Egyptians recruited and trained by Sosibius performed well and much of the victory was attributable to their effectiveness, but they would later rebel against the rule of Ptolemy and form a separate government in Upper Egypt that lasted from 207-186 BCE. Ptolemy IV lost about half of his kingdom in the process, which set the stage for the rise of the Seleucids as rulers of Judea.

204-194 BCE, Fifth Syrian War

verses 13-17: *“For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed. He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.”* ... Ptolemy IV died in 204 BCE, leaving the throne of Egypt to the child king, Ptolemy V. The power struggle that resulted among the Egyptian leaders soon led to anarchy. Antiochus III took advantage of the situation and invaded Coele-Syria in 202 BCE, after making a military alliance with Philip V

of Macedon. The Seleucid forces first overran the coastal areas of Judea and then achieved a decisive victory over the army of Ptolemy in the Battle of Panium in 198 BCE. At that point, Rome, fearing disruption of vital grain supplies from Egypt, warned Antiochus and Philip not to invade Egypt, and they complied. Antiochus was content to reestablish his rule over Coele-Syria and the coastal areas. Since Ptolemy was facing a revolt at home, he sued for peace in 195 BCE, signing away Coele-Syria and agreeing to marry Cleopatra I, the daughter of Antiochus III. The marriage took place in 194 BCE, with Antiochus hoping to gain influence in the Egyptian court through his daughter, but she proved to be loyal to her husband. The most significant result of the peace treaty of 195 BCE was the permanent transfer of Judea and Jerusalem to Seleucid rule.

195-187 BCE

verses 18-19: *“After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.”* ... With peace secured on his southern flank, Antiochus III attacked Greece with 10,000 soldiers to aid the revolt against Greek rule by the Aetolians, who elected him their commander in chief. That westward thrust soon brought Antiochus into conflict with Rome, exacerbated when he provided refuge to Rome’s nemesis, Hannibal, at his court. The Romans responded by defeating Antiochus at Thermopylae, forcing him to withdraw back into Asia. The Roman army then proceeded to wrest Anatolia away from Seleucid control by winning the Battle of Magnesia. That defeat, combined with the defeat of Hannibal at sea, gave Rome control of Asia Minor for good, a fact that was made official by the Treaty of Apamea in 188 BCE. That treaty saddled Antiochus with heavy debt to Rome, and he had to send his son Mithridates, who would later rename himself Antiochus IV Epiphanes, to Rome as a hostage. With Seleucid authority weakened, the eastern provinces gained independence. Antiochus III died in 187 BCE in Persia, trying to reassert his authority over his diminishing empire.

187-175 BCE

verses 20-21: *“Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour*

of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.”

... Antiochus III was succeeded by Seleucus IV Philopater. Because of the heavy tribute now being demanded by Rome and the greatly reduced territory from which to generate revenue, Seleucus resorted to heavy taxation of his remaining subjects. At one point, Seleucus ordered his treasurer, Heliodorus, to plunder the empire's temples, including the treasury of the Temple in Jerusalem. The priests and people wailed and lamented and entreated God to prevent the sacrilege, and God responded with the help that had been prophesied in Daniel chapter 12, verse 1. A vivid and detailed account of what happened at that time is given in the apocryphal 2 Maccabees 3:23-39:

“Nevertheless Heliodorus executed that which was decreed. Now as he was there present himself with his guard about the treasury, the Lord of spirits, and the Prince of all power, caused a great apparition, so that all that presumed to come in with him were astonished at the power of God, and fainted, and were sore afraid. For there appeared unto them an horse with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely, and smote at Heliodorus with his forefeet, and it seemed that he that sat upon the horse had complete harness of gold. Moreover two other young men appeared before him, notable in strength, excellent in beauty, and comely in apparel, who stood by him on either side; and scourged him continually, and gave him many sore stripes. And Heliodorus fell suddenly unto the ground, and was compassed with great darkness: but they that were with him took him up, and put him into a litter. Thus him, that lately came with a great train and with all his guard into the said treasury, they carried out, being unable to help himself with his weapons: and manifestly they acknowledged the power of God. For he by the hand of God was cast down, and lay speechless without all hope of life. But they praised the Lord, that had miraculously honoured his own place: for the temple; which a little afore was full of fear and trouble, when the Almighty Lord appeared, was filled with joy and gladness. Then straightways certain of Heliodorus' friends prayed Onias, that he would call upon the most High to grant him his life, who lay ready to give up the ghost. So the high priest, suspecting lest the king should misconceive that some treachery had been done to Heliodorus by the Jews, offered a sacrifice for the health of the man. Now as the high priest was making an atonement, the same young men in the same clothing appeared and stood beside Heliodorus, saying, Give Onias the high priest great thanks, insomuch as for his sake the Lord hath granted thee life: And seeing that thou hast been scourged from heaven, declare unto all men the mighty power of God.

And when they had spoken these words, they appeared no more. So Heliodorus, after he had offered sacrifice unto the Lord, and made great vows unto him that had saved his life, and saluted Onias, returned with his host to the king. Then testified he to all men the works of the great God, which he had seen with his eyes. ... For he that dwelleth in heaven hath his eye on that place, and defendeth it; ..." ¹

In the closing years of Seleucus IV's rule, the Roman Senate, wanting a better guarantee of the king's fealty, demanded that he send his son and heir, Demetrius, to be held as a hostage, at the same time releasing Seleucus' brother Mithridates as a token of their good will. Seleucus IV died in 175 BCE, possibly poisoned by Heliodorus, but many attributed his demise to the machinations of his ambitious brother Mithridates. Whatever the case, that left the door open for Mithridates to work his mischief since the legitimate heir to the throne, Demetrius, was still being held in Rome. He moved quickly to secure the throne for himself when he heard of his brother's death, making his way to Pergamum, where he sought the help of King Eumenes II to establish his claim to the throne. Heliodorus had another son of Seleucus, a five-year-old child named Antiochus, crowned as king, but Mithridates quickly maneuvered himself into a coregency. The child-king Antiochus did not fair well under that arrangement, being murdered not long after it began. That left the throne in the sole possession of Mithridates.

175-168 BCE, Sixth Syrian War

verses 22-28: *"And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time. And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty*

¹ Daniel 12:1-4 describes the empowerment of the Jews by God that led to the Maccabean revolt provoked by the period of persecution beginning with Seleucus IV and Heliodorus in 187 BCE and culminating with the taking away of the daily sacrifices by Antiochus IV on 25 Kislev (December 13), 167 BCE. When Heliodorus was repelled from the Temple, that was the literal fulfillment of verse 1, *"And at that time shall Michael stand up"*

army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land." ... After the death of the child-king Antiochus, Mithridates overpowered all further opposition, usurped the throne, and changed his name to Antiochus IV Epiphanes to bolster his authority. Immediately, Antiochus set about to Hellenize and unify his realm, including Judea, initiating a struggle for the hearts and minds of the Jewish people that would dominate the history of the Jews for centuries. Onias III was the high priest in Jerusalem when Antiochus became king and was known for his faithfulness to the traditions of Judaism and resistance to Hellenization. He had a brother, Joshua, who had adopted the Hellenistic ways of the Seleucids, and had even changed his name to its Greek equivalent, Jason. Aware that Antiochus was in severe need of money, Jason offered him a bribe to set aside Onias and appoint him as high priest in his brother's place. Antiochus was only too happy to do so, installing Jason as high priest in 174 BCE. Jason thus became the first high priest over the Jewish people to be appointed by a non-Jewish secular authority, much to the chagrin of the many faithful Jews still residing in the land. Two years later, Jason sent a Temple official named Menelaus to Antiochus bearing his tribute in gold and silver for that year. Instead of delivering the money, Menelaus added more gold to Jason's tribute and, representing the total as his own, bribed Antiochus to supplant Jason and install him as high priest in his place. Antiochus greedily did so.

While these priestly machinations were taking place in the inner circles of Temple leadership, Antiochus, eager to add the riches of the Nile to his imperial revenue, decided to tour Egypt, entering with a small army to act as bodyguard and posing as the protector of his nephew, the newly crowned 14-year-old king, Ptolemy VI Philometor, son of Antiochus' sister Cleopatra I. Once in Egypt as a benefactor of Ptolemy, Antiochus distributed money to gain the favor of the Egyptian people. At the same time, his generals reconnoitered the kingdom's defenses. In these deceitful ways, Antiochus laid the groundwork for his later attempt to conquer Egypt by force. By 170 BCE, Antiochus deemed everything in readiness, so he again set out for Egypt. He moved his army to the border, where he was met by a large Egyptian force, but the army of Ptolemy VI was

unable to stop him. He captured Pelusium and Memphis, including his nephew Ptolemy VI, and set out to attack Alexandria. To curry favor with the Egyptians, Antiochus publicly supported Ptolemy VI as a puppet king, conducting many friendly meetings and war conferences with him in Memphis, and, to appease Rome, left Ptolemy on the throne when he withdrew from Egypt to return to Syria. As he passed through Judea in 169 BCE, Antiochus' soldiers plundered the city of Jerusalem and killed anyone who opposed them, a portent of even worse things to come on his next visit. Back in Egypt, the Alexandrians, once Antiochus and his army had gone home, renounced Ptolemy VI and declared their independence, crowning his younger brother, Ptolemy VII Euergetes, as their king. Still a puppet king in Memphis, Ptolemy VI initially praised his uncle Antiochus, but later formed a strategically wise but uneasy alliance with his brother, agreeing to rule Egypt jointly and oppose Antiochus united as one.

168 BCE-67 CE

verses 29-35: *"At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed."* ... Angered by the alliance between the Ptolemy brothers, Antiochus invaded Egypt a second time, in 168 BCE, and had his fleet capture Chittim (Cyprus). The Ptolemy brothers appealed to Rome for help, and the Senate complied. As Antiochus approached Alexandria, he was met by three Roman senators. Popillius, speaking for the Senate, demanded that Antiochus withdraw from Egypt and Chittim (his ships were thus turned back against him). The Roman historian Livy described the meeting in his history of Rome, *Ab Urbe Condita*, xlv.12, as follows:

“After receiving the submission of the inhabitants of Memphis and of the rest of the Egyptian people, some submitting voluntarily, others under threats, [*Antiochus*] marched by easy stages towards Alexandria. After crossing the river at Eleusis, about four miles from Alexandria, he was met by the Roman commissioners, to whom he gave a friendly greeting and held out his hand to Popilius. Popilius, however, placed in his hand the tablets on which was written the decree of the senate and told him first of all to read that. After reading it through he said he would call his friends into council and consider what he ought to do. Popilius, stern and imperious as ever, drew a circle round the king with the stick he was carrying and said, ‘Before you step out of that circle give me a reply to lay before the senate.’ For a few moments [*Antiochus*] hesitated, astounded at such a peremptory order, and at last replied, ‘I will do what the senate thinks right.’ Not till then did Popilius extend his hand to the king as to a friend and ally. Antiochus evacuated Egypt at the appointed date, and the commissioners exerted their authority to establish a lasting concord between the brothers [*Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII*], as they had as yet hardly made peace with each other.”

While Antiochus was preparing his army to retreat back to Syria after his humiliation by the Romans, erroneous news that he had been killed in Egypt arrived in Jerusalem. That report stimulated the former high priest Jason, who Antiochus had removed from that post in favor of the briber Menelaus, to gather a thousand men and launch an attack on the city of Jerusalem and the Temple, hoping to regain his seat of authority. Menelaus was forced to take refuge inside the Akra fortress, where a garrison of Seleucid soldiers held out against the rebels. When Antiochus heard about the revolt, he marched to Jerusalem¹

¹ Scholars disagree about the number of times Antiochus IV passed through and plundered Jerusalem. One visit is indicated in each of the apocryphal books of 1 Maccabees 1:20-30 and 2 Maccabees 5:1-16, with plundering mentioned in both instances. A good case can be made that two separate instances are recorded, one in each book, thus providing evidence that there were indeed two visits. Two distinct visits are indicated in Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12.246-251, in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q248), and in Daniel chapter 11, verses 28-32. Josephus mentions plundering on the second visit, as do the other two-visit sources. Since Antiochus invaded Egypt twice, it makes sense that he visited Jerusalem two times, once in 169 BCE and again in 168/7 BCE. It also makes sense that his army would have plundered and killed opponents on both occasions. However, it seems much more likely that the wholesale plundering of the Temple itself, and the widespread massacres described in several sources, both of which would have caused a severe reaction among the Jews in both Jerusalem and the countryside, is more logically associated with the period of unrest leading to the Maccabean revolt that began in 167/166 BCE.

to put down the insurrection, which he did with brutality, killing 40,000 Jewish men, women, and children, and enslaving even more. Antiochus also reinstated Menelaus to his post as high priest.

That was the prelude to a time of trouble for the Jews that would surpass anything yet seen in Judea and Jerusalem.¹ During the next year, the practice of Judaism was forbidden by royal decree, as was the rite of circumcision and the observance of the sabbath. Torah scrolls were confiscated and burned. Anyone caught trying to observe Jewish rituals was summarily executed, usually by being burned alive. The Temple storehouses were looted with the help of Menelaus, its vessels removed and the treasury emptied. The daily morning and evening sacrifices were stopped for the first time since the return from Babylon when, to make a place for his soldiers to worship Zeus Olympius, Antiochus built an altar in the inner Temple, complete with a statue of the Greek god, erecting it atop the sacred altar of burnt offering. Then, on the 25th day of Kislev² in the 145th year of the Seleucid Empire, which is equivalent to the proleptic date December 13, 167 BCE in Gregorian reckoning, the flesh of swine was offered on the altar, the ultimate desecration of the place considered most holy by the Jewish people.

Scholars debate whether the desecration of the Temple was the spark that caused the Maccabean³ revolt that began thereafter, but one thing is certain, the Jews had more than enough reason to rebel. The insurrection itself started in the rural town of Modin when a local priest named Mattathias refused to sacrifice to Greek gods on the town altar, publicly disobeying the decree by Antiochus that all of his subjects must worship the gods of the Hellenistic pantheon. Mattathias then proceeded to kill a Hellenized Jew who tried to comply in his place. He and his five sons immediately fled to the Judean wilderness to escape death and there began the fight for religious freedom,³ but Mattathias died within the

¹ Dan. 12:1a: *"And at that time shall Michael stand up [ca. 178 bce], the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble [the 228 Pasovers from 161 BCE to 67 CE], such as never was since there was a nation"*

² The 25th of Kislev (a day and month on the Jewish calendar) is not equivalent to December 25th (a day and month on the Gregorian calendar), as assumed by the authors of many commentaries and study Bibles. They incorrectly assume that the days in Kislev exactly align with the days in December. However, the alignment varies from year to year. That wrong assumption results in error when used to interpret chrono-specific prophecy.

³ The term Maccabee is derived from the nickname of Judah, called "the Maccabee" ("the Hammer"), or it could be based on an acronym for the Torah verse "**Mi CHamocha BA'elim YHWH**", "*Who is like unto thee among the mighty, O Lord!*" from Exodus 15:11.

year. His eldest son, Judah, gathered an army of irregulars and began the effort to gain independence from the rule of the Seleucids. The guerrilla tactics employed by the Maccabees were successful against the more-regimented Syrian troops, especially since the rebels knew the lay of the difficult Judean landscape infinitely better than their foreign adversaries. After three years of warfare, the Maccabean forces had captured Jerusalem. The priests immediately set about to rededicate the Temple and build a new altar of burnt offering. Daily sacrifices were resumed on the 25th day of the month of Kislev in the 148th year of the Seleucid Empire, which is equivalent December 10, 164 BCE in Gregorian reckoning, 1,096 days after they has been stopped (but not 1,150 days; see footnote 2 on page 13).

The prophecy in verses 2-32 of the eleventh chapter goes into great detail about the struggle between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, and, more important theologically since it relates to the relationship of the Jewish people with God, between Hellenism and Judaism. After Antiochus profanes the Temple and stops the daily sacrifices, the prophecy reaches a turning point when Jerusalem was liberated by the Maccabees, the Temple altar was reconsecrated, and the daily sacrifices resumed, as described in verse 32b, *“but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”* The prophecy then jumps to the future in verses 33-35, *“And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.”* The meaning of the last phrase in verse 35b, *“even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed,”* can be understood chronologically by recalling that the interpretation of Daniel 7, verse 12, in which the phrase *“their lives were prolonged for a season and time”* is also anchored to the reestablishment of Jewish law in Judea in 162 BCE. Apparently the *“time appointed”* reference in verse 35 is foretelling the future period of the *Diaspora*, which can be dated from 67 CE onward (see page 60).

At that point, it is good to remember the stated purpose of the eleventh chapter, which is revealed in its introduction in the tenth chapter, in verse 14, *“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days.”* In pursuit of that goal of revealing what shall befall the Jewish people after the time of the prophet Daniel, the prophecy has so far described events that have taken the Jewish people through the Achaemenid Persian period

that followed the Exile in Babylon down to the challenges of Hellenism, specifically mentioning the profanation of the Temple altar by Antiochus IV and subsequent interruption of the sacrificial system central to the Mosaic Law. The prophecy proceeds to describe the restoration of the Temple system by the Maccabees, followed by a time of distress that continues “*for a season and time*” (see page 54), ending with the start of the *Diaspora*, which resulted in the first widespread dispersal of Jews among the nations beginning in 67 CE, an event followed by the destruction of the Temple building in 70 CE.

All of the events described in the prophecy so far have involved the Temple, the city of Jerusalem, and the covenant governing the Jewish people’s possession of the land. It now seems logical to assume that the rest of the prophecy will also involve the fate of the city of Jerusalem, the Temple, and the people’s possession of the land, and so it does. After progressing forward in time to “*the time of the end*” mentioned in verse 35, which ended with the start of the *Diaspora* in 67 CE, the prophecy resumes its forward movement through time in verses 36-45.

Fulfillment in History (after 70 CE)

The placement in history of the events described in verses 36-45 has been the subject of heated debate among expositors over the years. Some expositors claim that the prophecy in those verses was fulfilled completely during the time of Antiochus IV. Others say that history will see fulfillment of those verses only in the future. A few expositors have proposed fulfillments that fall in between the two extremes. However, none have proposed fulfillments that are post-biblical, yet found in recorded history looking backwards from our viewpoint today. Nevertheless, that is where the fulfillments of the prophecies in those verses are to be found. Using clues in the verses themselves, the time frame for the events in those verses can be determined, and, once that time frame has been established, the various events mentioned in those verses can be identified as they correlate with history, and as they relate to the fate of the Jewish people.

The key to understanding the prophecy is found in verses 42-43: “*He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the*

Ethiopians shall be at his steps.” These verses describe a king that will conquer Egypt after coming through the land of Israel, and will approach near to both Libya and Ethiopia (ancient Cush). Fortunately, from the standpoint of identifying that king, there have been only a few conquerors of Egypt since 67 CE, the year at which the events in the prophecy left off in verse 35. Another key to understanding the prophecy is to realize that the eleventh chapter of Daniel employs a chronology that parallels that in the seventh chapter of Daniel.¹ In the same way that the time period described in verse 35b of the eleventh chapter was related to the “season and time” in the seventh chapter, as explained on page 74, verses 36-45 that follow verse 35 have a parallel structure in the seventh chapter as well, in verse 25b: *“and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”* That parallel time period is the 798 years of Roman-Byzantine hegemony over the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem that began in 161 BCE, when Judah Maccabee appealed to Rome for help against the Seleucid army, and ended when Caliph Omar captured Jerusalem and the Temple Mount for Islam in the year 638 CE. That time frame from 161 BCE through 638 CE gives the time period in which the conqueror of Egypt described in the prophecy in verses 42-43 will be found in documented history.

Since Antiochus IV never captured all of Egypt, never threatened Libya or Ethiopia militarily, and died in early 163 BCE, he cannot be the conqueror of Egypt between 161 BCE and 638 CE who is described in verses 42-43 of the eleventh chapter. Looking at Egyptian history during that time period, there is only one king who came down through the land of Israel and conquered all of Egypt, then made military excursions into both Libya and Ethiopia that are documented in the historical record. That king is Chosroes II Parvez, the twenty-second king of the Sassanid Persian Empire, who reigned from 590-628 CE. Skipping over verses 36-39 for the moment,² the narrative in verses 40-44 describes the struggle between the Byzantine and Sassanid Persian empires from 602-628 CE, and it specifically describes the conquests of Chosroes II during that period. So, let us take verses 40-45 and examine them verse by verse, as follows:

¹ See the “Overview Chart” (located at the end of this book) for a comparison of the timelines for the seventh and the eleventh chapters. Note that the seventh chapter divides into three timelines, one for a “season and time” ending in 67 CE, another for “time and times and the dividing of time” (3½ “times”) ending in 638 CE, and a third that is everlasting in duration, without end.

² Verses 36-39 describe an earlier king, not Chosroes II, as will be shown later in this chapter.

624-638 CE

verse 40a: *“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships.”* ... The phrase “time of the end” refers to the conclusion of the time period defined in Daniel chapter 7, verse 25b, the latter part of the 3½ “times” that ended in 638 CE. A description of the events that will happen at the very end of that time period is being given in verse 40a, and three political entities are described: (1) the king of the south, who shall push at **him**, (2) the king of the north who will come against **him**, and then (3) the entity described with the pronoun **him**. Since the “him” has already been identified as the king of the Sassanid Empire Chosroes II (and his successors), the identities of the other two personalities can be easily determined from history. The king of the south is Mohammed and the nascent army of Islam, which, after 622 CE, was pushing northward toward Persian lands after consolidating rule over Arabia, even making a few tentative excursions into the Persian lands east of the Jordan River just before Mohammed’s death in 632 CE. The king of the north is the emperor of the Byzantine Empire, Heraclius, who reigned as emperor from 610-641 CE. Using his large navy, he sailed his army across the Black Sea in 624 CE, landed in Armenia, then marched overland and attacked the Sassanid Empire through its northern back door while Chosroes was preoccupied with solidifying his gains in Anatolia and Egypt, and was thus unprepared to defend his heartland. The events described in verse 40a are a preview of the events described in verses 40b-44, which elaborate on the rapid expansion of the Sassanid Persian Empire. Verse 40a foretells the decline and final defeat of the Sassanid Persians by Byzantium in 628 CE, and gives the first hint at the rise of Islam, which would go on to supplant both powers, conquering Judea and Jerusalem in 638 CE.

602-616 CE

verses 40b-43a: *“... and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt”* ... Verses 40b-44 are a description of the rapid expansion of the Sassanid Persian Empire from 605-628 CE. As pointed out in the preceding section, that period of

expansion of the empire is described out of order, after the description of the final demise of the empire in real time as previewed in the overview given in verse 40a.¹ The empire's expansion began in 602 CE. In that year, the Byzantine emperor Maurice, who had helped establish Chosroes II on the Sassanid throne, was killed in a palace coup in Constantinople. The young Sassanid king, using the murder of Maurice as a pretext to break the peace treaty that had been signed before the death of Maurice, attacked the Byzantine provinces in Asia Minor, the area known today as central and western Turkey. From 605-613 CE, the Sassanid armies of Chosroes captured the important cities of Dara, Amida, Edesa, Hierapolis, Aleppo, Apamea, Caesarea, and Damascus, plus all of the surrounding provincial territories. Emboldened by his relatively easy victories, Chosroes declared a holy war against Byzantine Christianity, and boasted that he would extend the empire and its Zoroastrian religion even beyond the far-flung boundaries that had existed under Darius III a thousand years earlier.

Pausing in Damascus, Chosroes made a strategic political decision that was designed to weaken the Byzantine defenses in Judea, through which he had to pass to invade Egypt. He appointed the son of the Jewish Exilarch in Babylon, a mystic named Nehemiah ben Hushiel, as nominal head of his armies, although his general Shahrbaraz, known as "the king's boar," actually led the invasion. The Jews in the land of Israel rallied behind the invading army of Chosroes, who was considered by many Jews to be a "second Cyrus" who would return them back to self-governance and help them restore their Temple in Jerusalem. They had been treated harshly by the Byzantine Christians for more than three-hundred years and were eager for a change of regime. With the help of thousands of Jewish citizens inside its walls, Jerusalem was captured by the Persians in 614 CE, and a massacre ensued. Centuries of hatred and resentment were unleashed against the Christian populace, holy sites, and clerics.² Zechariah, bishop of Jerusalem, along with the "true cross" relic, were carried captive back to the Persian capital. The part of the prophecy about Egypt was fulfilled in 616 CE, two years after the capture of Jerusalem, when Egypt was captured by the army of Chosroes II under the command of Shahrbaraz.

¹ Daniel foretold the rise and fall of the Sassanid empire in verse 40a, then expanded on that verse by giving the details of that rise and fall in verses 40b-45.

² The sack of Jerusalem by the Sassanids and their Jewish allies was undoubtedly a bloody affair, but the best-preserved account, that of the monk Antiochus Strategos, is probably an exaggeration skewed toward a Byzantine perspective.

As for the lands of Moab, Edom, and the chief of Ammon mentioned in verse 41, that is referring to the Arabs living in the lands formerly occupied by those kingdoms, since they had long since ceased to exist by their earlier names by the time of Chosroes II's invasion. The former territories of the Moabites, Edomites, and Ammonites were occupied by the Bani Ghassanids, a tribe of Monophysite Christians who had been allied with Byzantium for many years, acting as buffers against Sassanid Persia. When Chosroes captured Syria and Judea in 614 CE, he only partially overran the territory of the Ghassanids. When Heraclius began his counterattack against Persia in 624 CE, the Ghassanids attacked Chosroes and reclaimed their lost lands east of the Jordan River. That guerilla warfare against the Sassanids in what is today eastern Syria and western Jordan greatly aided the Byzantine cause. In appreciation, Heraclius appointed the chief of the Ghassanids, Jabala ibn al-Ayham, as King of the Arabs.

616-624 CE

verses 43b-44: “... and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.” ... After capturing Egypt, the army of Chosroes II apparently made incursions into Libya as far as present-day Tripoli, and pushed up the Nile toward Ethiopia. There is no evidence that the Sassanids captured these territories during that period, but historical documents, and some recent archeological evidence, indicate that the Sassanids plundered westward into Cyrenaica on the coast of Libya, and perhaps inland to the Siwa Oasis, and southward beyond the first Nile cataract.¹ Whether or not the Sassanids actually entered Libya and Ethiopia in force is not the point of the prophecy, however. It merely says that these regions “*shall be at his steps*,” and that was certainly the case. Chosroes II had expanded his empire to its greatest extent by 624 CE, being almost unstoppable for more than two decades, but his fortunes began to turn that year when Heraclius felt strong enough to begin a counteroffensive. With Chosroes’ resources devoted to consolidating his gains in Egypt and Anatolia, the eastern provinces began to revolt. Heraclius then sailed his Byzantine army across the Black Sea and attacked the Sassanid rear through Armenia. That required Chosroes to leave Egypt and rush his army back home to meet the challenges in the north and east, as the prophecy had foretold.

¹ Matteo Comparetti, “The Sassanians in Africa” (*Transoxiana*, vol. 4; July, 2002).

614-617 CE, Second attempt to rebuild the Temple

verse 45: *“And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”* ... Verse 45 now looks back in time to the capture of Jerusalem in 614 CE. After taking the city, Chosroes II established Nehemiah ben Hushiel, son of the Exilarch in Babylon and figurehead commander of the Persian army during the invasion, as governor in Jerusalem, thus planting the tabernacles of his palace on the holy mountain (Temple Mount). Ben Hushiel governed the city with a twelve-man “council of the righteous,” exercising political and religious authority. Soon after being installed as governor of Judea, he began making preparations for rebuilding the Temple, and he also began sorting out genealogies in anticipation of resuming the priesthood. However, ben Hushiel was killed by a mob of rioting Christian youths only a few months after being appointed governor. Chosroes, needing to placate the city’s anti-Jewish Christian majority, appointed a Christian governor to replace ben Hushiel and banned Jews from approaching within three miles of the city gates, dashing all hopes for a rebuilt Temple. In 628 CE, the city of Jerusalem was recaptured by Heraclius, whereupon thousands of Persians and Jews were killed in the process as the city reverted to Byzantine rule. A decade later, after the Muslims captured Jerusalem from the Byzantines, Sebeos recorded that a small group of Jewish rebels had succeeded in building an altar on the Temple Mount, but “Ishmaelites” forced its removal.

Returning to verses 36-39

Verses 36–39 were skipped in order to first identify the “him” opposed by the king of the north and the king of the south, the one who would overrun Egypt after passing through the land of Israel in verses 40–45. That figure has now been identified as Chosroes II of the Sassanid Persian Empire. With that identification in place, we can return to examine the king described in verses 36–39. The exposition of verses 40–45 established that the final time period covered by the prophecy in Daniel chapter 11 spans the years 602–638 CE, so the king described in the earlier verses must be someone who ruled before 602 CE but after 67 CE—someone significant to Jewish history whose actions match the description in the prophecy. History provides us with just such a person: a Roman emperor whose brief reign fits the prophetic outline exactly. His name was Julian, known to history as Julian the Apostate.

363 CE, First attempt to rebuild the Temple

verse 36-39: “And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.” ... Twenty-three years after the death of Constantine I, who opened the Roman Empire to Christianity in 313 CE by issuing the Edict of Milan proclaiming religious toleration throughout the empire, his nephew Julian, known to history as Julian the Apostate, was installed as the last non-Christian ruler of the Roman Empire. He was sustained as emperor mainly by the power of the western Roman army. During his reign from 360-363 CE, Julian actively encouraged the return of the Roman people to pagan Hellenism and forcefully rejected the teachings of Christianity. He wrote a number of blasphemous treatises whose sole purpose was to convince his subjects that the Christian religion was nothing but a hoax. He was considered a Neo-Platonist, but, judging from his existing writings, he seems to have had no real religious convictions. However, Julian is important in Jewish history because, in a deliberate attempt to diminish the influence of Christianity in the empire, he showed favor to the Jews. In 363 CE, Julian commanded the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, the first serious attempt to rebuild it after its destruction by the Romans in 70 CE. The fourth-century historian Ammianus Marcellinus, in his *Roman History* 23.1.1-3, offered the following account:

“To pass over minute details, these were the principal events of the year. But Julian, who in his third consulship had taken as his colleague Sallustius, the prefect of Gaul, now entered on his fourth year [363 CE], and by a novel arrangement took as his colleague a private individual; an act of which no one recollected an instance since that of Diocletian and Aristobulus. And although, foreseeing in his anxious mind the various accidents that might happen, he urged on with great diligence all the endless preparations necessary for his expedition, yet distributing his diligence everywhere; and being eager to extend the recollection of his reign by the greatness of his exploits,

Attempts to Build a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Attempted by</i>	<i>Result</i>
ca. 1,008 BCE	David, King of Israel	Prevented by God
1,002-995 BCE	Solomon, King of Israel	Built, inhabited by God
ca. 535-515 BCE	Zerubbabel, Governor of Judah	Rebuilt
ca. 19 BCE	Herod, King of the Jews, <i>etc.</i>	Enlarged (rebuilt?)
132 CE	Hadrian, Emperor of Rome	Promised
132-135 CE	Simon bar Kochba, <i>Nasi</i> of Israel	Recaptured (disputed)
363 CE	Julian the Apostate, Emperor of Rome	Prevented by fire
614 CE	Nehemiah ben Hushiel, Gov. of Judea	Aborted
638 CE	Small group of Jewish rebels	Built only an altar

he proposed to rebuild at a vast expense the once magnificent temple of Jerusalem, which after many deadly contests was with difficulty taken by Vespasian and Titus, who succeeded his father in the conduct of the siege. And he assigned the task to Alypius of Antioch, who had formerly been proprefect of Britain. But though Alypius [as manager of construction on site in Jerusalem] applied himself vigorously to the work, and though the governor of the province co-operated with him, fearful balls of fire burst forth with continual eruptions close to the foundations, burning several of the workmen and making the spot altogether inaccessible. And thus the very elements, as if by some fate, repelling the attempt, it was laid aside.”

That first serious attempt to rebuild the Temple in 363 CE was halted by an earthquake in the Galilee, followed by mysterious fire erupting from excavations on the Temple Mount. A month later, Julian the Apostate died in battle against the Sassanid Persians and, without his support, construction on the Temple was halted for good. After the failed attempt by Julian, only one more serious attempt to rebuild the Temple would be made, that being the aborted attempt made by Nehemiah ben Hushiel in 614 CE. That second and final attempt to rebuild the Temple was foretold in verse 45 (explained on page 80), the verse that brings the vision recorded in the tenth and eleventh chapters of Daniel to a close.

SEVENTY WEEKS ARE DETERMINED

READ DANIEL 9:1-27 ON PAGE 216 | SEE 7 ON OVERVIEW CHART

The ninth chapter of Daniel begins with a historical reference. It was revealed “*in the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans.*” This likely refers to Cyrus the Great, although some scholars suggest it may point to his general, Gubaru, who captured the city of Babylon and was appointed governor shortly thereafter. Either way, the chapter can be reliably dated to 539 BCE—the year Babylon fell to Persia and the seventy-year exile foretold in Jeremiah (*cf.* Jer. 25:11–12; 29:10) came to an end.

In addition to recording Daniel’s prayer of confession on behalf of Israel, this ninth chapter includes the prophecy of the “seventy weeks” found in verses 24–27. Those four verses are arguably the most controversial—and certainly among the most misinterpreted—prophetic passages in the entire Bible. Christian theologians have long disagreed not only with Jewish sages but also with one another over their meaning. Much of the divide stems from the theological assumptions each tradition brings to the text. Some Christian interpreters assume that the seventy weeks describe a 490-year span that will not conclude until the second coming of Jesus. Most Jewish interpreters, by contrast, assume the prophecy says nothing at all about Jesus. The exposition that follows adopts neither of those viewpoints.

The ninth chapter contains three prophetic parts, each serving a distinct purpose in describing the destiny of the Jewish nation:

THE FIRST PART is comprised of verses 1–2, and confirms that Daniel was familiar with the earlier prophecies of his contemporary, Jeremiah—especially those predicting Babylon’s seventy-year dominion over Judah. That period of subjugation came to an end in 539 BCE when the Achaemenid Persians captured Babylon. Daniel was also likely familiar with the prophecies of Isaiah, which foretold the rise of Cyrus, the Persian king who would play a pivotal role in Jewish history, even though Isaiah is not mentioned in the book of Daniel.

THE SECOND PART of the chapter, verses 3–23, contains Daniel’s prayer of confession and repentance on behalf of the nation of Israel. This kind of national repentance had been prescribed centuries earlier in the Torah, specifically in Leviticus 26:40–45. In his prayer, Daniel acknowledges that Israel’s unfaithfulness was the reason for the destruction of the Temple, the exile from

the land of Israel, and the nation's subjugation to surrounding empires. He then pleads for divine forgiveness and redemption. As recorded in verses 11–14: *“Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.”*¹

THE THIRD PART consists of verses 24–27, which present what is generally known as the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (also recognized by many modern Bible researchers as the Messiah Prophecy). The prophecy will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter, primarily because of its central importance to soteriology.² It will also be examined in even greater depth in the following chapter. But before turning to the details of this controversial and often misunderstood prophecy, it is necessary to consider its thematic structure.

Two Major Themes

The chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel 9:24–27 presents two major themes: (1) a chronological theme centered on the time span described as “seventy weeks,” and (2) a soteriological theme involving a covenant and its confirmation by someone identified as the “*anointed one*,” the promised Messiah and Redeemer of Israel. This chapter will focus primarily on the chronological theme—specifically, on identifying the commandment that initiates the seventy weeks and then by relating the divisions of that time period to key events in Jewish history. The soteriological theme will be explored in the next chapter, where attention will turn to identifying the covenant and the anointed one who is prophesied to confirm it. Separating the discussion of these two themes into distinct chapters allows each to be understood more clearly. Naturally, the

¹ cf. Leviticus, chapter 26.

² Soteriology is the study of religious doctrines of salvation.

chronology provides the historical framework for locating the events of the soteriology in time, and the soteriological theme in turn takes on meaning from its chronological placement in Jewish history. Thus, while the two themes are closely intertwined, the primary focus of each chapter will be developed independently. We begin below with an examination of the chronological structure embedded in the prophecy, starting with verse 25.

Keys to Interpretation

THE FIRST KEY to interpretation of the prophecy of the seventy weeks is to focus on the action events specified in the text of verse 25, which reads as follows in the King James Version: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”* The KJV translation is improved somewhat in the JPS 1917 translation of verse 25 from the Masoretic text,¹ which removes a Christological bias not justified by the text, as follows: *“Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto one anointed, a prince, shall be seven weeks; and for threescore and two weeks, it shall be built again, with broad place and moat, but in troublous times.”*

There are essentially three action events specified in verse 25: (1) the going forth of a commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, (2) the restoration of an anointed one-prince to Jerusalem, and (3) the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s street and wall. Associated with the three action events are two specified time periods, one of seven weeks in duration followed by another of sixty-two weeks. The seven-week time period begins after a commandment to restore Jerusalem to an anointed one-prince on one end and, as will be shown in this exposition, restoration of the anointed one-prince back to Jerusalem on the other end. The prophecy also seems to clarify that the timing of the “seventy weeks” is dependant in some way on the street and wall having been rebuilt.

THE SECOND KEY to interpreting the prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:25 is identifying which decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem is being referenced. Most traditional expositors focus on one of several decrees issued to

¹ ותדע ותשכל מן-מצא דבר להשיב ולבנות ירושלם עד-משנים נגיד שבועים שבעה ושבועים שנים ושנים תשוב ונבנתה רחוב וחרוץ וקצוק העתים: ... Masoretic Text of Dan. 9:25 (BHS)

the Jews by Persian rulers during or soon after Daniel's lifetime. The most commonly cited decrees from the Persian period are those issued by:

Cyrus II the Great (*circa* 538 BCE) – allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. However, the exact year it was issued is not clearly recorded in either biblical or historical sources.

Darius I the Great (*circa* 520 BCE) – confirming and extending Cyrus's earlier authorization, again focusing on Temple reconstruction.

Artaxerxes I Longimanus – a decree issued to Ezra (*circa* 458/457 BCE) authorizing him to collect offerings for the Temple, travel to Jerusalem, offer sacrifices, and teach the Law of God to the people.

Artaxerxes I Longimanus – a decree to Nehemiah (*circa* 445/444 BCE), issued in the form of letters to regional governors, permitting Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem without their interference.

Most expositors who choose one of these decrees as the starting point for the seventy weeks prophecy assume that a “week” refers to a “week of years” (*i.e.*, seven years), making the total period seventy weeks, or 490 years. From there, they count forward in time, often selecting an ending point that aligns with a major event in the life of Jesus—such as his triumphal entry into Jerusalem during the Passion Week, or his crucifixion and resurrection.

One very popular exposition in conservative Christian circles is based on the *circa* 445/444 BCE decree. It was set forth by Sir Robert Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince* (1895). The late Dr. John Walvoord, in his commentary on Daniel, had this to say about Anderson's interpretive scheme:

“Sir Robert Anderson has made a detailed study of the possible chronology for this period beginning with the well-established date of 445 B.C. when Nehemiah's decree was issued and culminating in A.D. 32 on the very day of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem shortly before his crucifixion. Sir Robert Anderson specifies that the seventy sevens began on the first of Nisan, March 14, 445 B.C. and ended on April 6, A.D. 32, the tenth of Nisan. The complicated computation is based upon a prophetic year of 360 days ...”¹

Walvoord then adds the following observation:

“That Sir Robert Anderson is right in building upon a 360-day year seems to be attested by the Scriptures. It is customary for the Jews to have twelve months of 360 days and

then to insert a thirteenth month occasionally when necessary to correct the calendar. ... The conclusions reached by Anderson, however, are quite complicated in their argument and impossible to restate simply. ... While the details of Anderson's arguments may be debated, the plausibility of a literal interpretation ... makes this view very attractive.”¹

Walvoord is absolutely correct about one thing. Anderson's mathematical exposition is quite complicated. But, contrary to its basic assumption, use of a 360-day calendar is documented nowhere in the Bible or in mainstream Judaism. It even contradicts what the Bible itself ordains as the length of a year.² The lack of biblical or historical support for Anderson's premise invalidates his approach, and, without the benefit of his 360-day-year calendar manipulation, using the 445 BCE decree as the *terminus a quo*, as he does, yields an ending date in the year 38 CE, long after the *terminus ad quem* (in his case the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem) could have occurred in real time.

Another popular conservative interpretation of the prophecy of the seventy weeks uses the first decree of Artaxerxes in 458 BCE as the starting point. That is the preferred interpretation of the late Dr. Leon Wood, who says:

“... the third possible *terminus a quo* may provide the best solution. This terminus is the earlier decree of Artaxerxes, given to Ezra in 458 B.C. Figuring on the basis of solar years, the 483-year period [69 weeks] ends now at A.D. 26, and this is the accepted date for Jesus' baptism. To this answer, the objection is sometimes made that actually the decree relative to Ezra's return was, of the three possible, the furthest removed from the idea of rebuilding Jerusalem. In reply, however, it may be stated that both the decree and Ezra's resultant work did concern rebuilding Jerusalem **in a moral and spiritual way** [emphasis added]; and there is reason to believe that considerable building operations, of a physical nature, occurred as well (cf. Ezra 9:9).”³

Wood then questions his own interpretation by adding the following:

¹ John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), p. 228.

² “And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven ... and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years” (Gen. 1:14). Using a 360-day year for interpretation of prophecy thus contradicts what the Bible specifies as the length of a biblical year, namely, the time it takes the Earth to go around the Sun (~365.25 days).

³ Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 1998), p. 253-254.

“One question yet remains. What of the division of the 483 years into groups of 49 (seven weeks) and 434 (sixty-two weeks)? What occurred 49 years after the edict of Artaxerxes in 458 B.C., *i.e.*, in 409 B.C., which was of sufficient importance to call for this grouping? The context suggests that it must have concerned the building of Jerusalem, because the next phrase of the verse speaks of ‘street’ and ‘moat’ being constructed. Can the completion of rebuilding activity in Jerusalem be placed at 409 B.C.?”

Wood then goes on to suggest other possibilities for explaining the seven-week division, but admits that all of his speculations provide no real answer by concluding that, “***Details are lacking for certainty ...***” [*emphasis added*]. Thus, he ends up with no cogent explanation for the seven-week division specified in verse 25, offering only unverifiable assumptions as a possible interpretation.

The two interpretive schemes used for illustration above are typical of the dozens of interpretive schemes for the seventy weeks that use a starting date based on a decree by a Persian monarch. And, like those two examples, all of the other expositions using a Persian decree have failed to produce an ironclad interpretation that cites fulfillment events that can be verified from the historical record, and that also incorporates every element specified in verse 25.

In view of the fact that the interpretive approaches of so many previous expositors had failed to achieve a satisfactory interpretation using the Persian-period decrees, I reasoned that there must be an overlooked decree somewhere else in the historical record, one that would yield an exact match to the biblical text. So, I began searching through works of history, looking for mention of decrees that involved the Jews, and I found that Julius Caesar, between 47 BCE and 44 BCE, had issued at least two major decrees pertaining to Jews in Judea.

One decree in particular seemed to have all of the elements mentioned in verse 25. It was issued by Caesar just before his assassination on the Ides of March in 44 BCE, ratified by the Roman Senate soon after his death, and recorded in Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 14.10.5 (Whiston), as follows:

“Gaius Caesar, consul the fifth time [*in 44 BCE*], hath decreed, That the Jews shall possess Jerusalem, and may encompass that city with walls; and that Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander, the high priest and ethnarch of the Jews, retain it in the manner he himself pleases; and that the Jews be allowed to deduct out of their tribute, every second year the land is let [*in the Sabbatic period*], a corus of that tribute; and that the tribute they pay be not let to farm, nor that they pay always the same tribute.”

When the details are examined closely, the 44 BCE decree by Julius Caesar can be seen to fit the description in Daniel 9:25 exactly. In that decree, Caesar confirmed Hyrcanus II—who served as both high priest (anointed one) and ethnarch (prince) of the Jews from 63 to 40 BCE—as ruler over Jerusalem, granting him authority to govern the city and its people as he saw fit. Critically, Caesar also gave permission to rebuild the city’s defenses, which had been torn down by Pompey twenty years earlier in 63 BCE, when Rome first established its sovereignty over Judea. Those defenses had included fortified gates with broad places behind them for mustering troops, as well as a trench (moat) at the base of the wall to enhance its protective height. The city’s lack of defenses had left it exposed to attack, particularly from the hated Parthians to the east. Eager to create a fortified buffer state between Parthia and Egypt—Rome’s vital grain supplier—Caesar wanted his client ruler, Hyrcanus II, and Rome’s appointed procurator, Antipater, to begin reconstruction without delay. Historical sources record that the walls were indeed rebuilt by Antipater in the year spanning 44/43 BCE, after Caesar’s decree and prior to Antipater’s death in 43 BCE. Therefore, the decree issued by Julius Caesar shortly before his assassination is identified as the decree referenced in Daniel 9:25, which locates the time period of the prophecy of the seventy weeks in real time.

THE THIRD KEY to understanding is to correctly interpret the time unit meant by the Hebrew word “weeks” שָׁבוּעַ (BHS, Strong’s OT: 7620 *shabuwa`*) in verse 25. As previously mentioned, almost all traditional expositors interpret it as a “week of years,” meaning a period of seven years. According to that view, the seven weeks become forty-nine years, and the sixty-two weeks become 434 years. However, that is not the meaning intended by the word “weeks” in this verse. In the Book of Daniel, time units are often used as symbolic references to the Jewish pilgrimage festivals. In chapter 8, “evening-morning(s)” refers cryptically to Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. In chapter 12, “days” refers to Great Days, the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles. In chapter 9, the word “weeks” should likewise be understood as a cryptic reference to a Jewish festival—the Feast of Weeks, with its concluding day, the Day of Pentecost serving in this exposition as shorthand for the entire festival. Thus, the time periods specified in verse 25 are seven Pentecosts and sixty-two Pentecosts. Accordingly, the prophecy covers approximately seventy years, not 490 years. To simplify both narrative and graphics, this chapter will use the word Pentecost to represent the entire Passover and Feast of Weeks festival season.

THE FOURTH KEY to interpretation of the prophecy is to understand that the starting point for counting the seven weeks is specified at the end of verse 25, which reveals that “... *the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times,*” which history shows actually means, “*the street and wall shall have been built again*” (Au). The word translated as “street” רְחֹב (BHS, Strong’s OT: 7339 *rěchob*) is a reference to the wide space inside the wall of the city, directly behind a tower gate, the place where troops were assembled to defend the gate. That definition is revealed by its usage in 2 Chronicles, 32:6: “*And he [Hezekiah] set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street [behind] the gate of the city ...*” In addition, the word translated as “wall” חָרוֹץ (BHS, Strong’s OT: 2742 *charuwts*) is better translated as “trench” according to the UBS Old Testament Handbook, which says, “The second word, rendered ‘moat’ by RSV, is literally the word for ‘cut’ and refers to a trench cut into the rock on the exterior walls of a city in order to make the wall a more difficult obstacle for those who would attempt to attack from the outside.” According to Josephus in his *Wars of the Jews* 1.7.3, Pompey’s troops had filled in the trench in front of the vulnerable northern wall of Jerusalem to make a flat platform for his siege engines, and then had used them to destroy the wall and its tower gates. Caesar’s decree to Hyrcanus II gave permission to rebuild the defensive structures that Pompey had destroyed twenty years earlier. The tower gate with street behind and the trench below the northern wall were the major part of the fortifications covered by the permission to rebuild. Thus, the completion of their restoration had to occur before the count of the seventy weeks could begin. Antipater finished the rebuilding of the fortifications before his death in 43 BCE.

THE FIFTH KEY to interpreting the prophecy in Daniel 9:25 is recognizing that the seven-week division, usually left unexplained in traditional expositions, refers to seven Day of Pentecost(s) occurring within a single seven-year sabbath cycle, one each year. To begin the interpretation, those seven Pentecosts must be aligned with the sabbath cycle that immediately followed the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s wall and street in early 43 BCE. This presents a challenge, since no original records of sabbath or jubilee year observance in ancient Israel have survived. They were likely lost during the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. In their absence, several sabbath-jubilee calendars have been proposed by Jewish scholars over the centuries. One of the most widely accepted is the 1866 system developed by Benedict Zuckermann, a 19th-century professor of calendrical science at the Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau. In modern times, an alternative system

introduced in 1973 by Dr. Ben Zion Wacholder, a professor at Hebrew Union College, has gained favor in some academic circles. When evaluated against the well-attested destruction date of Herod's Temple in the summer of 70 CE, which multiple Jewish sources—the *Seder Olam Rabbah*, *Tosefta*, and *Jerusalem Talmud*—affirm occurred during a sabbatical year, Zuckermann's calendar aligns correctly, while Wacholder's does not. Therefore, for the purpose of aligning Daniel's prophecy with historically verified events, Zuckermann's system is used in this exposition. The dates presented in Appendix Four: Calendar of Sabbath and Jubilee Years (see page 149), are derived from the academically accepted date for the destruction of Herod's Temple in 70 CE. It provides the sabbath-cycle framework needed for interpreting the “seven weeks” in the prophecy.

Fulfillment in History

The decree issued by Julius Caesar to Hyrcanus II in 44 BCE can be aligned with the seven-year sabbath-year cycle in effect at that time. As shown in the table on page 153, the Jewish year spanning 43/42 BCE was a sabbath year. Therefore, the next sabbath cycle began in the following year, 42 BCE. According to the interpretation presented in this chapter, the first of the seven Pentecosts referenced in Daniel 9:25 occurred in 42 BCE, and the seventh fell in 36 BCE, which was a sabbath year. The sixty-two Pentecosts that followed began in 35 BCE and extended through 27 CE. Thus, the first Pentecost of the sixty-two-week segment occurred in 35 BCE, and the sixty-second occurred in 27 CE. This alignment is presented visually in Table 6.1 on page 93, which shows how the seven and sixty-two Pentecosts fit within the historical timeline.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks was set in motion with the decree issued by Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, which confirmed Hyrcanus II as ruler in Jerusalem. Acting on Caesar's authority, Hyrcanus returned to the city as both high priest and ethnarch—the “anointed one” and “prince” referenced in the prophecy—accompanied by the Roman-appointed procurator Antipater. By early 43 BCE, they had rebuilt Jerusalem's wall and tower gate and cleared the trench that had been filled in by Pompey in 63 BCE. Antipater died later that year and was succeeded by his son Herod. In 40 BCE, Antigonus, the nephew of Hyrcanus II, then led a rebellion with the help of the Parthians. He captured Jerusalem and replaced Hyrcanus as high priest. Herod fled to Rome, where he appealed to the Senate, was declared King of the Jews, and returned with Roman legions to suppress the

uprising. In early 36 BCE, Herod recaptured the city. Fearing that the Parthians might attempt to retake Jerusalem and restore Hyrcanus, then held captive in Babylon, as ruler, Herod instead invited him to return peacefully as part of his royal court. Hyrcanus accepted the invitation and returned to Jerusalem in 36 BCE. That event, marking the restoration of the former “anointed one and prince,” completed the seven-week period of the prophecy, beginning with Caesar’s decree and ending with Hyrcanus’s final return, all during a seven-year sabbath cycle.

Taking all of the above textual and historical evidence into account, a good paraphrase of verse 25, substituting real events and real names from history for the prophetic language, would read something like this: *“Observe with your eyes and calculate with your mind, that after the issuance of the decree by Julius Caesar to Hyrcanus II, high priest and ethnarch (anointed one and prince) of the Jews, restoring him to rule in Jerusalem (the first restoration) and granting him permission to rebuild its fortifications, until his repatriation to Jerusalem by Herod (the second restoration), there will be seven Pentecosts, followed by sixty-two Pentecosts. Before the seven Pentecosts begin, the tower gate with its broad place and the trench in front of the wall that were destroyed by Pompey will have been rebuilt”* (Au).

Now that the chronology of the first sixty-nine weeks of the seventy weeks has been established as having occurred during Roman times—spanning from 42 BCE to 27 CE—what about the seventieth week? When does it occur? Since the reconstruction of Jerusalem’s defenses—namely the tower gate with its broad assembly area for troops and the filled-in trench below the northern wall—was completed by 43 BCE, it is reasonable to view that completion as the starting point of the seventy weeks. This rules out adding a Pentecost before that date. Therefore, the Pentecost of 28 CE, which comes immediately after the seven Pentecosts and sixty-two Pentecosts, is the one that must be added to bring the total to seventy weeks (see Diagram 6.1 on page 95). The events of that seventieth week will be examined in detail in the next chapter. Before moving on to do so, however, some additional chronological items in verses 24-27 need to be correlated with Jewish history, as follows:

Verse 24

Verse 24: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision*

Table 6.1 – How to Count the 70 “weeks” (Pentecosts)

Each Day of Pentecost (50th day in the Feast of Weeks) is shown under its equivalent Gregorian year. Sabbath and jubilee years begin in the Gregorian year shown and end in the following year. Jubilee years begin on the 10th day of Tishri (September-October) in the 49th sabbath year in a seven-sabbath cycle. For a listing of all sabbath and jubilee years, see pages 151-153.					44 BCE Year of Julius Caesar's Decree to Hyrcanus II	43 BCE Sabbath Year, Jerusalem's street and wall rebuilt
The 7 “weeks”						
<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year 4</i>	<i>Year 5</i>	<i>Year 6</i>	<i>Sabbath Year</i>
42 BCE 1st of 7 Pentecosts	41 BCE 2nd of 7 Pentecosts	40 BCE 3rd of 7 Pentecosts	39 BCE 4th of 7 Pentecosts	38 BCE 5th of 7 Pentecosts	37 BCE 6th of 7 Pentecosts	36 BCE 7th of 7 Pentecosts
The 62 “weeks”						
35 BCE 1st of 62 Pentecosts	34 BCE 2nd of 62 Pentecosts	33 BCE 3rd of 62 Pentecosts	32 BCE 4th of 62 Pentecosts	31 BCE 5th of 62 Pentecosts	30 BCE 6th of 62 Pentecosts	29 BCE 7th of 62 Pentecosts
28 BCE 8th of 62 Pentecosts	27 BCE 9th of 62 Pentecosts	26 BCE 10th of 62 Pentecosts	25 BCE 11th of 62 Pentecosts	24 BCE 12th of 62 Pentecosts	23 BCE 13th of 62 Pentecosts	22 BCE 14th Pentecost JUBILEE YEAR
21 BCE 15th of 62 Pentecosts	20 BCE 16th of 62 Pentecosts	19 BCE 17th of 62 Pentecosts	18 BCE 18th of 62 Pentecosts	17 BCE 19th of 62 Pentecosts	16 BCE 20th of 62 Pentecosts	15 BCE 21st of 62 Pentecosts
14 BCE 22nd of 62 Pentecosts	13 BCE 23rd of 62 Pentecosts	12 BCE 24th of 62 Pentecosts	11 BCE 25th of 62 Pentecosts	10 BCE 26th of 62 Pentecosts	9 BCE 27th of 62 Pentecosts	8 BCE 28th of 62 Pentecosts
7 BCE 29th of 62 Pentecosts	6 BCE 30th of 62 Pentecosts	5 BCE 31st of 62 Pentecosts	4 BCE 32nd of 62 Pentecosts	3 BCE 33rd of 62 Pentecosts	2 BCE 34th of 62 Pentecosts	1 BCE 35th of 62 Pentecosts
1 CE 36th of 62 Pentecosts	2 CE 37th of 62 Pentecosts	3 CE 38th of 62 Pentecosts	4 CE 39th of 62 Pentecosts	5 CE 40th of 62 Pentecosts	6 CE 41st of 62 Pentecosts	7 CE 42nd of 62 Pentecosts
8 CE 43rd of 62 Pentecosts	9 CE 44th of 62 Pentecosts	10 CE 45th of 62 Pentecosts	11 CE 46th of 62 Pentecosts	12 CE 47th of 62 Pentecosts	13 CE 48th of 62 Pentecosts	14 CE 49th of 62 Pentecosts
15 CE 50th of 62 Pentecosts	16 CE 51st of 62 Pentecosts	17 CE 52nd of 62 Pentecosts	18 CE 53rd of 62 Pentecosts	19 CE 54th of 62 Pentecosts	20 CE 55th of 62 Pentecosts	21 CE 56th of 62 Pentecosts
22 CE 57th of 62 Pentecosts	23 CE 58th of 62 Pentecosts	24 CE 59th of 62 Pentecosts	25 CE 60th of 62 Pentecosts	26 CE 61st of 62 Pentecosts	27 CE 62nd of 62 Pentecosts	28 CE 70th Pentecost JUBILEE YEAR
The 70th “week”						
Sometime after the Day of Pentecost in 27 CE, John the Baptist began introducing the new covenant to Israel. In early 28 CE, Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John, tempted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness, and then began his public ministry in Nazareth on the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE by proclaiming the Acceptable Year of the Lord. Jesus' public ministry took place from that Day of Pentecost in 28 CE until his Ascension from the Mount of Olives in 30 CE. Ten days later the Holy Spirit was given on the Day of Pentecost in 30 CE.						

*and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” ... That verse sets forth six things that must be accomplished during the seventy weeks. The first is “to finish the transgression.” The Hebrew words in verse 25 translated in the KJV as “to finish” כָּלָא (BHS, Strong’s OT: 3607 *kala*) and “the transgression” פְּשָׁע (BHS, Strong’s OT: 6588 *pasha*’) can also be translated as “to shut up the national religious revolt.” That alternate reading precisely describes the events of 36 BCE foretold by the prophecy. Following the decree issued by Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, a major revolt broke out in 40 BCE, led by Antigonus, the nephew of Hyrcanus II, the Hasmonean high priest and ethnarch. In alliance with Rome’s archenemy Parthia, Antigonus overran Judea and captured Jerusalem and the Temple, ousting Hyrcanus from power. To prevent Hyrcanus from ever serving again as high priest, Antigonus reportedly mutilated him—cutting off his ear, which rendered him ritually unfit under Jewish law—and then sent him in chains to Parthia. In response, Herod fled to Rome, where he was proclaimed King of the Jews by the Senate and then sent back to Judea with Roman legions to suppress the uprising. Herod besieged Jerusalem, and in 36 BCE the city fell. Afterward, he brought Hyrcanus II back from captivity and returned him to Jerusalem as a non-ruling member of his court. These events brought a decisive end to the religious rebellion and fulfilled the first of the six prophetic objectives listed in Daniel 9:24: “to finish the transgression.” The remaining five objectives—“to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy”—will be discussed in the next chapter.*

Verse 25

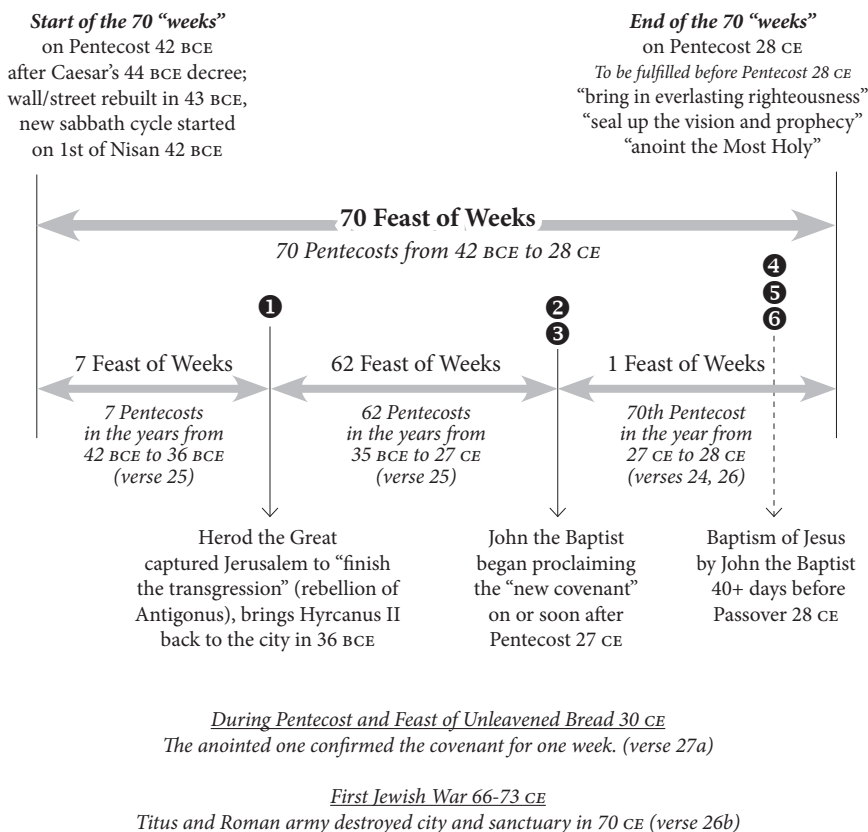
Verse 25: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” ... As previously discussed, the phrase “Messiah the Prince” in the KJV has been discredited as having Christological meaning. Instead, the anointed one and prince being referred to is Hyrcanus II, high priest and ethnarch from 66-40 BCE. Caesar’s decree in 44 BCE restored Hyrcanus to Jerusalem, and the broad place and wall with moat were rebuilt in 43 BCE. Near the end of seventh week (Feast of Weeks) that occurred during a sabbath-year cycle, Herod recaptured Jerusalem and brought Hyrcanus back to the city in 36 BCE. The seven-weeks period was followed by a period of sixty-two Pentecosts from 35 BCE to 27 CE.

Diagram 6.1 – The Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:24-27)

Six things required to happen during the 70 “weeks”:

- ❶ “to finish the transgression” (*fulfilled 36 BCE*)
- ❷ “to make an end of sins” (*fulfilled 27 CE*)
- ❸ “to make reconciliation for iniquity” (*fulfilled 27 CE*)
- ❹ “to bring in everlasting righteousness” (*fulfilled 28 CE*)
- ❺ “to seal up the vision and prophecy” (*fulfilled 28 CE*)
- ❻ “to anoint the Most Holy” (*fulfilled 28 CE*)

... from verse 24; see fulfillment location on diagram below



Verses 26-27

Verses 26-27 (two-verse chiasm¹ rearranged chronologically): (26a) *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself:”* (27a) *“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,”* (26b) *“and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood,”* (27b) *and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”* ... The sixty-two weeks segment of the prophecy ended on the Day of Pentecost in 27 CE (see diagram 6.1 on the previous page).² After this, the prophecy states that an anointed one³ would be “cut off” קָרַח (BHS, Strong’s OT: 3772 *karath*). While most traditional expositors interpret “cut off” only as “killed,” the same word was translated in Genesis 15:18 as “made a covenant.” The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (TWOT) confirms this cutting-a-covenant sense: “The most important use of the root is ‘to cut’ a covenant ... Genesis 15 is a significant passage in that regard.” Accordingly, the phrase *“shall Messiah be cut off”* (KJV) is better understood in a dual sense—*“the anointed one shall be consecrated (set apart) to confirm a covenant”* and, in the process, *“shall be killed.”* Isaiah 42:1-6 identifies the covenant role as that of a servant anointed with God’s Spirit, who is given *“for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.”*⁴ Thus, verse 26 reveals that, after the sixty-two weeks are completed, the anointed one will begin confirming a covenant for redemption of both Jews and Gentiles. This aligns with Isaiah 53:8, where the servant is *“cut off out of the land of the living,”* (i.e., given for a covenant through his sacrificial death). The next phrase, *“but not for himself,”* expresses self-emptying. It can be paraphrased as *“but he shall choose to be nothing”* (Au), describing his servant role.⁵

¹ Verses 26-27 display Hebrew parallelism, a chiasm to be read (a a b b) instead of (a b a b).

² The seventieth week of the Seventy Weeks concluded on the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE.

³ The anointed one in verse 26 cannot be Hyrcanus II this time, since he died in 30 BCE.

⁴ The word קָרַח (Strong’s OT: 1504 *gazar*) translated as “cut off” in Isaiah 53 is followed by *“out of the land of the living,”* explaining how God would “give[his servant] for a covenant” by offering him as a blood atonement and propitiation for Israel’s sins and iniquities.

⁵ Philippians 2:5-7: *“... Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men”* (ESV); also, see Isaiah, chapter 53.

Verse 27a continues the covenant narrative, revealing that the anointed one will confirm the covenant by his sacrificial death during one (normal seven-day) week, causing the sacrifice and oblation system under the Law to cease in the midst of that week (the Passion Week, to be expounded in the next chapter). Verses 26b and 27b go on to state that “*the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end [i.e., end of the sanctuary] thereof shall be with a flood, ... and unto the end of the war desolations are determined,*” foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 CE. The victorious Roman soldiers offered sacrifices to their standards on the Temple ruins according to Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 6.6.1. Many followers of Jesus considered the standards, which depicted the emperor as a god, to be the “*abomination of desolation*” foretold in Matthew 24:15. The final words of verse 27 look even further forward in time to the total destruction of Jerusalem and Judea by Hadrian during the Second Jewish War (132-135 CE), which ended with the Temple Mount being plowed under, a new Roman city named Aelia Capitolina being built on the ruins of Jerusalem, and the name of Judea being changed to Syria Palestina.

The phrase translated as “*overspreading of abominations*” in verse 27 is an interpretation of the Hebrew words כָּנֶף שִׁקְוָה (BHS, Strong’s OT: 3671, 8251 *kanaph shiqquwts*) meaning literally “wing of abominable filth” (Au). By using that imagery of being covered over with a wing of filth, the prophecy comes to its end by looking to the final days of Byzantine rule over Jerusalem before the fall of the city to Caliph Omar. That event was predicted in the seventh chapter of Daniel, which foretold that the end of the Roman-Byzantine rule of Jerusalem would occur in 638 CE (see page 54). During that final period of Byzantine rule, Christians covered the Temple Mount with their garbage, feces, and soiled menstrual cloths, some items even being sent to Jerusalem from faraway Rome and Constantinople in an effort to ensure that the Temple area remained ritually impure for use by Jews and thus desolate as had been prophesied (in contradiction to Matt. 23:37).

In the year 638 CE, Omar, leading the armies of Islam, accepted the surrender of the city of Jerusalem. Ironically, it was the Muslim Caliph Omar and not the Catholic Bishop of Jerusalem Sophronius who revered the Temple Mount area as a holy place, as indicated by this account of Omar’s first visit to Jerusalem recorded by the Muslim historian Mujir al-Din al-’Ulaymī (b. 1456):

“When ‘Umar reached the old ruined gates of the Temple he was horrified to see the filth, ‘which was then all about the holy sanctuary, had settled on the steps of the

gates so that it even came out into the streets in which the gate opened, and it had accumulated so greatly as almost to reach up to the ceiling of the gateway.' The only way to get up to the platform was to crawl on hands and knees. Sophronius went first and the Muslims struggled up behind. When they arrived at the top, the Muslims gazed appalled at the vast and desolate expanse of Herod's platform, still covered with piles of fallen masonry and garbage. The shock of this sad encounter with the holy place whose fame had reached them in far-off Arabia was never forgotten: Muslims claimed that they called Anastasis al-qumamah, 'the Dungheap,' in retaliation for the impious behavior of the Christians on the Temple Mount. 'Umar does not seem to have spent any time on this occasion examining the [Sakhrah] rock, which would later play such an important part in Islamic piety. Once he had taken stock of the situation, he threw handfuls of dung and rubble into his cloak and then hurled it over the city wall into the Valley of Hinnom. Immediately his followers did the same."¹

A few decades after the conquest of Jerusalem by Omar and his Muslim army, his successors built the Al-Aqsa Mosque, recognizable today by its silver-gray dome on the southern end of the Temple Mount platform, and, to its north, they built a shrine, the (now golden) Dome of the Rock. The latter was purposefully erected over the rock presumed to be the exact spot where the Jewish Temple's Holy of Holies was once located, and the dome's inner surface was purposefully adorned with an anti-Christian Arabic inscription.² These acts were meant to proclaim to the world that Islam had superseded both Judaism and Christianity as the one true monotheistic religion. After more than thirteen centuries, the Dome of the Rock, with its blasphemous inscriptions³ prominently displayed for all to see, continues to desecrate the sacred Temple Mount site, and it will probably continue to do so "*even until the consummation*" (verse 27b).

¹ Karen Armstrong, *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths* (New York: Ballantine Books Trade Paperback Edition/Random House, Inc., 2005), p. 229-230.

² "O People of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter aught concerning God save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a Messenger of God, and His Word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers, and say not 'Three,' (instead) cease! (it is) better for you! God is only One God. Far be it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son. Whoso disbelieveth the revelations of God (will find that) lo! God is swift at reckoning!" ... based on a translation published by *Islamic Awareness* (www.islamic-awareness.org).

³ By denying the Sonship of Jesus, the Dome of the Rock inscriptions meet the definition for antichrist: "*He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son*" ~ 1 John 2:22.

HE SHALL CONFIRM THE COVENANT

READ DANIEL 9:24-27 ON PAGE 216 | SEE 7 ON OVERVIEW CHART

The prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24–27 delineates three consecutive time spans totaling seventy “weeks,” where the word “week” denotes the Jewish pilgrimage festival Feast of Weeks that culminates on its fiftieth day, the Day of Pentecost; see Table 6.1 on page 93.

THE FIRST SPAN—consists of seven weeks that coincided with a seven-year sabbatical cycle running from Pentecost in 42 BCE to Pentecost in 36 BCE.

THE SECOND SPAN—consists of the sixty-two weeks that ran from Pentecost in 35 BCE to Pentecost in 27 CE.

THE THIRD SPAN—ran from Pentecost in 27 CE to Pentecost in 28 CE, with the Feast of Weeks in that latter year being the seventieth week.

After the seventy weeks were completed on the Day of Pentecost in the year 28 CE, verse 27 states that a “covenant” would be confirmed “with many” by an anointed one, the confirmation happening in the middle of a week (in this case denoting a literal seven-day week). Question: What covenant was introduced between Pentecost 42 BCE and Pentecost 28 CE (*i.e.*, during the time span specified by the prophecy of the seventy weeks) and who confirmed it? The remainder of this chapter will answer that question by focusing on the six requirement in verse 24 that had to be fulfilled before the seventy weeks ended—using them as criteria for identifying the covenant and the anointed one who confirmed it.

The New Covenant

The key to identifying the covenant described in verse 27 is contained in verse 24, the opening verse of the prophecy of the seventy weeks, which states “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*” In that verse, six items are specified that had to happen before the seventy weeks concluded in 28 CE. The first item, “*to finish the transgression,*” was accomplished when Herod the Great besieged and captured Jerusalem from Antigonus and the Parthians prior to Pentecost in

36 BCE, bringing the transgression—the civil and religious revolt led by Antigonus—to a close. The next two items, “*to make an end of sins*” and “*to make reconciliation for iniquity*,” are key to identifying the covenant by using the words found in Jeremiah 31:31-34:

*“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for **I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.**”*

Notice the promises at the end, “*I will forgive their iniquity*” and “*I will remember their sin no more.*” The wording of those two phrases is identical in meaning to the wording in the second and third items of the six items listed as having to be accomplished during the seventy weeks, namely, “... *to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity*” The fact that the wording in Daniel 9:24 mirrors the wording used in Jeremiah 31:34 is the key to identifying the covenant in question. By using essentially the same phrases, the covenant in Daniel’s ninth chapter is identified as referring to the new covenant promised by God through the prophet Jeremiah.

Some expositors object, saying that a new covenant was established when the Jews returned from Babylon. However, Jeremiah 31:31 specifically declares otherwise, and history concurs. The Jews rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem after they returned and began offering the traditional Temple-centered sacrifices instituted by the Sinai covenant, exactly as they had done before the Exile. They were not operating under a new covenant. They were continuing to operate under the Mosaic Law, and so until the Temple was destroyed in the year 70 CE. Obviously, the resumption of the Mosaic covenant cannot be what was meant by new covenant. Other expositors claim that a new covenant was established by rabbis after the Temple was destroyed, but that argument ignores

the time frame for confirming the covenant set forth in verses 25 and 27, which require that the anointed one had to confirm the new covenant no later than Pentecost in 28 CE. So, according to the timeline in Daniel, the introduction of the new covenant had to occur before the destruction of the Temple, not after, in contrast to what Jewish rabbis have been claiming for centuries. As for modern Jewish expositors, most interpret the reference to the new covenant in Jeremiah as referring to the original Mosaic covenant made with the Israelites at Sinai, but placed anew in the hearts of the Jewish people by the Messiah, usually assuming that will happen when a third Jewish Temple is built on the Temple Mount sometime in the future. However, that is another incorrect interpretation that ignores the time constraints given in Daniel 9: 24-27. According to those verses, the anointed one who confirms must be introduced no later than 28 CE.

Fulfillment in History

The *Tanakh* was completed sometime before 400 BCE, so it will not contain the record of the introduction of Jeremiah's new covenant to Israel, an event which had to occur after Pentecost in 42 BCE, nor will it record the fulfillment of the six items specified in verse 24 that must occur sometime before the seventy weeks ended in 28 CE. For that information, we must look to the *B'rit Hadashah*, also called the Book of the New Covenant (or New Testament). It contains the continuing record of God's revelation to the Jewish people, and, like the *Tanakh*, was written by Jewish prophets, making it a trustworthy testimony about the new covenant and the anointed one who confirmed that covenant to Israel. The first of the six items specified in verse 24, "to finish the transgression," was discussed on page 92. The remaining five items, which identify the new covenant and reveal the identity of the anointed one who confirms the covenant, are listed below (circled numbers match those on Diagram 6.1 on page 95):

① "to finish the transgression"	locates the 70 weeks in time
② "to make an end of sins"	identifies the introduction of the new covenant promised by Jeremiah
③ "to make reconciliation for iniquity"	
④ "to bring in everlasting righteousness"	identifies the anointed one who will confirm the new covenant (see what John the Baptist said in John 1:31)
⑤ "to seal up the vision and prophecy"	
⑥ "to anoint the most Holy"	

② “to make an end of sins”

③ “to make reconciliation for iniquity”

The second and third items of the six items from verse 24 that are required to happen during the seventy weeks, “to make an end of sins,” and “to make reconciliation for iniquity,” were shown on pages 99-101 to identify the covenant mentioned in verse 27 of the seventy-weeks prophecy as being the new covenant foretold in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The introduction of the new covenant, which had to occur sometime before the end of the seventy weeks on the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE, is described in the Gospels¹ of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The following account is from Matthew 3:1-12:

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

John the Baptist was the messenger of the new covenant, raised up to call the people of Israel to repentance for forgiveness of sins, and he did so without

¹ A Middle English word, derived from Old English *gōdspel* meaning “good news.”

reference to the Temple and its system of sacrifices that were required by the Sinai covenant. John's use of baptism by immersion, drawing from the Jewish practice of the *mikveh*—a ritual bath associated with purification—would have been familiar to those who heard his message and sought his baptism. By situating his baptisms in the Jordan River, using freely flowing water that Jews regarded as “living water” with special sanctifying value, John gave his call to repentance a vivid force. His adaptation of a well-known ritual, now directed not toward ritual purity but toward repentance for forgiveness of sins, challenged the efficacy and exclusivity of the atonement achieved through the Temple system of animal sacrifice established by Moses and the Law. Despite this challenge, the authorities did not try to stop John from baptizing. They were intimidated by him because the masses considered him to be a prophet. Eventually, the Temple authorities sent priests and Levites seeking to know who he claimed to be, as recorded in John 1:19-28:

“And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.”

Thus, John the Baptist, when challenged by the Jewish authorities, stated emphatically that he was not the anointed one who would confirm the covenant, though he did reveal that the anointed one was that very day walking among the people of Israel. But, who was the anointed one who would confirm the new covenant? That question is answered by the fulfillment of the fourth, fifth and sixth required items provided in Daniel chapter 9, verse 24.

④ “to bring in everlasting righteousness”

The fourth item of the six items from verse 24 that are required to happen during the seventy weeks is “to bring in everlasting righteousness,” which was fulfilled during the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. That event is described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and it had to occur before the end of the seventy weeks on the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE according to the chronological constraints spelled out in the prophecy of the seventy weeks. The account of the baptism that is most pertinent to verse 24, in that it pointedly identifies that event with the “everlasting righteousness” requirement of the prophecy, is given in Matthew 3:13-17:

*“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us **to fulfil all righteousness**. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

The Gospel of Mark contains a second account of the baptism of Jesus in chapter 1, verses 1-11:

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel’s hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of

Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”^{1, 2}

A third account of the baptism, one that contains important chronological information, is found in Luke 3:1-22:

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests,³ the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do

¹ “The heavens shall declare his righteousness” ~ Psalm 50:6a and Psalm 97:6a.

² cf. Isaiah 42:6, Jeremiah 23:6

³ Note that Luke also mentions Annas as high priest. Caiaphas is known to have been the high priest between 18 CE and 36 CE. The mention of Annas can be explained by the fact that he was a high priest who preceded Caiaphas between 6 CE and 15 CE, and was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, making him *high priest emeritus*. Annas probably served as high priest when Caiaphas was ritually impure, or, in this case involving Jesus, to avoid the possibility of becoming impure since this was the Passover week.

likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

In the three Gospel accounts of the baptism of Jesus, there are two important pieces of information, one dealing with prophetic fulfillment and the other with chronology, that are particularly useful for interpretive purposes, as follows:

The first piece of information is found in the statement by Jesus recorded in the Gospel of Matthew that his baptism was being done *"to fulfil all righteousness."* The Greek word πληρῶσαι (NTG, Strong's NT: 4137), rendered as "fulfil" in English, is most often used to indicate fulfillment of Scripture, and that is the case in this instance. Over the years, countless expositors have questioned the need for Jesus to be baptized by John the Baptist. If indeed his life was sinless, why was it necessary for Jesus to submit to a baptism of repentance for remission of sins? The answer is quite simple. The baptism of Jesus was done to fulfill the prophecy about everlasting righteousness that was specified in Daniel 9:24, and it served as a public announcement of the identity of the anointed one specified in verse 27 as the one who would confirm the new covenant.

The second piece of information is the chronologically rich statement in the Gospel of Luke that the ministry of John the Baptist began in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pilate was governor of Judea, and so on. The

baptism of Jesus had to occur before Pentecost in 28 CE, the year that marked the end of the seventy weeks, so the chronological details in Luke can be used to pinpoint the start of the ministry of John the Baptist and make sure Jesus' baptism happened before Pentecost in 28 CE.

Since Joseph Caiaphas was high priest from 18 CE until 36 CE, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea from 26 CE until 36 CE, Herod Antipas was tetrarch of the Galilee from 4 BCE until 39 CE, Herod Philip II was tetrarch of Ituraea and the region of Trachonitis from 4 BCE until 33/34 CE, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene from 14 CE until 29 CE,¹ all of those dates together produce a time frame that encompasses the years 26 CE to 29 CE. A baptism happening between the Pentecosts of 27 CE and 28 CE can be seen to fall within that time frame. So far, so good. Next, some portion of "*the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*" must be shown to have happened before the Pentecost in 28 CE, the conclusion of the seventy weeks (see Diagram 6.1 on page 95). Many traditional expositors have equated the fifteenth year of Tiberius to the year 29 CE, based on the years of his reign being counted from his first year of sole reign in 14 CE, but whether that is the fifteenth year meant by Luke is not quite so simple to ascertain.

The possible years that can be identified as the fifteenth year in the reign of Tiberius depend on several variables, namely ...

- on whether one counts the first year of Tiberius' reign as an accession year followed by numbered years or counts numbered years with no accession year,
- on whether the count begins with the year of his coreign with Augustus over the provinces that began in 12 CE or with the year of his sole reign after Augustus died in 14 CE,
- on the type of calendar used, Roman, Syro-Macedonian, or Jewish. If Jewish, there is the added uncertainty about whether the calendar used started the new year in the first month Nisan or the seventh month Tishri.

Using those variables, sixteen different time periods can be identified as including the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the time period stipulated for the start of the ministry of John the Baptist. They range from 26-27 CE to 29-30 CE. Five of the sixteen configurations allow for the fifteenth year of Tiberius' reign to occur after Pentecost in the year 27 CE and before Pentecost in the year 28 CE, which is the Pentecost that concluded the prophecy of the seventy weeks.

¹ Savignac, Raphaël. "Texte complet de l'inscription d'Abila relative à Lysanias." *Revue Biblique* 9, no. 4 (1912): 533-540.

The dates for the five most probable time periods for the fifteenth year of Tiberius (counting from his joint rule; showing proleptic Gregorian dates) are:

October 26–October 27 CE (Roman, non-accession year).

January 1–December 31, 27 CE (Julian, accession-year).

October 1, 26–September 30, 27 CE (Syro-Macedonian, non-accession year).

March/April 26–September 30, 27 CE (Jewish, non-accession year).

March/April 26–March/April 28 CE (Jewish, accession year).¹

It is probable that the Gospel of Luke was written by a Jew,² a follower of Jesus, possibly as a formal presentation to the former high priest Theophilus³ for the purpose of explaining the growing branch of Judaism that was built on recognition of Jesus as the Anointed One of Israel. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that a Jewish calendar system was used to calculate the fifteenth year of Tiberius as referenced in Luke, using one of the Jewish calendars mentioned above. However, knowing which calendar was used, Jewish or otherwise, is not really important. All that is needed at this point is to show that “*the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*” could have been referring to a time period occurring before Pentecost in the year 28 CE, which marks the end of the seventy weeks. That has been demonstrated to have been possible not only once but in five instances using various calendars and accession/non-accession years.

Now that the ministry of John the Baptist has been located as beginning sometime after the Pentecost of 27 CE (May 28 that year), can the year of Jesus’ baptism be placed within the time frame defined by the start of John’s ministry in early 27 CE and the end of the seventy weeks on the Pentecost in 28 CE? Yes, it can be so placed, at least indirectly. The age at which Jesus began his ministry shortly after his baptism is given in Luke 3:23, which says: “*And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age.*” Since Jesus was born sometime before the death of Herod the Great, who died in March of 4 BCE, it can be easily confirmed

¹ Calendar calculations were verified by Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1998), p. 330-345.

² Based on Romans 3:1-2 and that all of the other parts of the *Tanakh* and *B’rit Hadashah*) were written by Jews, it seems probable that the writer of the Luke was a messianic Jew.

³ Theophilus was the name of a high priest from 37-41 CE who was the son of the high priest Annas, brother of the high priest Caiaphas, both mentioned in Luke, and grandfather of a woman named Johanna, possibly the one mentioned in Luke 8:3.

Table 7.1 – Year of Jesus’ Baptism

1 year old - 3 BCE	2 years old - 2 BCE	3 years old - 1 BCE	4 years old - 1 CE	5 years old - 2 CE
6 years old - 3 CE	7 years old - 4 CE	8 years old - 5 CE	9 years old - 6 CE	10 years old - 7 CE
11 years old - 8 CE	12 years old - 9 CE	13 years old - 10 CE	14 years old - 11 CE	15 years old - 12 CE
16 years old - 13 CE	17 years old - 14 CE	18 years old - 15 CE	19 years old - 16 CE	20 years old - 17 CE
21 years old - 18 CE	22 years old - 19 CE	23 years old - 20 CE	24 years old - 21 CE	25 years old - 22 CE
26 years old - 23 CE	27 years old - 24 CE	28 years old - 25 CE	29 years old - 26 CE	30 years old - 27 CE

by simple calculation that Jesus could have been “*about thirty years of age*” in the time period between the Pentecost in 27 CE that ended the sixty-ninth week of the prophecy of the seventy weeks and the Pentecost in the year 28 CE that ended the seventy weeks (see Table 7.1 above).

So far, four of the six items that were required to happen before the seventy weeks ended on the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE have now been demonstrated to have happened in history exactly in the order predicted. The new covenant was introduced by John the Baptist in early 27 CE, and the baptism of Jesus by John, which identified Jesus as the anointed one who would confirm the new covenant, happened sometime after John began his ministry in 27 CE and before the seventy weeks came to their end on Pentecost in the year 28 CE. That leaves just the fifth and sixth items, “*to seal up the vision and prophecy*” and “*to anoint the most Holy*.” These last two items will now be shown to have also been fulfilled at the time of the baptism of Jesus, setting the stage for his public ministry.

⑤ “*to seal up the vision and prophecy*”

The fifth of the six items set forth in verse 24, “*to seal up the vision and prophecy*,” (a strict translation of the Masoretic Text yields: “*to seal up the vision and prophet*”) was fulfilled at the time of the baptism of Jesus. After his baptism, as recorded in John 6:27, Jesus revealed to his disciples that God had previously sealed him, saying: “... *for him* [i.e., for the Son of Man, a messianic term Jesus often used to describe himself] *hath God the Father sealed*.” Jesus was revealing to them that his messiahship and his role as “The Prophet” had been attested by God, but that his message had been sealed away from the understanding of the Jewish religious leadership and the Jewish people, all except those Israelites who

were chosen by God to understand Jesus' message of the new covenant. God had warned Israel through Moses about what would happen (exile from the land) if the nation did not keep the commandments. Daniel himself called attention to Moses' warning in his prayer of confession (see page 216), and the prophet Isaiah, echoing Moses' warning, had foretold that the nation of Israel would be given spiritual blindness, as recorded in Isaiah 6:9-10:

*"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims ... And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, **Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.** Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."*

Note the use of the phrases "*thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged*" in the above passage from Isaiah, which is essentially the same terminology used in Daniel 9:24 to signal the new covenant. The spiritual blindness given to Israel by God is further clarified in Isaiah 29:10-14:

"For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with

their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.”

That latter passage from Isaiah makes clear that the blindness from God he foretold was not applicable only to the Israel of his day, but that the blindness of Israel would be extended to include the wisdom of their wise men and the understanding of their prudent men about the entire testimony of Moses and the prophets. All of that was to occur in the future, after the time of Isaiah, when God was prophesied to do a marvellous work and wonder among the people. During Jesus’ ministry to introduce the new covenant, the acceptance of his message was hindered by the spiritual blindness imposed by God on the religious leadership and people of Israel, as indicated in the Matthew 13: 10-17, where he specifically invokes the words of Isaiah:

“And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them. ... Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”

Isaiah had specifically predicted the blindness of Israel with respect to the redemptive ministry of Jesus. In Isaiah, chapter 53, the prophet wrote:

“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry

ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

⑥ “to anoint the Most Holy”

The last of the six items that had to be accomplished before the end of the seventy “weeks,” “to anoint the Most Holy,” was also accomplished at the time of the baptism of Jesus. That event involved an anointing with the Holy Spirit that would signify the Most Holy One being consecrated for service¹ as the servant of God who would confirm the covenant, *i.e.*, the “new covenant” promised by Jeremiah as previously explained in this chapter. In addition, the baptism was done in the context of Isaiah 42:1-8:

¹ See discussion on the usage of the word “cut off” on page 96.

*“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; **I have put my spirit upon him:** he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, **and give thee for a covenant of the people,** for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord: that is my name.”*

Thus, it can be seen that Jesus’ anointing by the Spirit of God at his baptism fulfilled the requirement to anoint the Most Holy.¹ It also identified him as the servant introduced in Isaiah 53 who would bear the iniquities of Israel and justify many. With his anointing the stage was set for his public ministry to begin, a ministry that would be completed by the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE to dwell in the heart of all who believed in him and his resurrection. As part of his ministry as the messianic forerunner, John the Baptist explained the spiritual meaning of the baptism of Jesus to his own disciples,² as recorded in John 1:29-36:

¹ In Dan. 9:24, the phrase translated Most Holy (Hebrew: מִשְׁכָּן קֹדֶשׁ *qōdeš qāḏāšim*) is a technical term for the inner sanctuary, altar, furnishings, or certain consecrated offerings (e.g., Exod. 26:33–34; 29:37; 30:26–29; Lev. 6:17, 25; 24:9; Num. 18:9). To the prophet Daniel, who was writing in the context of the Mosaic Covenant, the phrase “to anoint the Most Holy” would have been a reference to the Temple altar anointings (Exod. 40:9–10; Lev 8:10). However, in the context of New Covenant revelation, the body of Jesus is revealed to be the true Temple (John 2:19–21) and he is the cornerstone of the New Covenant temple (Psalm 118:22; Mark 12:10–11; Eph. 2:20–22; 1 Peter 2:6). Thus, he is the Most Holy anointed with the Spirit (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38), and by the later outpouring of the Spirit on his followers, the church becomes the dwelling place for God (Acts 2; 1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21–22). Read this way, “to anoint the Most Holy” is typologically linked to Christ’s anointing and the Spirit’s consecration of the New Covenant temple (Christ and his body of believers). That preserves the Hebrew syntax used by Daniel while recognizing that Christ himself is the Most Holy, the locus of God’s presence.

² By the act of immersing Jesus’ body in the living waters of the Jordan River, his future death, burial (symbolically under the water), and resurrection to eternal life, which would take place at the end of his ministry, was portrayed for all to see at the beginning of his ministry.

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!”

When the Holy Spirit of God was placed on Jesus as prophesied in Isaiah 42:1, the sixth and final item required to be accomplished during the seventy “weeks,” “to anoint the Most Holy” was accomplished. Afterwards, Jesus was led into the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan for forty days and forty nights. Ten days later during Passover, Jesus appeared in Jerusalem for the first “cleansing” of leaven (the traditions of men) from the Temple, followed by a period of public ministry in Judea. When John the Baptist was arrested and beheaded, Jesus took his ministry to the Galilee. With the seventy weeks completed, verse 27 moves the prophecy forward by telling what will happen thereafter:

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [meaning a normal seven-day week]: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

After John’s arrest, Jesus began preaching the new covenant to his Jewish brethren in Galilee, as recorded in Luke 4:13-21:

“And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in

*their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias [Isaiah]. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because **he hath anointed me** to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”*

During his public ministry, which lasted about twenty-seven months from baptism to ascension, Jesus preached the “good news” of the new covenant in Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and other parts of *Eretz Israel*, including Jerusalem. A two-year-plus ministry is indicated by the Scriptural text. The Gospel of John specifically mentions three Passovers observed during Jesus’ ministry, one in chapter 2, verse 13, “*And the Jews’ passover was at hand*”; a second in chapter 6, verse 4, “*And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh*”; and a third in chapter 11, verse 55, “*And the Jews’ passover was nigh at hand.*” The reference in chapter 2 is to the Passover in 28 CE,¹ the one in chapter 6 to the Passover in 29 CE, and the one in chapter 11 to Jesus’ last Passover in 30 CE.

Some Bible scholars have speculated that a fourth Passover is alluded to in John 4:35, when, immediately before an unnamed feast mentioned in John 5:1, Jesus tells his disciples, “*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*” They assume that the statement by Jesus was literal, made in the spring when the fields of barley were ready for harvesting, something that would be true around the time of Passover. However, the timeline of Jesus’ ministry (see Diagram 7.1 on page 117) shows that his statement was made after Pentecost and before the Great Day in the year 28 CE, during a sabbath year and prior to the start of the jubilee year,

¹ The exact year can be derived from the reference in John 2:20 to Herod’s Temple having been under construction for forty-six years (see page 167).

which would begin on the 10th of Tishri. Looking around, the disciples would have seen that the fields were laying fallow, having already been harvested many months earlier before the start of the sabbath year, and, since that was to be a jubilee year as well, the disciples would also have known that the next sowing and harvesting could not begin until the jubilee year had ended on the Great Day in 29 CE, at least twelve months in the future. So, it must have been obvious to the disciples that Jesus was not making a literal statement about harvesting crops. The Gospel of John, in chapter 4, verse 35, goes on to confirm that Jesus was teaching instead about harvesting souls, not crops, and emphasizing that the souls of the Jewish people were ripe for gathering at that very moment.

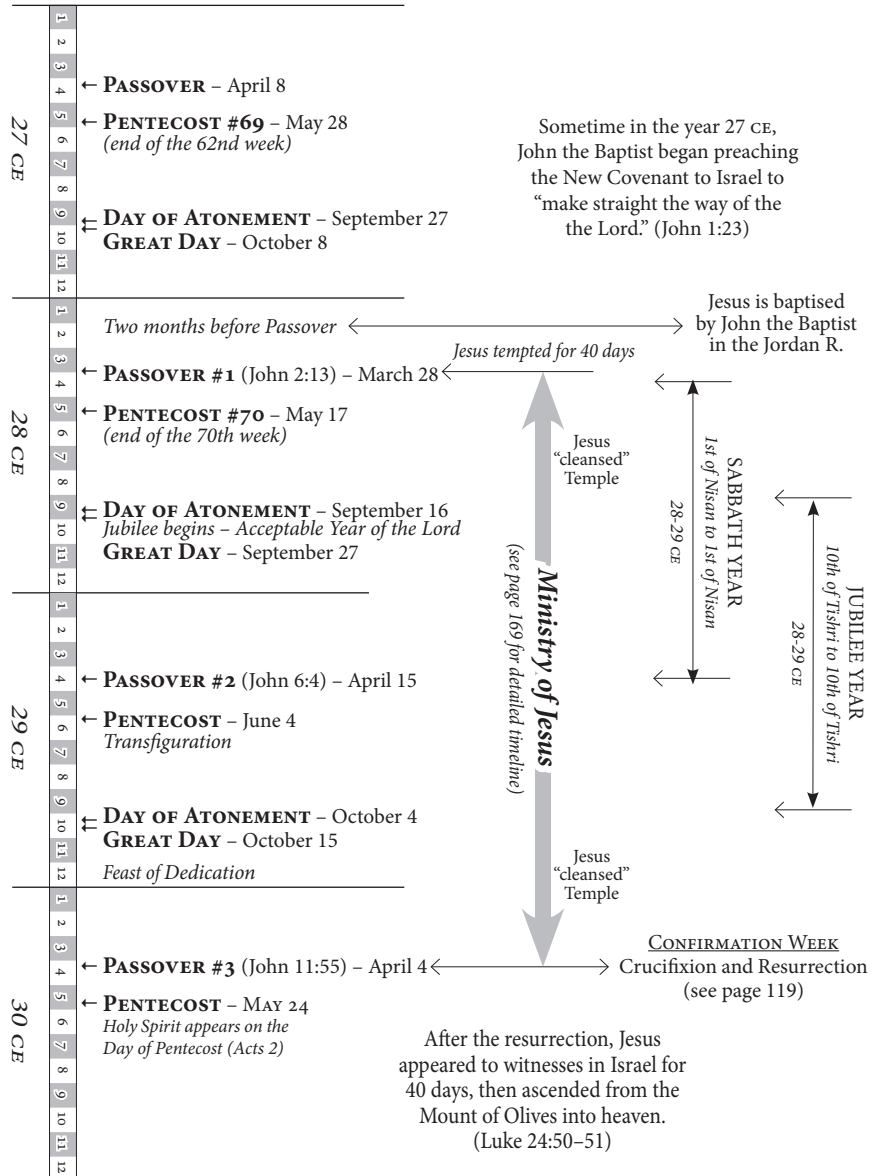
As history shows, Jesus' authority as mediator of the new covenant promised to Israel by Jeremiah was not understood by Jewish religious and political leaders of that day, and his simple message of justification through repentance and faith was almost universally rejected by the Temple authorities, Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and rabbis of his time.¹ On the other hand, many ordinary Jewish people in the countryside, and even some Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (probably those who had been enlightened by the news of the coming kingdom preached by John the Baptist), responded to Jesus' message of salvation and were baptized into the new covenant, as recorded in John 3:26:

"And they came unto John [the Baptist], and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and

¹ Much harm has been done by those who have used the rejection of Jesus' ministry by the Jewish leadership (as recorded in the *B'rit Hadashah*, New Testament) to justify anti-Semitic views and actions against Jewish people, individually and collectively, over the centuries. A careful reading and correct interpretation of the Bible, both the *Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadashah*, will show that there is absolutely no theological justification whatsoever for anti-Semitic/anti-Jewish/anti-Israel views or actions by anyone.

Diagram 7.1 – The Ministry of Jesus

Gregorian Years
and Months



heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Confirmation of the Covenant

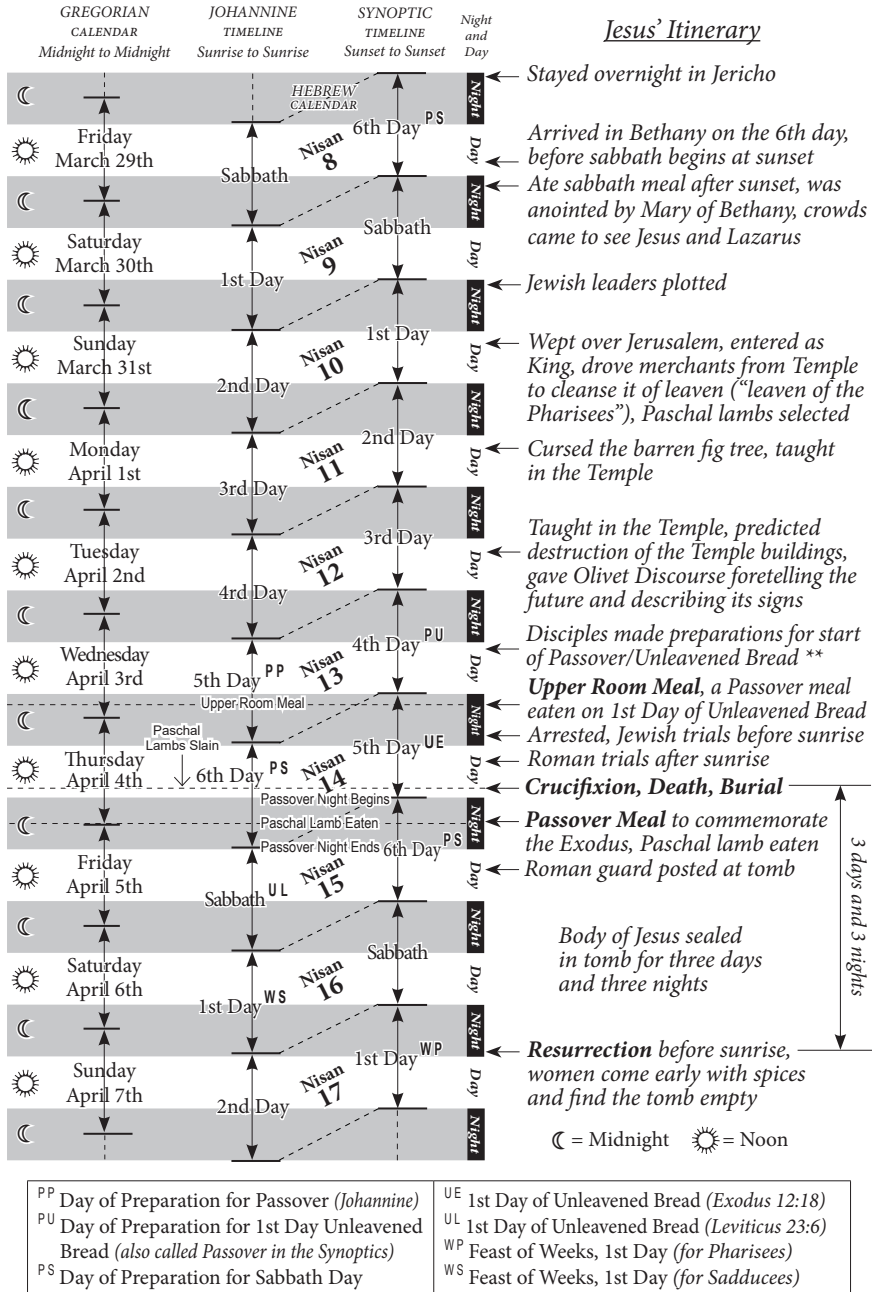
The public ministry of Jesus reached its climax during Passover week in the year 30 CE (see Diagram 7.2 on the opposite page), during which the first part of verse 27, *“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,”* was fulfilled. Jesus began the week by entering Jerusalem as the King of Israel, as recorded in Luke 19:29-38:

“And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.”

The kingship of Jesus was rejected by official Judaism from the beginning. During his entry into the city of Jerusalem on his way to the Temple area during the final week of his ministry, this exchange that took place between some Pharisees and Jesus is recorded in Luke 19:39-44:

Diagram 7.2 – The Confirmation Week (30 CE)

Showing relationship of Gregorian, Johannine (Sadducean), and Synoptic (Pharisean) Days



“And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

Jesus’ entered Jerusalem on the tenth of Nisan, the day designated for selecting the lamb for Passover. His crucifixion four days later, on the fourteenth of Nisan was on the afternoon of the day when the Paschal lambs were slain. At a supper with his disciples just hours before his arrest and trials by Jewish and Roman authorities, Jesus made it plain that his impending death on the cross was the required offering of blood for atonement that would confirm the new covenant, as recorded Matthew, 26:26-28:

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

The prophesied week of confirming the new covenant was brought to a close by the burial of Jesus in a rock-hewn tomb for three days and three nights, followed by his bodily resurrection to life on the third day, which was 17 Nisan by Sadducean reckoning (or 16 Nisan by Pharisean reckoning), in both cases the resurrection occurring on the first day of the Feast of Weeks (First Fruits). Forty days later, after appearing to the eleven remaining disciples and many of his other followers for the purpose of creating witnesses to the fact that he had been bodily resurrected, Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. On the fiftieth day following the resurrection of Jesus, on the Day of Pentecost, his disciples and followers were gathered together as he had commanded them, and it was at that time that the gift of the Holy Spirit descended upon

and indwelt each of them as Jesus had promised before ascending to the Father, an event that is recorded in Acts, chapter 2, as follows:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues [known languages spoken by visitors to Jerusalem for Pentecost], as the Spirit gave them utterance. ... And they [the people in Jerusalem] were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ... What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But [the apostle] Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast

made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified,¹ both Lord and Christ.”

From a theological standpoint, Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection during Passover week in the year 30 CE confirmed the new covenant and brought to an end the efficacy of Temple sacrifices for atonement. The New Covenant replaced the Sinai Covenant. The end of the sacrificial system had been predicted in verse 27b, “*and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,*” and its demise was attested by ominous signs recorded in the Talmud.² The Temple continued to function for another forty years, until it was destroyed by Titus and the Romans in 70 CE as predicted, “*And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.*” Verse 27c goes on to prophesy, “*and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate,*”³ thus foretelling the state of perpetual conflict and spiritual desolation of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount that is still in evidence to this very day.

¹ Jewish religious authority (the Sanhedrin) condemned Jesus for blasphemy, a capital offense under Jewish law; Roman civil authority (Pilate) executed him by means of crucifixion.

² *Jerusalem Talmud*, Tractate Yoma 6:3 [33b]: “It has been taught: For forty years before the destruction of the Temple the western menorah light darkened, the crimson thread did not turn white, and the lot for the Lord always came up in the left hand. The priests would close the gates of the Temple at night and get up in the morning and find them open” (Au).

³ See previous exposition of verse 27 on page 96.

THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND

This book has fully interpreted the chrono-specific predictive prophecies revealed to and sealed by the prophet Daniel as recorded in the Book of Daniel. The exegesis presented herein claims to match the biblical text and recorded history exactly. Now that you have read the interpretations for yourself, you may still have some reservations—perhaps feeling that the interpretive approach used herein is a bit too technical and analytical to be spiritual. Or you may be questioning whether projecting fulfillment of Hebrew prophecy into modern times is a valid extension. Or you may simply be having a normal cautionary reaction to what you consider to be an approach that is new and unorthodox.

Whatever your reaction, I can relate. Before starting my research into the Daniel chronology, I, too, favored the traditional approaches found in popular commentaries by well-known Daniel scholars—works that often leaned on approximate history and chronology, or sidestepped them altogether. Taking a fresh, chrono-historical look, and allowing for modern fulfillment, required a deliberate break with that tradition. I first had to set aside my own biases before seeing the Daniel prophecies for what they are: chrono-specific predictions intended to explain the history of the Jews, Jerusalem, and the Anointed One of Israel. Once I accepted that fact, the prophecies began to yield understanding.

After the prophecies were understood, the next challenge was deciding how to best explain the new interpretations to others—whether to compare them to older interpretations, giving them a traditional hermeneutic context, or to present them as novel interpretations standing on their own. I chose the latter approach, primarily to avoid having to include critiques of the most-quoted scholarly expositions of Daniel in vogue today, commentaries which I consider to have been written largely by scholars trying their best to avoid admitting any possibility of divine providence with respect to the prophecies and their fulfillments. The resulting freedom from having to deal with that error opened the way for clear interpretations of the prophecies, with precise fulfillments documented in history, thus not requiring the usual academic equivocations.

It was also decided that the interpretations of Daniel's chrono-specific prophecies should be presented, not in the order in which they appear in the Bible but in the order in which I was given to understand them. By rearranging the biblical order of presentation, the path of interpretation I had traveled from

one prophecy to the next could be recreated for you to follow. Ultimately, though, I knew that the most I could accomplish by sharing my insights was to present the interpretations as clearly as possible, then trust that God would open your eyes and ears to understand the prophecies in the same way he had opened mine when I first began the quest to know their meanings.

In the days to come, as you meditate on the interpretations of the chrono-specific predictive prophecies explained in this book, one important point should be reemphasized: I am not claiming to have unsealed the Daniel prophecies, although I may have been one of the earliest to recognize that the 1967 events had been used to unseal the book. It is also possible that I am the first to dare to say so in print. For the record, the prophecies had already been unsealed by God enacting his will through the recalled Jewish people in Israel (despite their unbelief) well before I began my research. By the time this exposition was begun, all I had to do was match the prophetic events with historical events—something relatively easy to do since all of the fulfillment events in Daniel had already occurred and were documented in history.

It is also worth noting that the fulfillment of every major chrono-specific prophecy in Daniel has now been fully explained. That means there are no predictions left unaccounted for—no events still awaiting fulfillment. Apart from the possible “standing in his lot” of Daniel himself, implied at the end of the twelfth chapter, everything else in Daniel has already happened in history. Of course, the interpretations set forth in this book, inasmuch as they fully explain the chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel by matching their biblical texts to events documented in history, constitute a challenge to traditional eschatology.

Bible-believing scholars (and, fortunately, there are still a few of them around) will need to reexamine basic assumptions about their sequence of end-time events, and do so without using a framework of future events resting on Daniel’s prophecies as a foundation. That process will be troubling for dispensational eschatologists, especially when they realize that some of their cherished assumptions may have to be revised as a result. For Bible-doubting scholars (and, unfortunately, there are all too many of them), the actuality of predictive prophecy validated by fulfillment in history—a sure sign of divine providence—will now have to be incorporated into their naturalistic approaches to biblical exposition. Sadly, even with the overwhelming evidence from Daniel’s prophetic fulfillments, admitting the reality of transcendence may still be considered too risky by those who wish to remain wise in the eyes of their peers.

As for modern Jewish scholars and religious leaders, the challenge offered by the interpretations presented in this book is even greater still. The chronological precision of the prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27—the Messiah Prophecy—demands that serious consideration be given to the evidence that Jesus, in whose name Jews have been unjustly persecuted and killed for nearly two thousand years, was, is, and will again be the Anointed One foretold by Moses and the prophets in the *Tanakh*. Indeed, it is possible, even probable, that the chrono-specific predictive prophecies in Daniel have been unsealed at this moment in history especially for the edification of the Jewish people, allowing them to understand the Holy One of Israel in the manner the Scriptures ordain that they will acknowledge, worship, and testify of him at the time of the end.

In closing, I thank you for allowing me to share my understanding of the seven chrono-specific predictive prophecies recorded in the Book of Daniel. My hope is that the insights set forth herein will prove spiritually illuminating, and that, by helping you better understand God's faithfulness and steadfast love as revealed by his most sure words of prophecy, your faith in his Word will be increased—even to the point of belief if that is not already the case. The Bible promises that those who diligently seek to know God, and persevere in seeking him to the point of belief in his redemption and salvation, will one day be rewarded with the gift of eternal life in his presence. Until that glorious day, God freely bestows his earthly blessings, perhaps the greatest of which is that he empowers his disciples to share the message of salvation through faith in him with a world desperately seeking to believe in something eternal and true.

*“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:
and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings:
he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:
he revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness,
and the light dwelleth with him.” - DANIEL 2:20-22*

APPENDICES



“Wise men lay up knowledge.” – PROVERBS 10:14

BACKGROUND NOTES

ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL

The Book of Daniel is one of the most debated books in the Bible. Scholars seem unable to agree about when it was written and what it means. Since this exposition is based on the assumption that the chrono-specific prophecies in Daniel are totally trustworthy, it only follows that everything else that the Book of Daniel says or implies about itself will be taken at face value herein as well.

Author

The Book of Daniel was written by the seer Daniel, a Hebrew man of noble birth who was carried away captive from Judah to Babylon in the year 605 BCE. In his book, Daniel records the revelation given to him by God, who communicated with him through visions, dreams, and angels. It can be inferred that Daniel was in his early teen years when taken to Babylon. There he lived and was schooled in the king's palace, and eventually held high office in the Neo-Babylonian Empire, serving as chief over the Chaldean mathematicians and astromers. Daniel spent most of his life removed from Jerusalem and Judah, his homeland, but remained faithful to his Jewish heritage. He lived to see the fall of Babylon to Cyrus the Great of Persia, but nothing is known about his life thereafter. His death is assumed to have occurred soon after 536 BCE, with his place of burial unknown. In Hebrew, the name Daniel דַּנְיֵאל means "God is my judge." Interestingly, Daniel never refers to himself as a prophet, and his book is not included in the "Prophets" section of the Jewish *Tanakh*. In the *B'rit Hadashah*, however, Jesus specifically refers to him as "Daniel the prophet" (see Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14), and his book is placed among those of the major prophets in most Christian Bibles.

Date Written

It is not known whether the vision-dream sequences in the Book of Daniel were recorded individually at the time they were experienced, or as a collection of several at a time, or perhaps even all together as one continuous work. It is certain that all were written down after the author was carried off to Babylon by

Nebuchadnezzar II. In this book, the following chronology for the pophecy chapters is assumed: chapter 4 was written before 562 BCE; chapter 7 in the first year of Belshazzar, *ca.* 553 BCE; chapter 8 in the third year of Belshazzar, *ca.* 551 BCE; chapter 9 in the first year of Darius the Mede, *ca.* 539 BCE; chapters 10-12 in the third year of Cyrus the Great of Persia, *ca.* 536 BCE.

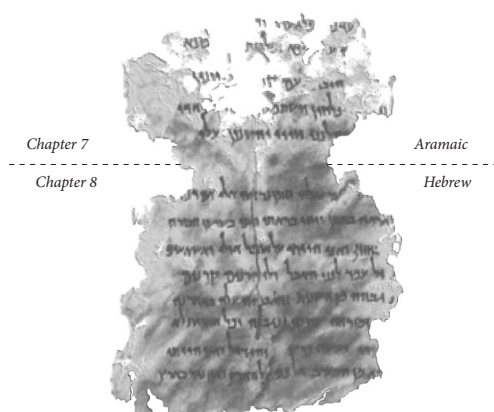
Languages Used

Daniel used two languages to compose his book: Daniel 1:1–2:4a written in Hebrew, Daniel 2:4b–7:28 written in Aramaic, Daniel 8:1–12:13 written in Hebrew (see illustration of language transition on opposite page). No expositor has come up with a good explanation for Daniel's use of two languages to write his book. Some scholars suggest that Hebrew was used when addressing covenant Israel and Aramaic when addressing Israel under Gentile empires.

Historical Context

Daniel was born during the reign of Josiah (*r.* 640-609 BCE), who presided over a period of religious revival in the kingdom of Judah. Josiah restored the Temple and its priesthood to purity and reinstituted the biblical festivals. The national return to righteousness followed the extreme wickedness of King Manasseh (*r.* 697-642 BCE), who provoked God to say in 2 Kings 21:10-15: *"Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols: Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies; Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day."* However, God was so pleased with Josiah that he promised that the wrath to come would not happen in his lifetime.

During Josiah's reign, Egypt was the great power to the south. To the north, the power of Assyria was in decline and that of Babylon on the rise. In 609 BCE,



Fragment of a Daniel Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q112) showing the transition from Aramaic to Hebrew in the Book of Daniel when going from chapter 7 to chapter 8.

Josiah, who was loosely allied with Babylon, led his army to Megiddo in northern Israel to block an Egyptian army of Pharaoh Necho that was passing along the coast to the aid of their Assyrian allies against an attack by Babylon. Josiah was killed by the Egyptians. As an immediate consequence of his death, the countdown to judgment that God had paused during Josiah's lifetime was resumed. In successive annual campaigns, the Babylonians moved southward to subjugate cities in the Levant. In 605 BCE, the Babylonian army clashed with the Egyptian army once again and achieved final victory in the Battle of Carchemish, firmly securing Judah as a Babylonian vassal. It was during that time that Daniel and many Hebrew nobles were taken captive to Babylon and that Judah came under the Babylonian hegemony. In 597 BCE, after a rebellion by King Jehoiachin of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar II reacted with vigor. He seized Jerusalem and led its king Jehoiachin, the prophet Ezekiel, and many Jews into exile in Babylon. Nine years later, Nebuchadnezzar's army returned for a third time, entering Jerusalem in August of 586 BCE after a two-year siege. It was at that time that Solomon's Temple and the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed and the people taken into captivity, except for a remnant left in the countryside.

During the seventy years of the Babylonian Exile (605-536 BCE), a new power arrived on the scene that would challenge the supremacy of Babylon. As predicted in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1, Cyrus the Great united the Medes and

Persians, and in October of 539 BCE the Persian army conquered Babylon under his banner as King of the Achaemenid Persian Empire. Cyrus was an enlightened ruler who tolerated and even encouraged retention of the customs and religious practices of conquered peoples. Not too long after conquering Babylon, Cyrus decreed (no one knows the exact year) that the Jews could return to their ancestral lands in Judah and rebuild their Temple. The first Jews returned *circa* 536 BCE and began to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. Thus, the seventy years of Exile that had been predicted by the prophet Jeremiah came to an end. Prior to the return from Babylon, God had revealed to Daniel the history of the Jews from the end of the Exile until the “*time of the end*.” However, because the prophecies were sealed, it is debatable how much of what God revealed to Daniel was understood by the Jewish people over the years. Even today, much of the meaning of the Daniel prophecies remains an enigma to them.

Place in the Canon

In the *Tanakh* (Old Testament), the Book of Daniel is not included with the Prophets but is placed in the Writings (*Ketuvim*), the section that also contains Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra–Nehemiah, and the Chronicles. By contrast, the older Greek Septuagint manuscripts usually include Daniel among the major Prophets. Some have speculated that Daniel was moved from the Prophets to the Writings in the Hebrew canon after early Christians drew heavily on the book to support the messiahship of Jesus, though this remains conjecture. A more common Jewish explanation is that Daniel’s visions differ in form from those of the classical prophets and therefore suited the Writings better. In Christian Bibles, Daniel is included with the Major Prophets, placed immediately after Ezekiel. The Roman Catholic version contains additional material not found in the Jewish or Protestant canon: Susanna (chapter 13), Bel and the Dragon (chapter 14), and within chapter 3 the “Prayer of Azariah” and the “Song of the Three Holy Children.” These expansions appear in varying combinations in some of the earliest Greek versions of the Bible but are not recognized as Scripture by Jews or Protestants. In this book, the Protestant/Jewish version, based on the Masoretic text, is considered authoritative and is used exclusively.

TIMEKEEPING IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

The earliest reference to sacred timekeeping is found in Genesis 1:14: “*And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.*” As that verse demonstrates, timekeeping was anchored to celestial movement from the very beginning of biblical history. Unfortunately, the Bible does not describe the actual calendar system used by the ancients, so we can only guess about its structure, astronomical associations, and accuracy.

The first calendar component with a numerical notation is found in the Book of Exodus, when God commanded that the Passover be observed in the first month, called Abib. The early books of the Bible mention only four months by name: Abib, the first month (Exodus 12:2, 13:4); Zif, the second month (1 Kings 6:1); Ethanim, the seventh month (1 Kings 8:2); and Bul, the eighth month (1 Kings 6:38). From these few mentions, some have assumed that the ancient Hebrew calendar was a strict lunar calendar. There is evidence, however, that the movement of the sun was also taken into account by the early Hebrews. The Gezer Calendar, dating from the 10th century BCE, the earliest written example of a Hebrew calendar so far found by archeologists, shows a twelve-month year which is correlated with the major agricultural seasons in ancient Israel—olive harvest, early grain planting, late grain planting, hoeing of flax, barley harvest, wheat harvest, and so on. That correlation of months to seasons confirms that the early Hebrew calendar was not exclusively lunar, but was instead lunisolar in practice, coordinated in some manner with the sun-regulated seasons in addition to the monthly waxing and waning of the moon so as to keep the calendar aligned with planting and harvest year after year.

After the Exodus, there were twelve months in the ancient calendar used by the Israelites, with months alternating between 29 and 30 days in length, which averages out to 29½ days per month. The resulting lunar year was composed of 354 days. Since that 354-day lunar year was eleven-plus days shorter than the solar year, an adjustment by intercalation (probably a leap month added every three or four years, but the exact method is still unknown) was made to keep the seasons synchronized with the sun. While captive in Egypt, the Hebrews probably followed the Egyptian civil calendar, which had twelve months, each having 30 days, with five leap days added each year to prevent calendar creep, resulting

in a year of 365 days, which is close to the astronomically-determined 365¼-day year. There is no evidence that the Israelites ever adopted the 365-day Egyptian calendar for sacred purposes after the Exodus, though. Some Bible expositors have postulated a 360-day “prophetic year” that they claim can be used for interpreting biblical chronology and prophecies. However, the Bible itself does not formalize any specific number of days in a Hebrew year, probably because its length had to be adjusted from time to time to reconcile the twelve lunar-determined Jewish festival months with their corresponding solar seasons.

Until the Exodus, the basic components of the Hebrew calendar were all derived from physical observation of the heavens—the day from the recurring rising of the sun, the month from the recurring crescent of the new moon, and the year from the recurring equinoxes and solstices. After the Exodus, the new nation of Israel was given a non-astronomical time unit to add to its calendar system, the week. Every seventh day was to be observed by the Israelites as a reminder of their deliverance from bondage, as recorded in the Torah, in Deuteronomy 5:12-15: *“Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.”* Thus, the seven-day week became a unit of time in Jewish life.

In addition to the sabbath day, festivals and religious days to be observed throughout the year were added to the calendar by God through Moses at Sinai, and sabbath and jubilee years were ordained. The Jewish new year was originally celebrated in the first month, as God had commanded, but when Israel became a kingdom there is evidence that a parallel civil year was instituted with its New-Year Day observed in the seventh month. After the Exile, the religious and civil new year reflected the custom of Judah, with the new-year observed on the first day of the seventh month, Tishr, and that holiday is called *Rosh Hashanah* (literally, “head of the year”) today. Other changes were to happen over time as well. The Exile in Babylon that began after Carchemish in 605 BCE resulted in major changes to the Hebrew calendar. The most obvious change was the adoption of Babylonian

Months of the Jewish Year				
Number	Pre-Exilic Name	Post-Exilic Name	Length (days)	Gregorian Equivalent
1st	Abib	Nisan	30	March-April
2nd	Zif	Iyar	29	April-May
3rd		Sivan	30	May-June
4th		Tammuz	29	June-July
5th		Av	30	July-August
6th		Elul	29	August-September
7th	Ethanim	Tishri	30	September-October
8th	Bul	Heshvan	29 or 30	October-November
9th		Kislev	30 or 29	November-December
10th		Tevet	29	December-January
11th		Shevat	30	January-February
12th		Adar	29 (or 30 in LY)	February-March
13th (in LY)		Adar II	29	March-April
<i>In a leap year (LY), the month of Adar II is inserted and all other months are moved back accordingly; a leap month is inserted in the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years of the 19-year cycle.</i>				

names for the months, and those names are still being used today. The first month Abib became Nisan, the seventh month Ethanim became Tishri, and so on (see list of Jewish months above). More important for accuracy, the 19-year cycle of calendar synchronization (later called the Metonic cycle), with its schedule for adding leap months to seven specified years in every nineteen-year cycle, became standard, and it is found reflected in the chronology of the Book of Daniel.

The ancient Hebrew calendar had a high degree of accuracy. Before 70 CE, it was based on priestly observations from Jerusalem, the sighting of the new moon being the most important calendric event. All other Jewish calendars were coordinated with the Temple calendar, so that the festivals would be celebrated on the correct day everywhere. After the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE and the priesthood ceased to function, the calendar was maintained by rabbis in various locations. Since observations from the Temple were no longer possible, and since the Jewish people were becoming so widely dispersed that timely dissemination of calendric information was impossible from one central location, a Hebrew calendar employing mathematical calculation was developed by Rabbi Hillel II

Major Festivals on the Ancient Jewish Priestly Calendar			
<i>Order</i>	<i>Post-Exilic Name</i>	<i>Day of Month and Festival</i>	<i>Pilgrimage</i>
1st Month	Nisan	14th – Passover (Pesach) and 15th – 22nd – Feast of Unleavened Bread 16th – First Day, Feast of Weeks, First Fruits (barley)	✓
2nd Month	Iyar	14th – Second Passover	
3rd Month	Sivan	50th Day, Feast of Weeks (Shavuot), First Fruits (wheat)	✓
4th Month	Tammuz	- - -	
5th Month	Av	- - -	
6th Month	Elul	First Fruits (figs, pomegranates, dates)	
7th Month	Tishri	1st – New Year (Rosh Hashanah) 10th – Great Day (after Yom Kippur) 15th-22nd – Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), First Fruits (wine and oil)	✓
8th Month	Heshvan	- - -	
9th Month	Kislev	25th – Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah)	
10th Month	Tevet	- - -	
11th Month	Shevat	- - -	
12th Month	Adar	14th – Purim (with Fast of Esther)	
<i>Since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel has established four new Jewish holidays: Jerusalem Day (Yom Yerushalayim); Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah); Memorial Day (Yom Hazikaron); Israel Independence Day (Yom Ha'atzmaut).</i>			

in the 4th century CE. A derivative of that universal calendar is used by many Jews today. It standardized the length of months and formalized the addition of seven leap months over the course of a 19-year cycle, so that the lunar calendar is regularly realigned with the solar year. The Hillel II calendar also ensured that Yom Kippur would not fall adjacent to a Sabbath and Hoshanah Rabba would not fall on a Saturday, extra-biblical prohibitions instituted by the rabbis. A day is added to the month of Heshvan or subtracted from the month of Kislev of the previous year to prevent those things from happening.

In reality, the rules for computing the Jewish calendar, both in antiquity and in more modern times, are much more detailed than has been outlined here, but this presentation covers all aspects that are important for using the ancient Hebrew calendar system as a tool for interpreting the Bible and its prophecies.

CALCULATING SABBATH AND JUBILEE YEARS

READ DANIEL 4

The Children of Israel were commanded to observe sabbath and jubilee years, as recorded in Leviticus 25:1-10. Observances of the sabbath and jubilee years are rarely mentioned in the Bible, though, probably because the Israelites were not always faithful to observe them over the centuries, especially the jubilee years. In addition, most extra-biblical records of whatever observances did occur in ancient Israel were lost at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Modern Jewish sources, which are based mainly on later rabbinical writings and Josephus, disagree about how often and when ancient Israel observed sabbath and jubilee years, and about how the sabbath and jubilee years were related to one another, whether they were sequential or overlapping. So, the challenge for modern biblical chronology is to identify at least one sabbath year and one jubilee year with certainty, based on the biblical text, and, from those “anchor” years, calculate a calendar showing all sabbath and jubilee years in history. Fortunately, there is a way to do just that by using the chronological information in Daniel chapter 4, together with information provided in the Book of 1 Kings.

Identifying the Sabbath-Jubilee Year of Solomon

Calculating a calendar of sabbath and jubilee years using the fourth chapter of Daniel begins with an understanding of how that chapter relates to the promises made to Solomon about the permanence of the kingdom to him and his posterity, as recorded in the Book of 1 Kings, beginning with chapter 9, verses 1-9:

“And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king’s house, and all Solomon’s desire which he was pleased to do, That the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do

according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil.”

In his later years, Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord by marrying many foreign women, that done in addition to his marriage to the daughter of pharaoh which occurred in the early years of his reign. Consequently, his heart was turned away from God to worship their gods, the gods of the surrounding nations, as recorded in 1 Kings 11:1-8:

“But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination

of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.”

Solomon’s disobedience, together with the disobedience of the people of Israel who followed his example by worshipping at the high places dedicated to the forbidden foreign gods, caused the Lord to pass judgment on the king and the nation, as recorded in 1 Kings 11:9-13:

*“And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, **I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father’s sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.** Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant’s sake, and for Jerusalem’s sake which I have chosen.”*

Solomon, when dedicating the Temple, possibly recalling the consequences of Israel’s future unfaithfulness to the covenant as had been foreseen by Moses in Deuteronomy, chapter 28, had asked for future forgiveness for the people of Israel, as recorded in 1 Kings 8:46-53:

“If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; Yet if they shall bethink themselves [alternate translation, “come to their senses”]¹ in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have

¹ The NET Bible® © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press; available at www.bible.org.

built for thy name: Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.”

The above passage is quoted from the Book of 1 Kings. It provides the context needed for understanding Daniel chapter 4 (see text on page 211), which is a chrono-specific prophecy about the future of Israel presented as an allegory, with Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar representing Israel and its king.¹ In the allegory, the king has a dream, seeing himself as a tree,² as described in verses 10-16:

“Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from

¹ Some expositors have proposed that Daniel chapter 4, is actual history. However, there is no evidence in the historical record of the events described in the fourth chapter (loss of kingdom, madness, return to sanity, worship of the God of Israel, etc.) ever happening to the historical Nebuchadnezzar. Other expositors have worked around that lack of evidence by proposing that the events refer to a later Babylonian king, Nabonidus (r. 556-539 BCE). He did leave Babylon ca. 552 BCE, living at the oasis of Tayma in Arabia for ten years. The historical record shows that he was associated with the worship of the moon goddess Sin in Tayma, but gives no indication that he ever went mad or worshipped the God of Israel.

² The allegorical symbolism of the tree and chronological intent of Daniel’s vision becomes clear by recalling the words of the prophet Isaiah “... for as the days of a tree are the days of my people ...” (Isaiah 65:22b).

heaven; He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him."

Daniel then records the interpretation of the dream in verses 20-26:

*"The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and **seven times** shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule."*

Verses 28-37 conclude Daniel chapter 4, by describing a sequence of three calamities that happened to the king in the allegory (keeping in mind that the Nebuchadnezzar character in the allegory represents the king of Israel):

*"All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. **At the end of twelve months** he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said,*

*Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; [1] **The kingdom is departed** from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and [2] **seven times shall pass over thee**, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. And [3] **at the end of the days** I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and **mine understanding returned** unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me."*

Recapping the sequence of events in verses 28-36, verse 29 specifies that the king, after he had been walking in his palace for twelve months, had the kingdom taken from him for a period of seven "times," during which the king lived among the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, meaning that Israel would be a nation living as the surrounding nations, at times exiled among them, for a specified period of seven times. Verse 34 then says that, at the end of the "days," the king came to his senses, and, at the conclusion of the "days," he was restored to his former glory. Focusing only on the chronological aspects of the narrative, there are three elements specifying time, namely "months," "times," and "days." Two of the three elements are associated with a specific time period. Twelve months are specified during which the king will walk in his palace, and seven "times" are specified during which the king will live among the birds and beasts. The duration of the period of "days" is left unspecified, but emphasis is put on the restoration that happens at the end of them.

Table A – How to Count the 7 “times” (1,596 Passovers)									
P-1 632 CE	P-2 631 CE	P-3 630 CE	P-4 629 CE	P-5 628 CE	P-6 627 CE	P-7 626 CE	P-8 625 CE	P-9 624 CE	P-10 623 CE
P-10 <i>see above</i>	P-20 613 CE	P-30 603 CE	P-40 593 CE	P-50 583 CE	P-60 573 CE	P-70 563 CE	P-80 553 CE	P-90 543 CE	P-100 533 CE
P-110 523 CE	P-120 513 CE	P-130 503 CE	P-140 493 CE	P-150 483 CE	P-160 473 CE	P-170 463 CE	P-180 453 CE	P-190 443 CE	P-200 433 CE
P-210 423 CE	P-220 413 CE	P-230 403 CE	P-240 393 CE	P-250 383 CE	P-260 373 CE	P-270 363 CE	P-280 353 CE	P-290 343 CE	P-300 333 CE
P-310 323 CE	P-320 313 CE	P-330 303 CE	P-340 293 CE	P-350 283 CE	P-360 273 CE	P-370 263 CE	P-380 253 CE	P-390 243 CE	P-400 233 CE
P-410 223 CE	P-420 213 CE	P-430 203 CE	P-440 193 CE	P-450 183 CE	P-460 173 CE	P-470 163 CE	P-480 153 CE	P-490 143 CE	P-500 133 CE
P-510 123 CE	P-520 113 CE	P-530 103 CE	P-540 93 CE	P-550 83 CE	P-560 73 CE	P-570 63 CE	P-580 53 CE	P-590 43 CE	P-600 33 CE
P-610 23 BCE	P-620 13 CE	P-630 3 CE	P-640 8 BCE	P-650 18 BCE	P-660 28 BCE	P-670 38 BCE	P-680 48 BCE	P-690 58 BCE	P-700 68 BCE
P-710 78 BCE	P-720 88 BCE	P-730 98 BCE	P-740 108 BCE	P-750 118 BCE	P-760 128 BCE	P-770 138 BCE	P-780 148 BCE	P-790 158 BCE	P-800 168 BCE
P-810 178 BCE	P-820 188 BCE	P-830 198 BCE	P-840 208 BCE	P-850 218 BCE	P-860 228 BCE	P-870 238 BCE	P-880 248 BCE	P-890 258 BCE	P-900 268 BCE
P-910 278 BCE	P-920 288 BCE	P-930 298 BCE	P-940 308 BCE	P-950 318 BCE	P-960 328 BCE	P-970 338 BCE	P-980 348 BCE	P-990 358 BCE	P-1000 368 BCE
P-1010 378 BCE	P-1020 388 BCE	P-1030 398 BCE	P-1040 408 BCE	P-1050 418 BCE	P-1060 428 BCE	P-1070 438 BCE	P-1080 448 BCE	P-1090 458 BCE	P-1100 468 BCE
P-1110 478 BCE	P-1120 488 BCE	P-1130 498 BCE	P-1140 508 BCE	P-1150 518 BCE	P-1160 528 BCE	P-1170 538 BCE	P-1180 548 BCE	P-1190 558 BCE	P-1200 568 BCE
P-1210 578 BCE	P-1220 588 BCE	P-1230 598 BCE	P-1240 608 BCE	P-1250 618 BCE	P-1260 628 BCE	P-1270 638 BCE	P-1280 648 BCE	P-1290 658 BCE	P-1300 668 BCE
P-1310 678 BCE	P-1320 688 BCE	P-1330 698 BCE	P-1340 708 BCE	P-1350 718 BCE	P-1360 728 BCE	P-1370 738 BCE	P-1380 748 BCE	P-1390 758 BCE	P-1400 768 BCE
P-1410 778 BCE	P-1420 788 BCE	P-1430 798 BCE	P-1440 808 BCE	P-1450 818 BCE	P-1460 828 BCE	P-1470 838 BCE	P-1480 848 BCE	P-1490 858 BCE	P-1500 868 BCE
P-1510 878 BCE	P-1520 888 BCE	P-1530 898 BCE	P-1540 908 BCE	P-1550 918 BCE	P-1560 928 BCE	P-1570 938 BCE	P-1580 948 BCE	P-1590 958 BCE	P-1591 <i>see below</i>
P-1591 959 BCE	P-1592 960 BCE	P-1593 961 BCE	P-1594 962 BCE	P-1595 963 BCE	P-1596 964 BCE	---	---	---	---
<i>Note that there was no year “0” (zero) when going from CE to BCE, so the count for the P-assovers in the transition decade from 3 CE to 8 BCE is determined as follows: P-assover number 630 in the count (P-630 above) occurred in the year 3 CE, P-631 in 2 CE, P-632 in 1 CE, P-633 in 1 BCE, P-634 in 2 BCE, P-635 in 3 BCE, P-636 in 4 BCE, P-637 in 5 BCE, P-638 in 6 BCE, P-639 in 7 BCE, P-640 in 8 BCE.</i>									

Step 1 – Identifying the year the kingdom divided ...

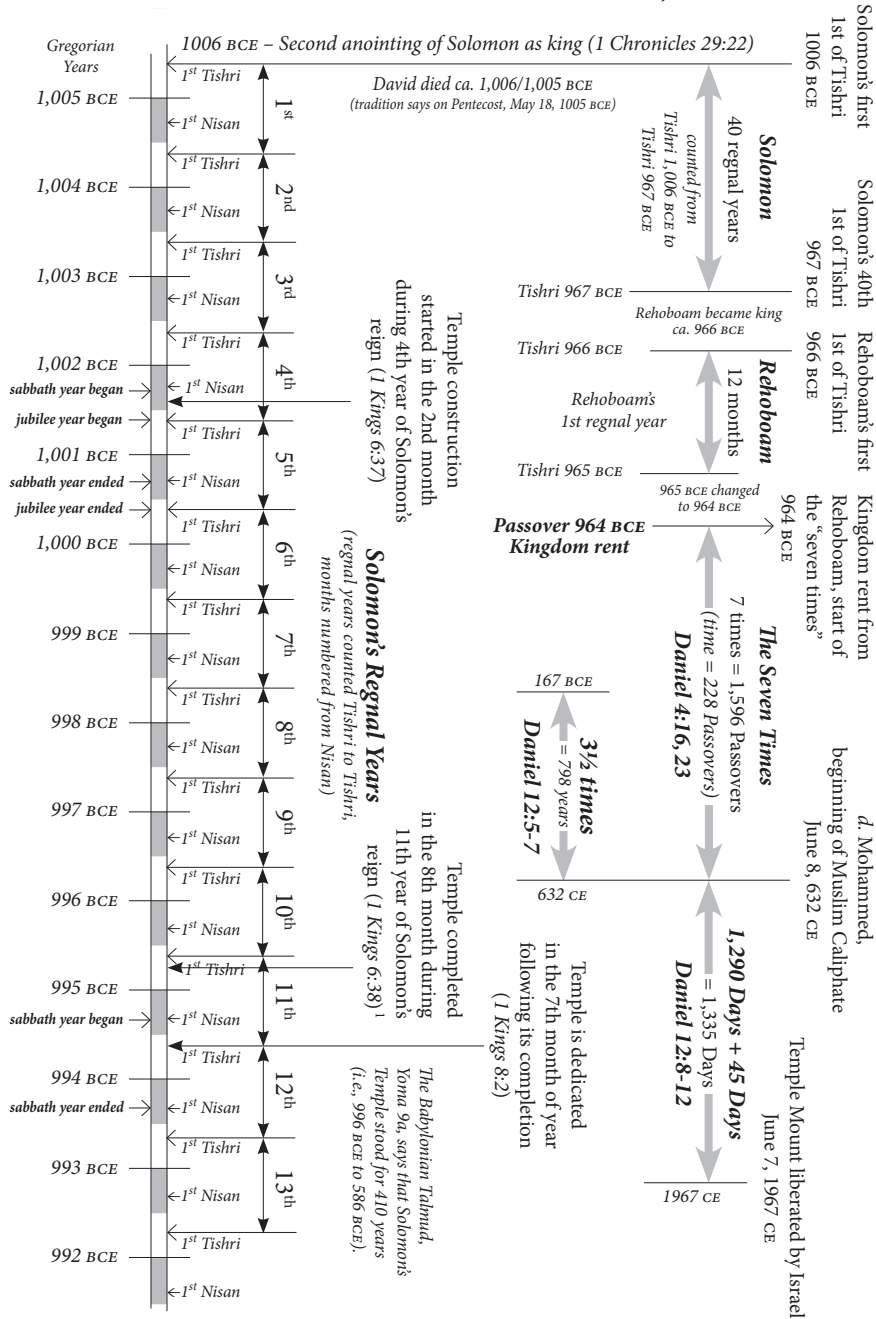
As I considered the three time-specific elements (months, times, and days) in the allegory, and the sequence of events specified in the allegorical narrative ending in restoration, the timeline developed during the interpretation of Daniel chapter 12, which describes a “*time, times, and an half*” (3½ “times”) followed by a period of 1,335 “days,” after which Israel was restored to dominion over the Temple Mount, was recalled. Based on the similarity between the two restoration sequences in Daniel chapters 4 and 12, it seemed logical to consider the probability that both prophecies were describing the same historical events. So, the next step was to align the “3½ times” in the twelfth chapter with the seven “times” described in the fourth chapter of Daniel (see Diagram A on the opposite page, top timeline). By so doing, the *terminus ad quem* of the “*time, times, and an half*” in the twelfth chapter, which is June 8, 632 CE, became the *terminus ad quem* of the “*seven times*” in the fourth chapter as well.

With the *terminus ad quem* thus established as 632 CE, and recalling that a “time” equals 228 Passovers (see pages 42-44), I was then able to count backwards for seven times, which is 7 x 228 Passovers = 1,596 Passovers, to identify the Passover in 964 BCE as the starting point in history for the “seven times” specified in the allegory. Table A (on the previous page) shows how to do the backwards count of 1,596 Passovers. The count is initiated with the Passover in 632 CE, which was the last Passover before the death of Mohammed and the start of the Muslim Caliphate that marked the end of the “3½ times” in the twelfth chapter, and it proceeds backward for 1,596 Passovers to reveal the Passover occurring in 964 BCE as the starting point of the “seven times.” Each Passover in the table is denoted as “P-#” (where “#” is its number in the count), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year. After the initial ten Passovers (P-1 through P-10), shown on the top line, Passovers are shown in ten-year increments, which allows you to verify the count for yourself.

Once the Passover of 964 BCE had been identified as the starting point of the “seven times,” it was easy to deduce that the starting event in the allegory, the rending of the kingdom from Nebuchadnezzar, was actually recalling an event that had happened in the history of Israel, namely, the prophesied rending of the kingdom from Solomon’s son and heir, Rehoboam. Thus, the chrono-specific prophetic allegory in Daniel chapter 4, identifies the year 964 BCE as the year the kingdom of United Israel was rent from Rehoboam as God had foretold.

Diagram A – Calculating Solomon’s Regnal Years

(to reveal Nisan 1002 BCE to Nisan 1001 BCE as a sabbath year)



Step 2 – Identifying the first year of Solomon’s reign ...

Focusing on the chronological aspects of the narrative in Daniel chapter 4, the first of the three time-related elements, the twelve months prior to the rending of the kingdom specified in the allegory, require that Rehoboam had to have been “*walking in the palace*” for at least twelve months (one complete Tishri to Tishri regnal year) prior to the rending that happened on Passover in 964 BCE.

That would mean that Rehoboam had to have succeeded Solomon as king sometime before the 1st of Tishri in 966 BCE, and then to have ruled for one regnal year until the 1st of Tishri in 965 BCE, in order to meet the prophesied twelve-month-as-king-living-in-the palace requirement that was stipulated before the kingdom could be rent from him on Passover in 964 BCE. That scenario means that Solomon must have died in the year between the month of Tishri in the year 967 BCE and month of Tishri in the year 966 BCE, a chronological clue that allows reasonable identification of Solomon’s last Tishri as king before his death as the one that occurred in the year 967 BCE.

The Bible preserves the length of Solomon’s reign in 1 Kings 11:42, recording that “*the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.*” Since his regnal years were tabulated Tishri to Tishri, that means that Solomon reigned for forty 1st of Tishris after his elevation to the throne. The table on the opposite page counts back forty 1st of Tishris from the last 1st of Tishri in Solomon’s reign, the one in the year 967 BCE, revealing the first Tishri during which Solomon was ruler of Israel as the one that occurred in the year 1,006 BCE.

It is that identification of Solomon’s first regnal year that allows the identification of the fourth year of his reign as the year beginning on the 1st of Tishri in 1,003 BCE and ending on the 1st of Tishri in 1,002 BCE.

Step 3 – Identifying the year Solomon began building the Temple ...

Of special importance for biblical chronology in general, and for the specific quest being pursued in this section, namely, the identification of the first sabbath year that occurred during Solomon’s reign, is the identification of the year in which Solomon began to build the Temple, an event specified as occurring in his fourth regnal year, 1,002 BCE. In 1 Kings 6:37-38, and 8:2, the following details are given about building the Temple: (1) construction began in the second month in the fourth year of the reign of Solomon, (2) the Temple was

Counting the Years (Tishris) of Solomon's Reign				
40th - 967 BCE	39th - 968 BCE	38th - 969 BCE	37th - 970 BCE	36th - 971 BCE
35th - 972 BCE	34th - 973 BCE	33rd - 974 BCE	32nd - 975 BCE	31st - 976 BCE
30th - 977 BCE	29th - 978 BCE	28th - 979 BCE	27th - 980 BCE	26th - 981 BCE
25th - 982 BCE	24th - 983 BCE	23rd - 984 BCE	22nd - 985 BCE	21st - 986 BCE
20th - 987 BCE	19th - 988 BCE	18th - 989 BCE	17th - 990 BCE	16th - 991 BCE
15th - 992 BCE	14th - 993 BCE	13th - 994 BCE	12th - 995 BCE	11th - 996 BCE
10th - 997 BCE	9th - 998 BCE	8th - 999 BCE	7th - 1000 BCE	6th - 1001 BCE
5th - 1002 BCE	4th - 1003 BCE	3rd - 1004 BCE	2nd - 1005 BCE	1st - 1006 BCE

completed in the eighth month in the eleventh year of the reign of Solomon, and (3) the Temple was dedicated on the tenth day of the seventh month in the year following its completion. From Diagram A on page 145, it can be seen that the fourth year of Solomon's reign began in Tishri of 1,003 BCE and ended in Tishri of 1,002 BCE. Though regnal years began with Tishri (the seventh month), Jewish months were still numbered in accordance with the religious calendar, starting with Nisan as the first month. So, it can be determined that Temple construction was begun in the second religious month, a few weeks after Passover (March-April) in 1,002 BCE, and was completed in the eighth month (October-November) seven years later in the year 996 BCE, then dedicated on the Day of Atonement in the seventh month (September-October) of the year following its completion, in 995 BCE.¹

Step 4 – Identifying Solomon's first sabbath year ...

Although not stated directly in the Bible, it makes sense to assume that Solomon waited until 1,002 BCE, the fourth year of his reign, to start construction of the Temple for two very specific reasons. First, he could not begin building while David was still alive since God had decreed that David was to have no part in building the Temple, so David had to die before construction could begin. After

¹ Two ancient cross-checks verify that year. The *Seder Olam* records that Josiah began refurbishing the Temple in his eighteenth regnal year, 622 BCE, 218 years after Joash had begun refurbishing the Temple in his twenty-third regnal year, 840 BCE, and that Joash's refurbishing was 155 years after the Temple was completed in 996 BCE, confirming the year of dedication as 995 BCE. The *Babylonian Talmud* (Tractate Yoma 9a) says that Solomon's Temple stood for 410 years. Since it was destroyed in 586 BCE, counting back in time 410 Passovers confirms 996 BCE as the year of its completion.

a short coreign with Solomon, David died sometime before Tishri 1,006 BCE. Second, Solomon needed a large workforce for gathering and preparing the huge quantities of materials needed for building the Temple, and for doing the actual construction, and that meant he had to wait for the first sabbath year when the land was at rest and the manpower of the nation was not devoted to its prime endeavor, agriculture.¹ Thus, the year 1,002 BCE, the year he started building the Temple in his fourth regnal year, can be identified as the first sabbath year that occurred in Solomon's reign. Based on that one occurrence, all sabbath years can be calculated to produce a calendar of sabbath years.

Step 5 – Identifying all sabbath and jubilee years ...

In every seventh sabbath cycle, the last year (the 49th year) saw the start of a jubilee year. Aligning the jubilee years with the sabbath cycle defined above involves knowing one jubilee year with certainty. By counting forward in time in increments of forty-nine years from the date of the first jubilee year after the Exodus, the year 1,394 BCE, the year 1,002 BCE can be identified as a jubilee year (see page 163). That calculation can be verified by using information provided in the *Brit Hadashah* as follows: Jesus announced the start of a jubilee year in the first year of his ministry, which the chronological information in John 2:13-21 identifies as the year 28 CE (see pages 167-168). That jubilee year (or if a date based on the *Tanakh* is preferred, the jubilee that occurred in 1,394 BCE or 1,002 BCE) can be used to calculate a calendar of all jubilee years. Then, by combining the sabbath calendar with the jubilee calendar, a single calendar of all sabbath and jubilee years can be derived if the two align. The result of that combination is displayed in the tables that make up the *Calendar of Sabbath and Jubilee Years* in *Appendix Four* that begins on the next page.

¹ Solomon used foreigners to do most of the construction on the Temple according to the Scriptures, as recorded in 2 Chronicles 2:17-18, which says: “*And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred. And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work.*” The strangers were undoubtedly agricultural laborers and slaves who would normally be under-utilized during the sabbath year, since planting and harvesting of crops was prohibited by the Law of Moses.

CALENDAR OF SABBATH AND JUBILEE YEARS

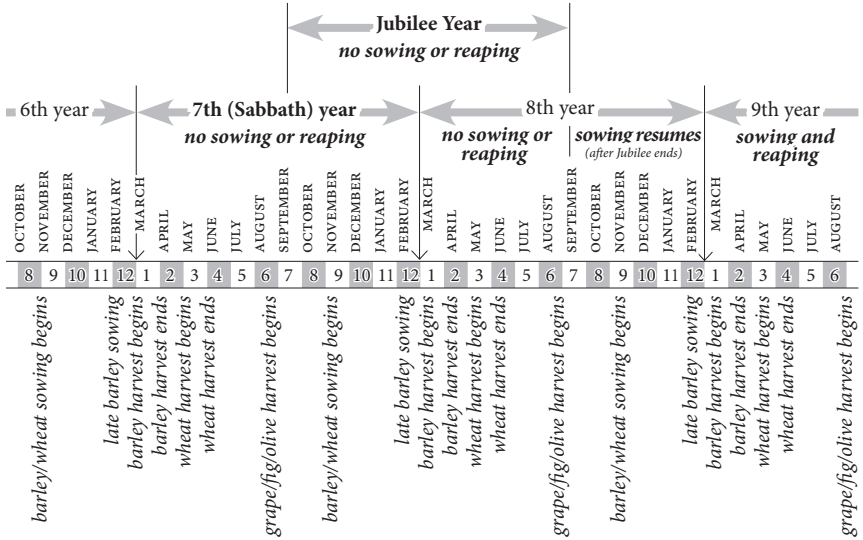
The Children of Israel were commanded to begin observing both sabbath and jubilee years (which, in practice, meant that they were to begin counting the number of memorial Passovers), in Leviticus 25:1-12:

“And the Lord spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat. And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.”

Leviticus 25:20-22 clarified that the people of Israel would not go hungry because of their obedience to the commandment:

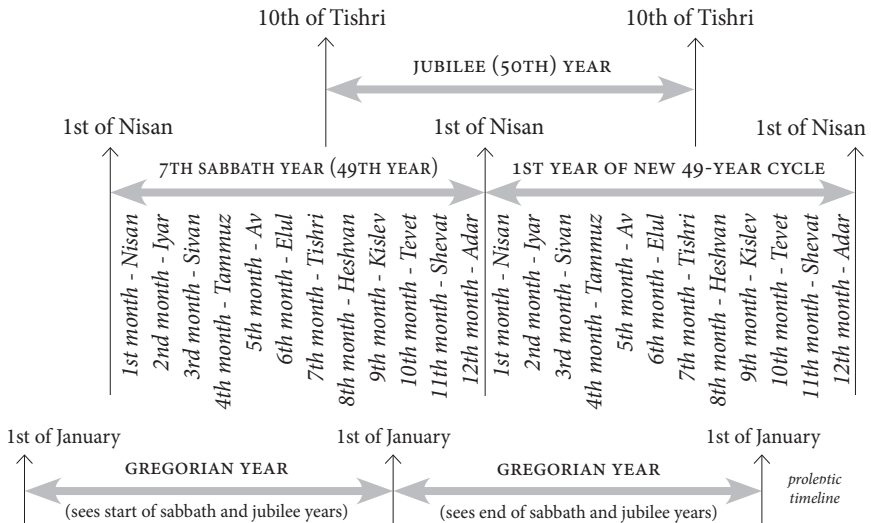
“And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow

Diagram A – Relationship of Seasons to Sabbath and Jubilee Years



Jewish months are shown as numbers, with Nisan = 1; corresponding Gregorian months shown above.

Diagram B – Relationship of Sabbath, Jubilee, and Gregorian Years



(exact relationship of a Gregorian year to the Jewish year varies a few days from year to year)

the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.”

In practical terms, the people would sow barley and wheat in November of the fifth year, then reap the bounteous threefold “sixth-year” yield of both grains during the following March through June harvest months, then possibly sow barley again in November (the month for sowing) of the sixth year to harvest whatever they could harvest in early spring before the start of the seventh year on the 1st of Nisan (March-April). There would be no sowing at all in November of the seventh year, and thus no harvest of wheat or barley the following March through June in the eighth year. However, in November of the eighth year, both barley and wheat would once again be sown and then harvested in the spring and early summer of the ninth year. That schedule meant that there were two harvest seasons when no harvesting was done. Under that schedule, though, no additional provisions were needed for a sabbath-jubilee combination year since the jubilee ended on the 10th of Tishri (September-October in the eighth year), so sowing could still be done in November of the eighth year as during the sabbath-only years. Sabbath years were to be observed every seventh year, beginning on the 1st of Nisan, and were to extend until the following 1st of Nisan, whereas a jubilee year began on the 10th of Tishri in the forty-ninth year of a 49-year cycle (seven sabbath cycles), and it continued until the 10th of Tishri in the following year. Both sabbath and jubilee years began in one proleptic Gregorian year and ended in the following year. A jubilee year, although called a “fiftieth year,” was not a separate year, but overlapped the last five months in the forty-ninth year and the first seven months in the first year in the 49-year cycle, as shown in Diagram B on page 150.

Table of Sabbath and Jubilee Years from 1,700 CE to 2,037 CE

JUBILEE	7th Sabbath	6th Sabbath	5th Sabbath	4th Sabbath	3rd Sabbath	2nd Sabbath	1st Sabbath
2037/2038	2037/2038	2030/2031	2023/2024	2016/2017	2009/2010	2002/2003	1995/1996
1988/1989	1988/1989	1981/1982	1974/1975	1967/1968	1960/1961	1953/1954	1946/1947
1939/1940	1939/1940	1932/1933	1925/1926	1918/1919	1911/1912	1904/1905	1897/1898
1890/1891	1890/1891	1883/1884	1876/1877	1869/1870	1862/1863	1855/1856	1848/1849
1841/1842	1841/1842	1834/1835	1827/1828	1820/1821	1813/1814	1806/1807	1799/1800
1792/1793	1792/1793	1785/1786	1778/1779	1771/1772	1764/1765	1757/1758	1750/1751
1743/1744	1743/1744	1736/1737	1729/1730	1722/1723	1715/1716	1708/1709	1701/1702

Table of Sabbath and Jubilee Years from 1 CE to 1,695 CE							
JUBILEE	7th Sabbath	6th Sabbath	5th Sabbath	4th Sabbath	3rd Sabbath	2nd Sabbath	1st Sabbath
1694/1695	1694/1695	1687/1688	1680/1681	1673/1674	1666/1667	1659/1660	1652/1653
1645/1646	1645/1646	1638/1639	1631/1632	1624/1625	1617/1618	1610/1611	1603/1604
1596/1597	1596/1597	1589/1590	1582/1583	1575/1576	1568/1569	1561/1562	1654/1655
1547/1548	1547/1548	1540/1541	1533/1534	1526/1527	1519/1520	1512/1513	1505/1506
1498/1499	1498/1499	1491/1492	1484/1485	1477/1478	1470/1471	1463/1464	1456/1457
1449/1450	1449/1450	1442/1443	1435/1436	1428/1429	1421/1422	1414/1415	1407/1408
1400/1401	1400/1401	1393/1394	1386/1387	1379/1380	1372/1373	1365/1366	1358/1359
1351/1352	1351/1352	1344/1345	1337/1338	1330/1331	1323/1324	1316/1317	1309/1310
1302/1303	1302/1303	1295/1296	1288/1289	1281/1282	1274/1275	1267/1268	1260/1261
1253/1254	1253/1254	1246/1247	1239/1240	1232/1233	1225/1226	1218/1219	1211/1212
1204/1205	1204/1205	1197/1198	1190/1191	1183/1184	1176/1177	1169/1170	1162/1163
1155/1156	1155/1156	1148/1149	1141/1142	1134/1135	1127/1128	1120/1121	1113/1114
1106/1107	1106/1107	1099/1100	1092/1093	1085/1086	1078/1079	1071/1072	1064/1065
1057/1058	1057/1058	1050/1051	1043/1044	1036/1037	1029/1030	1022/1023	1015/1016
1008/1009	1008/1009	1001/1002	994/995	987/988	980/981	973/974	866/867
959/956	959/956	952/953	945/946	938/939	931/932	924/925	917/918
910/911	910/911	903/904	896/897	889/890	882/883	875/876	868/869
861/862	861/862	854/855	847/848	840/841	833/834	826/827	819/820
812/813	812/813	805/806	798/799	791/792	784/785	777/778	770/771
763/764	763/764	756/757	749/750	742/743	735/736	728/729	721/722
714/715	714/715	707/708	700/701	693/694	686/687	679/680	672/673
665/666	665/666	658/659	651/652	644/645	637/638	630/631	623/624
616/617	616/617	609/610	602/603	595/596	588/589	581/582	574/575
567/568	567/568	560/561	553/554	546/547	539/540	532/533	525/526
518/519	518/519	511/512	504/505	497/498	490/491	483/484	476/477
469/470	469/470	462/463	455/456	448/449	441/442	434/435	427/428
420/421	420/421	413/414	406/407	399/400	392/393	385/386	378/379
371/372	371/372	364/365	357/358	350/351	343/344	336/337	329/330
322/323	322/323	315/316	308/309	301/302	294/295	287/288	280/281
273/274	273/274	266/267	259/260	252/253	245/246	238/239	231/232
224/225	224/225	217/218	210/211	203/204	196/197	189/190	182/183
175/176	175/176	168/169	161/162	154/155	147/148	140/141	133/134
126/127	126/127	119/120	112/113	105/106	98/99	91/92	84/85
77/78	77/78	70/71	63/64	56/57	49/50	42/43	35/36
28/29	28/29	21/22	14/15	7/8	1 BCE/CE 1	- - -	- - -

Appendix Four: Calendar of Sabbath and Jubilee Years

Table of Sabbath and Jubilee Years from 1 BCE to 1,393 BCE							
JUBILEE	7th Sabbath	6th Sabbath	5th Sabbath	4th Sabbath	3rd Sabbath	2nd Sabbath	1st Sabbath
---	---	---	---	---	CE 1/1 BCE	7/8	14/15
21/22	21/22	28/29	35/36	42/43	49/50	56/57	63/64
70/71	70/71	77/78	84/85	91/92	98/99	105/106	112/113
119/120	119/120	126/127	133/134	140/141	147/148	154/155	161/162
168/169	168/169	175/176	182/183	189/190	196/197	203/204	210/211
217/218	217/218	224/225	231/232	238/239	245/246	252/253	259/260
266/267	266/267	273/274	280/281	287/288	294/295	301/302	308/309
315/316	315/316	322/323	329/330	336/337	343/344	350/351	357/358
364/365	364/365	371/372	378/379	385/386	392/393	399/400	406/407
413/414	413/414	420/421	427/428	434/435	441/442	448/449	455/456
462/463	462/463	469/470	476/477	483/484	490/491	497/498	504/505
511/512	511/512	518/519	525/526	532/533	539/540	546/547	553/554
560/561	560/561	567/568	574/575	581/582	588/589	595/596	602/603
609/610	609/610	616/617	623/624	630/631	637/638	644/645	651/652
658/659	658/659	665/666	672/673	679/680	686/687	693/694	700/701
707/708	707/708	714/715	721/722	728/729	735/736	742/743	749/750
756/757	756/757	763/764	770/771	777/778	784/785	791/792	798/799
805/806	805/806	812/813	819/820	826/827	833/834	840/841	847/848
854/855	854/855	861/862	868/869	875/876	882/883	889/890	896/897
903/904	903/904	910/911	917/918	924/925	931/932	938/939	945/946
952/953	952/953	959/960	966/967	973/974	980/981	987/988	994/995
1001/1002	1001/1002	1008/1009	1015/1016	1022/1023	1029/1030	1036/1037	1043/1044
1050/1051	1050/1051	1057/1058	1064/1065	1071/1072	1078/1079	1085/1086	1092/1093
1099/1100	1099/1100	1106/1107	1113/1114	1120/1121	1127/1128	1134/1135	1141/1142
1148/1149	1148/1149	1155/1156	1162/1163	1169/1170	1176/1177	1183/1184	1190/1181
1197/1198	1197/1198	1204/1205	1211/1212	1218/1219	1225/1226	1232/1233	1239/1240
1246/1247	1246/1247	1253/1254	1260/1261	1267/1268	1274/1275	1281/1282	1288/1289
1295/1296	1295/1296	1302/1303	1309/1310	1316/1317	1323/1324	1330/1331	1337/1338
1344/1345	1344/1345	1351/1352	1358/1359	1365/1366	1372/1373	1379/1380	1386/1387
1393/1394 – Land allotted to the twelve tribes in the first jubilee year after the Exodus							
<i>In the table for years BCE above, note that the land was allotted in the first jubilee year after the Exodus, 1394 BCE. The next year, 1393 BCE, started the sabbath cycle in the land of Canaan, and the next five years in that first sabbath cycle after the land was allotted were 1392 BCE, 1391 BCE, 1390 BCE, 1389 BCE, 1388 BCE (see diagram on page 137). Also, note that there was no year “0” (no year zero) when going from years BCE on this chart to years CE on the chart on the opposite page, since the year 1 BCE was followed by the year 1 CE as time moves forward in history.</i>							

Verifying the Sabbath and Jubilee Tables

After crossing the Jordan River in 1,402 BCE, the Children of Israel began the process of subduing the land of Canaan. In the forty-ninth year after the Exodus from Egypt (identified by counting forward in time for forty-nine Passovers, starting with the first Passover in Egypt; see page 163), the warfare had ended and the land of Canaan was at rest. It was at this time, in the forty-ninth year (essentially a first jubilee year after the Exodus) that the land was allotted to the twelve tribes. Once the land was allotted, the Children of Israel possessed the promised land and the sabbath-year count began, with 1,393 BCE marking the first year in the first sabbath “week” in the land. Counting forward in time from that year in one-year increments reveals the proleptic Gregorian date for the first sabbath year observed by the Israelites in the land to be the year 1,387 BCE, calculated as follows:

- 1,394 BCE ... 49th year after Exodus, land allotted to the twelve tribes
- 1,393 BCE ... 1st year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,392 BCE ... 2nd year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,391 BCE ... 3rd year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,390 BCE ... 4th year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,389 BCE ... 5th year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,388 BCE ... 6th year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,387 BCE ... **7th year, and first sabbath year observed in the land**

The first sabbath year is shown in the sabbath and jubilee table for years BCE on the previous page (see bottom row, far right column), and all subsequent sabbath and jubilee years from that first sabbath year down to the present day have been calculated from the date for that first sabbath year. The resulting sabbath and jubilee years are shown in the tables on pages 151-153. The validity of the tables can be verified by comparing the sabbath and jubilee years listed in them with other sabbath and jubilee events and chronological details mentioned in the Bible, the works of Josephus, the *Seder Olam*, and the *Talmud*.

Cross-check #1 – The chronology of Caleb’s jubilee year request ...

A first cross-check of the sabbath-jubilee dates is provided by the chronology associated with Caleb as recorded in Joshua 14:7. Caleb was forty years old when he was sent by Moses from Kadesh-Barnea into the land of Canaan as a spy, and

he was eighty-five years old when he asked for his promised allotment as the land was ready to be assigned to the twelve tribes. Since the spies were sent from Kadesh-Barnea in the second year after the Exodus and thirty-eight years before the Israelites crossed the Jordan River in 1,402 BCE (Deuteronomy 2:14), that would mean they were sent in 1,440 BCE. Subtracting forty-five years (Passovers) from that year yields the year 1,394 BCE as the year that the land was at rest and Caleb made his request for his promised allotment of land. That result coincides with the year for the first sabbath year seven years later, namely 1,387 BCE, and it is a cross-check on the accuracy of the sabbath-jubilee tables presented in this book. A diagram showing the years of Caleb is provided on page 163.

Cross-check #2 – The destruction of Solomon’s Temple ...

A second cross-check is provided in the Babylonian Talmud. Tractate Arakin 12b says that Solomon’s Temple was destroyed in the third year of a sabbath cycle. The Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE, which would make the year 589 BCE a sabbath year, confirming the sabbath tables (see page 153).

Cross-check #3 – The sabbath in the third year of Jehoshaphat ...

A third cross-check is provided in 2 Chronicles 17:7-9, which record that Jehoshaphat, in his third regnal year, sent his princes, accompanied by Levites and priests, to teach the Law to the people in the cities of Judah. That was in keeping with the commandment given by Moses in Deuteronomy 31:10-13, for observing the sabbath year. The third regnal year of Jehoshaphat (r. 900-875) was 897 BCE, which was indeed a sabbath year (see page 153).

Cross-check #4 – The mention of sabbath years in Josephus ...

A fourth cross-check on the exact location of sabbath years in history is provided by Josephus, who described the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE, reporting: “It was a Sabbatical year, which happened to fall at that time; for the Jews neither plowed their land that year, nor did they take in the fruits” (*Wars* 6.94 [6.4.5]). His note is not abstract. It reflects the lived reality of a sabbath year, with fields left fallow, agricultural scarcity, and famine pressing upon the people. These conditions match what we know of Jerusalem’s state under Roman assault.

Josephus' testimony, contemporary and concrete, carries decisive weight. And, the Jerusalem Talmud (Ta'anit 4:5) corroborates Josephus by recording: "In a Sabbatical year the Temple was destroyed." Another crucial fixed point is Josephus' description of Pompey's siege in 63 BCE: "It happened to be a Sabbatic year, in which the Jews are forbidden to sow the ground ... they neither reaped corn that year, nor laid up corn beforehand" (*Antiquities* 14.63–68). This securely identifies that the year 64/63 BCE was a sabbath year. Counting forward in seven-year intervals from this anchor to 70 CE spans 132 years, which equals eighteen full cycles plus six years. That calculation identifies 70 CE as a sabbath year, specifically the Jewish year running from Nisan 70 CE to Elul 71 CE using the biblical designation of Nisan as the first month (or from Tishri 69 CE to Elul 70 CE using the later extra-biblical rabbinic counting that started the year in the seventh month Tishri).

Cross-check #5 – Sabbatical cycle associated with Solomon's Temple ...

A fifth cross-check that can be used for locating sabbatical years on the biblical timeline is provided by the *Seder Olam Rabbah*, which twice links the construction of Solomon's Temple to later renovations by two kings of Judah—first by Joash (2 Chronicles 24) and later by Josiah (2 Kings 22). The *Seder Olam* states that Joash began his repairs in his twenty-third regnal year, 218 years before Josiah's renovation, and 155 years after Solomon had completed construction on the Temple. Since Josiah's eighteenth regnal year is fixed at 622 BCE, counting back 218 Nisan-to-Nisan years places Joash's twenty-third regnal year in 840 BCE. Counting back a further 155 Passovers from that point identifies 996 BCE as the year that Solomon finished the Temple, in the eighth month of his eleventh regnal year. Because the Temple required exactly seven years to build, it is logical to assume that construction spanned a full sabbatical cycle: begun after Passover in 1,002 BCE, completed in 996 BCE, and dedicated in 995 BCE.^{3,4}

¹ Heinrich W Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998, 2005), p. 264.

² Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam*, p. 161-162.

³ The traditional chronology for the Hebrew kings (e.g., the harmonization given in the Edwin Thiele book *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*) is incorrect. For a correct harmonization, see your author's book *Sacred Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*.

⁴ See footnote 1 on page 148.

CHRONOLOGY IN THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

EZEKIEL 4; SEE TIMELINE 8 ON OVERVIEW

An important chrono-specific prophecy is set forth in Ezekiel 4:5-6: “Also for your [Ezekiel’s] part lie on your left side and place the iniquity of the house of Israel on it. For the number of days you lie on your side you will bear their iniquity. I have determined that the number of the years of their iniquity are to be the number of days for you, 390 days. So bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. When you have completed these days, then lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah 40 days. I have assigned one day for each year.” A period of 430 days is specified during which the prophet Ezekiel is to bear the iniquity of Israel and Judah by laying on his left and right sides, an action representing a “siege of Jerusalem” (see verses 1, 2) that would last for 430 years. Since Ezekiel often dated events from the time when Jehoiachin was taken into exile by Nebuchadnezzar II,¹ it is logical that the starting point for counting the 430 years would be the same. Thus, it is necessary to identify the proleptic Gregorian year when the exile of Jehoiachin began.

Ezekiel gives chronological clues that help determine the year Jehoiachin went into exile. In chapter 40, verse 1, he writes: “*In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year ... in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten.*” That equates the twenty-fifth year of the exile of Jehoiachin with the fourteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was destroyed on August 14, 586 BCE.² Since Jewish years at the time of Ezekiel were reckoned from the first month of the year in accordance with the command given in Exodus 12, verse 2, “*This month [Nisan, the month of the Passover] shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you,*” the observance of Passover was a way of keeping track of the passage of years, as demonstrated in Daniel 8:13-14. That method of using Passovers to keep track of years seems to apply to the chronological references in Ezekiel as well. Thus, Ezekiel’s reference to the “fourteenth year” after the destruction of Jerusalem

¹ See examples of such dating in Ezekiel, e.g. 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1.

² Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1998), p. 259.

in chapter 40, verse 1, would mean that fourteen Passovers had occurred after that event, and his reference to the “twenty-fifth year” after the beginning of the exile of Jehoiachin would mean that twenty-five Passovers had occurred after his captivity began.

Table A – How to count the 25 Passovers in Ezekiel 40:1									
P-26 597 BCE	<i>Exile begins</i>	P-25 596 BCE	P-24 595 BCE	P-23 594 BCE	P-22 593 BCE	P-21 592 BCE	P-20 591 BCE	P-19 590 BCE	P-18 589 BCE
P-17 588 BCE	P-16 587 BCE	P-15 586 BCE	<i>Temple destroyed</i>	P-14 585 BCE	P-13 584 BCE	P-12 583 BCE	P-11 582 BCE	P-10 581 BCE	P-9 580 BCE
P-8 579 BCE	P-7 578 BCE	P-6 577 BCE	P-5 576 BCE	P-4 575 BCE	P-3 574 BCE	P-2 573 BCE	P-1 572 BCE	(25th year of exile)	---

Table A (above) demonstrates how the Passovers that indicate the passage of years in the Ezekiel 40:1, should be counted. Each Passover in the table is denoted as “P-#” (where “#” is its number in the count), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year. The table should be read backwards to arrive at the year of the first Passover celebrated in exile in Babylon, starting with the cell to the far right on the bottom row labeled “25th year of exile,” representing the point in time when Ezekiel said that he wrote his chapter 40, verse 1. The cell labeled “Temple destroyed,” representing the destruction of the Temple on August 14, 586 BCE, is reached by counting back fourteen Passovers (P-1 through P-14) to reach the first Passover after the destruction, the one celebrated in 585 BCE. By resuming the count with the last Passover before the destruction of the Temple, the one in 586 BCE, and counting back eleven more Passovers (P-15 through P-25), the twenty-fifth Passover is revealed as occurring in 596 BCE. As that calculation demonstrates, the exile of Jehoiachin had to begin before the Passover in 596 BCE. It also had to happen after the surrender of Jerusalem on March 16, 597 BCE, which the Babylonian Chronicles (tablet number 21946)¹ records as occurring on the second day of the month Addaru, just before the new year began. Adding another clue, 2 Chronicles 36:10, says that Jehoiachin was ordered brought to Babylon “*when the year was expired*,” which pinpoints the time as sometime after the Jewish new year on the 1st of Nisan, which occurred on the 8th of March that

¹ The Babylonian Chronicles are cuneiform tablets recording major events in the history of Babylon, written by Babylonian astronomers (Chaldeans) over a long period of time stretching from the reign of Nabonassar to the Parthian Period. Almost all of the tablets currently reside in the Middle East collection of the British Museum.

year. Since 2 Kings 24:13-14 says that ten-thousand people were taken captive to Babylon, along with the Temple treasures and large amounts of booty, at least a few weeks would have been required after the capture to assemble everything and leave Jerusalem. All of these time constraints indicate that Jehoiachin left Jerusalem several weeks after the Passover observed in 597 BCE, which occurred on March 22 that year, less than a week after the surrender of the city.

Table B – How to count the 430 Passovers in Ezekiel 4:5-6

P-1 596 BCE	P-2 595 BCE	P-3 594 BCE	P-4 593 BCE	P-5 592 BCE	P-6 591 BCE	P-7 590 BCE	P-8 589 BCE	P-9 588 BCE	P-10 587 BCE
P-10 <i>see above</i>	P-20 577 BCE	P-30 567 BCE	P-40 557 BCE	P-50 547 BCE	P-60 537 BCE	P-70 527 BCE	P-80 517 BCE	P-90-507 BCE	P-100 497 BCE
P-110 487 BCE	P-120 477 BCE	P-130 467 BCE	P-140 457 BCE	P-150 447 BCE	P-160 437 BCE	P-170 427 BCE	P-180 417 BCE	P-190 407 BCE	P-200 397 BCE
P-210 387 BCE	P-220 377 BCE	P-230 367 BCE	P-240 357 BCE	P-250 347 BCE	P-260 337 BCE	P-270 327 BCE	P-280 317 BCE	P-290 307 BCE	P-300 297 BCE
P-310 287 BCE	P-320 277 BCE	P-330 267 BCE	P-340 257 BCE	P-350 247 BCE	P-360 237 BCE	P-370 227 BCE	P-380 217 BCE	P-390 207 BCE	P-400 197 BCE
P-410 187 BCE	P-420 177 BCE	P-430 167 BCE	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Now that the time for the start of the exile of King Jehoiachin to Babylon has been identified as occurring after Passover in 597 BCE, the 430 Passovers can be counted to reveal the time span specified in Ezekiel 4:5-6. Table B (above) demonstrates how to count the Passovers. Note that the count begins with the Passover in 596 BCE, the first Passover after the departure of Jehoiachin from Jerusalem and thus the first Passover celebrated in exile. Each Passover in the table is denoted as “P-#” (where “#” is its number in the count), followed by its corresponding Gregorian year. After the initial ten Passovers (P-1 through P-10), which are shown on the top line, Passovers are shown in ten-year increments, which allows you to verify the count for yourself.

The count of 430 Passovers ends with the Passover celebrated in the year 167 BCE, after which Antiochus IV Epiphanes desecrated the Temple that December, sparking the Maccabean revolt that began soon thereafter. The revolt eventually resulted in a self-governing Jewish nation, the first time the Jewish people had been ruled by a Jewish ruler in Jerusalem since the deportation of the last king of Judah, Jehoiachin, by Nebuchadnezzar 430 years earlier in 597 BCE. Thus, the 430-year time span between the captivity of Jehoiachin to begin the Exile and the appointment of Zedekiah as Babylon’s puppet king to the beginning of the

Maccabean revolt that led to Jerusalem's liberation and the subsequent re-establishment of the Law of Moses in Judea was the fulfillment of the days of iniquity of Israel and Judah that was foretold by the symbolic actions of Ezekiel described in Ezekiel, chapter 4.

Table C – How to count the 30 Passovers in Ezekiel 1:1-2									
P-30 592 BCE	P-29 593 BCE	P-28 594 BCE	P-27 595 BCE	P-26 596 BCE	P-25 597 BCE	P-24 598 BCE	P-23 599 BCE	P-22 600 BCE	P-21 601 BCE
P-20 602 BCE	P-19 603 BCE	P-18 604 BCE	P-17 605 BCE	P-16 606 BCE	P-15 607 BCE	P-14 608 BCE	P-13 609 BCE	P-12 610 BCE	P-11 611 BCE
P-10 612 BCE	P-9 613 BCE	P-8 614 BCE	P-7 615 BCE	P-6 616 BCE	P-5 617 BCE	P-4 618 BCE	P-3 619 BCE	P-2 620 BCE	P-1 621 BCE

As an added bonus, the information contained in Table A on page 158 can also be used to help interpret the chronologically ambiguous phrase “*the thirtieth year*” that is referenced in Ezekiel 1:1-2. The meaning of that phrase has long been a subject of speculation among Bible scholars. Note that in verse 2, Ezekiel equates the thirtieth year with the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. That means that the fifth year would have been the Nisan-to-Nisan year that began just before the fifth Passover of Jehoiachin's captivity, which was the Passover that occurred in the year 592 BCE (denoted as “P-21” in the table). As shown on Table C (above), the thirtieth Passover back from the Passover in the year 592 BCE (using the Passover in that year as the first Passover in the count) would have been the Passover celebrated in 621 BCE. That indicates that Ezekiel considered that specific Passover, the one celebrated in 621 BCE, as identifying year number one of his thirty-year count. That reveals that the zero point for his count was the Passover observed in the previous year, 622 BCE, which was the year of the Great Passover celebrated by Josiah, the last righteous king of Judah (see 2 Kings 22:8, 23:1-23).

SYNCHRONIZED BIBLE TIMELINE

The chronology embedded in the Book of Daniel provides a framework for the history of the Jewish people from the time of the reign of Solomon down to events occurring in modern times (see PLATE 1 at the end of this book). Using chronological information from other books of the Bible together with the chronology in Daniel, a biblical timeline can be synchronized with the timeline of secular history all the way back to the birth of Abram in Ur.

Dating the Exodus

The biblical reference most frequently used for determining the year of the Exodus is found in the Book of 1 Kings: *“And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord”* (1 Kings 6:1). According to that verse from the Masoretic text, the specified interval was 480 years.

If taken literally, and with Solomon’s fourth year is fixed at 1,002 BCE,¹ this places the Exodus in the year 1,482 BCE. Such an early date presents formidable difficulties. For example, it conflicts with the timeline for the life spans of Moses, Caleb, and Joshua as specified in the Bible, and it proves incompatible with the sabbath and jubilee cycles later established in the Torah.

The Septuagint preserves an alternative reading: *“And it came to pass in the four hundred and fortieth year after the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, in the fourth year and second month of the reign of king Solomon over Israel, that the king commanded that they should take great and costly stones for the foundation of the house”* (3 Kings 6:1 LXX).² This figure of 440 years, counted back from the fourth year of Solomon in 1,002 BCE, places the Exodus as occurring in the year 1,442 BCE.

Which tradition, the Masoretic or LXX, commands greater authority? The earliest dated witness to the Septuagint’s “440 years” is the Codex Vaticanus

¹ The 1,002 BCE date for the fourth year of Solomon comes from the research done by your author when harmonizing the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah for publication in his book, *Sacred Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*; see page 146 for a discussion about how that date was derived.

² Sir Lancelot Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha; Greek and English* (Hendrickson, 1986).

dated to the 4th century CE, whereas the earliest Masoretic manuscript displaying “480 years” is Codex Cairensis, *circa* 895 CE, nearly half a millennium later than the 440-year reference in the Septuagint. The Dead Sea Scrolls, regrettably, do not preserve this passage in its manuscript of 1 Kings, and thus offer no resolution. We are left, then, with two divergent manuscript traditions, each with a valid claim to be the preferred choice for calculating the date of the Exodus.

One way of reconciling the differing number of years in each manuscript tradition is to recognize that both may be accurate, but reckoned from different beginning points. The Masoretic figure of 480 years could be measured from Moses’ personal flight from Egypt—he being the first Israelite to depart after slaying an Egyptian (Exodus 2:15). By contrast, the Septuagint’s 440 years could reflect the departure of the entire nation from Egypt in the Exodus.

Adopting the Septuagint’s 440-year figure that dates the Exodus to the year 1,442 BCE yields a series of striking harmonizations:

First, it situates Moses within the 18th Dynasty of Egypt during its apex period. His childhood during Hatshepsut’s reign would place him at 80 years old in the reign of Amenhotep II, the pharaoh of the Exodus (see page 164).

Second, it places the division of Canaan under Joshua in 1,394 BCE exactly forty-nine years after the first Passover that was observed before leaving Egypt. This has it fall precisely in what later became codified as a Jubilee Year, a synchronism too exact to be coincidental. (Leviticus 25:10; see opposite page)

Third, Paul’s statement in Acts 13:20—that Israel received its inheritance “for about 450 years”—agrees with the Septuagint but cannot be reconciled with the Masoretic figure. Paul’s words, shaped by first-century Jewish tradition and his training under Gamaliel, lend weight to using the LXX-based 440-year chronology on the timeline (see next page; also, discussion on page 166).

It is worth noting that many of the early Church Fathers such as Eusebius and Jerome followed the Septuagint reading, using the 440-year figure in their expositions. Whereas using the Masoretic figure introduces contradictions when trying to produce a coherent timeline for ancient Bible times, the Septuagint resolves them and yields a consistent framework—one that unites the chronology of Moses’ life, the chronology for the events during the conquest of Canaan, the sabbath-jubilee cycles, and Paul’s testimony into a single, coherent chronology. For that reason, this book adopts the Septuagint’s 440-year figure as the preferred anchor for dating the Exodus to 1,442 BCE. It better harmonizes both biblical and historical timelines for that period of Israel’s history.

Timeline A – Exodus to the First Sabbath Year in the Land of Canaan

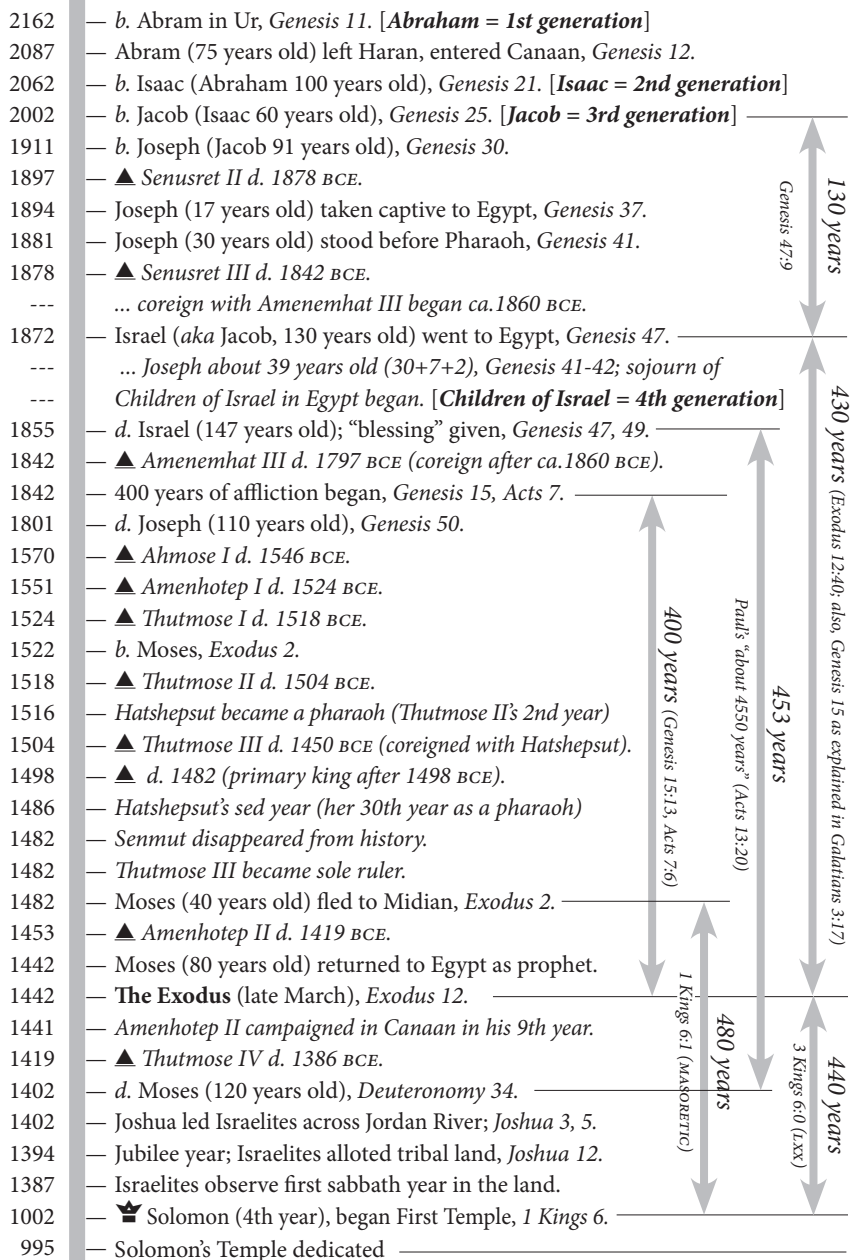
(starting year of every sabbath/seventh year shown in bold type; all years BCE)

Gregorian years		Jubilee count (yrs.)	Caleb's age (yrs.)	Moses' age (yrs.)
1442	The Exodus from Egypt <-----	1st		80
1441	Law given at Sinai	2nd	39	81
1440	Spies sent to Canaan <-----	3rd	40	82
1439		4th	41	83
1438		5th	42	84
1437		6th	43	85
1436		7th	44	86
1435		8th	45	87
1434		9th	46	88
1433		10th	47	89
1432		11th	48	90
1431		12th	49	91
1430		13th	50	92
1429		14th	51	93
1428		15th	52	94
1427		16th	53	95
1426		17th	54	96
1425		18th	55	97
1424		19th	56	98
1423	<i>In the Wilderness</i>	20th	57	99
1422		21st	58	100
1421		22nd	59	101
1420		23rd	60	102
1419		24th	61	103
1418		25th	62	104
1417		26th	63	105
1416		27th	64	106
1415		28th	65	107
1414		29th	66	108
1413		30th	67	109
1412		31st	68	110
1411		32nd	69	111
1410		33rd	70	112
1409		34th	71	113
1408		35th	72	114
1407		36th	73	115
1406		37th	74	116
1405		38th	75	117
1404		39th	76	118
1403	d. Moses (120 years old) <-----	40th	77	119
1402	Israel crossed Jordan River, <-----	41st	78	120
1401	conquest of land began	42nd	79	
1400		43rd	80	
1399		44th	81	
1398	<i>Conquest of the Land</i>	45th	82	
1397		46th	83	
1396		47th	84	
1395	Caleb (85 years old) asked for land	48th	85	
1394	land apportioned at start of jubilee	49th	86	
Jubilee		1st		
1393	1st year in sabbath count	2nd		
1392	2nd year in sabbath count	3rd		
1391	3rd year in sabbath count	4th		
1390	4th year in sabbath count	5th		
1389	5th year in sabbath count	6th		
1388	6th year in sabbath count	7th		
1387	7th year; first sabbath year observed <-----			

Timeline B – Abraham to Solomon

BCE

▲ denotes a pharaoh; using High Chronology after 1,900 BCE



Abraham to Solomon (2,162–1,002 BCE)

Once the year of the Exodus has been identified, the information provided in Exodus 12:40-41, “*Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt,*” can be used to calculate the year that Jacob (*aka* Israel) and his descendants (the Children of Israel) went down to Egypt. As shown on Timeline B on the opposite page, going back 430 years in time from the Exodus year 1,442 BCE yields the year 1,872 BCE as the date for the beginning of the sojourn of the Children of Israel in Egypt.¹

From the year the sojourn began, the year of the birth of Jacob can be calculated from the information given in Genesis 47: 8-9, “*And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old [art] thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage [are] an hundred and thirty years*” Going back 130 years in time from 1,872 BCE gives the year 2,002 BCE as the year for the birth of Jacob. From the year of the birth of Jacob, the year of the birth of Isaac can be calculated from the information given in Genesis 25:26, “*And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.*” Going back 60 years in time from 2,002 BCE gives the year 2,062 BCE as the year for the birth of Isaac. From the year of the birth of Isaac, the year for the birth of Abram (later renamed Abraham) can be calculated from the information given in Genesis 21: 5, “*And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.*” Going back 100 years in time from 2,062 BCE gives the year 2,162 BCE for the birth of Abram, which places his birth as occurring in the last years of the Akkadian Empire.

Other time periods shown on the diagram can be calculated as follows: In Genesis 15:13, Abraham is told by God, “*Know of a surety that thy seed shall be*

¹ The 430-year figure for the period of sojourn in Egypt has been questioned by biblical scholars. In doing so, the duration of the sojourn has been shortened by some from 430 years to about 215 years, primarily for the purpose of trying to agree with archeological findings, such as those at Jericho that propose a 13th-century BCE invasion of Canaan. That change is usually justified by asserting that the 400 years of affliction included the time of the patriarchs in Canaan before Jacob moved to Egypt. However, Psalm 105: 9-15, states in no uncertain terms that ***no oppression was experienced during the lifetimes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*** while in Canaan. Both the 430-year and 400-year figures are correct.

a stranger in a land not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.” Going back in time 400 years from the Exodus in 1,442 BCE gives the year 1,842 BCE for the beginning of the affliction.

That chronology from the *Tanakh* is verified by a comment made in the *B’rit Hadashah*, in the Book of Acts 13: 16-20, by the Apostle Paul, who studied at the feet of the esteemed Rabbi Gamaliel, so it can be assumed that he is recounting the chronological understanding that was being espoused by the most authoritative Jewish scribes and Pharisees of the first century CE. Paul said: “*Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. And for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet*” (ESV). From the death of Jacob *aka* Israel in 1,855 BCE, when Jacob gave God’s blessing to his sons (Paul apparently identifying this event as the choosing of the fathers), until the death of Moses in 1,402 BCE, beginning the period of the judges with Joshua essentially functioning as a prototype for all future judges, yields a period of 453 years, which, as Paul says in Acts 13:17-20, is **about** (but not exactly) 450 years in duration.

The start of the 400-year period of affliction is shown by the timeline to have coincided with the first regnal year of Amenemhat III (r. 1842-1797), who reigned as sole ruler after a sixteen year coreign with his father Senusret III, the pharaoh who made Joseph his second in command. That chronology conforms to the biblical text, which says that the affliction began in the reign of a new pharaoh, “*Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph*” (Exodus 1:8). Amenemhat undoubtedly knew (Hebrew יָדָע *yāda’*) the person Joseph, but did not acknowledge him as second in command as his father had done.

The chronological reference in Genesis 15:16, which records what Abraham was told by God: “*But in the fourth generation they [Abraham’s seed] shall come hither [to Canaan] again,*” gives insight as to the meaning of the word “generation” as applied to Israel as a people. The Bible lists at least twelve genetic generations of Israelites during the 430-year stay in Egypt prior to the Exodus, so it seems that the term “fourth generation” was used in a theological and spiritual sense, with Abraham being the first generation, Isaac the second generation, Jacob the third generation, and all subsequent descendants of Jacob (*i.e.*, the Children of Israel) thereafter referred to collectively as the fourth generation.

That usage is reflected in The existence of a Jewish people today is verification of the continuing “fourth generation.”

The Divided Kingdoms (961-586 BCE)

The reigns of the Hebrew kings are harmonized and the dates for their reigns are synchronised with the concurrent chronologies of Egypt and Mesopotamia in the book *Sacred Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* published by your author.

Construction of Herod’s Temple (20 BCE-28 CE)

Herod the Great is perhaps most famous for rebuilding the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, which was described by ancient historians as one of the architectural wonders of the world. The grandeur of the Temple building and its porticos and retaining walls (some still visible today) evoked admiration and praise from even the highly-resentful-of-Herod Jewish spiritual leaders and sages, who reportedly said, “He who has never seen Herod’s Temple has never seen a beautiful building.”

According to Josephus (*Antiquities* 15:354 and 15:380), construction on the Temple began after Herod had completed his seventeenth regnal year, which means that construction actually began during his eighteenth regnal year. Josephus also mentions that the year Herod began building the Temple was the same year that Augustus Caesar visited Syria, an event for which the exact year has been identified from a mention in a work by Dio (who lists the consuls in office during that year) as occurring in the springtime of the year 20 BCE. Josephus also records that the Temple itself took one year and six months to complete, but that additional construction on the Temple complex continued for many decades.

The *Brit Hadashah* (New Testament) contains a reference to an event that occurred in the beginning of the ministry of Jesus that can be cross-referenced to the above chronology of the Temple construction. In the first weeks of his public ministry, Jesus went to teach in the Temple during Passover and drove out the money changers and those selling animals. That event is recorded in John 2:13-21, as follows:

“And the Jews’ passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove

How to Count the 46 Passovers					
AFTER PASSOVER in 20 BCE	P1 in 19 BCE	P2 in 18 BCE	P3 in 17 BCE	P4 in 16 BCE	P5 in 15 BCE
P6 in 14 BCE	P7 in 13 BCE	P8 in 12 BCE	P9 in 11 BCE	P10 in 10 BCE	P11 in 9 BCE
P12 in 8 BCE	P13 in 7 BCE	P14 in 6 BCE	P15 in 5 BCE	P16 in 4 BCE	P17 in 3 BCE
P18 in 2 BCE	P19 in 1 BCE	P20 in 1 CE	P21 in 2 CE	P22 in 3 CE	P23 in 4 CE
P24 in 5 CE	P25 in 6 CE	P26 in 7 CE	P27 in 8 CE	P28 in 9 CE	P29 in 10 CE
P30 in 11 CE	P31 in 12 CE	P32 in 13 CE	P33 in 14 CE	P34 in 15 CE	P35 in 16 CE
P36 in 17 CE	P37 in 18 CE	P38 in 19 CE	P39 in 20 CE	P40 in 21 CE	P41 in 22 CE
P42 in 23 CE	P43 in 24 CE	P44 in 25 CE	P45 in 26 CE	P46 in 27 CE	BEFORE PASSOVER in 28 CE

*them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise ... Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, **Forty and six years was this temple in building** [emphasis added], and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.”¹*

Jesus spoke the above words a few days before Passover night in 28 BCE, the year being revealed by counting forward in time forty-six Passovers from the start of construction of the Temple by Herod in 20 BCE (see table above). The table shows that the interval between the start of construction of Herod's Temple after the Passover in 20 BCE and before the Passover in Jerusalem attended by Jesus in the year 28 CE, during which the crowd replied to him that the Temple had been under construction for forty-six years, contains exactly forty-six Passovers. That synchronization provides an anchor year for the start of the public ministry of Jesus, a year that saw the start of a sabbath year and jubilee year as well.

¹ When Jesus drove the money changers and those selling animals for profit out of the Temple before Passover, he was upholding the Law, not performing a political act. According to Deuteronomy 16:3-4, having leaven in one's house during Passover was prohibited, so Jesus was cleaning his Father's house of leaven. Later in his ministry, just before another Passover, Jesus clarified the meaning of leaven by saying, “Take heed and beware of the leaven [man-made rules] of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Matthew 16:6).

The Ministry of Jesus (28-30 CE)

The year when Jesus began his public ministry is revealed by the prophecy of the “seventy weeks” in Daniel chapter 9, verses 24-27, which required that the “Most Holy” one who would confirm the covenant to Israel be anointed before the seventieth week ended on Pentecost in the year 28 CE (see page 95). That coincides with the baptism and “cleansing of the Temple” that Jesus performed at the beginning of his ministry, the latter being an event that occurred during Passover week in the year 28 CE as shown in the previous section about Herod’s Temple (also, see page 182). Thus, it can be said with absolute certainty that both the *Tanakh* and the *B’rit Hadashah* pinpoint 28 CE as the year when Jesus began his public ministry. Using the information given in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the ministry of Jesus can be seen to have continued for about twenty-seven months after his baptism, a time period that includes three Passovers, as follows:

28 CE				
<i>Events</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus baptized by John the Baptist.	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-28	---
Jesus tempted by Satan for 40 days.	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	---
Jesus returns to Jordan R., Andrew hears John proclaim Jesus as the Lamb of God, two disciples follow him to Nazareth.	---	---	---	1:19-51
Jesus attends wedding at Cana, turns water to wine, the disciples believe.	---	---	---	2:1-11
Jesus visits Capernaum with his mother, brothers, and his (two) disciples.	---	---	---	2:12
PASSOVER #1 – March 28 to April 4, 28 CE				<i>start of sabbath year</i>
Jesus goes to Jerusalem for the Passover, drives merchants and money changers out of Temple, challenged by Jewish leaders.	---	---	---	2:13-25
Nicodemus visits Jesus secretly at night and is told that he must be “born again.”	---	---	---	3:1-21
Jesus and disciples baptize in Judea, John the Baptist continues to baptize at Aenon near Salim as his ministry diminishes.	---	---	---	3:22-36
Day of Pentecost – May 17, 28 CE – end of the “Seventy Weeks”				
Jesus hears that John the Baptist has been imprisoned, Jesus and his disciples decide to leave Judea, depart for Galilee.	4:12	1:14	4:14	4:1-3

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28 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus passes through Samaria with his disciples, talks with woman at well, says the time to harvest (souls) is now.	---	---	---	4:4-42
Jesus leaves Samaria, arrives in Galilee, welcomed by Galileans.	---	---	---	4:43-45
Jesus moves to Capernaum, preaches in area synagogues, proclaims the kingdom.	4:13-17	1:15	4:15	---
Jesus, while he is visiting Cana, heals son of royal official back in Capernaum.	---	---	---	4:46-54
<i>Day of Atonement – September 16, 28 CE</i> <i>start of jubilee year</i>				
Jesus reads from scroll at the synagogue in Nazareth on the sabbath, proclaims start of the jubilee (“acceptable”) year, people take him to cliff to throw him down, he passes through their midst unharmed.	---	---	4:16-30	---
Jesus attends Feast of Tabernacles.	<i>That visit to Jerusalem is not mentioned in the Gospels.</i>			
Jesus returns to Capernaum, teaches in synagogue with authority, heals demoniac man, fame spreads throughout area.	---	1:21-28	4:31-37	---
Jesus visits Simon’s house, cures Simon’s mother-in-law of fever, heals many people.	8:14-17	1:29-34	4:38-41	---
Jesus calls Simon, Andrew, James, John.	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	---
Jesus preaches the kingdom and heals the sick in the synagogues of Galilee.	4:23-24	1:35-39	4:42-44	---
Jesus cleanses leper, crowds and reputation grow, often withdraws to wilderness to pray.	4:25 8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	---
Matthew, chapters 5, 6, and 7 – Jesus goes up a mountain, privately teaching his disciples about the kingdom and publicly preaching the kingdom to the multitudes coming to him to be healed, topics covered include: The Beatitudes, salt and light, fulfillment of the Law and prophets, anger and murder, adultery and divorce, swearing of oaths, “eye for eye” and love for enemies, giving in secret, praying in private, fasting with joy, laying up treasure in heaven, do not worry about tomorrow, do not judge, ask-seek-knock, the narrow gate, tree known by its fruit, not all will enter the kingdom, heed and do his words, house built on rock stands.				
Jesus forgives paralytic man let down through roof, then heals him to confirm his authority to forgive sins.	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	---
Jesus calls Matthew (aka Levi), dines with him, tells Pharisees that he is called to save sinners, God requires mercy not sacrifice, sick need physician, new wine put into new wineskins, he is bridegroom.	9:9-17	2:13-22	5:27-39	---

28/29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus and his disciples walk through a field picking wheat on sabbath, he says that Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath. ¹	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	---
Jesus heals man with withered hand in a synagogue on sabbath, Pharisees plot with Herodians about how they can kill him.	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	---
<i>Feast of Dedication – November 29 to December 6, 28 CE</i>				
Jesus attends feast in Jerusalem, heals paralytic man at pool of Bethesda on the sabbath, Jewish leaders criticize the man for picking up his mat on the sabbath.	---	---	---	5:1-15
Jesus confirms his authority as the Son, says deeds and Moses testify about him, hostility of Jewish leaders increases.	---	---	---	5:16-47
Jesus leaves Jerusalem to avoid wrath of Jewish leaders and withdraws to the Sea of Galilee to preach and heal the people.	12:15-16	3:7-12	---	---
Jesus is presented by Matthew as the chosen servant who fulfills Isaiah 42:1-4, the one who will show judgment to the nations, and in whom they will trust.	12:17-21	---	---	---
Jesus ordains the Twelve Apostles to preach the kingdom and heal the sick.	---	3:13-19	6:12-16	---
Jesus delivers sermon (often called the Sermon on the Mount) on a coastal plain of Sea of Galilee at base of a mountain. ²	---	---	6:17-49	---
Jesus returns to Capernaum, heals a centurion's servant, marvels at centurion's display of faith not seen so far in Israel.	8:5-13	---	7:1-10	---
Jesus raises widow's son at Nain, people declare Jesus a prophet, report circulates through Judea and surrounding country.	---	---	7:11-17	---
John the Baptist sends his disciples to question Jesus about his identity after hearing reports of Jesus' ministry, Jesus confirms John is the herald of Messiah, thus confirming his own mission, says woe to cities that have rejected it.	11:2-24	---	7:18-35	---
¹ The year 28 CE was a sabbath/jubilee year, so grain would still be unharvested in early winter. ² The topics and the order of presentation in that sermon are almost identical to those recorded in Matthew, chapters 5-7. Some speculate that the two accounts are same event, but it is more likely that Jesus preached the same message, in whole or in part, on many occasions.				

29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus gives thanks to God for revealing him to the children, and for hiding him from the wise, gives invitation to weary.	11:25-30	---	---	---
Jesus dines with Pharisee, sinful woman anoints his feet with tears, wipes them with her hair, Jesus rebukes his host.	---	---	7:36-50	---
Jesus and his disciples go through towns and villages in the Galilee preaching and healing, women provide for them.	---	---	8:1-3	---
Jesus heals blind and mute man, crowd asks if Jesus is the Son of David, family says Jesus is deranged, Pharisees say Jesus is possessed by Beelzebub, Jesus warns about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.	12:22-37 12:46-50	3:20-35	8:19-21	---
Pharisees ask for a sign of authority, Jesus replies that the only sign they will get will be the “sign of the prophet Jonas.”	12:38-45	---	---	---
Jesus teaches mysteries of the kingdom, speaks to crowd in parables, explains the mysteries to his disciples in private, including parable of the Sower, parable of the Tares, parable of the Mustard Seed, parable of the Yeast in Three Measures, parable of the Sickle and Harvest, parable of the Lamp on a Lampstand, parables of the Kingdom of Heaven.	13:1-9 13:18-33 13:36-52	4:1-9 4:13-32	8:4-18	---
Jesus reveals the reason for using parables to teach the crowds.	13:10-17 13:34-35	4:10-12 4:33-34	---	---
Jesus sails to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, calms storm, disciples awed.	8:18 8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	---
Jesus heals demoniac man in region of the Gadarenes, sends demons into pigs, people urge Jesus to leave the region.	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	---
Jesus returns to Capernaum, heals daughter of a synagogue official named Jairus, woman with issue of blood cured by touching the hem of his garment.	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	---
Jesus gives sight to two blind men, gives voice to a mute man, Pharisees attribute his power to the “prince of demons.”	9:27-34	---	---	---
Jesus teaches in synagogues in Galilee.	9:35-38	6:6b	---	---

29 CE				
Events (cont.)	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus teaches in synagogue at Nazareth, has his disciples with him, the people are offended, Jesus does no miracles there.	13:53-58	6:1-6a	---	---
Jesus sends the twelve out two by two to preach the kingdom and heal the sick, gives them authority over demons.	10:1-11:1	6:7-13	9:1-6	---
Herod Antipas mistakes Jesus for John the Baptist, who he had earlier beheaded.	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9	---
The twelve report back to Jesus.	---	6:30	9:10a	---
Jesus goes off privately by boat with his disciples to Bethsaida for rest (and mourn after hearing that John the Baptist is dead), crowds run ahead and meet them.	14:13-14	6:31-34	9:10b-11	6:1-3
Jesus has compassion on the crowd and heals the sick, then feeds 5,000 people (just before the week of the Passover).	14:15-21	6:35-44	9:12-17	6:4-13
People want to make Jesus king because of miraculous signs, Jesus sends crowds away, disciples wait below while Jesus goes up a mountainside to pray alone.	14:22-23	6:45-46	---	6:14-15
Jesus walks on the water of Sea of Galilee, startles disciples, Peter sinks and prays.	14:24-33	6:47-52	---	6:16-21
Jesus heals many people at Gennesaret.	14:34-36	6:53-56	---	---
Jesus is found in Capernaum by crowds seeking more bread, Jesus reveals that he is the true bread from heaven and that anyone who eats his flesh and drinks his blood will have eternal life.	---	---	---	end of sabbath year 6:22-59
Many disciples cannot accept Jesus' new "flesh and blood" teaching and depart.	---	---	---	6:60-65
Simon Peter says that he and the eleven believe that he is the Holy One of Israel, Jesus reveals one of them will betray him.	---	---	---	6:66-71
PASSOVER #2 - April 15-22, 29 CE				
Jesus disputes with Pharisees about their man-made tradition and the word of God, says defilement comes from the heart, not by what food is eaten, Jesus explains the parable of Defilement and afterwards he explains that all foods are clean.	15:1-20	7:1-23	---	---

29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus decides to stay out of Judea to avoid being killed by Jewish leaders.	---	---	---	7:1
Jesus goes to Tyre, heals the demoniac daughter of a Syrophenician woman.	15:21-28	7:24-30	---	---
Jesus travels through Sidon to the region of the Decapolis on the Sea of Galilee, opens the ears and loosens the tongue of a man who could not hear or talk easily, people are astounded by his works.	15:29-31	7:31-37	---	---
Jesus has compassion on a crowd that has been listening to him for three days, feeds the crowd numbering about 4,000 men, plus women and children.	15:32-38	8:1-9	---	---
Jesus and his disciples go by boat to Dalmanutha, Pharisees ask Jesus for a sign of his authority, none is given.	15:39-16:4	8:10-12	---	---
Jesus and his disciples go back by boat across the Sea of Galilee, he warns the disciples to beware the leaven of the Pharisees (their man-made teachings).	16:5-12	8:13-21	---	---
Jesus and his disciples arrive at Bethsaida, Jesus heals a blind man, demonstrates that healing by him is always total, not partial.	---	8:22-26	---	---
Jesus and his disciples go to Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asks the disciples who people think he is, Simon (who is named Peter by Jesus) answers that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and Jesus says that on "this rock" his church will be built and it will have the keys of the kingdom.	16:13-20	8:27-30	9:18-21	---
Jesus reveals that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, be killed, and on the third day be raised, Peter objects, Jesus rebukes him. ¹	16:21-26	8:31-33	9:22-25	---
Jesus reveals that if anyone wants to save his life, he must lose it, predicts that some listening will not see death before they see the coming of the Son of Man in glory.	16:27-28	8:34-9:1	9:26-27	---
¹ That is the first time Jesus predicts that he will suffer abuse at the hands of Jewish authorities and be killed in Jerusalem. He repeats the prediction two more times, repeating the prophecy immediately prior to each subsequent pilgrimage festival.				

29 CE				
Events (cont.)	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Day of Pentecost – June 4, 29 CE				
Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up a mountain where they witness his Transfiguration, see Moses and Elijah, hear the voice of God confirm Jesus as his Son. ¹	17:1-9	9:2-10	9:28-36	---
Jesus equates the ministry of John the Baptist with Elijah's coming, adding that the Son of Man will have to suffer at the hands of Jewish and Roman authorities.	17:10-13	9:11-13	---	---
Jesus heals a demoniac boy who the disciples could not heal, gives a discourse on faith, uses mustard seed as an example of the power of faith to move mountains.	17:14-21	9:14-29	9:37-43a	---
Jesus reveals for the second time that he will be betrayed, killed, and resurrected.	17:22-23	9:30-32	9:43b-45	---
Jesus and his disciples return to Capernaum, collectors of Temple tax come to Peter, Jesus sends him to find a coin in the mouth of a fish.	17:24-27	---	---	---
Jesus' disciples ask who will be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus tells them to become as little children.	18:1-5	9:33-37	9:46-48	---
Jesus warns about causing others to stumble, says not to stop others using his name since they are not against him.	18:6-14	9:38-50	9:49-50	---
Jesus teaches about kingdom conduct in this life, how to solve disputes among believers, the power of two or more praying together, application of forgiveness, then compares faith to mustard seed.	18:15-35	---	---	---
Jesus is taunted by his unbelieving brothers about going to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, he says he will remain in Galilee, they leave, afterward he goes to Jerusalem secretly.	---	---	---	7:2-10
¹ The Tranfiguration is an event mirroring the events in Exodus 24, which describe Moses going up the mountain of God to receive the Mosaic covenant. After Moses comes down, the people confirm that they will keep the covenant and are sprinkled with the blood of the covenant. Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders are then allowed to go back up the mountain to see God. Jesus takes his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, up the mountain to see his face shine (see Psalms 80:19 in KJV) and to hear God address him as his Son, the one who confirms the new covenant of salvation.				

29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus sends seventy disciples to preach and heal ahead of him as goes through villages on his way to Jerusalem, many in a Samaritan village reject his message, he explains the cost of commitment to him.	---	---	9:51-62 10:1-16	---
The seventy disciples report back to Jesus that even the demons submit to his name, Jesus praises the Father for hiding things from the wise and making them known to the children, says disciples are blessed to see what prophets and kings longed to see.	---	---	10:17-24	---
Day of Atonement – October 4, 29 CE				<i>end of jubilee year</i>
Jesus returns to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, Jewish leaders are looking for him, on the third day of the feast Jesus publicly teaches in the Temple courts.	---	---	---	7:11 7:14
Midway through the feast (fourth day), Jesus again teaches in the Temple, woman caught in adultery is brought to him for judgment, he writes in dirt, says let he who is without sin cast the first stone. ¹	---	---	---	7:53-8:11
Reactions to Jesus are mixed, Jewish authorities are astounded at the depth of his knowledge, Jesus says that his teaching is from the one who sent him, accuses the people of not keeping Law of Moses and wanting to kill him, they say Jesus is possessed by a demon.	---	---	---	7:12-13 7:15-24
People in Jerusalem are puzzled about Jesus' identity, ask if Jewish leaders really know that he is the Messiah, many believe in him because of miracles, chief priests and Pharisees try to arrest him, Jesus says they cannot go where he is going.	---	---	---	7:25-36
On last day of feast, Jesus says that out of him will flow rivers of living water so that any who thirst can drink and be refreshed.	---	---	---	7:37-38
¹ That was a sabbath day. Jesus probably wrote the Pharisaical rule against picking up a stone on the sabbath (writing in dirt was not a sabbath violation because it was not permanent writing). Under the Law of Moses, a woman caught in adultery and accused by two witnesses should be stoned. However, the crowd would not violate the Pharisaical law against picking up a stone in order to uphold the Law of Moses. Jesus in that way was pointing out their hypocrisy. Since there were not enough witnesses, Jesus did not violate the Law of Moses by not stoning the woman.				

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29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Many people believe Jesus is the Prophet or the Messiah, others doubt his identity because he is from Galilee, Jewish leaders want to send Temple guards to arrest him, but Nicodemus reminds them that Jesus must be heard before the council.	---	---	---	7:39-52
An expert in the Law asks what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus questions him, approves the expert's response that he must love God and his neighbor, then tells the parable of The Good Samaritan.	8:19-22	---	10:25-37	---
Jesus visits in home of Martha and her sister Mary, rebukes Martha for worrying about details while he is still with them.	---	---	10:38-42	---
Jesus proclaims himself the Light of the World just prior to the Feast of Lights (Dedication), then reveals that he is not of this world, predicts that they will know him when they lift him up, many people believe in him as the Messiah.	---	---	---	8:12-30
Jesus promises that those who follow his teachings will not die, calls the Judeans children of the devil, they say he is possessed by a demon, Jesus equates himself with the Father by claiming he predates Abraham, the people pick up stones to stone him, Jesus leaves Temple.	---	---	---	8:31-59
Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray, assures them that if men know to give their children good gifts, the Father will give the Holy Spirit even more so.	---	---	11:1-13	---
Jesus cures a mute man, crowds are amazed, some say Jesus is using the power of the prince of darkness Beelzebub, Jesus teaches that a guarded house cannot be invaded, that an unclean spirit will leave and, if it returns to an empty house, will bring seven unclean spirits with it.	---	---	11:14-28	---
Jesus says that a wicked generation seeks after a sign, but will get no sign but that of Jonah, adds that his teachings and works are greater than the teachings and works of both Solomon and Jonah.	---	---	11:29-32	---

29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus teaches that no one who has a lamp puts it under a basket but on a lampstand, that the eye is the light of the body, and urges people to empty their body of its darkness so that it can reflect light.	---	---	11:33-36	---
Jesus dines with a Pharisee who criticizes him for not washing his hands, Jesus rebukes him for hypocrisy, experts in the law takes offense, Jesus says woe to the experts as well, Jewish religious leaders try to trap Jesus into saying something that can be used to condemn him.	---	---	11:37-54	---
On sabbath Jesus heals a man born blind, Jewish leaders skeptical, Jesus says that he has come into the world so that those who cannot see can see and those who claim to see can be seen to be blind.	---	---	---	9:1-39
Jesus points out the guilt of the Pharisees who say they are not spiritually blind.	---	---	---	9:40-41
Jesus is asked about salvation, stresses the need for repentance, tells the parable of the Fig Tree that was cultivated to see if it would bear fruit in the third year.	---	---	13:1-9	---
Jesus tells the story of the Good Shepherd, explains the parable to his disciples.	---	---	---	10:1-18
Jesus heals woman infirmed for eighteen years, synagogue official objects to Jesus healing on the sabbath, tells people that they should not seek sabbath healing.	---	---	13:10-17	---
Some say Jesus is possessed by a demon, others ask how he can cast out demons and heal the sick if that is so, opinion is divided about his words and deeds.	---	---	---	10:19-21
Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed that grows into a tree, and to leaven in three measures of bread, says that the door to the kingdom is narrow, and that some who are last will be first.	---	---	13:18-30	---
Some Pharisees warn Jesus to leave Jerusalem because Herod wants to kill him, Jesus replies that a prophet cannot be killed outside of Jerusalem, then he laments over Jerusalem.	---	---	13:31-35	---

29 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
<i>Feast of Dedication – December 17-24, 29 CE</i>				
Jesus teaches crowd of thousands in Jerusalem during the Feast of Dedication, discussing various topics (see below).	---	---	12:1-59	10:22-23
Topics taught during the feast: Gives warning against the yeast of the Pharisees (which is equated with hypocrisy), says that there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, says that all words spoken in darkness will eventually be revealed by the light, gives promise that those who acknowledge him before men in this life will one day be acknowledged before the angels of God, gives strict warning about speaking against the Holy Spirit, tells the parable of the Rich Landowner, gives exhortation not to worry about daily needs but to pursue the kingdom and all needed things will be provided by God, instructs believers to be ever ready for service when the master returns because the Son of Man will come when he is not expected, reveals that he will not bring peace but division, laments that the people cannot read the signs of the times, urges people to make peace with their accusers.				
Jesus dines with a Pharisee in Jerusalem on the sabbath, Pharisees are watching him intently, Jesus heals man with dropsy, asks the Pharisees present who would not save their son or an ox if either fell into a well, Pharisees refuse to answer him.	---	---	14:1-6	---
Jesus tells parable of the Honored Guest, which says to seek an humble seat and let the master of the house move one to a place of honor as he sees fit, that when you give a banquet, invite the poor, not those from whom you expect a return.	---	---	14:7-14	---
Jesus tells the parable of the Banquet, which says to accept the invitation and go to the banquet without excuses or delay since the host will eventually close the door to those who refuse the invitation.	---	---	14:15-24	---
Jesus warns those who want to follow him to count the cost of discipleship, that salt that has lost its flavor is of no value.	---	---	14:25-35	---
Jesus tells parables to show how the Father rejoices over all who return, that riches have no eternal value, that those who are faithful in little will be given much; parable of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin, parable of the Prodigal Son and Forgiving Father, parable of the Clever Steward.	---	---	15:1-16:15	---
Jesus says that the Law was in effect until John the Baptist, that it will not pass away.	---	---	16:16-17	---

29/30 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus comments on divorce and adultery.	---	---	16:18	---
Jesus tells parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, says that if Israel will not believe Moses and the Prophets, they will not believe if one comes back from the dead.	---	---	16:19-31	---
Jesus warns against being a stumbling block, teaches on forgiveness.	---	---	17:1-6	---
Jesus teaches that a servant should not expect praise or reward from his master for doing what he is commanded to do.	---	---	17:7-10	---
Jesus heads to Jerusalem, passing through Samaria he heals ten lepers, one returns.	---	---	17:11-19	---
Jewish leaders try to get Jesus to say that he is the Messiah, he says that they have seen his deeds and that the deeds identify him, that his sheep hear his voice, reveals that the kingdom will not come with signs but is already in their midst, Jesus adds that he and the Father are one, Pharisees attempt to stone him for blasphemy.	---	---	17:20-21	10:24-39
Jesus reveals that the days are coming when they will desire to see the coming of the Son of Man but that first he must suffer many things.	---	---	17:22-37	---
Jesus tells two parables about prayer: parable of the Persistent Widow, parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector.	---	---	18:1-14	---
Jesus teaches about divorce, changes the terms of divorce specified by Moses.	19:1-12	10:1-12	---	---
Jesus leaves Jerusalem and goes across the Jordan to the place where John the Baptist formerly baptized (Bethany in Perea).	---	---	---	10:40
Many people come to Jesus in Bethany, some bring their children to be blessed, the disciples try to stop them but Jesus says that of such is the kingdom of God.	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	10:41-42
Jesus tells young man to sell everything, give it to the poor, and follow him, then observes that it will be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.	19:16-26	10:17-27	18:18-27	---

30 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
The disciples ask about their reward, Jesus says they will inherit eternal life and sit on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel.	19:27-30	10:28-31	18:28-30	---
Jesus tells the parable of the Owner of a Vineyard, a story about a man who hired workers throughout the day, then paid all the same amount no matter how long they worked, says that the last shall be first and the first shall be last in the kingdom.	20:1-16	---	---	---
On the journey back to Jerusalem, Jesus tells his disciples that he will be handed over to the Jewish and Roman authorities to be condemned, flogged, and killed, but will rise again on the third day.	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	---
The mother of James and John seek to gain favor for her sons, Jesus says that such positions are not his to give, that to be great one must be a servant.	20:20-28	10:35-45	---	---
Approaching Jericho on the way from Perea, Jesus heals blind Bartemaeus; leaving Jericho to go up to Jerusalem, Jesus heals two more blind men.	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	---
Passing through Jericho, Jesus dines with the tax collector Zacchaeus, who believes.	---	---	19:1-10	---
Nearing Jerusalem, the people following Jesus expect that the kingdom of God will appear immediately upon his arrival, Jesus tells the parable of the Nobleman Who Goes to a Far Country to receive a kingdom, entrusting money to his three servants to use while he is gone, then comes back to settle accounts.	---	---	19:11-28	---
Jesus returns to Bethany four days after Lazarus is buried, raises Lazarus from the dead, many believe, some tell Pharisees.	---	---	---	11:1-46
Passover near, Sanhedrin discuss Jesus, decide to have him killed, so Jesus and his disciples withdraw to Ephraim.	---	---	---	11:47-57
<i>Six days before Passover</i>				
Jesus comes back to Bethany before the start of the sabbath day at sunset.	---	---	---	12:1

30 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Sabbath Day				
After sunset, Jesus eats a sabbath meal at the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.	26:6	14:3a	---	12:2
Mary anoints Jesus' feet with oil of nard, Judas objects, Jesus says her deed will be remembered wherever gospel is heard.	26:7-13	14:3b-9	---	12:3-8
Crowds come from Jerusalem to see Jesus and Lazarus, Jewish leaders plot to kill both.	---	---	---	12:9-11
THE CONFIRMATION WEEK – March 31-April 7, 30 CE				
<i>See Diagram 7.2 on page 119; Synoptic days reckoned sunset to sunset, Johannine days sunrise to sunrise.</i>				
1st Day of the Week – 10th of Nisan¹ – Saturday/Sunday				
Jesus sends disciples from Bethphage to secure a donkey and foal.	21:1-6	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
Jesus enters Jerusalem as king seated on a donkey, ² with the people rejoicing and the Pharisees telling him to stop them.	21:7-11	---	---	---
Jesus drives money changers from Temple, ³ heals blind/lame, Jewish leaders indignant.	21:12-17	11:15-19	19:45-48	---
Greeks seek to talk with Jesus, who reveals that the Son of Man is about to be glorified, says that a grain of wheat must die to produce much grain, prays that the Father will glorify his own name, a voice answers that it will be so, Jesus tells crowd that he will be lifted up, they ask how it is that the Son of Man will die.	---	---	---	12:20-36
Many believe but are afraid to say so because of fear of the Pharisees, Jesus says those who believe will receive eternal life.	---	---	---	12:37-50
2nd Day of the Week – 11th of Nisan – Sunday/Monday				
Jesus curses the barren fig tree as he and the disciples go into Jerusalem, disciples are amazed, Jesus teaches on faith.	21:18-22	11:12-14 11:20-26	---	---
Jesus' authority is challenged by Jewish leaders, in return he asks them by whose authority John the Baptist did his works, they say that they do not know.	21:23-27	11:27-33	20:1-8	---
¹ The 10th of Nisan was the traditional day for selecting the Paschal lamb. ² That was done in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, as noted in the Gospels of Matthew and John. ³ According to Deuteronomy 16:3-4, having leaven in the house during Passover was prohibited, so Jesus was cleaning his Father's house of leaven (man-made "laws") before Passover.				

30 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
Jesus focuses on Israel's failure to be a nation of priests, warns that kingdom will be taken from them and given to a people who will produce fruit; parable of the Two Sons, parable of the Wicked Tenants, Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son.	21:28-44 22:1-14	12:1-11	20:9-18	---
Chief priests and Pharisees want to arrest Jesus but fear the crowds, who think he is a prophet.	21:45-46	12:12	20:19	---
Jewish authorities question Jesus about tribute to Caesar, resurrection, and which is the greatest commandment.	22:15-40	12:13-34	20:20-40	---
Jesus asks question about the Messiah, Jewish leaders cannot answer.	22:41-46	12:35-37	20:41-44	---
Jesus specifies the eight woes, indicating what will befall the scribes and Pharisees.	23:1-39	12:38-40	20:45-47	---
Jesus comments on the widow's mites.		12:41-44	21:1-4	---
3rd Day of the Week – 12th of Nisan – Monday/Tuesday				
Jesus foretells destruction of the Temple.	24:1-2	13:1-2	21:5-6	---
Jesus gives the Olivet Discourse, tells his disciples about things to come; turmoil among nations, famines, earthquakes, persecution of disciples, great suffering, false messiahs, lightning from east and west, sun and moon darkened, all tribes mourn, Son of Man appears in clouds of heaven with power and glory, angels will be sent forth to gather elect; parable of Sprouting Fig Tree, parable of Faithful and Wise Servant, parable of the Ten Virgins, parable of the Talents.	24:3-25:30	13:3-37	21:7-38	---
Jesus explains the Last Judgment.	25:31-46	---	---	---
Jesus tells his disciples that he will be handed over to the chief priests, Jewish elders meet in Caiphus' house to plan how to have Jesus arrested, but do not want him killed during the Passover festival.	26:1-5	14:1-2	22:1-2	---
4th Day of the Week – 13th of Nisan – Tuesday/Wednesday				
Judas goes to the chief priests and agrees to betray Jesus, begins looking for a way.	26:14-16	14:10-11	22:3-6	---
Disciples make preparations for Passover (and 1st Day of Feast of Unleavened Bread).	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	---

30 CE				
<i>Events (cont.)</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Luke</i>	<i>John</i>
PASSOVER #3 – 5th Day of the Week – 14th of Nisan – Wednesday/Thursday				
Jesus and disciples eat meal in upper room after sunset (<i>same day Paschal lambs slain</i>).	26:20-35	14:17-31	22:14-38	13:1-17:26
Topics taught in the upper room: Jesus washes the disciples feet, names Judas as his betrayer, institutes the Lord's Supper (changing the focus of the Passover from deliverance out of Egypt to deliverance from death, says that his blood confirms the new covenant), foretells the denials by Peter, says that he himself is the way, the truth, and the life, promises to send the Comforter (the Holy Spirit), tells the parable of the Vine and Branches, reveals his going and his return, prays for the disciples and then prays for all who will believe after his resurrection.				
Jesus prays in Gethsemane.	26:36-46	14:32-42	22:39-46	18:1
Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested.	26:47-56	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:2-12
Jesus tried before Annas and Sanhedrin, Peter denies Jesus at daybreak, Sanhedrin condemns Jesus for blasphemy, delivers him to Romans for execution.	26:57-75 27:1-2	14:53-72	22:54-71	18:13-27
Judas hangs himself.	27:3-10	---	---	---
Jesus is tried before Roman officials, first Pilate, then Herod Antipas, then back to Pilate who condemns him to be crucified.	27:11-31	15:1-20	23:1-25	18:28-19:16
Jesus crucified at noon, dies at 3pm while Paschal lambs are being slain until sunset.	27:32-56	15:21-41	23:26-49	19:17-37
Before sunset, Jesus' body is removed from the cross, placed in tomb by Joseph of Arimathea.	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:38-42
6th Day of the Week – 15th of Nisan – Thursday/Friday 1st Day of the Feast of Weeks (First Fruits) for Pharisees (see page 119)				
After sunset, the Paschal lambs are eaten by Jews to commemorate the Exodus, and by the disciples in remembrance of Jesus.	<i>That event is not mentioned in the Gospels, but Passover was kept by all observant Jews, and the eleven disciples would have been no exception.</i>			
Jewish leaders go to Pilate and demand a Roman guard be placed on Jesus' tomb.	27:62-66	---	---	---
Sabbath Day – 16th of Nisan – Friday/Saturday 1st Day of the Feast of Weeks (First Fruits) for Sadducees (see page 119)				
Jesus' dead body lays in tomb	---	---	---	---
1st Day of the Week – 17th of Nisan – Saturday/Sunday				
After sabbath ends at sunset, women purchase and prepare burial spices.	---	16:1	---	---
Jesus' body resurrected to life after three days and three nights; during the next 40 days, Jesus appears to many witnesses as proof of his resurrection to life.	28:1-20	16:2-20	24:1-53	20:1-21:24

THE NATION OF ISRAEL

IS IT A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

The rebirth of modern Israel as a nation is a remarkable story, even by secular standards. It began in earnest when the First Zionist Congress was convened in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897. From the start, the stated purpose of Zionism was to achieve a political homeland in Palestine for the Jewish people. The new movement quickly gained traction among Jews and among Christian Restorationists in Europe, especially in England. As a result, several proposals to create a Jewish homeland were soon put forth, the most serious being the 1903 “Uganda Proposal” by Great Britain offering land in East Africa, an offer that was considered but rejected at the Seventh Zionist Congress in 1905.

During WWI, the focus again turned back to the Middle East when Great Britain, on the verge of capturing Jerusalem from the Ottoman Empire, issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917 favoring a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Five years later, the League of Nations endorsed the idea by passing the Palestine Mandate of 1922, formalizing the territory of Palestine and making Great Britain its administrator. In 1928, the lands east of the Jordan River (77% of the original Palestine mandate) were given to the Arabs as the nation of Transjordan. In 1947, two years after the end of WWII, when the horror of the Holocaust had focused world attention on the suffering of the Jewish people and their need for a safe haven (which, incredibly, no nation was offering), the United Nations, which had inherited authority for the mandate from the League, passed Resolution 181 partitioning the remaining 23% of the original Palestine territory between Arabs and Jews. The Arab states rejected the resolution, but the Jews accepted it.

When the U.N. mandate expired on May 14, 1948, the Jewish leadership in Palestine proclaimed the nation of Israel on their 11% of the mandated land. The Arab nations immediately attacked the new Jewish state and a fierce war of self-defense ensued for the next year until the Israeli forces had beaten back the Arab armies, in the process extending the territory under Israeli control. However, Jerusalem’s Old City and Temple Mount remained in Arab hands.

In 1950, two years after the modern nation of Israel was established, Israel’s legislature, the Knesset, passed the Law of Return, which said that any Jewish person living anywhere in the world could come to the new nation of Israel, be

welcomed as a citizen, and thereafter live under Jewish majority rule in his ancestral homeland. Still, the spiritual meaning of that modern ingathering of Jews to Palestine, and the sudden Jewish national rebirth there after more than eighteen-hundred years of dispersion among the nations, was questioned by both Jews and non-Jews, who asked: Is the modern ingathering of Jews to *Eretz Israel* simply a secular phenomenon with only a coincidental biblical basis, or is the ingathering actually a fulfillment of Bible prophecy?

Patriarchal Covenants

Before trying to find a biblical reference to modern Israel, the promises and covenants made by God to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (and extended to Jacob-renamed-Israel's descendants, *i.e.*, to the Children of Israel) must be understood as providing the foundational context for any such reference.

The first promise God gave to Abram in Ur of the Chaldees is recorded in Genesis 12:1-3:

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, [and travel] unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Abram obeyed God, left the city of Ur, and eventually arrived in the land of Canaan, where he remained until famine forced him to seek food in Egypt. When conditions improved, Abram returned to the land of Canaan, where God renewed the promises, as recorded in Genesis 13:14-15:

"And the Lord said unto Abram ... Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest [from the Euphrates River to the river of Egypt], to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

God further confirmed his promises by making them into an unconditional covenant with Abram, as recorded in Genesis 15:1-18:

“After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

Some years later, God reiterated his covenant with Abram, changing his name to Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 17:1-13:

“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou

perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you ... and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.”

After Abraham died, the blessings of the covenant God had made with him were passed on and confirmed to Isaac, the “seed of Abraham” and heir who was designated by God, as recorded in Genesis 26:1-5. Then, just prior to his death, Isaac confirmed the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant to his own son Jacob, as recorded in Genesis 28:1-4. However, because he had obtained the blessing through deceit, fooling his father Isaac into giving him the blessing that should have gone to his older brother Esau, Jacob was forced by fear of retribution to avoid the wrath of his brother by fleeing from the promised covenant land of Canaan. As he was leaving, Jacob had a dream at Bethel in which God gave him assurances that the covenant with him and his descendants was still binding, as recorded in Genesis 28:10-15:

“And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the

Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”

On his return to the land of Canaan twenty years later, Jacob was again met by God, who reminded him of the covenant and reconfirmed it by giving him the covenant name Israel, as recorded in Genesis 35:9-15:

“And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.”

Thus, Jacob became Israel, and his descendants would be known as the Children of Israel. Based on the covenant made to Abraham, passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and confirmed by God to Jacob again at Bethel, the Children of Israel would become the rightful heirs to the promises of land and nationhood made by God to each of the three great Hebrew patriarchs.

The National Covenant

Jacob and his family prospered in the land of Canaan until a famine caused all of them to seek relief in Egypt. There the Israelites grew into a multitude. Then, after four-hundred years of affliction at the hand of the Egyptians, God called Moses to lead the Children of Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness

in the Sinai, where he would make them into the chosen nation. The Book of Exodus recounts the story of Israel's deliverance and the call to be God's chosen people at Mount Horeb, as recorded in Exodus 19:1-8:

"In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord."

Unlike the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the land promise with the Children of Israel was conditional. It required that they obey God's voice and keep his commandments. To achieve that end, God gave them the *Torah*, the Tabernacle with its high priest who had access to Urim and Thummin,¹ and later judges and prophets to exhort and warn them. Unfortunately, when it came time to go up to possess the promised land of Canaan, the Children of Israel were overcome by fear. God judged their lack of faith harshly, decreeing that the doubters would not see the promised land. All except Joshua and Caleb, who were spared because of their faith, died during the next thirty-eight years in the wilderness, during which time God raised up a new generation of Israelites.

In Moab, just before the new generation that God had raised up crossed the Jordan to take possession of the land, God renewed the national covenant with the Children of Israel, as recorded in Deuteronomy 29:1-13:

¹ Urim and Thummin are not fully explained in the Bible. They were objects worn by the high priest that provided direct counsel from God (see Ex. 28:30, Lev. 8:8, Num. 27:21).

“These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I am the Lord your God. And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them: And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh. Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do. Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

Continuing in verses 14-29, God extended the covenant to all of the future descendants of those Israelites who crossed the Jordan River by saying:

“Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; But with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day: (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by; And ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them:) Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root

that beareth gall and wormwood; And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law: So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it; And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them: And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book: And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Foreseeing and foretelling that the Children of Israel would be unfaithful to the commandments, God confirmed that he would be faithful to keep the promises that he made to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob far into the future, as revealed in Deuteronomy 30:1-20:

“And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all

that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest

obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

Thus, the promised land was given to the Children of Israel as a homeland conditionally, with the promise of blessing and curse, blessing from God if they were faithful to keep his commandments, the curse of exile if they were not. The remainder of the Hebrew Scriptures, everything after the five Books of Moses, is a record of the struggle of the nation of Israel to keep the commandments to ensure their stay in the land. Repeatedly through the period of the judges, and later under king after king, the people of Israel, then Judah alone after the northern kingdom of Israel was taken into exile, were increasingly unfaithful to the covenant. Prophet after prophet warned the people that they would be removed from the land if they did not repent. Finally, in 721 BCE, as an example to the southern kingdom of Judah, God permanently removed the more wicked northern kingdom of Israel from the land, using the Assyrians.

Judah did not take heed and failed to correct its ways, except for a brief period of faithfulness under the boy-king Josiah, who sought to do the will of God with all his heart. After his death in 609 BCE, though, the decline began again and continued until 605 BCE, when God began a three-staged exile of Judah from the land, using the Babylonians. The Exile in Babylon lasted for seventy years, as foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. In 539 BCE and afterwards, using Cyrus the Great of Persia, God fulfilled his promise to restore the people to the land if they repented (see Daniel’s prayer of repentance beginning on page 216). Still, over the next six centuries, the Jewish nation grew increasingly unfaithful to the covenant, causing God to eventually remove them from the land once again in 70 CE, this time using the Romans. For the next 1,800-plus years, the Jewish people would remain nationless, dispersed among the nations.

Modern Israel – Is It a Sign of the Times?

The involuntary *Diaspora* of the Jews described above has now ended. The Bible predicted that it would eventually be brought to a close with an ingathering of Jews from all nations of the world to *Eretz Israel* in the latter days, and so they have been regathered, as any student of recent Middle East history can attest. With the birth of the modern nation of Israel in 1948 and passage of the Law of

Return in 1950, the prophecies were fulfilled. Still, the prophecies in the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) that predicted the ingathering, though definite about the future ingathering, were not specific about the point in history when it would occur beyond saying that it would happen in the latter days. However, a chrono-specific prophecy foretelling the exact time of the rebirth of the nation of Israel and the end of the involuntary *Diaspora* is found in the continuation of the *Tanakh*, the *B'rit Hadashah*, in Luke 21:5-24:

“And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he [Jesus] said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? ... Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. ... And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh ... For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

The above passage records the events that Jesus prophesied to his disciples while walking in the Temple a few days before his crucifixion in 30 CE. He was sharing his foreknowledge of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and Herod's Temple, events that occurred forty years later in 70 CE exactly as described (and as had been foretold in the seventh chapter of Daniel, see page 54). Jesus was also revealing a much longer chronology than his disciples could comprehend at the time. In addition to the prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by Titus and the Roman army that would happen in the near future, Jesus added an important chrono-specific prophecy that projected the history of Jerusalem and the Jews far into the future when he prophesied ***“and [the Jews] shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”***

The chrono-specific prophecy of Jesus in Luke, chapter 21, can be interpreted by understanding the phrase “*times of the Gentiles*” as follows:

1) The phrase used by Jesus (the only occurrence of that phrase in the Bible) is better translated as “*times among the nations*.” Many modern expositors interpret the phrase from a non-Jewish viewpoint to emphasize the idea of Gentile political domination of history, but the more important concept being put forth is the one seen from a Jewish perspective, as Jesus would have seen it, which places the emphasis on the Jewish people being “*led away captive*” to live in exile among the nations of the world until the “*times among the nations*” are fulfilled.

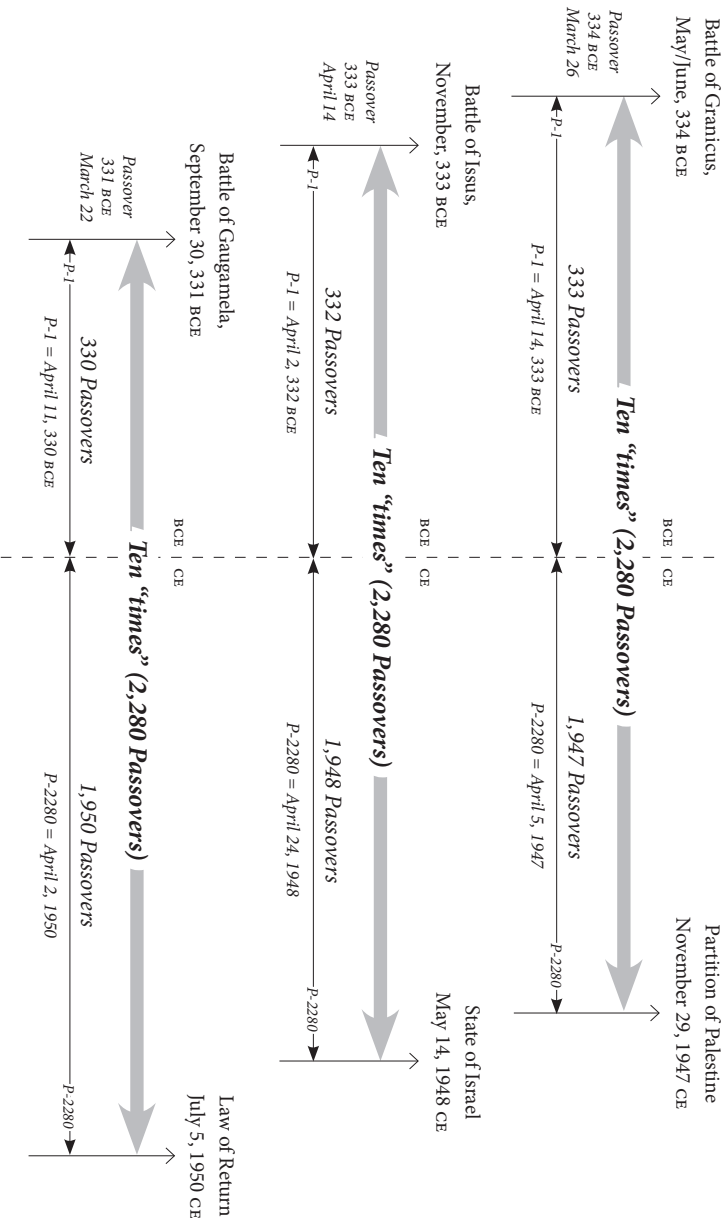
2) The word “*time*” is being used by Jesus as a chronological marker in the same way that the prophet Daniel used the word “*time*” in his prophecies, e.g., as in the prophecy recorded in the seventh chapter of Daniel, where “*a time and times and the dividing of time*” = $3\frac{1}{2}$ “*times*” = ($3\frac{1}{2} \times 228$ Passovers) = 798 Passovers (see page 51). And, since the word “*times*” in the phrase used by Jesus is plural, the span of time during which the Jews would be dispersed among the nations that was specified in Jesus’ prophecy should be calculated as some multiple of a “*time*” (= 228 Passovers) in duration.

With the above clarifications in mind, I quickly realized that, in order to find out the duration of the “*times of the Gentiles*,” a starting point for calculating the “*times*” was needed. Since the Battle of Granicus, in which Alexander the Great first defeated the Persians, had been the starting point for calculating the modern-day restoration of the Temple Mount (as described in the eighth chapter of Daniel), the starting date for that prophecy, May/June 334 BCE, seemed like a good place to begin. Counting forward in multiples of “*times*” (i.e., in multiples of 228 Passovers) from the first Passover after the Battle of Granicus,¹ which was the Passover in 333 BCE, I looked for a match with an important event in modern Jewish history. Ten “*times*” (10×228 Passovers = 2,280 Passovers) forward in time from that Passover brought the count to the Passover in the year 1947, and to a key period in modern Jewish history. After the Passover in 1947 and before the Passover in 1948, the United Nations had passed Resolution 181, which partitioned the remaining 23% of the

¹ Why God picked the Battle of Granicus in 334 BCE to anchor the prophecy in Daniel chapter 8 is not explained, but he did so and that makes it a significant event in Jewish history. Perhaps Greek dominion over the Jews and *Eretz Israel* differed from that of Babylon and Persia in its spiritual implications. It is a matter of record that the conflict between Hellenism and Judaism becomes a major focus of Jewish history after Granicus.

Diagram 6A – The Times of the Gentiles

“time” is equal to twelve 19-year Metonic Cycles (12 x 19 years = 228 years/Passovers)



P = Passover (using Passover dates from "Calculating Easter using the Jewish Calendar in One Step" by Stephen P. Morse, available at www.stevemorse.org)

original mandated Palestine territory between the Arabs and Jews. For the first time since ancient times, the political mechanism for establishing a Jewish homeland in *Eretz Israel* was given official international sanction.

So, with the Battle of Granicus and its corresponding event ten “times” later in Jewish-history fresh in mind, and aware that Alexander had defeated the Persians in two additional battles after the Battle of Granicus, I began counting the “times” again, this time from the second victory won by Alexander over Persia, the Battle of Issus in 333 BCE, and did the same calculation, using ten “times” as before, which brought the count to the Passover in 1948. Shortly after that Passover, the nation of Israel had been proclaimed on May 14, 1948. Continuing in the same manner, ten “times” from the third and final battle against the Persians won by Alexander, the Battle of Gaugamela in 331 BCE, was calculated, bringing the count to the Passover in 1950. Shortly after that Passover the Israeli Knesset had passed the Law of Return. From that point on, no Jewish person in the world had to remain “*led away captive*” to live “*among the nations*,” thus bringing the involuntary *Diaspora* of the Jews to an official end after more than 1,800 years

The three events in modern Jewish history that serve as fulfillments of the chrono-specific predictive prophecy of Jesus in Luke 21:5-24—the Partition of Palestine, the founding of the State of Israel, and the Law of Return—are depicted graphically by Diagram 6A on the previous page. Each of the events was a major turning point in modern Jewish history. The final event, the passage of the Law of Return in 1950, which ended the involuntary *Diaspora* that Jesus said would conclude the times of the Gentiles (“*and [the Jews] shall be led away captive into all nations ... until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*”), gave witness that the modern nation of Israel is the prophesied place of end-time ingathering foretold in the Bible, with the events and timing surrounding its rebirth in the years 1947-1950 identified exactly. Thus, it can be said with confidence that the modern nation of Israel is indeed a sign of the times,¹ and that the ingathering of the Jews to Palestine, culminating in the passage of the Law of Return in 1950, is a clear indicator that the “*times of the Gentiles*” have been completed and are being followed by the “*time of the end*” that is now underway.

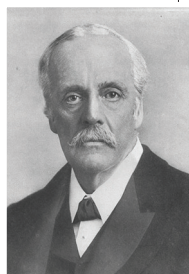
¹ The phrase “sign of the times” indicates that the modern nation of Israel was predicted in Scripture as an end-time event, and that its rebirth and existence today is the fulfillment of the land and nationhood promises made by God to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It should be noted that the redemptive promise made to the fathers was fulfilled by Jesus, the seed of Abraham who was promised as a blessing to all nations.

Important Documents in Israel's Rebirth

The Balfour Declaration - November 2, 1917



*Walter, 2nd Baron Rothschild
Member of Parliament
1916-1937*



*Arthur, 1st Earl of Balfour
British Foreign Secretary
1916-1918*

Foreign Office,

November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country"

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "Arthur Balfour". There is a small heart-shaped mark above the signature.

Original letter is in the British Library (MS 41178 ff 1.3)

Palestine Mandate and Partition – 1922 to 1948

The partition of Palestine by the League of Nations in the early twentieth century was rooted in the geopolitical transformations that followed World War I, and led to the subsequent administration of the region by the British Empire under the auspices of the League. The foundation for this partition was laid in 1922 when the League of Nations granted Britain a mandate to govern Palestine. This mandate codified the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which had promised the Zionist movement the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. However, the mandate also stipulated that this must not prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities.

The Mandate for Palestine, established by the League of Nations, emerged as a response to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Britain was given administrative control over Palestine with the dual purpose of implementing the Balfour Declaration and preparing the region for eventual self-governance. Central to the mandate was Britain's responsibility to facilitate Jewish immigration and settlement, a directive that significantly influenced the demographic and political landscape of the region.

Throughout the British Mandate, various petitions were submitted by both Arab and Jewish communities in response to specific policies or events. Arab petitions often aimed at opposing Jewish immigration and land purchases, asserting their nationalist claims for independence, and seeking to influence British policies to favor the Arab population. Conversely, Jewish petitions focused on promoting Jewish immigration, securing land acquisition rights, and advocating for the establishment of a Jewish national home.

As the mandate progressed, it became clear that the conflicting aspirations of Jews and Arabs in Palestine could not be reconciled under a single one-state administrative framework. The rising tensions and international pressure led the United Nations to propose a partition plan for Palestine at the end of the British Mandate. On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, which recommended the creation of independent Arab and Jewish states, linked economically to foster cooperation.

The British Mandate officially terminated on May 15, 1948. On the preceding day, May 14, 1948, the Jewish leadership declared the establishment of the State of Israel. This declaration was immediately followed by the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, as neighboring Arab states intervened in support of the Palestinian Arabs. After the war, the territory of Mandatory Palestine was subsequently divided among the newly declared State of Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the Kingdom of Egypt.

Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel – May 14, 1948

On May 14, 1948, the United Nations Palestine Mandate expired, the Jewish People's Council gathered at Tel Aviv Museum, where David Ben-Gurion proclaimed, "I shall read from the scroll of the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel" ...



PHOTO: COPYRIGHT © STATE OF ISRAEL, GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE. USED BY PERMISSION.

Eretz Israel [the Land of Israel, Palestine] was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to reestablish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses—Pioneers, ma'pilim [(Hebrew) immigrants coming to Eretz Israel in defiance of restrictive legislation] and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodore Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and

reaffirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people—the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe—was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by reestablishing in Eretz Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the comity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom- and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

Accordingly, We, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish Community in Eretz Israel and of the Zionist movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British Mandate over Eretz Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel."

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

Appendix Eight: The Nation of Israel, Is It a Sign of the Times?

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.

WE APPEAL—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months—to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream—the redemption of Israel.

Placing our trust in the “Rock of Israel,” we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the Provisional Council of State, on the soil of the homeland, in the city of Tel-Aviv, on this Sabbath Eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).

Signers of the Declaration

David Ben-Gurion

<i>Daniel Auster</i>	<i>Herzl Vardi (Rosenblum)</i>	<i>Aharon Zisling</i>
<i>Mordekhai Bentov</i>	<i>Rachel Cohen</i>	<i>Moshe Kolodny</i>
<i>Yitzchak Ben Zvi</i>	<i>Rabbi Kalman Kahana</i>	<i>Eliezer Kaplan</i>
<i>Eliyahu Berligne</i>	<i>Sa'adia Kobashi</i>	<i>Abraham Katznelson</i>
<i>Fritz Bernstein</i>	<i>Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Levin</i>	<i>Felix Rosenblath</i>
<i>Rabbi Wolf Gold</i>	<i>Meir David Loewenstein</i>	<i>Moshe David Remez</i>
<i>Meir Grabovsky</i>	<i>Zvi Lurie</i>	<i>Berl Repetov</i>
<i>Yitzchak Gruenbaum</i>	<i>Golda Myerson</i>	<i>Mordekhai Shattner</i>
<i>Dr. Abraham Granovsky</i>	<i>Nachum Nir-Rafalkes</i>	<i>Ben Zion Sternberg</i>
<i>Eliyahu Dobkin</i>	<i>Zvi Segal</i>	<i>Behor Shitreet</i>
<i>Meir Vilner-Kovner</i>	<i>Rabbi Yehuda Leib Fishman</i>	<i>Moshe Shapira</i>
<i>Zerach Wahrhaftig</i>	<i>David Zvi Pincas</i>	<i>Moshe Shertok</i>

Text courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Israel

Law of Return, 5710 / 1950¹ – July 5, 1950

Right of aliyah²

1. ***Every Jew has the right to come to this country as an oleh.***³

Oleh's visa

2. (a) Aliyah shall be by oleh's visa.

(b) An oleh's visa shall be granted to every Jew who has expressed his desire to settle in Israel, unless the Minister of Immigration is satisfied that the applicant

(1) is engaged in an activity directed against the Jewish people; or

(2) is likely to endanger public health or the security of the State.

Oleh's certificate

3. (a) A Jew who has come to Israel and subsequent to his arrival has expressed his desire to settle in Israel may, while still in Israel, receive an oleh's certificate.

(b) The restrictions specified in section 2(b) shall apply also to the grant of an oleh's certificate, but a person shall not be regarded as endangering public health on account of an illness contracted after his arrival in Israel.

Residents and persons born in this country

4. Every Jew who has immigrated into this country before the coming into force of this Law, and every Jew who was born in this country, whether before or after the coming into force of this Law, shall be deemed to be a person who has come to this country as an oleh under this Law.

Implementation and regulations

5. The Minister of Immigration is charged with the implementation of this Law and may make regulations as to any matter relating to such implementation and also as to the grant of oleh's visas and oleh's certificates to minors up to the age of 18 years.

David Ben-Gurion,
Prime Minister

Moshe Shapira,
Minister of Immigration

Yosef Sprinzak,
Acting President of the State
Chairman of the Knesset

Text courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Israel

¹ Passed by the Knesset on the 20th Tammuz, 5710 (5th July, 1950) and published in Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 51 of the 21st Tammuz, 5710 (5th July, 1950), p. 159; the Bill and an Explanatory Note were published in Hatzot Chok No. 48 of the 12th Tammuz, 5710 (27th June, 1950), p. 189.

² *Aliyah* means the immigration of Jews to the modern nation of Israel.

³ *Oleh* (plural: *olim*) means a Jew who is immigrating to the modern nation of Israel.

Liberation of the Temple Mount and Western Wall during the Six-Day War – June 7, 1967

*A Hebrew-to-English transcript of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) radio traffic on the morning of June 7, 1967, recorded live as the 55th Paratroopers Brigade liberated the Temple Mount and Western Wall during the Six-Day War, is reproduced below. The following people are featured: **Col. Motta Gur** commanded the 55th (Reserve) Paratroopers Brigade, the primary military unit deployed for the capture of the Temple Mount and Western Wall; **Gen. Uzi Narkiss** commanded the IDF central Region, which included Jerusalem, and was charged with defending against Jordanian aggression; **Commander 89** was unidentified by name; **Yossi Ronen** was an IDF radio reporter; **Rabbi Gen. Shlomo Goren** was the Orthodox Zionist (Ashkenazi) Chief Rabbi of the Israeli army ...*

Colonel Motta Gur [on loudspeaker]: All company commanders, we're sitting right now on the ridge [Mount of Olives] and we're seeing the Old City. Shortly we're going to go in to the Old City of Jerusalem, that all generations have dreamed about. We will be the first to enter the Old City. Eitan's tanks will advance on the left and will enter the Lion's Gate. The final rendezvous will be on the open square [of the Temple Mount] above ...

Sound of applause by the soldiers ...

Yossi Ronen: We are now walking on one of the main streets of Jerusalem towards the Old City. The head of the force is about to enter the Old City ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: There is still shooting from all directions; we're advancing towards the entrance of the Old City ...

Gunfire and sound of running soldiers' footsteps ...

Yelling of commands to soldiers ...

More running soldiers' footsteps ...

Yossi Ronen: The soldiers are keeping a distance of approximately five meters between them ... It's still dangerous to walk around here; there is still sniper shooting here and there ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: We're all told to stop ... we're advancing towards the mountainside ... on our left is the Mount of Olives ... we're now in the Old City opposite the Russian church ... I'm right now lowering my head, we're running next to the mountainside ... We can see the stone walls ... They're still shooting at us ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: Israeli tanks are at the entrance to the Old City, and we're going ahead, through the Lion's Gate. I'm with the first unit to break through into the Old City ... There is a Jordanian bus next to me, totally burnt; it is very hot here ... We're about to enter the Old City itself. We're standing below the Lion's Gate, the Gate is about to come crashing down, probably because of the previous shelling. Soldiers are taking cover next to the palm trees ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: I'm also staying close to one of the trees ... We're getting further and further into the City ...

Gunfire ...

Colonel Motta Gur [on the army wireless]: The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands! ... [see photo on page 10]

Gunfire ...

Colonel Motta Gur [on the army wireless]: All forces, stop firing! This is the David Operations Room. I repeat, all forces, stop firing! Over ...

Commander 89: Commander eight-nine here, is this Motta talking? Over ...
Inaudible response on the army wireless by Motta Gur ...

Gen. Uzi Narkiss: Motta, there isn't anybody like you. You're next to the Mosque of Omar ...

Yossi Ronen: I'm driving fast through the Lion's Gate all the way inside the Old City ...

Command [on the army wireless]: Comb the area, discover the source of the firing. Protect every building, in every way. Do not touch anything, especially in the holy places ...

Lt.-Col. Uzi Eilam blows the Shofar ...

Soldiers are singing 'Jerusalem of Gold' [a patriotic song written by Naomi Shemer in 1967 and introduced at the Israel Song Festival just before the war] ...

Gen. Narkiss: Tell me, where is the Western Wall? How do we get there? ...

Yossi Ronen: I'm walking right now down the steps towards the Western Wall. I'm not a religious man, I never have been, but this is the Western Wall and I'm touching the stones of the Western Wall ...

Soldiers [reciting the 'Shehechianu' blessing]: Baruch ata Hashem, elokein u melech haolam, she-hechianu ve-kiemanu ve-hegianu la-zman ha-zeh. [Translation: BLESSED ART THOU LORD GOD KING OF THE UNIVERSE WHO HAS SUSTAINED US AND KEPT US AND HAS BROUGHT US TO THIS DAY] ...

Rabbi Shlomo Goren: Baruch ata Hashem, menachem tsion u-voneh Yerushalayim. [Translation: BLESSED ARE THOU, WHO COMFORTS ZION AND BUILDS JERUSALEM] ...

Soldiers: Amen! ...

Soldiers sing "HaTiqvah" next to the Western Wall ["HaTiqvah" is Israel's national anthem, see lyrics and comments on next page] ...

Rabbi Goren: We're now going to recite the prayer for the fallen soldiers of this war against all of the enemies of Israel ...

Soldiers weeping ...

Rabbi Goren: El male rahamim, shohen ba-meromim. Hamtse menuha nahona al kanfei hashina, be-maalot kedoshim, giborim ve-tehorim, kezohar harakiya meirim u-mazhirim. Ve-nishmot halalei tsava hagana le-yisrael, she-naflu be-maaraha zot, neged oievei yisrael, ve-shnaflu al kedushat Hashem ha-am ve-ha'arets, ve-shichrur Beit Hamikdash, Har Habayit, Hakotel ha-ma'aravi veyerushalayim ir ha-elokim. Be-gan eden tehe menuhatam. Lahen ba'al ha-rahamim, yastirem beseter knafav le-olamim. Ve-yitsror be-tesror ha-hayim et nishmatam adoshem hu nahlatam, ve-yanuhu be-shalom al mishkavam [soldiers weeping loud]ve-ya'amdu le-goralam le-kets ha-yamim ve-nomar amen! [Translation: MERCIFUL GOD IN HEAVEN, MAY THE HEROES AND THE PURE BE UNDER THY DIVINE WINGS, AMONG THE HOLY AND THE PURE WHO SHINE BRIGHT AS THE SKY, AND THE SOULS OF SOLDIERS OF THE ISRAELI ARMY WHO FELL IN THIS WAR AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL, WHO FELL FOR THEIR LOYALTY TO GOD AND THE LAND OF ISRAEL, WHO FELL FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE TEMPLE, THE TEMPLE MOUNT, THE WESTERN WALL AND JERUSALEM THE CITY OF THE LORD. MAY THEIR PLACE OF REST BE IN PARADISE. MERCIFUL ONE, O KEEP THEIR SOULS FOREVER ALIVE UNDER THY PROTECTIVE WINGS. THE LORD BEING THEIR HERITAGE, MAY THEY REST IN PEACE, FOR THEY SHALT REST AND STAND UP FOR THEIR ALLOTTED PORTION AT THE END OF THE DAYS, AND LET US SAY, AMEN!] ...

Soldiers weeping ...

Rabbi Goren sounds the shofar ...

Sound of gunfire in the background ...

Rabbi Goren [holding Torah scroll]: Le-shana HA-ZOT be-Yerushalayim ha-b'nuya, be-yerushalayim ha-atika! [Translation: THIS YEAR IN A REBUILT JERUSALEM! IN THE JERUSALEM OF OLD!]

HaTiqvah

As long as deep in the heart,
The soul of a Jew yearns,
And towards the East,
An eye looks to Zion,
Our hope is not yet lost,
The hope of two thousand years,
To be a free people in our land,
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.

Hebrew Transliteration

כל עוד בלבב פנימה	Kol 'od balleivav penimah
נפש יהודי הומיה	Nefesh yehudi homiyah,
ולפאתי מזרח קדימה	Ul(e)fa'tei mizrach kadimah,
עין לציון צופיה	'Ayin letziyon tzofiyah;
עוד לא אבדה תקותנו	'Od lo avdah tikvateinu,
התקנה בת שנות אלפים	Hatikvah bat shnot alpayim,
להיות עם חפשי בארצנו	Lihyot 'am chofshi be'artzeinu,
ארץ ציון וירושלים	Eretz-tziyon (v)'Y(e)rushalayim.

HaTiqvah (literally “The Hope”) is the national anthem of Israel. The words were written by Naphtali Herz Imber, a secular Galician Jew from Zolochiv (today in Lviv Oblast, Ukraine), who moved to Palestine in 1882. The music was written by Samuel Cohen, an immigrant from Moldavia, who based the melody on a musical theme in Smetana’s “Moldau.” The anthem’s theme revolves around the nearly 2000-year-old hope of the Jewish people to be a free and sovereign people in *Eretz Israel*, a national dream that would eventually be realized with the founding of the modern nation of Israel. When the State of Israel was established in 1948, HaTiqvah was adopted by most Israelis as their unofficial national anthem. It was made the official national anthem by the Knesset in November, 2004.

Lyrics and comments courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Israel

SCRIPTURE



KING JAMES VERSION

Note that the Jewish Publication Society 1917 version of the Tanakh is not reproduced herein since it has virtually the same wording as the KJV.

BOOK OF DANIEL

CHAPTER 4 AND CHAPTERS 7-12

Chapter 4

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. **2** I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. **3** How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation. **4** I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: **5** I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. **6** Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. **7** Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof. **8** But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying, **9** O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof. **10** Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. **11** The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: **12** The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. **13** I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; **14** He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: **15** Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: **16** Let his heart be changed from man's,

and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. **17** This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. **18** This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee. **19** Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies. **20** The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; **21** Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: **22** It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. **23** And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; **24** This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: **25** That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. **26** And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. **27** Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. **28** All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. **29** At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. **30** The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? **31** While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.

32 And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. **33** The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. **34** And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: **35** And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? **36** At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. **37** Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Chapter 7

1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. **2** Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. **3** And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. **4** The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. **5** And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. **6** After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. **7** After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly: and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. **8** I considered the horns, and, behold, there

came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. **9** I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. **10** A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. **11** I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. **12** As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. **13** I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. **14** And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. **15** I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. **16** I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. **17** These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. **18** But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. **19** Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; **20** And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. **21** I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; **22** Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. **23** Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. **24** And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. **25** And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until

a time and times and the dividing of time. **26** But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. **27** And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. **28** Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Chapter 8

1 In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. **2** And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai. **3** Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. **4** I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. **5** And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. **6** And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had there seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. **7** And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. **8** Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. **9** And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. **10** And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. **11** Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. **12** And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. **13** Then I heard one saint speaking,

and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? **14** And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed [restored (Au)]. **15** And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. **16** And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. **17** So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. **18** Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. **19** And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. **20** The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. **21** And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. **22** Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. **23** And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. **24** And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. **25** And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. **26** And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. **27** And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

Chapter 9

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; **2** In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. **3** And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication,

with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: **4** And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; **5** We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: **6** Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. **7** O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. **8** O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. **9** To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; **10** Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. **11** Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. **12** And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. **13** As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. **14** Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. **15** And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. **16** O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. **17** Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. **18** O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. **19** O Lord, hear; Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

20 And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; **21** Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. **22** And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. **23** At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. **24** Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. **25** Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. **26** And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. **27** And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Chapter 10

1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long; and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. **2** In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. **3** I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. **4** And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; **5** Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: **6** His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. **7** And

I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. **8** Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. **9** Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. **10** And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. **11** And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. **12** Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. **13** But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. **14** Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days. **15** And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. **16** And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. **17** For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. **18** Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, **19** And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me. **20** Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. **21** But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

Chapter 11

1 Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him **2** And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his

strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. **3** And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. **4** And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those. **5** And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. **6** And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times. **7** But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: **8** And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. **9** So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land. **10** But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress. **11** And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. **12** And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it. **13** For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. **14** And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. **15** So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. **16** But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed. **17** He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. **18** After this

shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. **19** Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. **20** Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. **21** And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. **22** And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. **23** And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. **24** He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time. **25** And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. **26** Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. **27** And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. **28** Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land. **29** At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. **30** For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. **31** And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. **32** And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. **33** And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. **34** Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. **35** And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.

36 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. **37** Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. **38** But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. **39** Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. **40** And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. **41** He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. **42** He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. **43** But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. **44** But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. **45** And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Chapter 12

1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. **2** And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. **3** And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. **4** But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. **5** Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. **6** And one said to the man clothed in linen,

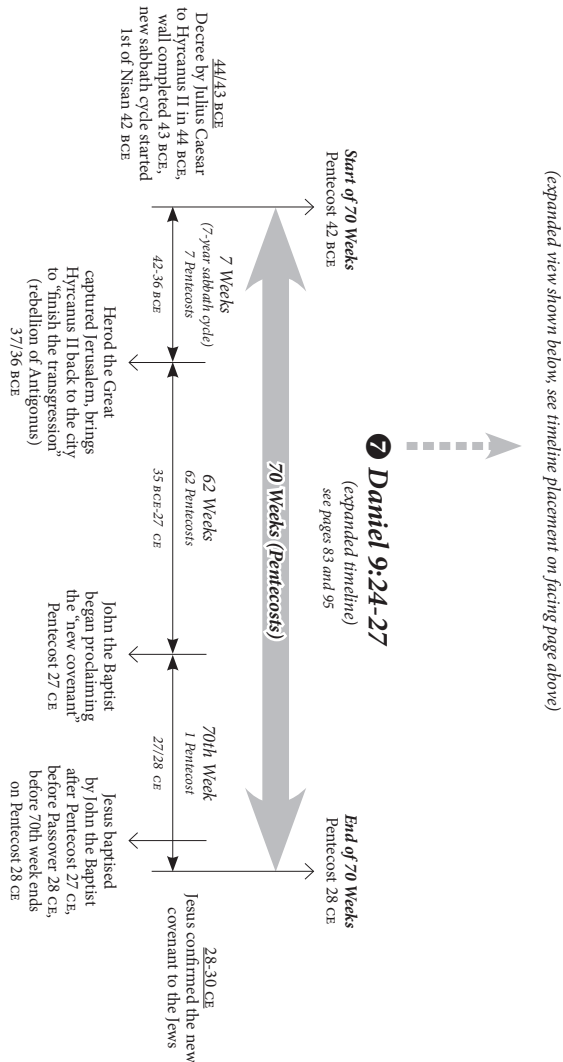
which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? **7** And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. **8** And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? **9** And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. **10** Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. **11** And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. **12** Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. **13** But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.



OVERVIEW OF THE PROPHECIES IN DANIEL

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The timelines on the chart on this page and the opposite page are not drawn to scale, but events on a particular timeline are always shown in their correct chronological sequence in history when read left to right or *vice versa*, and all timelines, except in instances where the need for clarity requires otherwise, are shown in the correct chronological relationship to one another.



Battle of Granicus
Alexander the Great
May/June, 334 BCE

Nebuchadnezzar took
Jehoiachin and Ezekiel
to Babylon 597 BCE

8 Ezekiel 4:5-6
see page 157

Antiochus IV Epiphanes
desecrated Temple
167 BCE

1 Daniel 8:13-14
see page 11

2,300 Evening-Mornings (Passovers)

d. Mohammed,
start of Caliphate
June 8, 632 CE

2 Daniel 12:8-12
see page 27

???

Note that the time period from June 8, 632 CE to
June 7, 1967 is exactly 1,335 years to the day.

Temple Mount liberated
by Israeli paratroopers
on June 7, 1967

430 Days (390 for Israel + 40 for Judah) = 430 Passovers

Third year of
Cyrus the Great
536 BCE

Persian Empire

ACHAEMENID PERSIAN EMPIRE
After Cyrus, "yet three kings" ...

1. Cambyses (530-522)
2. Gaetana (aka Smerdis, 522-521)
3. Darius I the Great (521-486)
- ... "and the fourth shall be" ...
4. Xerxes I (486-465)

Cyrus the Great
conquered Babylon
539 BCE

4 Daniel 7:1-11
see page 45

Greek Period

Alexander the Great

SELEUCID/PTOLEMIES
battle to control Syria-Judea,
Jews caught in between,
ca. 300-164 BCE

Persian Empire

THE FOUR BEASTS
4 Kingdoms of Achaemenid Empire

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th Kingdom

Cyrus the Great (550-530)
Cambyses II (530-522)
Gautama/Smerdis, 522-521
w/Ten Horns
Ten horns are
the 10 kings in the
dynastic line of
Darius the Great
(see list of kings
on page 49)

Greek Period

Alexander
defeats
Darius III
3 times

Seleucid
Empire

1st defeat - Granicus (334)
2nd defeat - Issus (333)
3rd defeat - Gaugamela (331)

Seleucus I Nicator (312-281)
Antiochus IV (175-164/3)

A Time, Times, and a Half [a Time]*
"Time" is defined as 28 years (Passovers).

6 Daniel 11:2-45
see page 61

Hasmonean Period

Judah Maccabee sought
alliance with Rome (before)
Passover in 161 BCE

Maccabean revolt
(167-141 BCE)

Temple rededicated in
164 BCE; religious freedom
restored in 163 BCE

4 Daniel 7:12
"The Period of Prolonged Lives," see page 54



Temple
desecrated
3 years ±

Ancient of
Days

Court of
Judgment
Everlasting
Kingdom
Son of Man
"season" was the
Passover (and
other festivals)
celebrated in the
year 162 BCE

A Season and Time*

Passover
161 BCE

"for a season"

religious liberty
granted to Jews
in 163 BCE;

"Time" = 28 Passovers
that occurred in the years
161 BCE - 67 CE

"and time"

Roman-Byzantine Period

Pompey
63 BCE

Julian the Apostate 363 CE

5 Daniel 7:25
"The Roman Period," see page 51

A Time and Times and the Dividing of Time*
"Time" is defined as 28 years (Passovers).

2nd Persian Period

Jerusalem captured by
Chosroes II in 614 CE,
retaken by Byzantine
Empire in 628 CE

Jerusalem captured for
Islam by Caliph Omar
February, 638 CE

1,335 Days (Day[s] of Atonement)

1290 Days
1290 Years

45 Days
45 Years

League of Nations
passed Palestine Mandate
July 24, 1922

The Roman-Byzantine Period ended in 638 CE
when the Muslims captured Jerusalem. Caliph
Omar visited the Temple Mount and had a
wooden mosque erected there. Later, Al-Aqsa
Mosque (ca. 666-705 CE) and Dome of the Rock
(ca. 685-691 CE) were constructed on the platform.

Priests reported departure of the Shekinah from the
Temple on Pentecost 66 CE; sacrifices to Caesars stopped
and First Jewish War started in July 66 CE; Second
Jewish War started in 132 CE; name of Jerusalem
changed to Aelia Capitolina by Hadrian in 135 BCE.

Passover 67 CE was the
last pilgrimage festival
in Jerusalem. Vespasian
began Jewish-Roman
War, Diaspora begins

7 Daniel 9:24-27
(see expanded view below)

Questions and Comments

If you have questions about anything presented in this book, or if you believe I have made a mistake in calculating the timeline for Bible history or interpreting the prophecies discussed herein, please feel free to contact me. As a slow typist with bad eyesight, I prefer a friendly telephone discussion if possible.

To begin discussion, you should confirm that you have read this book in its entirety. Then, ask a question if you need clarification or, if you want to disagree with anything, focus on the single most critical mistake you believe I have made and present your arguments for why you think I am mistaken. To keep our discussion productive, raise one issue at a time rather than a long list of objections.

Any alternative argument you present about Bible chronology must align precisely with both the biblical text and documented history. There can be no room for equivocation, approximation, or guesswork, since the Bible records actual events that occurred in real time. Therefore, only one unique timeline can be correct.

Be assured, I do not claim infallibility; however, to persuade me you must demonstrate using only the Bible and history where my reasoning is flawed. I will not be convinced by what “Dr. So-and-So” may have written in a commentary or study Bible; I have already read and evaluated hundreds. Nor am I interested in rehashing denominational differences about eschatology.

Please note that I do not research Bible chronology further back than the birth of Abraham, purposefully avoiding debate about the date of Creation, nor do I speculate about dates for future events. Scripture teaches that while we can sense eternity—that time reaches into the past and flows into the future—yet in this life we cannot know the beginning or the end of God’s work (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Finally, if you do not believe the Bible is inerrant in its chronological and historical details, we will have no basis for productive discussion. But if you share this conviction, I welcome a thoughtful and sincere exchange of ideas.

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*You can check out our other books
on Bible prophecy and chronology at
www.prophecysociety.org*