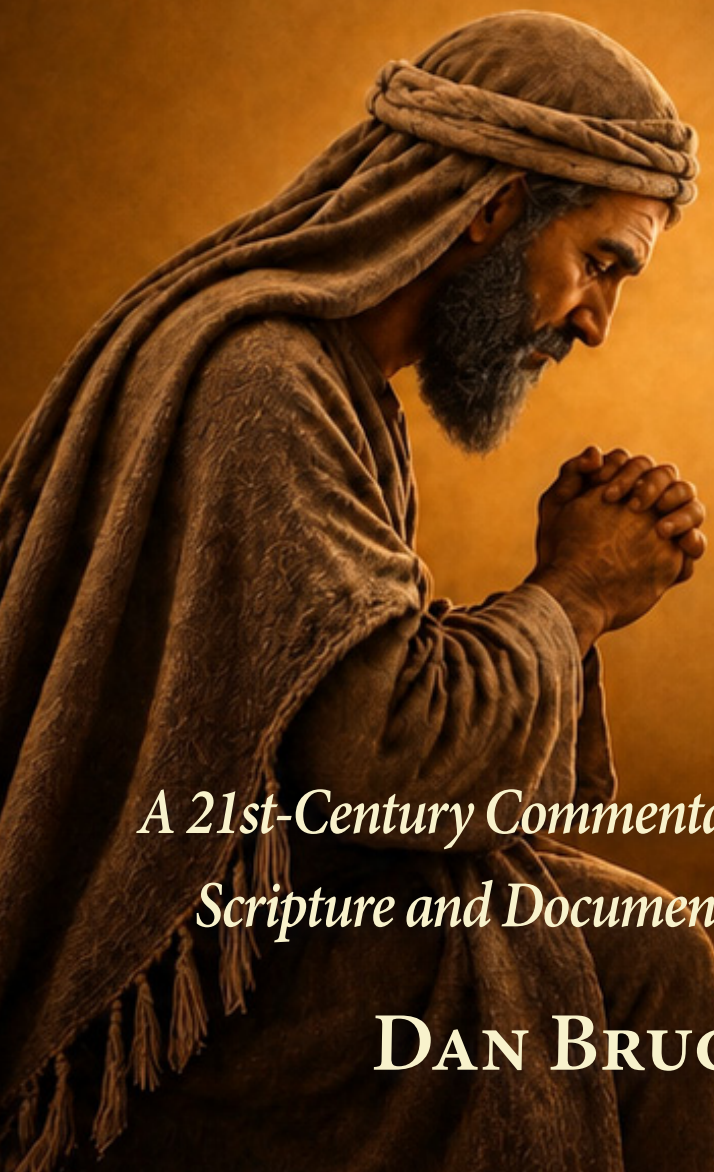
DANIEL

CHAPTERS 7–12



ויאמר לך
דניאל כי־סתמים
וחתמים הדברים
עד־עת קץ

—DANIEL 12:9

A 21st-Century Commentary Faithful to Scripture and Documented History

DAN BRUCE

DANIEL

CHAPTERS 7–12

A 21st-Century Commentary Faithful to Scripture and Documented History

The Expositor's Prayer
"Lord, forgive what is mistaken
and bless what is true."
— Alfred Edersheim

Dan Bruce

The Prophecy Society
Atlanta, Georgia

Daniel Chapters 7–12

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The basic research presented in this book was first published in 2010 under the title Daniel Unsealed. *A limited edition subsequently appeared under the title* Lifting the Veil on the Book of Daniel. *Revised editions under the original title, incorporating corrections and additional research, appeared in 2012, 2016, and 2020. The present book is a new publication, extensively rewritten and reorganized to represent the mature culmination of the author's biblical research into the Danielic prophecies.*



Contents

Preface: How This Exposition Began 1
Introduction: Sealed Until God's Appointed Time 5

Chapter One: Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Restored (Daniel 8:1–27) 11
Chapter Two: What Shall Be the End of These Things? (Daniel 12:8–12) 23
Chapter Three: For a Time, Times, and Half a Time (Daniel 12:5–7) 31
Chapter Four: That Which Shall Not Be Destroyed (Daniel 7:1–28) 39
Chapter Five: What Shall Befall Thy People (Daniel 10:1–12:4) 49
Chapter Six: Seventy Weeks Are Determined (Daniel 9:24a, 25) 63
Chapter Seven: The Anointed One Is Identified (Daniel 9:24) 75
Chapter Eight: He Shall Confirm a Covenant (Daniel 9:26–27) 91

Conclusion: The Wise Shall Understand 101

Appendices

Appendix One: Background Notes on the Book of Daniel 109
Appendix Two: Timekeeping in Ancient Israel 113
Appendix Three: Calendar of Sabbatical and Jubilee Years 123
Appendix Four: Chronology in the Book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 4) 129
Appendix Five: Recognizing How Festivals Mark Time 133
Appendix Six: Daniel and Jesus Agree about 1967 137
Appendix Seven: Transcript from June 7, 1967 139

Scripture

Book of Daniel, Chapters 7–12 (King James Version) 145

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

Reader's Notes

Format for dates: Unless otherwise identified, dates before October 15, 1582 CE, are given in the proleptic Gregorian calendar and are followed by BCE or CE. Dates from October 15, 1582 CE, onward are given in the Gregorian calendar, usually without the CE notation. Proleptic Gregorian equivalents of Hebrew festival dates were calculated using the Gregorian option in Stephen P. Morse's "Jewish Calendar Conversions in One Step," available online at www.stevemorse.org. These dates represent calculated equivalents and should not be understood as independently documented dates of actual observance. The first-century Passover date associated with the crucifixion in 30 CE is based on astronomical reconstruction by Humphreys and Waddington and is identified in the text by its equivalent in the Julian calendar.

Accuracy of dates: Interpreting a time-specific biblical prophecy does not necessarily require knowing the exact day on which every event mentioned in it occurred. An ancient event can be placed within the Jewish calendar by identifying the festivals occurring immediately before and after it. The overall chronology can then be established in either of two ways: (1) both the beginning and ending events can be accurately placed in time by identifying the Jewish festivals that bracket each of them, or (2) one securely identified endpoint allows the other to be located in history by applying the intervening time span specified in the prophecy. Thus, when the biblical text reveals at least two of the three essential chronological parameters—the starting point, the ending point, and the intervening interval—the third can be determined.

Annual accounting: The biblical text designates Nisan as the first month of the ancient Hebrew year, with Passover occurring on 14 Nisan. Because Passover occurred once in each Hebrew year, counting the Passovers between two events provides a reliable measure of the number of years separating them.

Scripture quotations: Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version. Its close relationship to the King James Version, as well as the 1917 Jewish Publication Society translation, makes it especially suitable for this exposition. Its relative consistency in translating Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek terms into English, together with the abundance of compatible KJV study aids and commentaries, provides additional advantages.

Festivals as markers: The Jewish calendar of annual festivals is central to the interpretation of Daniel's sealed prophecies. References to its recurring festival observances are embedded, using veiled language, as chronological markers in the time-specific prophecies. The pattern is summarized below. For a more detailed explanation of the pattern and how it was detected, see Appendix Five, "Recognizing How Festivals Mark Time," on page 133.

- Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread (Pesach/Chag HaMatzot)—A festival period beginning on 14 Nisan, when the Passover lamb was slain late in the day and the meal eaten after sunset at the beginning of 15 Nisan. It commemorates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on 15 Nisan, following the Passover meal (Leviticus 23:5–6). In Daniel chapter 8, Passover is represented by the expression "evening-mornings."
- Feast of Weeks (Shavuot/Pentecost)—Observed at the culmination of a fifty-day count beginning on the day after the Sabbath that occurs within the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It celebrates the wheat harvest and, in later Jewish tradition based on rabbinic interpretation, 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 fifteenth day of the seventh month, Tishri, it is observed for seven days. The seventh day, known as the Great Day (Hoshana Rabbah), includes prayers for salvation that reflect messianic hope. An eighth-day solemn assembly follows the festival (Leviticus 23:34–36). In Daniel chapter 12, the Great Days are represented by the word "days."

Abbreviations

b.	Born in *(with year), e.g., b.* 1922
BCE	Before the Common Era *(same as B.C.)*
ca.	Latin *circa* - about *(with year), e.g.,* ca. 1920
CE	In the Common Era *(same as A.D.)*
d.	Died in *(with year), e.g., d.* 1951
ESV	*English Standard Version*
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
KJV	*King James Version*
p., pp.	Page or pages *(with number or numbers), e.g.,* p. 62
r.	Reigned *(with year or years), e.g., r.* 519–524
UBS	United Bible Societies

Basic Principles of Prophecy 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 precise and complete meaning of the prophets may, in a considerable degree, be attained by prayer, reading, meditation, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture."—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 Israel are the key to all 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 overcloud the whole Word of God."—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 time-specific predictive prophecy:
"A time-specific predictive 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 time-specific prophecies were revealed by God for mankind's edification, their fulfillments will never be arcane, approximate, incomplete, or unverifiable."—Dan Bruce (2009)



Photo: Copyright © State of Israel, Government Press Office. Used by permission.

On the morning of June 7, 1967, during the Six-Day War, an Israel Defense Forces half-track carrying soldiers of the 55th Paratroopers Brigade advanced toward the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount. This book identifies the restoration of the sanctuary foretold in Daniel 8:14 with the restoration of Jewish sovereignty over the Temple Mount that morning. To experience that restoration through the voices of those who participated, read the transcript of live IDF radio communications reproduced on page 139.

How This Exposition Began

My interest in investigating the predictive prophecies in the book of Daniel began during the Yom Kippur War in October 1973. As Egypt and Syria attacked Israel, the conflict focused my attention on the place of the Jewish people in end-time prophecy. That renewed curiosity led me to read about the Six-Day War of 1967 and, in particular, to media reports about the liberation of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount by Israeli troops on the seventh day of June that year.

As I considered those events, I saw a possible correspondence between the return of Jewish control over the Old City of Jerusalem with its Temple Mount and the prophecy recorded in Daniel 8:13–14:

> *"For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?" And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state"* (ESV).

I knew that such an interpretation differed radically from those advanced by generations of respected Jewish and Christian expositors. I was therefore reluctant to believe that I, a young man without academic credentials in biblical studies, had perceived something that had escaped the notice of researchers possessing far greater knowledge of biblical languages and sacred texts.

I recognized that, if the correspondence I was sensing eventually proved valid, it would mean that Daniel's prophecy concerning 2,300 evenings and mornings ("days" in some versions) had reached an observable fulfillment in an event the world had watched on television only six years earlier.

Off and on for the next fourteen years, I put my interpretation and its implications to the test, focusing on the language and symbols of Daniel 8, the prophecy's chronological requirements, related passages of Scripture, and documented history. I repeatedly reconsidered whether I had misinterpreted the biblical language or allowed the prophetic importance assigned to modern Israel in my conservative Christian milieu to influence my reading of the text. In effect, I was looking for a convincing reason to reject my new interpretation.

The testing was not confined to the perceived correspondence between the prophecy and the modern Jerusalem events. I paid special attention to the

starting point identified by the prophecy in verse 6, the meaning of the chronological expression used to denote its time span in verse 14a, the event Daniel said would mark its conclusion in verse 14b, and the historical record of what happened in Jerusalem in 1967. Each prophetic element had to arise from the text rather than be selected simply because it produced an exciting result consistent with the popular eschatological outlook of the time. I also had to distinguish between verifiable evidence that supported the interpretation and circumstances that merely made it seem possible.

By 1987, I had become persuaded that the new interpretation should not be rejected merely because previous interpreters had not proposed it. If the terminating event occurred in 1967, the complete historical evidence needed to identify it had not existed before then. Those writing before 1967 therefore could not have fully recognized or historically verified the correspondence. For me, then as now, the important question was not whether my exegesis aligned with the traditional consensus, but whether its conclusions could be demonstrated from Scripture and documented history and thereby stand as a dependable testimony to God's enduring truth.

In an age when many claim to possess new revelation, it is important to stress that nothing presented in this book is based upon new private revelation or a claim of special spiritual authority on my part. The revelation given to Daniel was complete when he recorded it. Daniel was told to shut up the words and seal the book "until the time of the end" (Daniel 12:4). When he admitted that he did not understand what he had heard, the angel answered that the words were "closed up and sealed" until the appointed time, when "the wise shall understand" (Daniel 12:8–10).

My role in this exposition, therefore, is not that of a prophet revealing new words from God, but that of an expositor-reporter. My task here is to examine what a predictive prophecy says, identify the events and chronological relationships specified by its language, and compare them with documented history. When the correspondence is exact, it may be explained; until then, conclusions must be withheld. This approach neither sets dates for future events nor attempts to predict what will happen next. It seeks to understand what God has already revealed by examining what God has already brought to pass.

This distinction is important in the exposition of biblical prophecy, where speculation can easily be mistaken for interpretation. An exposition may be imaginative, persuasive, or widely accepted without being demonstrable from

the prophetic text. The interpretations proposed in this book do not depend upon speculation about future events. They begin with events that have already occurred and can be examined historically. That methodology is demonstrated in the interpretation of Daniel 8:13–14, where the restoration of Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in 1967 supplied the culminating historical evidence needed to recognize the prophecy's fulfillment.

That correspondence, once identified, provided the starting point for reexamining the chronological framework of Daniel's other time-specific prophecies as well. Until fulfillment supplied the necessary historical evidence, Daniel's words could be copied, translated, studied, and debated while their complete historical meaning remained sealed from understanding. Fulfillment would not change the words of prophecy or add anything to them. It would supply the evidential details by which the intended meaning could be recognized.

My earlier published presentations of this material went straight into the exposition of Daniel 8, without first laying the necessary exegetical groundwork. The present book steps back to ask when and how Daniel says the meanings of his prophecies could become known. The answer establishes the governing method, after which the exposition returns to Daniel 8—the prophecy through which this investigation began. Under that methodology, its chronological expression, starting event, measured time period, and announced result must each be established from Scripture and then tested against documented history.

The interpretations presented in this book have been in my thoughts for more than half a century. The passage of time has not exempted them from examination, nor does longevity prove that they are correct. Likewise, their novelty does not prove them wrong. For each prophecy, strict criteria must be applied: Does the proposed interpretation of the chronological language arise naturally from Scripture? Is the starting event identified by the text rather than selected to produce a desired result? Does the specified time period end with the event Daniel announced? Is that event supported by documented history? Most critically, is the proposed fulfillment exact?

I trust that those questions matter more than the identity, education, or reputation of the person proposing or critiquing the interpretations. Exactitude is demanded not to establish the authority of the interpreter, but because the prophecies claim the authority of God. My personal history as an expositor open to considering novel interpretative approaches explains how the investigation began and why I approached its conclusions cautiously. It does not establish

that those conclusions are correct. The arguments I make must stand or fall on evidence that readers can examine and verify for themselves.

I remain aware of how extraordinary some of the conclusions in this exposition may appear, especially to those who, like me, grew up regarding the traditional expositions of Daniel as almost sacrosanct. I also remain convinced that reluctance to differ from earlier interpreters cannot be allowed to overrule the evidence presented in the prophetic text.

It goes without saying that what God has commanded to be sealed can be unsealed only by God. I believe that God did just that through the events that happened in Jerusalem in 1967. I believe that the fulfillment of the prophecy in Daniel 8—culminating in the restoration of Jewish sovereignty over Old City Jerusalem and the Temple Mount—marked its unsealing and made its full meaning historically accessible. I also believe that the understanding gained from its unsealing provides grounds for reevaluating all of Daniel's other time-specific prophecies, including those traditionally regarded as already interpreted.

As an expositor, I rely heavily on a principle expressed by Jesus himself: "For whoever has, to him more will be given" (Matthew 13:12). Following that principle, this book will first explore the increased understanding made possible by the unsealing of Daniel 8 and then apply what has been learned from that prophecy and its fulfillment to reexamine and, where increased knowledge demands it, reinterpret each of Daniel's other time-specific prophecies.

"O Lord, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, For You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth."—Isaiah 25:1

Sealed Until God's Appointed Time

The book of Daniel contains some of the most engaging passages in the Bible. Its opening chapters recount the experiences of Daniel and his companions in exile in Babylon: their refusal to compromise their faith, the fiery furnace, the handwriting on the wall, and the lions' den. These accounts of faithfulness and divine deliverance are rightly beloved.

Interwoven with these accounts, and dominant in the latter half of the book, are visions of an extraordinary kind. They are not merely theological or thematic. They predict successive kingdoms and identifiable rulers, and they specify measured periods of time. As a collection, they are prophecies that trace the course of Jewish history beyond Daniel's own horizon.

Their specificity makes them extraordinary. Their resistance to interpretation for more than two millennia makes them perplexing. Yet that resistance should not be surprising. The text itself says that Daniel's prophecies would remain sealed by command of God until the appointed time for their understanding: "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase" (Daniel 12:4).

Daniel received the prophetic words, but did not understand their meaning: "Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, 'My lord, what shall be the end of these things?'" (Daniel 12:8). The angel did not reply by providing a full explanation. Instead, he told Daniel that understanding had been reserved for a later time: "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Daniel 12:9).

Daniel was entrusted with the revelation without possessing its complete historical meaning. The prophecies were not hidden from reading, copying, transmission, or study. They were sealed only from full understanding. This divine restriction presents the first question that must be answered before Daniel's prophecies can be interpreted correctly: What did it mean for the prophecies to be sealed, and how was their meaning intended to become known?

A Pattern of Concealment

The sealing of Daniel's prophecies did not occur in isolation. It formed part of a broader biblical pattern in which prophetic revelation could be heard and read

while its intended meaning remained concealed. God told Isaiah that the people would hear without understanding and see without perceiving: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive" (Isaiah 6:9).

The problem was not an absence of revelation. Isaiah would proclaim the word of God, and the people would hear what he said. They would witness events occurring around them but fail to perceive what God was revealing through those events. Isaiah later described this condition through the symbolism of a sealed book: "The whole vision has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed" (Isaiah 29:11). He was also instructed, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (Isaiah 8:16). These passages establish a distinction between possessing prophetic revelation and understanding what that revelation means.

This condition should not be understood as the inability of every Israelite to understand any prophecy. God always preserved those who heard and believed his word, and some prophecies were partially explained before their fulfillment. The concealment was neither universal nor permanent. It operated according to God's purpose and could continue until the appointed time for understanding arrived.

Jesus later applied Isaiah's words to people who heard his teaching and witnessed his works but did not recognize their significance: "Seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand" (Matthew 13:13). The pattern therefore extended beyond Isaiah's generation and did not necessarily end with Jesus' earthly ministry. Revelation could remain present while its complete historical significance awaited events still to come.

Daniel's experience belongs within this larger pattern. He heard the revelation but confessed that he did not understand it. The words were then preserved for later generations, while their complete historical meanings remained concealed until the time appointed by God.

Sealed by Time

Daniel's prophecies were sealed away from immediate understanding in two related ways. First, they were sealed by time. Their complete historical meaning, and ultimately their full spiritual significance, could not be identified until the events they predicted came to pass. Before those events occurred in time, interpreters could study the words, recognize their general subjects, and propose possible applications. They could not, however, verify all the historical persons, actions, and dates to which the prophecies referred.

Jesus confirmed the relationship between prediction and fulfillment: "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe" (John 14:29). The prediction was given beforehand as revelation; the event, occurring later in history, supplied confirming evidence afterward. History did not add anything to the prophetic word. It provided the facts by which the meaning of that word could be identified and tested.

Because Daniel's prophecies describe events occurring at different times, their meanings would not necessarily become understandable all at once. As successive events came to pass, history progressively supplied the evidence required to recognize their fulfillment. Thus, interpretation of Daniel's prophecies should be understood as a progressive process rather than as a single moment in which the meaning of every prophecy suddenly becomes transparent.

This explains why interpretations of Daniel proposed before the predicted events occurred may contain genuine insight without reaching a prophecy's complete historical meaning. Earlier interpreters were not being negligent. They simply could not identify facts that had not yet entered history. They had to work with the evidence available to them. Their conclusions deserve respectful consideration, but decades of acceptance alone cannot establish their correctness.

Since fulfillment supplies the evidence needed to identify the meaning of what has been temporarily sealed, interpretations offered before fulfillment must always remain subject to reexamination. Validity cannot be determined by which exposition has been around the longest or endorsed by the greatest number of scholars. It depends on which interpretation precisely accounts for the words preserved in the sacred text and correctly identifies their fulfillment in history. This approach neither dismisses earlier scholarship nor treats novelty as evidence. It simply recognizes that later generations may possess historical evidence unavailable to earlier generations.

Sealed by Language

Second, the prophecies were sealed by cryptic language related to major elements of Israel's sacred calendar. Their chronological measurements were expressed in terms that preserved their connection with that calendar while concealing their function as units for determining the timing of future events.

In Daniel's prophecies, this means of sealing with veiled language involved the use of Israel's three pilgrimage festivals. God commanded every Israelite male

to appear before him three times each year (Exodus 23:14–17; Deuteronomy 16:16). After the Temple was built, these appearances became pilgrimages to Jerusalem associated with three annual festival periods: Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

During the Babylonian captivity, pilgrimage to Jerusalem and participation in Temple worship were no longer possible. The festivals themselves, however, were not forgotten. They remained part of the sacred life of the exiles. This study proposes that the three pilgrimage festivals were purposefully embedded in Daniel's time-specific prophecies as cryptic chronological markers. Their relationship to the prophecies was preserved in symbolic language sufficiently abbreviated to prevent their chronological function from being immediately recognized:

- Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are represented by Passover night, an overnight observance referred to by the expression "evening-mornings" in Daniel 8.
- The Feast of Weeks is represented by the word "weeks" in Daniel 9.
- The Feast of Tabernacles is represented by its "Great Day," referred to by the word "day" in Daniel 12.

These proposed correspondences cannot simply be assumed. Each must be established from Scripture and tested against the time spans designated in its prophecy. The relevant festival must account for the language used in the prophecy, provide a consistent unit of measurement, and produce a chronological period that begins and ends with the events required by the prophetic text.

The proposed markers must therefore be evaluated under controls supplied by the prophecies themselves. A chronological unit cannot be chosen merely because it produces an attractive correlation. Each applicable starting or ending event must arise naturally from the prophetic text rather than be selected independently of its context in Daniel merely to make a calculation work. Events must also be identifiable in documented history.

The same method must be applied consistently to each prophecy, without changing a unit's meaning or shifting an endpoint when the result becomes inconvenient. If the language does not support the festival identification, if the starting event is arbitrary, or if the calculated period fails to reach the result announced by the prophecy, the interpretation must be abandoned.

The two forms of sealing worked together. Cryptic language preserved the units for measuring time without making their meaning prematurely apparent;

the passage of time supplied the historical evidence needed to identify their fulfillment. The prophecies themselves were neither changed nor supplemented. What had been written from the beginning became understandable when the chronological markers were recognized and the predicted events appeared in history. No new prophet, revelation, or Scripture was required.

The Knowledge That Increases

Daniel 12:4 joins the sealing of the book with the promise that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." The promised increase in knowledge does not refer to general advances in science, transportation, or information, as is often assumed. Instead, it refers to increased knowledge of the predicted events that is necessary for achieving understanding.

That increased knowledge has two components that have allowed progressive understanding over time: First, later readers possess a longer historical record to use for identifying events. They know after the fact which kingdoms rose and fell, which decrees were issued, which sanctuaries were violated or restored, and when particular events occurred. Second, they have ready access to the complete canon of Scripture as the authority against which everything must be tested.

The two components must be used together. Interpretations that are not tested against both the biblical text and documented history may be ingenious but incomplete. Full understanding becomes possible when the parameters identified in Scripture can be tested against documented history.

A Testable Standard

A claim that a prophecy has been unsealed should meet standards strict enough to distinguish fulfillment from approximation or coincidence. Does the proposed interpretation of the chronological language arise naturally from Scripture? Is the starting event identified by the prophetic text rather than selected or assumed to produce a desired result? Does the calculated time period end with the event the prophecy foretold? Is that event supported by documented history? Is it sufficiently distinctive to make accidental correspondence improbable? Most critically, is the correspondence with the sacred text and history exact?

These questions exclude several common shortcuts. A stated time unit may not be substituted for another—for example, a day for a year—merely because the

replacement yields a familiar date. A beginning or ending may not be chosen from several equally possible historical events solely because it produces a desired result. A result identified by the text of the prophecy as occurring in history may not be replaced or augmented by future events that cannot be verified. Approximation can suggest an interpretation, but it cannot demonstrate that a divinely sealed prophecy has been unsealed. In short, the biblical text and documented history must agree exactly for a sealed prophecy to be considered unsealed.

Exactitude is demanded because a predictive prophecy in the Bible claims God as its source. Genuine fulfillment should display a correspondence worthy of that claim. The standard also requires reproducibility. Another reader should be able to begin with the same biblical wording, identify the same starting event from the text, identify and count the same recurring units of time, consult the same historical records, and arrive at the same endpoint.

I recognize that the interpretations presented in this book differ from expositions of Daniel that do not take into account the significance I attribute to the events of 1967. Those differences have been considered throughout the development of this exposition. Readers are asked to examine the validity of its conclusions on the basis of the biblical and historical evidence presented here.

In Chapter One, the first prophecy to be examined will be the time-specific prophecy in Daniel 8, the prophecy that began my personal investigation. The method used to determine whether a proposed fulfillment is valid has already been derived from Daniel's statements about sealing and unsealing and from the biblical relationship between prediction and fulfillment. Daniel 8 must now satisfy that method and do so precisely.

The inquiry will begin with a close reading of Daniel's vision. The identity and sequence of its kingdoms, the meaning of its unusual chronological expression, the event that begins the measured period, and the result announced at its conclusion must all be determined from the text. Only then can the proposed interpretation be compared with documented history.

As Daniel's time-specific prophecies are examined in the chapters that follow, one question will govern the resulting exposition: Has God brought the predicted events to pass in a manner that supplies the evidence needed to understand what Daniel was told to seal until the time of the end?

Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Restored

READ DANIEL 8:1-27 ON PAGE 146 | SEE ❶ ON OVERVIEW CHART

Daniel received the vision recorded in Daniel 8 in the third year of Belshazzar, son and crown prince of Nabonidus, the final king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. He was serving as *de facto* ruler of Babylon during his father's long absence in Arabia. In the vision, the prophet found himself at Shushan in the province of Elam, beside the River Ulai. He saw a ram standing before the river. The ram had two horns, one higher than the other, and the higher horn had come up last. It pushed westward, northward, and southward. Nothing could withstand it, and none could deliver from its power (Daniel 8:1–4).

While Daniel considered what he had seen, a male goat came rapidly from the west. It crossed the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground and had a notable horn between its eyes. The goat ran at the ram with furious power, broke its two horns, cast it to the ground, and trampled it. The goat then became very great, but when it was strong, the great horn was broken. Four notable horns arose in its place, directed toward the four winds of heaven (Daniel 8:5–8).

The biblical text itself explains the ram and goat symbols. "The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king" (Daniel 8:20–21). The text therefore provides its own principal historical identifications. The ram represents the Medo-Persian Empire; the goat represents Greece; and the great horn represents the first king of the united Greek kingdom, Alexander the Great.

The sequence also agrees with documented history. Alexander crossed from Europe into Asia Minor in 334 BCE and first engaged the forces of the Persian Empire at the Granicus River (in modern Turkey). He defeated them again at Issus in 333 BCE and decisively at Gaugamela in 331 BCE. The Persian Empire fell, and Alexander's kingdom expanded with extraordinary speed. After his death in 323 BCE, his dominion was eventually divided among four principal Hellenistic kingdoms, corresponding to the four horns that replaced the great horn.

Out of one of those kingdoms arose the little horn described in verses 9–12. It grew toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land. It exalted itself against the prince of the host, removed the daily sacrifice, and cast down the place of the sanctuary. Verses 23–25 further describe a fierce king who would

destroy the holy people (faithful Jews in Judea), oppose the prince of princes, and finally be broken without human hand. Traditional expositions as well as this one agree that these details identify Antiochus IV Epiphanes, ruler of the Seleucid kingdom from 175 to 164 BCE. His suppression of Judaism, interruption of the sacrifices, and desecration of the Temple produced the Maccabean revolt.

The vision thus moves through a defined sequence: the power of Media and Persia, the Greek attack upon Persia, the rise and division of Alexander's empire, and the oppression of the Jewish people under Antiochus IV. The chronological question in verse 13, "How long will the vision be?" is asked after Daniel has seen that sequence. The cryptic answer provided in verse 14 reveals how long the vision extends in time.

The Question About Duration

In the text, Daniel heard one holy one ask another: "How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?" The answer that followed specifies the time span: "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state" (Daniel 8:13–14; ESV).

Note that the question does not ask only how long the daily sacrifice will be removed, how long the transgression of desolation will continue, or how long Antiochus will oppress the Jewish people. Those events are included because they are prominent elements of the vision, but the controlling subject of the question remains the length of "the vision." The angel's answer therefore gives the duration of the period during which the sanctuary and host will be trampled underfoot by Gentile nations (see Appendix Six on page 137).

This distinction is essential. If the 2,300 units measure only the desecration under Antiochus IV, both events establishing the boundaries of the period of "evening-mornings" must be found within the documented history of his reign. The surviving accounts record his desecration of the Temple and its subsequent rededication, but they do not provide two events within his reign that satisfy both the wording of the question and the exact interval stated in the answer. However, if the 2,300 units measure the chronological span of the entire vision, the count must begin with its first datable action and end with the promised event concerning the sanctuary. The text itself favors the latter reading: the question asks how long the vision and its events will extend, and the answer concludes with the sanctuary.

The vision describes the conditions preceding its first symbolic action. The ram stands before the river, and the goat approaches from the west. The first datable action involving both kingdoms occurs when the goat attacks the ram. Since the angel identifies the goat as Greece and the ram as Media and Persia, the corresponding event is Alexander's first attack upon the Persian Empire. That event took place at the Granicus River in 334 BCE.

Daniel identifies the Ulai as the river beside which he stood in the vision, but the historical river corresponding to the clash between the ram and the goat is not identified by name. It is nevertheless noteworthy that the first military encounter corresponding to that attack also occurred at a river. The battles of Issus and Gaugamela continued Alexander's conquest, but neither was the first action. The sequence of the vision therefore identifies Granicus as the starting event without requiring an event to be selected merely because it produces a desired calculation.

The time span specified in verse 14 also identifies the subject of the concluding event: after 2,300 units, the sanctuary will undergo the change expressed by the Hebrew verb קָדַצ *tsadaq*. The chronological structure is now defined. The starting event is Alexander's first attack upon Persia at Granicus. The ending event concerns the sanctuary. Between them lie 2,300 units described in the Hebrew text as "evening-mornings." The meaning of that expression must now be established.

What Is an Evening-Morning?

Many English versions, such as the KJV and NKJV, render the chronological unit expressed in Daniel 8:14 as "days." The Hebrew text is more specific. It reads רֶקֶב בֶּרֶע, *ʿerev boqer*—literally, "evening-morning." No conjunction appears between the two words. Daniel 8:26 later refers to "the evening and the morning," using a conjunction absent from verse 14. This confirms that Daniel could have included the conjunction had he intended to join the two words in that manner. The construction in verse 14 also differs from the Genesis creation formula, which states, "there was evening, and there was morning," and then explicitly identifies the sequence as a day.

Two traditional interpretations have commonly been proposed. One treats the 2,300 evening-mornings as 2,300 ordinary days. The other associates them with morning and evening sacrifices and divides the total by two, producing 1,150 days. Both interpretations connect the period with the persecution under Antiochus IV and the Maccabean rededication of the Temple.

Neither interpretation satisfies the chronological requirements of the passage. The interval between the documented desecration by Antiochus IV and the rededication of the Temple is not 1,150 days. Nor has any documented event been identified that occurred exactly 2,300 days before the rededication and would begin the period described by the vision. The proposed traditional periods must therefore be supported by approximation or by an assumed starting event for which no historical record exists.

Such approximation cannot establish a verifiable time-specific interpretation. If a prophecy specifies a chronological unit, a starting event, and an ending event, the interpretation must account for all three. Remember: Exactitude is not demanded to make the interpretation impressive; it is demanded because the prophecy claims God as its source.

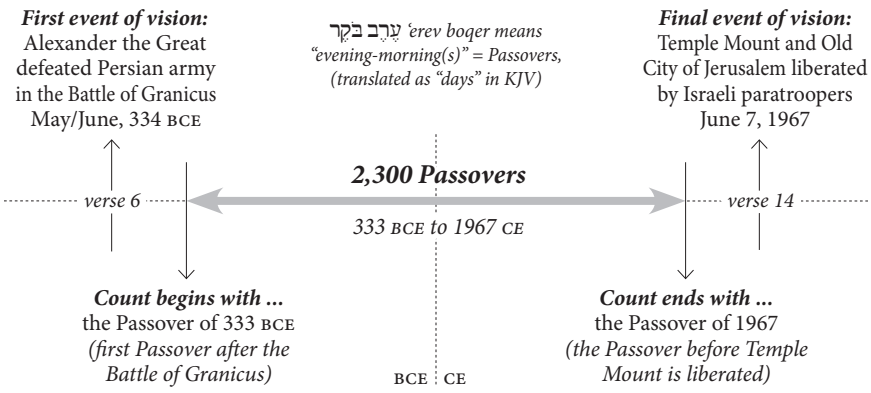
The wording itself also weighs against the sacrificial interpretation. Scripture normally refers to the daily offerings in the order "morning and evening," not "evening-morning" (1 Chronicles 16:40; 2 Chronicles 2:4; 13:11; 31:3; Ezra 3:3). Daniel 8:14 reverses that order and does not mention sacrifices. The phrase "evening-mornings" should not be reversed and converted into two daily offerings based merely on the mention of sacrifices in the preceding question.

The closest biblical parallels to the word order in Daniel 8:14 occur in Exodus 27:21 and Leviticus 24:3. In both passages, Aaron and his sons are commanded to tend the lamp in the Tabernacle "from evening until morning." The expression describes one continuous overnight period. These biblical parallels therefore indicate that an evening-morning is a night extending from evening until morning.

A count of 2,300 ordinary nights would span only about six years and four months. Counted from Granicus, such a period would end centuries before the oppression under Antiochus IV. Counted backward from the Maccabean rededication of the sanctuary, it would not reach the starting event identified by the vision. The ordinary-night interpretation therefore cannot connect the vision's starting and ending events. The expression must refer to a particular evening-to-morning observance that recurs across a longer span.

The Passover Night

Israel's sacred calendar identifies that observance. Exodus 12 commands that the Passover lamb be killed in the evening, eaten during the night, and that none of it remain until morning (Exodus 12:6–10). The same passage commands Israel



to keep the event as a memorial throughout its generations (verse 14). Passover is therefore a recurring evening-morning observance established by Scripture itself.

The identification does not rest merely on the fact that Passover occurs at night. It rests on the combination of three characteristics required by the prophecy. The unit is described as an "evening-morning"; Passover extends from evening until morning; and it recurs once each year as a commanded memorial. Passover is not itself a year. Rather, because it occurs annually, each successive Passover marks the passage of another year in a long chronological count.

This distinction matters. The interpretation does not apply a general day-for-year rule, nor does it declare that every prophetic night represents a year. Daniel's expression names a recurring sacred observance. Its annual recurrence supplies the interval. Thus, 2,300 evening-mornings signify 2,300 Passover nights.

The cryptic description of Passover as an "evening-morning" agrees with the means of sealing described in the Introduction. The chronological expression preserved its connection with Israel's sacred calendar while concealing its function in the prophecy. Readers could know the words "evening-morning," know the commands concerning Passover, and still not recognize that the expression supplied the unit by which the duration of the vision was measured.

The interpretation must now satisfy the remaining controls. The first Passover must occur after the starting event identified by the vision. The 2,300th must be followed by an event involving the sanctuary that fulfills verse 14.

Plutarch of Chaeronea places the Battle of Granicus in the Macedonian month of Daesius (*Life of Alexander* 16.1–3). The battle is commonly dated to May 334 BCE, after Passover had occurred that spring. The Passover of 334 BCE must therefore

be excluded from the count because it preceded the vision's first action. The first qualifying "evening-morning" was the following Passover, observed in 333 BCE.

Table 1.1 on the facing page shows how the 2,300 Passovers specified in the text are counted. It begins with the first Passover after the first datable action in the vision. Nor is 1967 treated as the endpoint merely because it is important in modern history. The ending event must involve the sanctuary and must correspond to the result announced in verse 14.

The Sanctuary in 1967

The Six-Day War began on June 5, 1967, several weeks after the 2,300th Passover. On the morning of June 7, soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces' 55th Paratroopers Brigade advanced through the Lions' Gate into the Old City of Jerusalem. Within the hour, Israeli forces had taken the Old City, the Western Wall, and the Temple Mount.

Before the advance, the brigade commander, Colonel Mordechai "Motta" Gur, told his men: "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."[1] Five days later, while the brigade assembled on the Temple Mount, Gur described what their victory had accomplished: "You have been privileged to restore to the people of Israel their capital and their sanctuary."[2] Gur's words do not prove the interpretation, of course; the biblical text and the chronology must do that. His words are historically important because the commander of the brigade that captured the Temple Mount identified it as Israel's sanctuary. The event occurred after the 2,300th Passover and involved the precise subject named at the conclusion of the prophecy.

The Temple Mount had been outside Jewish sovereignty for almost two thousand years. During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Jordan gained control of the Old City, including the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, and retained it after the 1949 armistice. The events of June 7, 1967, restored the site to Jewish sovereignty. Israel subsequently left the administration of the Islamic holy sites on the Temple Mount in the hands of the Waqf but retained governing

[1] Mordechai Gur, *The Battle for Jerusalem* (New York: Popular Library, 1974), 354.
[2] Amos Elon, *Jerusalem: City of Mirrors* (London: Flamingo, 1996), 91.

Table 1.1 – How to Count the 2,300 Passovers

Passover-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 zero when going from BCE to CE, so the count in the ten-year transition decade from 4 BCE to 6 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.*

authority over access and security. The prophecy does not say that a Temple will immediately be rebuilt or that sacrificial worship will resume. Its stated result must be determined by the Hebrew verb applied to the sanctuary.

Daniel's Definition of Sanctuary

In Daniel, the term "sanctuary" does not refer only to the Temple building itself. Daniel 8:11 uses the Hebrew term מִקְדָּשׁ *miqdash* for the sanctuary and speaks of "the place of his sanctuary." Verses 13–14 use *qodesh*, meaning that which is holy or the holy place. Within the same context, these terms associate the sanctuary with its place. Elsewhere Daniel associates the sanctuary with Jerusalem and God's holy mountain (Daniel 9:16–17, 20; 11:31). His usage can therefore encompass the Temple and its courts and, more broadly, the Temple Mount platform on which they stood. The restoration of the Old City in 1967 returned Jerusalem's sacred center—the Temple Mount—to Jewish sovereignty.

The final clause of Daniel 8:14 contains the verb *tsadaq*. The King James Version translates it as "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," while the same verse in the 1917 Jewish Publication Society translation reads, "then shall the sanctuary be victorious." Other translations use "restored," "restored to its rightful state," "justified," or "have its rights restored." This range reflects the verb's sense of being vindicated, justified, or restored to its rightful status—the status assigned to the sanctuary in Scripture.

Context must determine which aspect is intended. Jesus later foretold that "Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). Gentile domination of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, would therefore persist beyond his time but would not be permanent. Because Jesus spoke nearly two centuries after the Maccabean rededication, that event did not end the Gentile trampling of Jerusalem. The restoration of the sanctuary to Jewish sovereignty in 1967 accords with the outcome described in Daniel 8:14, and the prediction extends no further than that result.

Nothing in the verse requires that its fulfillment result in a new Temple being built in Jerusalem or that the resumption of sacrifices be initiated. It announces only that the sanctuary will be made victorious, vindicated, or restored to its rightful standing. The Temple Mount was returned to the sovereignty of the Jewish people, to whom the sanctuary had been entrusted in Scripture. Subsequent administrative concessions did not reverse that transfer. Israel

retained the authority to make those concessions and has continued to exercise governing authority over the site.

Fulfillment Has Unsealed the Prophecy

Daniel was given the prophetic words by an angel of God. History would subsequently supply the increased knowledge needed for interpretation. Complete understanding would come by comparing the vision of the ram, the goat, the sanctuary, and the 2,300 evening-mornings to documented history.

Each element required to understand the prophecy in Daniel 8 has now been identified. The goat's attack upon the ram marks Alexander's first assault on Persia at Granicus in 334 BCE. The first Passover after that event occurred in 333 BCE. The 2,300th Passover occurred on April 25, 1967, and the Temple Mount was restored to Jewish sovereignty six weeks later, well before the next Passover. The time unit arises from the Hebrew expression and Scripture's command that Passover be observed annually; the starting event arises from the angel's identification of the kingdoms and the sequence of their conflict; and the ending event arises from the sanctuary clause. Documented history supplies exact corresponding events in the order given.

Before June 7, 1967, the concluding event of Daniel 8 had not occurred in history. Interpreters writing before that date, and later interpreters who did not take the event into account, could study the Hebrew words, compare translations, reconstruct the reign of Antiochus IV, and calculate proposed periods. But they could not identify an exact fulfillment that history had not yet supplied. The obstacle was not necessarily insufficient learning or diligence. The prophecy remained sealed by the absence of its concluding event.

The restoration of the Old City and Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty supplied the missing historical result. With the entire sequence now present in history, the chronological expression, starting event, and concluding event could be brought together and tested. What had previously been cryptic could now be understood through fulfillment.

Together, these elements form one continuous historical sequence. The resulting understanding is the increased knowledge promised in Daniel 12:4. It is not new revelation and does not depend upon private authority. Everything needed to test the interpretation is publicly available in Daniel's words, the Passover command in Scripture, and documented history. The interpretation

stands or falls by whether the prophetic text and documented history correspond. In Daniel 8, they correspond exactly.

The time-specific prophecy in Daniel 8 can now be understood in a way that was impossible before its concluding event occurred. The prophecy extends from Alexander's first attack upon Persia to the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty in 1967. God sealed the prophecy through cryptic chronological language and descriptions of events whose meaning remained veiled while they were still future. It was unsealed when those events occurred in history and supplied the context needed to understand it.

This result also confirms the method set out in the Introduction for testing Daniel's prophecies. A sealed, time-specific prophecy can be fully understood only after its fulfillment has occurred. Its meaning must then be derived without altering its words or imposing an arbitrary chronological scheme upon it.

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

559 BCE	— Cyrus the Great began his reign in Anshan.
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; the Achaemenid Persian Empire continued until its conquest by Alexander the Great.
336 BCE	— *(verse 20)* Darius III Codomannus became king of the Achaemenid Persian Empire*; (verse 21)* Alexander became king of Macedonia and assumed leadership of the united Greek forces.
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 a statue of Zeus atop the 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.
164 BCE	— *(verse 25b)* Antiochus IV Epiphanes died in autumn.
1967 CE	— *(verse 14)* Passover #2,300 in the count was observed on April 24-25. Israeli army paratroopers liberated the Temple Mount and restored it to Jewish sovereignty on June 7 during the Six-Day War.

Sovereignty/Control 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 surrounded Jerusalem in 597 BCE and destroyed the city and Temple in 586 BCE, carrying many of its inhabitants into exile. Cyrus the Great subsequently permitted the Jews to return and rebuild the Temple. Hellenistic and Hasmonean periods followed, and then Roman rule. The Romans destroyed Herod's Temple in 70 CE, and Hadrian subsequently refounded Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina. Byzantine rule gave way to successive Islamic caliphates and dynasties, followed by Crusader, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman rule. Britain occupied Jerusalem in 1917 and administered it until 1948. In 1947, the United Nations recommended the partition of Palestine, with Jerusalem placed under international administration. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs did not. Following the 1948 war, Israel controlled West Jerusalem while Jordan controlled East Jerusalem, including the Old City. In 1967, Israel captured East Jerusalem and placed the entire city under unified Israeli administration. Today, Jerusalem serves as Israel's capital and the spiritual center of world Jewry.

Jebusites until 1,038 BCE
Kingdom of Israel 1,038-961 BCE
Kingdom of Judah 961-597 BCE
Neo-Babylonian Empire 597-539 BCE
Achaemenid Persian Empire 539-333 BCE
Empire of Alexander the Great 333-312 BCE
Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt 312-198 BCE
Seleucid Empire 198-164 BCE
Hasmoneans-Kingdom of Israel 164-63 BCE
Roman Ethnarchy of Judea 63-40 BCE
Arsacid Parthian Empire 40-36 BCE
Roman Empire 36 BCE-66 CE
Jewish rebels 66-70 CE
Roman-Byzantine Empire 70-614 CE
Sassanid Persian Empire 614-628 CE
Byzantine Empire 628-638 CE
Umayyad-Abbasid Caliphate 638-973 CE
Fatimids-Seljuks-Arab Bedouins 973-1099 CE
Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem 1099-1187 CE
Ayyubid Caliphate 1187-1229 CE
Sixth Crusaders-Muslims 1229-1244 CE
Tatars-Egyptians-Ayyubids 1244-1260 CE
Mongol Empire April 1260 CE (disputed)
Mamluk Sultanate 1260-1517 CE
Ottoman Empire 1517-1625 CE
Muhammad ibn Faroukh 1625-1627 CE
Ottoman Empire 1627-1703 CE
Naqib al-ashraf 1703-1705 CE
Ottoman Empire 1705-1825 CE
Jerusalemite Muslims 1825-1826 CE
Ottoman Empire 1826-1831 CE
Egyptians-Muhammad Ali 1831-1840 CE
Ottoman Empire 1840-1917 CE
British Empire 1917-1948 CE
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 1948-1967 CE
State of Israel 1967 CE to present

Above list based in part on Eric H. Cline, Jerusalem Besieged (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

What Shall Be the End of These Things?

READ DANIEL 12:8-12 ON PAGE 154 | SEE ❷ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The last words of prophecy revealed in Babylon left Daniel with questions. He wrote: "Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, 'My lord, what shall be the end of these things?' And he said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end'" (Daniel 12:8–9).

The angel's answer did not explain the prophecy to Daniel. Instead, it confirmed that its meaning was being withheld for a time. The words were to remain closed and sealed until the time of the end. The angel then supplied two chronological statements: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days" (Daniel 12:11–12).

These verses specify periods of 1,290 and 1,335 "days," but they do not immediately disclose how those spans should be applied to history. The events associated with them must be identified, the meaning of the chronological unit must be determined, and the relationship between the two numbers must be established. The prophecy also contains an important restriction: its complete meaning would not become knowable until the time of the end.

Chapter One identified the restoration of the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty in 1967 as the concluding event of Daniel 8. That fulfillment supplied the historical event necessary to unseal the 2,300 evening-mornings. It also provides an endpoint from which the final prophecy in Daniel 12 can be examined. If the words were to remain sealed until the time of the end, their meaning should become historically recognizable only when that time had arrived.

Chronological Limits Supplied by the Text

Daniel's question concerns "the end of these things"—referring to the sequence of events described in the vision preceding chapter 12, particularly those recorded in chapter 11. The prophecy therefore continues that sequence rather than introducing an unrelated chronology without context. Daniel 11:31 refers to forces that would "take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation." Daniel 12:11 returns to the same language when

introducing the 1,290 days. Whatever historical application is proposed must account for that connection.

The desecration of the Temple by Antiochus IV in 167 BCE supplies the earliest clearly datable occurrence of the language used in Daniel 11:31. The count of "days" in Daniel 12 must therefore concern developments no earlier than that event. This does not by itself establish the precise starting point of the 1,290 days, but it prevents the count from being detached from the historical sequence described in the preceding chapter.

The angel's statement in Daniel 12:9 supplies the other chronological limit. The words were closed and sealed "till the time of the end." The prophecy could not have been fully understood while its decisive historical events remained in the future. Its endpoint, or at least the event that made the endpoint identifiable, must therefore belong to the time when the sealed meaning became accessible.

These two controls establish the field of inquiry. The prophecy must remain connected to the events described in Daniel 11, and its full meaning must become recognizable at the time of the end. They do not permit an interpreter to select any attractive pair of dates separated by 1,290 or 1,335 years. Both the chronological unit and the historical events must arise from the prophecy's own language and sequence.

What Do the "Days" Represent?

The Hebrew word translated "days" is יוֹם *yom*, the ordinary word for a day. A literal count of 1,290 or 1,335 twenty-four-hour days does not reach the historical period in which this exposition locates the time of the end. The possibility that "days" functions as a cryptic annual marker must therefore be tested from the prophetic language and resulting chronology.

The interpretation of Daniel 8 revealed that "evening-morning" denoted the annually recurring Passover night. One Passover night therefore marked the passage of one year in the long count of 2,300 evening-mornings. The unit was not created by imposing a general day-for-year rule upon the passage. It was supplied by the annual recurrence of the sacred festival embedded in the prophecy's language.

This is an instance in which understanding gained from one unsealed prophecy provides a basis for understanding another. The identification of evening-morning in Daniel 8 with Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the first of Israel's three pilgrimage festivals, establishes the possibility that

Daniel may elsewhere refer indirectly to an annually recurring sacred festival as part of the sealing. That precedent raises the question of whether the "days" in Daniel 12 might function in the same cryptic way.

One possible referent is Hoshana Rabbah, the "Great Day" that brings the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles to its culmination. It occurs on the twenty-first day of Tishri. In later Jewish tradition, building on earlier practices, it came to be regarded as the conclusion of the season of judgment that began with the Feast of Trumpets and continued through the Day of Atonement. The judgment sealed on the Day of Atonement was understood to be finally delivered or executed on Hoshana Rabbah. That association is especially appropriate in a prophecy whose words and meaning were to remain sealed until the time of the end.

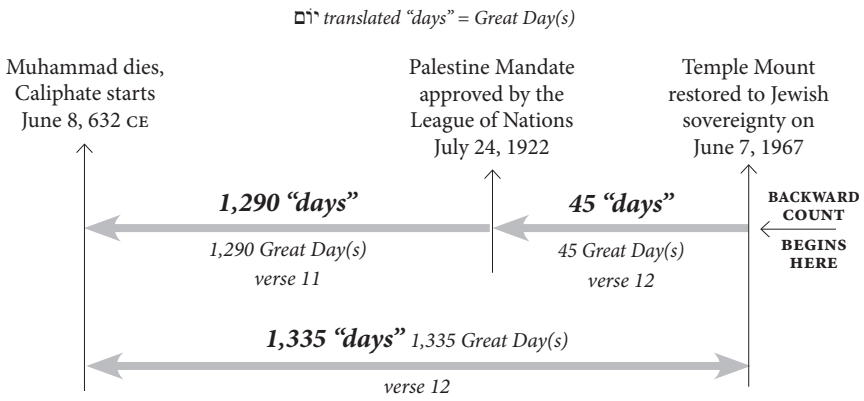
The word "days" in Daniel 12 can therefore be tested as a reference to these annually recurring Great Days. On this interpretation, 1,290 days represent 1,290 Great Days, and 1,335 days represent 1,335 Great Days. Each annual occurrence marks one year in the chronological count, just as each evening-morning in Daniel 8 marked one annual Passover. However, this identification cannot be established by resemblance and precedent alone. It must produce a continuous count whose events agree with the prophecy's subject, sequence, and stated result. If it does not, it must be rejected.

The Relationship Between the Two Periods

The 1,290 and 1,335 days are not best understood as two unrelated periods. The blessing in verse 12 belongs to the person who continues beyond the 1,290 days and reaches the 1,335th day. The longer period of 1,335 days therefore includes the shorter period of 1,290 days and extends the prophecy's time span forty-five days beyond it.

The prophecy consequently identifies one continuous period of 1,335 annual Great Days, with an intermediate point forty-five Great Days before its conclusion. The two figures require three historically meaningful points: the beginning of the 1,290 Great Days, the end of that period, and the beginning and end of the additional forty-five Great Days.

Daniel 12 does not disclose its endpoint as plainly as Daniel 8 describes its starting point, the goat's attack upon the ram. In light of the understanding gained from Daniel 8, the restoration of Jerusalem's Old City and the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty on June 7, 1967, is the only event thus far identified



in Daniel that both belongs to the time of the end and directly reverses Gentile domination of Jerusalem and its sanctuary.

That event provides a testable endpoint for the Daniel 12 prophecy. The procedure is not to declare beforehand that the count must terminate in 1967. It is to ask whether counting annual Great Days backward from the last such observance before June 7, 1967, produces events that satisfy the language and historical subject of the prophecy.

Counting Backward from 1967

Hoshana Rabbah in 1967 occurred after the liberation of the Temple Mount on June 7. Thus, the first Great Day included in a backward count is the preceding observance, which occurred in 1966.

Counting inclusively backward through forty-five annual Great Days, beginning with the Great Day in 1966, reaches the Great Day in 1922. The intermediate event must therefore have occurred after the preceding Great Day in 1921 and no later than the Great Day in 1922. That festival-to-festival interval defines a one-year window derived from the count. Continuing backward, the first of the preceding 1,290 Great Days is the observance in 1921. Counting inclusively through those annual observances reaches the Great Day in 632 CE. The beginning event must therefore fall within the interval bounded by the Great Days observed in 631 and 632 CE.

The arithmetic is simple. From 632 to 1922 is 1,290 years, and from 1922 to 1967 is forty-five years. From 632 to 1967 is 1,335 years. The question is whether

Table 2.1 – How to Count the 45 Great 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 1939 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 Great 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 *see above*	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	- - -

events within the three festival-bounded intervals form a historical sequence concerning the Jewish people, Jerusalem's Old City, and the Temple Mount.

Back to the Intermediate Event

The forty-five-year portion of the prophecy begins with an event that occurred during the year bounded by the Great Days of 1921 and 1922. Within that interval, the League of Nations approved the Mandate for Palestine on July 24, 1922 (League of Nations, *Mandate for Palestine*, preamble, July 24, 1922).

The Mandate incorporated the Balfour Declaration of 1917, in which the British government had expressed its support for establishing a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. For the first time since the Roman era, international recognition for the reestablishment of a Jewish national home in the historic homeland of the Jewish people was made official. The Mandate recognized "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine" and "the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country." It also made Britain responsible for placing the country under conditions that would secure the establishment of that national home.

The Mandate did not create the State of Israel, nor did it restore Jerusalem or the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty. It gave international legal recognition to a process that led toward the reestablishment of a Jewish national home in the land. That process reached a decisive stage when Israel declared independence on May 14, 1948. The first Arab–Israeli War followed immediately, ending with a series of armistice agreements in 1949 that halted the fighting and fixed temporary cease-fire lines between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Jerusalem's Old City and Temple Mount remained under Jordanian control.

The event in 1922 therefore occupies the intermediate position required by the prophecy. It did not complete the restoration. It established the internationally authorized framework within which Jewish national restoration proceeded. After forty-five additional Great Days, the historical process reached Jerusalem and the sanctuary in 1967—the places that occupy the central position in Daniel's restoration prophecies.

Back to the Beginning Event

Continuing backward from the intermediate event in 1922, a count of 1,290 Great Days reaches the year 632 CE. The pertinent event must therefore fall

between the Great Days of 631 and 632 and involve a historical development affecting the status of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

At this point, another thread in religious history enters the account. On June 8, 632, Muhammad died in Medina. The chronological importance of his death lies not in the event itself but in the events that followed. Abu Bakr became the first caliph, inaugurating a new phase in the expansion of Islam that would challenge both Christianity and Judaism. Within six years, the armies of Islam under Caliph Umar took Jerusalem from Byzantine rule. That conquest inaugurated the long period of Islamic rule over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

The wording of Daniel 12:11 may initially appear to indicate that the 1,290 and 1,335 "days" begin at the moment when the daily sacrifice was taken away and the abomination of desolation was set up. The desolation of the sanctuary was not confined to one event. It extended over a long span of Jewish history. The process began with the desecration under Antiochus, continued through the Roman destruction of the Temple and the ensuing Gentile domination of the Temple Mount, and entered its final phase with the rise of the Islamic caliphate.

The chronological idea in verses 11–12 may therefore be expressed by this paraphrase: "And following the period of desolation marked by the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the setting up of the abomination of desolation, there shall be a further period of desolation extending through 1,290 days to the 1,335th day."

Thus, the point from which the "days" are counted should not be understood as the moment when the sacrifices were initially removed, but as the beginning of the final phase of the sanctuary's continuing desolation foretold in Daniel 9:27. That final phase of Gentile domination began with the caliphate in 632, reached Jerusalem in 638, and eventually placed desecrating Islamic shrines upon the Temple Mount. The site remained outside Jewish sovereignty under successive Islamic and other Gentile governments until June 7, 1967. The event found by counting backward from that identifiable endpoint thus began the historical succession through which Islamic sovereignty over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount was established—a dominion reversed by the concluding event.

A Continuous Historical Sequence

The three events identified by the count of Great Days are not isolated dates joined only by arithmetic. They form a continuous history of Jerusalem, the

Jewish people, and the sanctuary. The death of Muhammad in 632 marked the beginning of the caliphal succession whose expansion brought Jerusalem and the Temple Mount under Islamic rule. The League of Nations Mandate in 1922 gave international recognition to the reconstitution of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The liberation of the Old City and Temple Mount in 1967 restored the sanctuary area to Jewish sovereignty.

The intervals between those events agree with the prophecy's two numbers. The first development extends through 1,290 annual Great Days from the establishment of the Muslim caliphate to the Mandate. The second extends through forty-five additional Great Days to the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty. Together they comprise the 1,335 Great Days of Daniel 12:12.

The result also explains why the prophecy remained sealed for so long. Before 1967, the concluding event had not occurred. No interpreter could begin with the restoration of the sanctuary area to Jewish sovereignty, count backward through the Mandate, and identify the historical power whose dominion over Jerusalem was brought to an end. The words were present, and the history was accumulating, but the completed sequence did not yet exist.

Once the Temple Mount was restored to Jewish sovereignty, the sequence became historically accessible. The time unit represented by the abbreviated term "days," the relationship between 1,290 and 1,335 days, the intermediate event in 1922, the beginning event in 632, and the concluding event in 1967 could then be tested together. Each element depends upon the others, and all concern the same prophetic subject.

At the beginning of the chapter, Daniel asked, "What shall be the end of these things?" The answer was not given to him in an explanation. It was sealed away from his understanding, reserved within the progression of history until the time of the end became identifiable through the fulfillment of Daniel 8. The completed events now supply the answer: the long Gentile rule over Jerusalem and its sanctuary would eventually end with the return of the Old City and Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty.

For a Time, Times, and Half a Time

READ DANIEL 12:5-7 ON PAGE 154 | SEE ❸ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The twelfth chapter of Daniel contains two related time-specific prophecies. Daniel 12:8–12 was examined in Chapter Two. It extended the prophetic timeline from the advent of the caliphate following the death of Muhammad in 632 CE to the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty in 1967. That prophecy is preceded in the text by Daniel 12:5–7, which says:

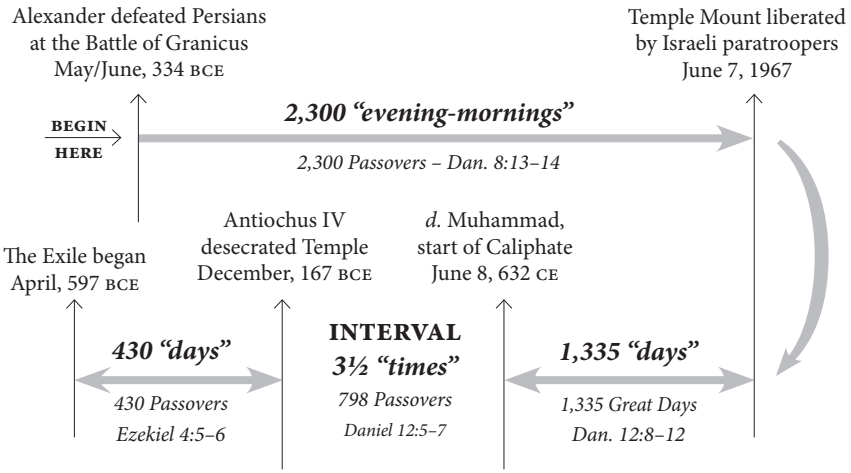
> *Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.* (Daniel 12:5–7)

In the passage above, the question is again, "How long?" The duration is expressed by the enigmatic phrase "a time, times, and half a time." That phrase denotes three and a half units called a "time" arranged in this way: one time, two times, and half a time. What remains unexplained is the duration of the unit specified in that phrase. Daniel does not say how many ordinary days, years, or other chronological units constitute a "time."

An Interval Appears

The exposition of the prophecies in Chapters One and Two established endpoints for those prophecies that can be used to identify the timeline of this chapter's prophecy when combined with a related timeline revealed by the prophet Ezekiel, Daniel's contemporary during the Exile. From the combined chronological information in the Daniel and Ezekiel prophecies, the starting point of the "3½ times" time span can be determined.

The relevant prophecy in Ezekiel 4:5–6 assigns a period of 390 days to Israel and forty days to Judah, producing a total timeline of 430 prophetic days. In this case, Scripture explicitly defines the year-day relationship. The prophecy therefore encompasses a span of 430 years of Jewish history.



Ezekiel dates his prophecies from the captivity of King Jehoiachin, making that event the starting point for the 430 years. Ezekiel 40:1 equates the twenty-fifth year of that captivity with the fourteenth year after Jerusalem was destroyed. Counting the Passovers identified by those two statements places the first Passover of Jehoiachin's captivity in Babylon in 596 BCE, following departure from Jerusalem after Passover in 597 BCE (see Table 3.1 on the facing page).

Counting 430 annual Passovers from the Passover of 596 BCE places the final observance in the spring of 167 BCE. Antiochus IV desecrated the Temple that December, bringing the period of 430 Passovers to the closing event Daniel describes as the taking away of the daily sacrifices (Daniel 8:11–13; 11:31; see the detailed exposition of Ezekiel's prophecy in Appendix Four, "Chronology in the Book of Ezekiel," on page 129).

Recall that the 1,335 Great Days examined in Chapter Two began with the Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles in 632 CE, the first Great Day after the founding of the Muslim caliphate, and ended with the Great Day in 1966. When that timeline and the Ezekiel timeline are plotted together to scale on a single graph, their relationship becomes immediately visible. The combined timeline reveals an interval extending from the desecration of the Temple in 167 BCE to the beginning of the caliphate in 632 CE (see diagram above).

Now notice that in Daniel 12 the phrase "a time, times, and half a time" precedes the prophecy containing the 1,290 and 1,335 days. That textual sequence suggests that the 3½ times expression may describe the interval in Israel's history

Table 3.1 – Locating Ezekiel 40:1 in History		
BCE	*Event*	*Jehoiachin's Captivity*
597	*Nebuchadnezzar II captures Jerusalem*	*Jehoiachin deported to Babylon*
596	**First Passover observed in Babylonia**	**Year 1 of Jehoiachin's Captivity**
595	---	*Year 2 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
594	---	*Year 3 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
593	---	*Year 4 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
592	---	*Year 5 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
591	---	*Year 6 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
590	---	*Year 7 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
589	---	*Year 8 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
588	---	*Year 9 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
587	---	*Year 10 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
586	**Jerusalem and the Temple Destroyed**	*Year 11 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
585	*Year 1 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 12 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
584	*Year 2 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 13 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
583	*Year 3 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 14 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
582	*Year 4 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 15 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
581	*Year 5 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 16 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
580	*Year 6 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 17 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
579	*Year 7 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 18 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
578	*Year 8 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 19 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
577	*Year 9 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 20 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
576	*Year 10 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 21 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
575	*Year 11 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 22 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
574	*Year 12 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 23 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
573	*Year 13 after Jerusalem's Destruction*	*Year 24 of Jehoiachin's Captivity*
572	**Year 14 after Jerusalem's Destruction**	**Year 25 of Jehoiachin's Captivity**

revealed by the timeline graph. That possibility can be tested by counting the annual Passovers that occur between the two events. The count begins with the Passover of 166 BCE, the first Passover after the Temple was desecrated. It ends with the Passover of 632 CE, the final Passover before Muhammad's death and

the beginning of the first Muslim caliphate. A quick calculation shows that the interval contains exactly 798 Passovers.

Equating the observed interval on the graph with the biblical three and a half times allows the 798-Passover interval to be divided by that number, giving the duration of one time: 798 Passovers ÷ 3½ times = 228 Passovers per time. The complete expression can then be stated as follows: one time = 228 Passovers, two times = 456 Passovers, and half a time = 114 Passovers. The total for 3½ times is 798 Passovers.

This calculation does not by itself prove that a time is 228 Passovers. It identifies the value required if the prophecy describes the interval between the two historically established events.

Counting the 798 Passovers

The count used in the preceding calculation begins after the starting event, when Antiochus desecrated the Temple in December 167 BCE. The first Passover in the interval therefore occurred in the spring of 166 BCE. The count ends with the Passover in the spring of 632 CE, the last Passover before Muhammad died and before the observance of the Great Day of Tabernacles that began the next chronological period.

The count from BCE to CE must be counted without a year zero. There are 166 Passovers from 166 BCE through 1 BCE, followed immediately by 632 Passovers from 1 CE through 632 CE. The total is therefore 166 + 632 = 798 Passovers (see "How to Count the 798 Passovers" on the facing page).

The count of Passovers in the interval is exact, and the two periods join without overlapping their festival counts. It does not depend upon rounding elapsed solar time or assigning fractional years to the events.

The 798th Passover occurred in the spring of 632 CE. The caliphate was established later that year, before the first Great Day in the count of 1,335 Great Days occurred. Thus, the Passover-bounded period ends before the Great-Day-bounded period begins, and both are joined by the same historical transition.

Defining a Danielic Time

Daniel 12:7 uses the Hebrew word מוֹעֵד *moʿed*, which denotes an appointed time. The word is used throughout the Old Testament for occasions fixed by

Table 3.2 – 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 *see above*	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 *see below*
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 Passovers in the transition decade from 7 BCE to 4 CE is determined as follows: Passover 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.

God, including Israel's sacred assemblies. The expression in Daniel therefore need not refer to an undefined span whose value must be imported from another system. Its language is compatible with an appointed interval measured by the recurring festivals already shown to govern Daniel's chronology.

The value derived from the historical interval—228 Passovers, which in this exposition denotes a Danielic time—also has a precise calendrical meaning. The Hebrew calendar is lunisolar. Its months follow the moon, while Passover must remain in the spring, its appointed agricultural season. Because twelve lunar months are approximately eleven days shorter than a solar year, an additional month must be inserted periodically to prevent the festivals from moving backward through the seasons.

Babylonian astronomers recognized that 235 lunar months are nearly equal to nineteen solar years. A nineteen-year lunisolar cycle therefore contains twelve ordinary years and seven years in which an additional month is inserted. This relationship was known in Babylonia before the regular cycle was standardized,

and it later became fundamental to the fixed Jewish calendar. The adjustment keeps the festivals aligned with their associated agricultural seasons.

Twelve of these nineteen-year cycles contain 228 solar years: 12 × 19 years = 228 years. This gives the proposed value of a time a precise relationship to Jewish festival timekeeping. A cycle of 235 mean lunar months exceeds nineteen solar years by approximately two hours. Across twelve such cycles, the accumulated difference approaches one full day. Thus, 228 years forms a coherent larger unit within the lunisolar relationship used to keep Passover in its appointed season.

Assuming that the Exodus occurred *circa* 1440 BCE and that the Israelites began observing the festival calendar prescribed by the Sinaitic covenant shortly thereafter, the alignment between the lunar calendar and the solar agricultural year had to be maintained across many centuries. A discrepancy of one day every 228 years would gradually accumulate if left uncorrected, eventually moving Passover away from its appointed season in the spring.

No claim is required that ancient Jewish authorities formally subtracted one day at the end of every 228 years. The biblical text does not describe such a rule, and the surviving evidence does not establish one. This interpretation of Daniel suggests only that the 228-year relationship was significant, not that any particular method of correction was formally prescribed.

The relevant point is narrower: the 228-Passover value produced by the historical interval is not arbitrary. It equals twelve complete nineteen-year lunisolar cycles and marks the point at which the discrepancy between the cycles of the moon and sun accumulates to approximately one day. These are the celestial bodies appointed to mark "signs and seasons, and days and years" (Genesis 1:14). This God-ordained calendrical relationship, by which Israel could maintain its sacred calendar, supports the calculated value of a "time" by giving it a precise connection with the calendar that keeps Passover in its appointed season.

The value of a "time" derived here will be applied to another prophecy, the one in Daniel 7:12. It says that the lives of beasts "were prolonged for a season and a time." Because this exposition of Daniel 12 assigns a duration of 228 Passovers to the term "time," using that same span in the exposition of Daniel 7:12 will provide a second test of its chronological value. The 228-Passover duration will be carried into that prophecy without alteration and combined with the independently defined term "season." If this procedure produces another exact historical span, the result will serve as an independent cross-check.

From the Temple to the Caliphate

The beginning and ending events are related in substance, not merely in chronology. The interval begins with the desecration of the Jerusalem Temple by Antiochus IV, when the daily sacrifices were taken away and an abomination was placed in the sanctuary. It ends with the establishment of the Muslim caliphate, under which Jerusalem and the Temple Mount would eventually pass into a new and enduring period of Gentile rule.

Daniel 12:7 associates the completion of the period with the shattering of "the power of the holy people." The desecration under Antiochus was a direct assault upon Jewish worship at its sacred center. The rise of the caliphate established the political and religious power that would dominate Jerusalem for most of the centuries preceding its modern restoration to Jewish sovereignty. The interval therefore extends between two major developments in the historical subjection of the sanctuary and the holy people.

The event in 632 did not end the sacrifices; they had ceased long before. Nor did it itself place the Temple Mount under Muslim rule on the day Muhammad died. His death marked the end of his leadership and the beginning of the caliphate that soon extended its authority over Jerusalem. The chronological marker identifies the beginning of that historical order, just as the Battle of Granicus marks the beginning of the Greek action in Daniel 8 before its later consequences reached the sanctuary.

This distinction is important. A prophetic chronological boundary need not occur only after every result described in a prophecy has already taken place. It may be marked by the datable action that sets the foretold historical development in motion. In 632 CE, the caliphate began. Jerusalem came under its rule six years later. The initiating event and its consequences belong to the same continuous historical sequence.

One Continuous Timeline

The strength of the method applied to the prophecies in Daniel 12 lies in the coherent chronology produced as each prophecy contributes its part. The 430 Passovers derived from Ezekiel 4 end at the desecration under Antiochus. The 798 Passovers described by "a time, times, and half a time" extend from that desecration to the beginning of the caliphate. The 1,335 Great Days then extend

from the beginning of the caliphate to the last Great Day before Jerusalem's restoration in 1967.

These periods are not isolated chronological correspondences. Each is bounded by identifiable events in Jewish history, measured by a recurring observance on Israel's sacred calendar, and joined to the next at a historically meaningful transition. The resulting chronology is controlled neither by approximation nor by a general day-for-year rule, but by the language of the prophecies, the sequence of their individual parts in the text, the appointed festivals, and documented events.

The sequence produced by linking the prophecies into a single timeline is historically as well as chronologically accurate. The angel came to show Daniel "what shall befall thy people in the latter days" (Daniel 10:14). Each period must therefore concern the Jewish people, Jerusalem, or the sanctuary. The events identified here satisfy that requirement: the desecration under Antiochus, the long subjection of the Temple Mount, the rise of the caliphate, the restoration of a Jewish national home, and the return of Jerusalem and the sanctuary to Jewish sovereignty form successive developments in the history of Daniel's people.

Once the historical endpoints of the Daniel 12:5–7 prophecy have been identified and tested against the 798 intervening Passovers and the calendrical significance of 228, Daniel's expression becomes historically intelligible. The period described as "a time, times, and half a time" extends from the first Passover after the desecration of the Temple to the last Passover before the establishment of the caliphate, which introduced a new period of Gentile rule over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, distinct from the preceding Greek and Roman orders. Joined to the prophecy of the 1,335 Great Days, it forms a continuous chronology of Jewish history from 167 BCE to 1967 and answers the question asked at the beginning of the prophecy: "How long?"

That Which Shall Not Be Destroyed

READ DANIEL 7:1-28 ON PAGE 145 | SEE ❹ ❺ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The vision in Daniel 7 presents the most extensive timeline examined thus far. It begins with what Daniel saw as four beasts rising from the Great Sea, proceeds to judgment before the Ancient of Days, introduces "One like the Son of Man" who receives an everlasting dominion, and concludes with an angelic interpretation. Within that broad vision are two chronological expressions that employ the value of a "time" established in Chapter Three: "for a time and times and half a time" in verse 25 and "for a season and a time" in verse 12.

The value established earlier for a Danielic "time" must now be carried into this prophecy without alteration. A "time" represents 228 annual Passovers. "A time and times and half a time" therefore represents 798 Passovers. The task in this chapter is not to derive that value again, but to determine how it fits the language, sequence, and historical events of Daniel 7. If it does, this prophecy will provide an independent test of the chronology already established.

The Structure of the Vision

Daniel received the vision in the first year of Belshazzar. He saw "the four winds of heaven" stirring up the Great Sea, from which four different beasts arose (Daniel 7:2–3). The first was like a lion with eagle's wings. The second resembled a bear raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth. The third was like a leopard with four wings and four heads. The fourth was "dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong," with iron teeth and ten horns (Daniel 7:7).

The wings, ribs, heads, iron teeth, and other features describe what Daniel saw in the vision. Notice, however, that the angel's explanation does not assign a separate historical meaning to every detail. This exposition therefore uses only the major elements the angel himself emphasizes for understanding the vision: the kings, kingdoms, horns, dominion, persecution, and judgment.

As Daniel considered the horns, another horn arose among them, before which three of the earlier horns were uprooted. This horn had eyes like a man and "a mouth speaking pompous words" (Daniel 7:8). Daniel then saw the Ancient of Days seated for judgment. "The court was seated, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:10). The fourth beast was slain and destroyed, while the other beasts

lost their dominion but had their lives prolonged "for a season and a time" (Daniel 7:12). The vision then turns from the beasts to heaven:

> *"I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed"* (Daniel 7:13–14).

The interpretation beginning in verse 15 returns to the beasts. The angel identifies them as four kings arising from the earth, but immediately directs attention to the final result: "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever" (Daniel 7:18). Daniel then asks particularly about the fourth beast, its ten horns, and the horn that spoke pompous words and made war against the saints.

The angel explains that the fourth beast represents a fourth kingdom. Ten kings arise from it, followed by another who speaks against the Most High, persecutes the saints, and intends to change times and law. The saints are then "given into his hand for a time and times and half a time" (Daniel 7:25). That dominion ends when the heavenly court sits in judgment, after which the kingdom is given to the saints of the Most High.

The chapter therefore contains three related movements. Verses 1–12 trace earthly kingdoms through judgment and the prolonging of the beasts' lives for "a season and a time." Verses 13–14 reveal the everlasting dominion given to "One like the Son of Man." Verses 15–27 interpret the earthly conflict and supply the second chronological period, "a time and times and half a time." The three movements concern one subject: the fate of the Jewish people under a succession of Gentile powers, the suffering of the saints under those powers, and the kingdom that ultimately cannot be destroyed.

Where the Action Begins

The first datable action in the vision is the rising of four kings. Because Daniel received the vision near the end of Babylonian rule, the exposition should begin with the imperial succession that followed Babylon. Cyrus conquered

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. 559-530), 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 – Bardiya/Smerdis (r. 522), identified as a son of Cyrus, though Darius claimed that the throne had been seized by an impostor, Gaumata.
4. Fourth Beast (with Ten Horns) – Darius Dynasty with 10 kings as follows:
   (1) Darius I Hystaspes (r. 522-486), "the Great," crossed the Bosporus 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 Philip II of Macedonia.
   (10) Darius III Codomannus (r. 336-330), succeeded Artaxerxes IV; defeated by Alexander the Great at the Granicus River (334), Issus (333), and Gaugamela (331); last king of the Achaemenid Persian Empire.

Babylon in 539 BCE, released the Jewish exiles, and authorized the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Persian period therefore provides the first historical setting in which the identities of the four kings can be tested.

The angel initially calls the beasts "four kings" (Daniel 7:17), but later describes the fourth beast as "a fourth kingdom" (Daniel 7:23). This change indicates that the symbols need not all function on precisely the same scale. The first three can represent individual kings, while the fourth expands into a dynastic kingdom containing ten kings.

The first three Persian rulers to exercise dominion over the Jewish people were Cyrus II, Cambyses II, and Smerdis (also known as Bardiya or Gaumata). Cambyses succeeded Cyrus and extended Persian rule into Egypt. Smerdis occupied the throne briefly in 522 BCE before Darius I seized power. With Darius I, the fourth symbolic kingdom expands to represent the Achaemenid dynasty as a succession of ten royal horns. Together, the three individual rulers and the ten-king dynasty supply the structural correspondence required by the vision and lead directly to the "little" horn that arose among them.

The Horn That Followed

The horn that arose after the ten is a composite of rulers who exercised dominion over the Jews for the better part of two centuries after the Persian period ended. It can first be identified with Alexander the Great and the Greek power established by his conquests. In 334 BCE, Alexander crossed the Hellespont into Persian territory and defeated Persian forces at the Granicus River. He then defeated an army commanded personally by Darius III at Issus in 333 BCE and destroyed the Persian king's remaining power at Gaugamela in 331 BCE. Darius fled eastward and was subsequently killed by his own men. Through these victories, Alexander brought the Achaemenid dynasty to an end and extended Greek dominion over the former Persian territories, including Judea.

The three horns "plucked out by the roots" appear to represent three decisive victories over Darius—one king defeated three times. At Granicus, Alexander fought the Persian army defending the western entrance to Asia Minor. At Issus, he defeated Darius himself and forced him to flee, abandoning his royal camp. Alexander found the king's mother, wife, daughters, and young son there, all of whom were taken captive. At Gaugamela, Alexander defeated the remaining power of the Achaemenid throne and took possession of the empire. Together, the three victories accomplished the removal symbolized in the vision.

The "little horn" cannot be limited to Alexander personally, however. As elsewhere in Daniel, a symbolic ruler may represent both the individual who establishes dominion and the power proceeding from him. Alexander founded Greek dominion, but the conduct later attributed to the horn appears most clearly in Antiochus IV Epiphanes of the Seleucid kingdom that arose from Alexander's empire. Daniel sees the horn speaking against the Most High, persecuting the saints, and attempting to change "times and law" (Daniel 7:25). These actions

correspond to Antiochus's attempt to suppress the covenantal worship and practices of the Jewish people.

The horn therefore represents a continuing historical power rather than the lifetime of a single ruler. It begins with Alexander, through whom Greek dominion was established, and reaches its ultimate persecuting expression under Antiochus IV more than a century and a half later. This representative character of the "horn" becomes especially important when viewed in light of the chronological prediction at the end of verse 25.

For a Time and Times and Half a Time

Daniel 7:25 states: "Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time." Chapter Three established from Daniel 12:7 that one prophetic "time" contains 228 Passovers. Three and one-half times therefore contain 798 Passovers. That value must be applied to Daniel 7 without alteration. Thus, the immediate question is where the 798 Passovers described by this prophecy begin and end.

Because the wording is nearly identical to the expression in Daniel 12:7, it might initially appear that the two prophecies cover the same years. Daniel 12, however, begins with the desecration of the Temple in 167 BCE and extends to the establishment of the caliphate in 632 CE. Daniel 7 provides different historical boundaries, spanning the period from 161 BCE to the Muslim caliphate's assumption of control of Jerusalem in 638 CE. The two periods contain the same number of Passovers but span different, though substantially overlapping, periods of Jewish history. In both instances, the prophetic expression supplies the length of the period, while the events described in each prophecy determine its location in history—where it begins and ends.

The starting point in Daniel 7 is made apparent by the events that followed the persecution under Antiochus. The Temple was desecrated in 167 BCE, and the Maccabean revolt began soon afterward. In late 164 BCE, the Jewish forces recovered Jerusalem. The Temple was rededicated in December that year. Antiochus IV died soon afterward, and under his successor Antiochus V, the Seleucid government formally restored the right of the Jewish people to live according to their ancestral laws. By 162 BCE, the people could again observe the full annual festival season.

A decisive transition occurred in 161 BCE. After Judah Maccabee defeated the Seleucid general Nicanor at the Battle of Adasa, the Jewish leadership braced

for a powerful Seleucid response. Judah calculated that his irregular forces could not indefinitely withstand the full military strength of the Seleucid kingdom. He therefore sent emissaries to Rome seeking friendship and protection. The Roman Senate received the delegation and ratified a treaty with the Jewish nation.

Judah's decision to appeal to Rome was understandable. Biblical precedent also provides grounds for understanding Judah's appeal to Rome as the point at which the Jewish people began to be given into the hand of the Gentile power upon which they had chosen to rely. Scripture established that precedent during the reign of Asa, king of Judah. When threatened by Baasha, king of Israel, Asa appealed to Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, seeking his military assistance. The strategy succeeded, but Hanani the seer rebuked Asa: "Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand" (2 Chronicles 16:7).

Asa obtained relief from the threat posed by Israel through the assistance of Syria, but his appeal to a Gentile power rather than continued dependence upon God brought lasting consequences. Judah Maccabee followed the same pattern when he appealed to Rome after God had already granted him repeated victories over Seleucid forces. Faced with renewed attack by a stronger enemy, the Jewish leadership sought protection through an alliance with the Gentile power that would eventually rule Judea. Rome first appeared as an ally, later intervened as an arbiter, and finally exercised direct dominion. Roman authority over Jerusalem ultimately continued through the Byzantine Empire.

This transition clarifies the statement that "the saints shall be given into his hand." The "saints" are the covenant people, and the expression describes their subjection to the continuing succession of Gentile powers represented in the vision. Antiochus supplies the immediate setting, but the chronological period begins when the Jewish nation turned to Rome, the power that would ultimately exercise dominion over it. The prophecy thus extends beyond the personal reign of Antiochus and describes the prolonged subjection of the Jewish people under Roman and Byzantine power.

The wording "given into his hand" does not require the same individual ruler to remain in power throughout the 798 Passovers. The horn represents the Gentile dominion that began with Alexander and assumed its most openly persecuting form under Antiochus. The chronological expression follows the resulting subjection of the saints as dominion passed from the Hellenistic kingdoms to Rome and, subsequently, to the Byzantine Empire.

Table 4.1 – How to Count "a time and times and half a time"

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 *see above*	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 *see below*
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 Passovers in the transition decade from 2 BCE to 9 CE is determined as follows: Passover 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.

The appeal to Rome was made after the Battle of Adasa and before the Passover of 161 BCE. It therefore supplies the event needed to locate the beginning of the chronological period. The Passover of 161 BCE was the first Passover after the Jewish leadership had formally turned to Rome and placed its hope for protection in Roman power.

The count therefore begins with the Passover of 161 BCE, the first Passover after Judah's appeal to Rome, and ends with the Passover of 637 CE, the last Passover before Caliph Umar took possession of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in 638 CE. That event brought Roman-Byzantine dominion over Jerusalem to its final end, closed the long period of Greco-Roman rule that had begun with Alexander's defeat of Persia, and inaugurated the extended period of Muslim sovereignty over the site.

The value derived from Daniel 12 thus fits Daniel 7 without alteration, but the historical endpoints are not the same. In Daniel 12, the 798 Passovers extend from the desecration of the Temple in 167 BCE to the establishment of the

caliphate in 632 CE. In Daniel 7, they extend from Judah's appeal to Rome in 161 BCE to the end of Roman-Byzantine dominion over Jerusalem in 638 CE. The same chronological value is used twice, but each prophecy applies it to a different sequence of events. Recognizing that distinction allows the two periods to complement one another without making them duplicates.

For a Season and a Time

Daniel 7 contains a second chronological expression: "As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time" (Daniel 7:12). Chapter Three established the value of the second term "time" as 228 Passovers. The first term "season" must be determined independently from the language and historical sequence of this verse.

The phrase "their lives were prolonged" recalls the covenantal language used by Moses as Israel prepared to enter the land. After commanding the people to observe the words of the Law, Moses said: "because it is your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess" (Deuteronomy 32:47). The use of the phrase "prolonged life" in a vision concerning the saints, Gentile dominion, and the land raises the possibility that the same covenantal relationship is intended.

That possibility can be tested against the period immediately following Antiochus's persecution. The Temple was rededicated by the Maccabees in late 164 BCE, and the weakened Seleucid government subsequently restored legal freedom to practice Judaism. By 162 BCE, the Law was again being enforced within Judea, and the people could observe the full annual festival cycle. The Passover of 162 BCE marked the restoration of the condition Moses associated with prolonged life in the land. The single "season" is therefore the Passover season of 162 BCE. The following Passover, in 161 BCE, begins the count of the additional "time" of 228 Passovers. Counting inclusively from the Passover of 161 BCE places the 228th Passover in 67 CE.

The endpoint corresponds to events in the First Jewish–Roman War. The revolt had begun in 66 CE, when the daily offering for the Roman emperor was stopped and fighting spread through Judea. In 67 CE, Vespasian began the Roman campaign in Galilee. Towns were captured, inhabitants were killed, enslaved, or displaced, and surviving rebels withdrew toward Jerusalem. The process that ended prolonged Jewish covenant life in the land was underway.

Table 4.2 – How to Count the "time" in "a season and a time"

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 *see above*	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

Note that there was no year "0" (zero) when going from BCE to CE, so the count for the Passovers in the transition decade from 2 BCE to 9 CE is determined as follows: Passover 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.

The prophecy does not require every consequence to occur on the day of the 228th Passover. As in the earlier prophecies, the recurring festival places the concluding event within the interval after one observance and before the next. The Passover of 67 CE marked the last annual boundary before the Roman campaign began the large-scale removal of Jewish life from the land.

The phrase "a season and a time" therefore identifies a period beginning with the restored Passover season of 162 BCE and continuing through 228 additional Passovers to 67 CE, when the dismantling of the Jewish covenantal presence in the land began. Its independently located endpoint confirms the 228-Passover value carried forward from Chapter Three.

Two Periods within One History

The two chronological statements in Daniel 7 describe overlapping aspects of the same history. The longer period, "a time and times and half a time," begins with the Passover of 161 BCE, the first Passover after Judah Maccabee's appeal to Rome, and continues for 798 Passovers through the Passover of 637 CE, the last Passover before Roman-Byzantine dominion over Jerusalem ended in 638 CE. It measures the prolonged subjection of the saints through the remaining Hellenistic period and the succeeding Roman and Byzantine periods.

The shorter period, "a season and a time," begins when Jewish worship was restored after the Maccabean revolt. One Passover season is followed by a "time" of 228 Passovers, ending when Rome began the campaign that removed Jewish life from the land and led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

The periods do not compete. One concerns the saints under continuing Gentile dominion; the other concerns the prolonging of Jewish life in the land after the Law and its festivals were restored. Both begin in the aftermath of Antiochus's assault upon Jewish worship. Both use Passover as the annual chronological marker. Both employ the unchanged value of 228 Passovers for a "time." Their different endpoints correspond to the different results described by the text.

Daniel 7 therefore provides the promised second test of the chronological value derived in Chapter Three. The 228-Passover unit does not merely produce one attractive correlation. It functions coherently in two expressions within the same chapter and joins events already identified within the chronology.

The Kingdom That Shall Not Be Destroyed

The beasts and horns occupy much of the vision's narrative, but they are not its ultimate focus. Their dominion is temporary. The Ancient of Days sits in judgment, the dominion of the persecuting power is removed, and the kingdom is given to One like the Son of Man and to the saints of the Most High.

Jesus applied the title "Son of Man" to himself and drew directly upon Daniel 7 when he spoke of the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven (Matthew 24:30; 26:64). The everlasting kingdom revealed to Daniel is therefore not another Gentile empire. It is the kingdom of the Messiah, received from the Ancient of Days and shared with his saints.

Daniel's vision encompasses centuries of foreign rule, persecution, restored worship, renewed exile, and continuing dominion over Jerusalem. Yet its conclusion is not the triumph of Persia, Greece, Rome, Byzantium, or the Muslim caliphate. Each earthly power receives only a limited period of rule, determined by God. The final kingdom belongs to the Son of Man, the Messiah: "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14).

The chronological periods explain how long particular dominions would continue in history. The final promise explains where that history leads. The sealed chronology becomes intelligible through its completed historical events, but the kingdom disclosed at the center of the vision is everlasting. That which arose from the sea passed from one ruler to another. That which was given by the Ancient of Days shall not be destroyed.

What Shall Befall Thy People

READ DANIEL 10:1-12:4 ON PAGES 150-154 | SEE ❻ ON OVERVIEW CHART

The vision considered in this chapter begins in Daniel 10, continues through chapter 11, and concludes in the opening verses of chapter 12. It is the longest continuous prophetic revelation in the book. The messenger states its purpose plainly: "Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come" (Daniel 10:14). The subject is therefore not a detached history of empires. It is the history of Daniel's people as they are affected by those empires.

That stated purpose controls the exposition. Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Rome, Byzantium, Sassanid Persia, and the emerging power of Islam enter the prophecy because their actions affect the Jewish people, Jerusalem, the Temple, or the covenant by which Israel possesses the land. The kings change, but the focus does not. The prophecy follows what happens to Daniel's people across more than a thousand years of history.

The vision falls naturally into three parts. Daniel 10:1–11:1 provides the setting and states the purpose of the revelation. Daniel 11:2–35 traces the Persian and Hellenistic periods through the persecution under Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Maccabean resistance. Daniel 11:36–45 then carries the narrative beyond Antiochus into the Roman and Byzantine periods, ending as Sassanid power collapses and Jerusalem is about to pass under Islamic control. Daniel 12:1–4 supplies the theological frame: Michael stands as protector of Daniel's people, those who understand the Scriptures instruct many, and the full meanings of Daniel's prophecies remain sealed until the time of the end.

The Historical Setting of the Vision

Daniel received the vision in the third year of Cyrus, after he had mourned and fasted for three full weeks. The messenger who came to him had been delayed by conflict with "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" until Michael came to help (Daniel 10:13). The scene discloses a spiritual conflict corresponding to the political conflicts that follow. Earthly kings act in history, but they do not exhaust the meaning of the events. The people of Israel are not abandoned without providential care while kingdoms contend over their land.

The messenger first strengthens Daniel, then tells him what is written in "the Scripture of Truth" (Daniel 10:21). Chapter 11 does not present a collection of unrelated predictions. It presents a single historical sequence, selective rather than exhaustive in its details. Particular rulers and campaigns are included because their actions affect Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Jewish people.

Fulfillment in History before 70 CE

536–334 BCE

Verse 2: "Three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all" ... The count begins with Cyrus, during whose reign the revelation was given. The three kings who follow are Cambyses II, Bardiya, and Darius I. The fourth is Xerxes I, whose wealth and invasion of Greece stirred the Greek world against Persia. Xerxes crossed into Greece with an enormous force in 480 BCE. Although he captured and burned Athens, the campaign ended without bringing Greece permanently under Persian control. The memory of that invasion remained alive in the Greek world and later supplied Alexander with a political justification for his war against Persia.

334–323 BCE

Verse 3: "Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion" ... The mighty king is Alexander the Great. Beginning with his victory at the Granicus River in 334 BCE, he destroyed the Achaemenid Empire and extended Greek rule eastward into Asia.

323–301 BCE

Verse 4: Alexander died in Babylon in 323 BCE without an adult heir capable of holding the empire together. His kingdom was not inherited by his posterity and did not retain the unity or power it had possessed under him. After years of conflict among his generals, the empire divided among rival dynasties. Of those divisions, two became especially important to the Jewish people: the Ptolemaic kingdom in Egypt, south of Judea, and the Seleucid kingdom in Syria, north of Judea. From that point onward, the titles "king of the South" and "king of the North" are geographical designations viewed from the land of Israel.

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.* 175-164	

301–261 BCE, The Ptolemaic and Seleucid Kingdoms

Daniel 11:5–20 compresses more than a century of conflict between the Ptolemies and Seleucids. Judea lay between them and repeatedly changed hands. The prophecy does not record every ruler or every battle. It selects the alliances, betrayals, invasions, and transfers of power that explain how Seleucid authority eventually reached Jerusalem. The king of the South in verse 5 is Ptolemy I Soter. He was succeeded by Ptolemy II Philadelphus, under whom Egypt became stronger and acquired wide influence in the eastern Mediterranean. The First Syrian War ended with a Ptolemaic victory.

260–246 BCE, Second Syrian War and Its Aftermath

Verse 6: Describes a marriage alliance intended to end the Second Syrian War. Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II, married Antiochus II Theos, the Seleucid king of the North. Antiochus set aside his wife Laodice to make the alliance possible. After Ptolemy II died, Antiochus returned to Laodice. Berenice

and her infant son were killed, and Antiochus himself died, reportedly from poisoning. The alliance therefore failed exactly where dynastic marriages were expected to succeed: the woman did not retain her position, and neither the king nor the child through whom the agreement was to continue survived.

246–241 BCE, Third Syrian War

Verses 7–9: The "branch of her roots" was Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes. He invaded the Seleucid kingdom to avenge her death, carried wealth and sacred objects back to Egypt, and outlived Seleucus II. The prophecy thus follows the sequence from marriage, to murder, to retaliatory invasion.

219–217 BCE, Fourth Syrian War

Verses 10–12 move the action to the sons of Seleucus II and then concentrate on Antiochus III, later called Antiochus the Great. He advanced through Coele-Syria toward Egypt but was defeated by Ptolemy IV at Raphia in 217 BCE. Polybius reports that both kingdoms fielded large armies. Antiochus appeared to have gained the advantage, but his pursuit of the fleeing enemy exposed the rest of his line and allowed Ptolemy's forces to prevail. The victory lifted up the heart of the southern king, but did not produce lasting strength.

217–204 BCE, Battle of Raphia

Verses 11–12: Near the town of Raphia, Ptolemy's native Egyptian soldiers proved decisive. Their success strengthened the king of the South for the moment, but it also gave trained Egyptian troops a new awareness of their own power. Rebellion later divided the Ptolemaic kingdom and weakened the southern dynasty, fulfilling the warning that Ptolemy would cast down many but would not be strengthened by his victory.

202–195 BCE, Fifth Syrian War

Verses 13–17: After Ptolemy IV died, leaving a child on the throne, Antiochus returned with a larger army. He defeated the Ptolemaic forces at Panium in 198 BCE and brought Judea under Seleucid rule for the remainder of the Ptolemaic-Seleucid struggle. The transfer of Judea from Ptolemaic to Seleucid control prepares for everything that follows.

195–187 BCE

Verses 18–19: Antiochus attempted to secure his position through another dynastic marriage. He gave his daughter Cleopatra I to Ptolemy V, expecting her to advance Seleucid interests in Egypt, but she supported her husband instead. Antiochus then turned toward the coastlands and Greece. Rome defeated him at Thermopylae and Magnesia, and the Treaty of Apamea imposed a heavy indemnity upon the Seleucid kingdom. He died in 187 BCE while attempting to obtain funds in the eastern part of his realm.

187–175 BCE

Verses 20–21: "There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom" ... Seleucus IV inherited both the throne and the Roman debt. His need for revenue led him to send Heliodorus to seize funds from the Temple treasury. Seleucus died without being killed in battle, and the legitimate heir remained a hostage in Rome. Antiochus IV then obtained the throne through political maneuvering. Second Maccabees preserves the Jewish account of the attempt upon the Temple treasury. Its report is important here because the conflict has now reached the sanctuary itself:

> "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. . . . 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." (2 Maccabees 3:23–27, 36, 39, KJV Apocrypha)

The above account does more than describe a frustrated act of plunder. It places the Temple under divine protection at the opening of the period that

will culminate in its desecration under Antiochus IV and provides documented historical evidence for locating Michael's intervention within the Seleucid period. Second Maccabees does not identify the heavenly figures by name, but it records precisely the kind of supernatural protection assigned to Michael in Daniel 12:1, where he is called "the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people." Michael's standing up therefore need not be displaced into an apocalyptic future. It has a coherent historical setting in the events leading to the persecution under Antiochus IV.

After Seleucus died in 175 BCE, his brother Mithridates took the dynastic name Antiochus IV Epiphanes and secured the throne. Daniel calls him a "vile person" to whom royal honor had not been given. He entered peaceably, gained support through intrigue, and became strong with a relatively small following.

175–168 BCE, Sixth Syrian War

Verses 22–28: Describe Antiochus's rise, his deceitful dealings, and his first campaign against Egypt. The "prince of the covenant" was Onias III, the legitimate high priest. Onias resisted Hellenization but was displaced after his brother Jason bribed Antiochus for the office. Jason was then displaced by Menelaus, who offered still more money. Onias was subsequently murdered. The high priesthood became an office bought from a foreign king.

Antiochus entered Egypt under the appearance of supporting his young nephew Ptolemy VI. He distributed wealth, studied Egyptian defenses, and later returned with an army. He captured Pelusium and Memphis and held Ptolemy under his influence. The two kings spoke lies at one table: Antiochus claimed to protect his nephew, while Ptolemy sought to preserve his throne. On his return through Judea in 169 BCE, Antiochus plundered Jerusalem. The prophecy notes that "his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant" (Daniel 11:28). Political conflict between north and south has now become direct hostility toward the covenant, its city, and its sanctuary.

168–164 BCE

Verses 29–35: Antiochus invaded Egypt again in 168 BCE, but this campaign did not end like the earlier one. The Ptolemies appealed to Rome. Near Alexandria, the Roman envoy Gaius Popillius Laenas confronted Antiochus and demanded his withdrawal from Egypt and Cyprus:

> "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." (Livy, *History of Rome*, 45.12.)

Daniel says that ships from Cyprus would come against Antiochus and that he would become grieved and return (Daniel 11:30). The Roman intervention extended to Cyprus, where a Roman force compelled the Seleucid troops to withdraw, while Popillius delivered the Senate's ultimatum to Antiochus near Alexandria. Humiliated by Rome, Antiochus turned his anger toward the holy covenant and listened to those in Judea who were prepared to abandon it.

The Maccabean Revolt

Verse 31: The crisis reached its climax. Forces acting for Antiochus defiled the sanctuary and took away the daily sacrifices. The practice of Judaism was forbidden. Circumcision, Sabbath observance, and possession of the Torah were punished. The Temple was plundered, the daily sacrifices ceased, and an altar associated with Zeus was erected upon the altar of burnt offering.

On 25 Kislev in 167 BCE, swine flesh was offered upon the desecrated altar. As shown in the earlier chapters, that event supplies the ending boundary for the 430 Passovers of Ezekiel 4 and the starting boundary for the 798 Passovers of Daniel 12:5–7. The first Passover after the desecration begins the latter count, which extends to the last Passover before the establishment of the caliphate in 632 CE. The chronological function of the event does not rest upon approximate dating. Its position in relation to Passover determines where the count begins.

The Maccabean revolt began at Modin when the priest Mattathias refused to sacrifice according to the royal decree. After his death, his son Judah Maccabee led the resistance. The Jewish forces defeated armies larger and better organized than their own. Jerusalem was recovered, a new altar was built, and the Temple was rededicated on 25 Kislev in 164 BCE.

Daniel 11:32 marks the reversal: "the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits." The statement does not glorify military power for its own sake. It identifies faithfulness to the covenant as the decisive distinction. Some were corrupted by flatteries; others resisted because they desired to remain faithful to their God.

From the Maccabees to the Dispersion

Verses 33–35 extend beyond the immediate victories of the Maccabees. Those who understand instruct many, yet they fall "by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering, for many days." The language moves from the persecution under Antiochus into a longer period during which faithful Jews continue to suffer under foreign rule. The persecution reaches to "the time of the end," but that phrase must be located by the chronology supplied elsewhere in Daniel rather than assumed to mean, as some suppose, the end of the world.

Chapter Four established the value of the "season and time" in Daniel 7:12. Applied from the restoration of Jewish law after the Antiochene persecution, that period reaches the beginning of the Diaspora associated with the Roman invasion of Judea in 67 CE. Daniel 11:35 reaches the same historical boundary. The prophecy has moved from the Persian period, through the Greek kingdoms and the Maccabean deliverance, to the point at which the Roman campaign begins a new and prolonged period of national dispersion of the Jewish people and leads to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 CE.

The sequence does not end there. Daniel 10:14 promised an account of what would happen to Daniel's people "in the latter days," and the events described thus far remain centered upon the land, Jerusalem, the Temple, and the covenant. Verses 36–45 continue those same subjects beyond 70 CE.

Fulfillment in History after 70 CE

The chief difficulty in Daniel 11:36–45 is not a lack of historical candidates but the tendency to detach the verses from the chronological structure already

supplied by the biblical text. If the interpretation of the passage is forced backward into the reign of Antiochus, several details do not fit: Antiochus never conquered all Egypt, did not bring Libya and Cush into the realm of his campaign, and died before the 798-Passover period of Daniel 7 began in 161 BCE. On the other hand, if the passage is moved entirely into the future, its relationship to the completed sequence before it is broken.

Daniel 7 provides the controlling boundary. Its "time and times and half a time" begins with Judah Maccabee's appeal to Rome in 161 BCE and ends when Jerusalem passes from Byzantine Christian rule to the caliphate in 638 CE. This is not the same placement as the identical expression in Daniel 12:7. Both contain 798 Passovers, but the events described by each prophecy determine where its period belongs in history. Daniel 12 extends from 167 BCE to 632 CE; Daniel 7 extends from 161 BCE to 638 CE. Daniel 11:36–45 belongs within the latter framework.

Chosroes II and the Persian Expansion

The ruler described in verses 40–45 cannot be Antiochus IV. The clearest identifying details appear in verses 42–43. This king enters the Glorious Land, conquers Egypt, and extends his advance toward Libya and Cush. Within the period bounded by Daniel 7, only one ruler marched through the land of Israel, conquered Egypt, and extended his reach toward both Libya and the upper Nile: Chosroes II, king of the Sassanid Persian Empire from 590 to 628 CE.

Verse 40a presents the forces that close upon the Persian kingdom near the end of the period: pressure from the south and a northern attack like a whirlwind. Verses 40b–44 then describe the expansion that preceded his fall. Verse 45 returns to Jerusalem and the holy mountain, where the Persian occupation briefly raised Jewish hopes for restoration.

624–638 CE

Verse 40a: By 624 CE the Sassanid Empire faced a devastating attack from the north. The Byzantine emperor Heraclius opened a daring counteroffensive through Armenia and the Caucasus, striking the vulnerable northern approaches to the Persian heartland. After Chosroes fell and the empire descended into internal disorder, Muslim armies advanced from the south into Sassanid territory beginning in 633 CE.

The prophecy distinguishes the king of the South, the king of the North, and the ruler opposed by both. Chosroes and his successors are the object of the attacks. Heraclius is the northern king who comes with rapid force; the emerging Islamic power supplies the pressure from the south. The Sassanids were defeated by Byzantium in 628 CE, and the weakened empire was then overwhelmed by Muslim armies. Jerusalem passed from Byzantine to Islamic rule in 638 CE, closing the Daniel 7 period.

602–619 CE

Verses 40b–43a: The Sassanid expansion began after the Byzantine emperor Maurice was murdered in 602 CE. Maurice had helped Chosroes recover his throne, and Chosroes used the murder as grounds for war. Persian armies captured one Byzantine stronghold after another through Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia. Damascus fell, opening the road south through the land of Israel.

In 614 CE the Persian general Shahrbaraz captured Jerusalem. Jews who had suffered under Byzantine rule supported the Persian advance, and some regarded Chosroes as a second Cyrus who might restore Jewish government and permit the rebuilding of the Temple. The conquest was followed by bloodshed, destruction of Christian sites, and the removal of the patriarch Zechariah and the relic honored as the True Cross. Two years later the Persians conquered Egypt. The prophecy's statement that "the land of Egypt shall not escape" is therefore fulfilled by a conquest Antiochus IV never accomplished.

The ancient names Edom, Moab, and Ammon describe lands east and southeast of Judea. During the Sassanid period, much of that region was associated with Arab tribes, especially the Ghassanids, who served as Byzantine allies and buffers against Persia. Persian control there was incomplete. When Heraclius counterattacked, Ghassanid resistance assisted the recovery of territory east of the Jordan. The prophecy's geographic language is thus anchored to the lands known by those biblical names, not to the continued existence of their ancient kingdoms.

619–624 CE

Verses 43b–44: After the conquest of Egypt, Persian authority extended into parts of Libya, while Cush lay beyond the southern boundary of Persian-controlled Egypt. The text does not say that Libya and Cush were fully annexed; it says they would be "at his heels" (Daniel 11:43). Their position at the edges of

the Persian advance fits that language. By 624 CE Chosroes had reached the maximum extent of his power, but news from the east and north about internal revolt and Heraclius's invasion turned expansion into retreat.

614–617 CE, Second Attempt to Rebuild the Temple

Verse 45: "He shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain" ... The final verse again places the prophecy at Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. It returns to the central focus that was announced in Daniel 10:14: what would happen to Daniel's people.

After the Persian capture of Jerusalem in 614 CE, Nehemiah ben Hushiel, associated with the Jewish exilarchate in Babylonia, was placed in authority in the city. A Jewish council governed for a short period, and preparations were reportedly made for the restoration of the Temple and priesthood. Those hopes did not endure. Nehemiah was killed, Persian policy changed, and Jews were again excluded from Jerusalem. When Heraclius recovered the city in 628 CE, Byzantine rule returned with violence against the Jewish population.

The attempt under Nehemiah was the second serious effort represented in verses 36–45 to restore the Temple. Julian's attempt in 363 CE had ended with fire and his death. The Persian-sponsored effort beginning in 614 CE was likewise aborted. After the Muslim capture of Jerusalem, the Armenian historian Sebeos reported that Jews erected an altar on the Temple site, but the new rulers ordered its removal. The Temple remained unbuilt.

Returning to Verses 36–39

363 CE, First Attempt to Rebuild the Temple

Verses 36–39: "Then the king shall do according to his own will" ... The king described here appears after the prophecy has reached the Roman period and before the Sassanid campaigns described in verses 40–45. His actions must also have direct importance for Jerusalem and the Temple.

Those conditions point to the Roman emperor Julian, who ruled from 361 to 363 CE and is remembered as Julian the Apostate. Constantine had granted toleration to Christianity and favored its growth within the empire. Julian rejected that course, attempted to revive pagan Hellenism, and wrote against the Christian faith. His reliance upon military power and his devotion to the old gods

fit a ruler who honored power and exalted his own religious program above the God acknowledged by his pro-Christian predecessor.

Julian's importance to the prophecy lies especially in his treatment of the Jews. Hoping to discredit Christianity and reverse the policy of the Constantinian dynasty, he authorized the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. This was the first serious imperial attempt to rebuild it after its destruction in 70 CE. Ammianus Marcellinus, a fourth-century Roman historian and no Christian apologist, records what followed:

> "[Julian] 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 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." (Ammianus Marcellinus, Roman History, 23.1.2–3.)

An earthquake in Galilee and fire at the building site halted the work. Julian died during his Persian campaign soon afterward, and imperial sponsorship ended. The attempt is historically significant because it returns the narrative to the Temple Mount. The ruler in verses 36–39 is not introduced merely for his military policy. His actions affected the place at the center of the prophecy.

A Continuous History of Daniel's People

The vision examined in this chapter begins with Persia and ends as the ancient Persian Empire's Sassanid successor gives way to the caliphate. Between those points, the prophecy follows the Jewish people through Greek conquest, Ptolemaic and Seleucid rivalry, the corruption of the high priesthood, the desecration under Antiochus, the Maccabean revolt, Roman domination, two failed attempts to restore the Temple, and the transfer of Jerusalem from Byzantine to Islamic rule. The vision therefore encompasses more than a succession of kings and military campaigns. It traces the preservation of Daniel's people through repeated periods of foreign domination, religious persecution, and political upheaval.

Attempts to Build a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem		
Year	*Attempted by*	*Result*
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, *etc.*	Enlarged (rebuilt?)
132 CE	Hadrian, Emperor of Rome	Promised
132-135 CE	Simon bar Kokhba, *Nasi* 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

That continuity explains both the detail of the prophecy and its selectivity. The angel does not provide a universal political history. He tells Daniel what will happen to "*your people*." A ruler appears in the text when he affects the covenant, the land, Jerusalem, or the Temple. Events elsewhere are included only when they influence that central historical course. The prophecy passes over rulers and wars that might appear more important in a general history, yet describes dynastic marriages, political betrayals, military interventions, and changes of government that directly affected the Jewish people. Its selectivity is therefore not a weakness or an irregularity. It reflects the purpose announced at the beginning of the vision.

When those points are kept in view, Daniel 11 does not end with Antiochus and then leap without warning to a distant future. It continues through identifiable events within the chronological boundaries already established by the other prophecies. The successive details are too closely related to be separated without disrupting the historical sequence. Each ruler inherits circumstances produced by those who preceded him, and each event prepares for the one that follows. The result is a continuous account rather than a collection of disconnected fulfillments.

Daniel 12:1–4 closes the vision by joining suffering with deliverance and understanding. Michael stands watch over the sons of Daniel's people. Those who are wise shall shine, and those who turn many to righteousness shall be

"like the stars forever and ever." Daniel is then commanded to shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. The long historical sequence was preserved in the text, but its full meaning could not be known until the later events supplied the missing boundaries and identities. The accuracy of the prophecy becomes most apparent retrospectively, when its individual parts can be compared with the completed course of history.

Chapter One showed that the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in 1967 supplied the terminating event that unsealed Daniel 8. Chapters Two through Four then built on that increased knowledge by establishing the festival-based periods that connect the desecration under Antiochus, the rise of the caliphate, and the history of Jerusalem. The present chapter brings those results back into the narrative of Daniel 11. Its kings can be identified because the prophecy, the chronology, and documented history converge upon the same events. The agreement is cumulative: geography, political succession, military action, Jewish history, and prophetic chronology reinforce one another. What was sealed was only temporarily unknowable. It was simply awaiting the history by which God intended it to be understood.

Seventy Weeks Are Determined

READ DANIEL 9:1-27 ON PAGE 148 | SEE ❼ ON OVERVIEW CHART

Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city ... Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.—Daniel 9:24a, 25

Chapters Four and Five carried the history of Daniel's people from the beginning of the Achaemenid Persian Empire to the end of the Roman-Byzantine period of dominion over Judea and Jerusalem. This chapter examines the prophecy in Daniel 9:24–27, which returns to the most significant spiritual period in that span. Those final four verses describe a period of seventy "weeks" within which Jerusalem would receive an anointed one, a prince, a national revolt would be brought to an end, and the new covenant promised through Jeremiah would be introduced to the Jewish people. This series of events makes the passage a turning point in the history of Israel, where that history culminates in the fulfillment of God's promise of redemption through Abraham's seed.

Identifying the historical span and location in time of the seventy weeks is critical to understanding the prophecy. Those weeks are traditionally treated as a continuous period of 490 years. That interpretation rests on the assumption that each "week" represents seven ordinary years. The text itself does not provide that equivalence. Nor does the text explain the division of the period into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. As in the prophecies already examined, the term "weeks" in this one must first be defined from the prophetic language and then used to calculate the prophecy's duration and location in history.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the command that begins the prophecy, determine what the term "week" represents, and locate the divisions of the specified seventy-week period in history. The anointed one will be identified in Chapter Seven, and the covenant he confirms will be examined in Chapter Eight. The three themes belong to the same prophecy, but separating them allows the chronology to be established before its redemptive meaning is considered. This order also preserves the progression of the prophecy.

Daniel's Prayer and Gabriel's Answer

Daniel received the prophecy in the first year of Darius the Mede, after Babylon had fallen to the Persians. He had been studying Jeremiah's prophecy that Jerusalem would remain desolate while Babylon exercised dominion for seventy years. Recognizing that the predicted period had reached its end, Daniel turned to God in prayer, fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

His prayer was not an attempt to calculate an abstract timetable. It was a confession made on behalf of the covenant people. Daniel acknowledged that Israel had sinned, rejected God's law, and ignored the prophets. The destruction of Jerusalem and the exile were therefore not evidence that God had forgotten his covenant. They were the judgments warned of in the Law of Moses. Daniel appealed to the same covenant for mercy, asking God to turn away his anger and restore Jerusalem and the sanctuary.

> *"O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us"* (Daniel 9:16).

Gabriel's answer extends beyond the immediate end of Babylonian rule. Jeremiah's seventy years explained the desolation Daniel had witnessed. The seventy weeks revealed what would happen after the Jews returned to Jerusalem. The answer concerned Daniel's people and the holy city, and it placed the work of an anointed one within a precisely ordered sequence of events.

The Structure of the Prophecy

Daniel 9:24–27 contains two closely related themes. The first is chronological. It begins with the going forth of a command to restore and build Jerusalem and accounts expressly for seven weeks followed by sixty-two weeks, leaving one final annual Feast of Weeks to complete the total specified in verse 24. The second is redemptive. It concerns the ending of sin, reconciliation for iniquity, everlasting righteousness, an anointed one, and the confirmation of a new covenant.

The chronology provides the historical setting for the redemptive events, while the redemptive events explain why the chronology matters. Nevertheless, the starting command and the divided periods must first be identified on their

own terms. If the beginning is misplaced or the time unit is assumed rather than demonstrated, the events of the prophecy will be forced into a chronology they do not fit. Verse 25 specifies the chronological structure for us: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince [an anointed one, a prince], there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times" (Daniel 9:25).

In translating that verse, the NKJV renders the Hebrew words מָשִׁיחַ נָגִיד *mashiach nagid* as "Messiah the Prince," using capitalization that reflects the traditional Christian identification of this figure with Jesus. Hebrew does not employ capitalization to distinguish a title from an ordinary description, and mashiach means simply "anointed one," while nagid means "prince" or "ruler." The 1917 JPS translation therefore renders the expression "one anointed, a prince." That more neutral wording allows the identity of the figure to be determined from the historical setting rather than assumed from tradition. In this exposition, the "one anointed, a prince" of verse 25 will be identified as Hyrcanus II. The different anointed one—the Messiah—who appears in verse 26, after the sixty-two weeks have concluded, will be examined in the next chapter.

Three actions govern the chronological statement. A command goes forth to restore and build Jerusalem. An anointed one who is also a prince is restored to the city. Jerusalem's street and wall are rebuilt. The two stated periods—seven weeks and sixty-two weeks—must be related to those actions. A satisfactory interpretation must account for all of them, including the otherwise puzzling seven-week division that begins the seventy weeks.

The Command to Restore Jerusalem

Most interpretations begin with a decree issued by a Persian king. There were four that pertained to the Jews. Cyrus permitted the Jewish exiles to return and rebuild the Temple. Darius I confirmed that authorization. Artaxerxes I later authorized Ezra to take offerings to Jerusalem and administer the Law, and about twelve years later he permitted Nehemiah to rebuild the city's walls. Each decree belongs to the restoration of the Jewish community after the exile, but none of the Persian decrees contains all the elements specified in Daniel 9:25, and no exposition based on one of them provides a clear historical explanation of why there is a seven-week division at the beginning of the seventy weeks.

The wording of the prophecy does not require the command to have been issued during the Persian period. It requires only a command concerning Jerusalem, an anointed one who was also a ruler, and the rebuilding of the city's defenses. However, those elements do appear together in a Roman decree that was issued by Julius Caesar in 44 BCE.

Jerusalem had come under Roman control when Pompey captured the city in 63 BCE. During the siege, his forces filled the trench below the vulnerable northern wall so that siege engines could be brought against it. The wall and its fortified gates were then broken down. Pompey also removed Hyrcanus II from royal authority. Jerusalem remained exposed, and Judea stood between Rome's eastern territories and the Parthian Empire.

After Caesar defeated Pompey, he rewarded Hyrcanus II, who as high priest had supported him, by confirming him as high priest and ethnarch of the Jews. Josephus preserves the decree among the Roman acts concerning Hyrcanus as follows: "Gaius Caesar, consul the fifth time, 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" (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 14.10.5).

The decree joins the principal elements of Daniel 9:25. Hyrcanus was high priest and therefore an anointed one. He was also ethnarch, the political ruler or prince of the Jewish people. Caesar confirmed his authority over Jerusalem and granted permission to surround the city with walls. Antipater, whom Caesar appointed procurator of Judea, carried out the reconstruction before his death in 43 BCE. He was succeeded by his son Herod, who would become the principal Roman-supported ruler in the events that followed.

This decree did more than permit general improvement of the city. It restored an identifiable anointed ruler to authority in Jerusalem and authorized the rebuilding of the defenses that had been destroyed by Pompey. It therefore supplies the command and rebuilding required to establish the starting boundary of the prophecy.

The Street and Wall

The familiar translation "street and wall" can obscure the military character of the structures named in verse 25. The Hebrew word for street רְחוֹב *rechov* describes a broad or open place. In a fortified city, such a space lay inside a gate

and provided room for troops to assemble. In 2 Chronicles 32:6, the same word *rechov* is used to describe the broad place behind a city gate where Hezekiah gathered his troops to defend the city.

The second word, חָרוּץ *charuts*, derives from a word meaning "to cut" and can refer to a trench or moat. Péter-Contesse and Ellington's *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel* notes that it can denote a trench cut into the rock outside a city wall. Such a trench increased the effective height of the fortification and hindered an attacking army. Josephus's account of Pompey's siege describes such a structure outside the northern wall of Jerusalem. The Roman soldiers filled it with rubble to create a level approach for their siege works.

Daniel 9:25 thus points to the restoration of a fortified gate area with its broad assembly place and the clearing and restoration of the defensive trench below the wall. These structures formed part of the defenses Caesar authorized Hyrcanus and Antipater to restore. Their completion by 43 BCE establishes the condition that precedes the beginning of the count of the seventy weeks.

Identifying a Danielic Week

The Hebrew word שָׁבֻעִים *shavuim* means "sevens." Most expositors assume that each week in Daniel's prophecy represents seven years and therefore interpret the seventy weeks as a period of 490 years. That conversion has become so familiar that it is often treated as though Daniel stated it. He did not. The prophecy specifies seventy weeks but never defines each week as seven years.

Genesis 29:27–28 is frequently cited as evidence that a "week" can represent seven years. In that passage, however, Laban tells Jacob to fulfill Leah's "marriage week," a customary seven-day wedding celebration also illustrated by Samson's wedding feast (Judges 14:12, 17), after which Rachel would be given to him in return for another seven years of service. The marriage week and the subsequent years of service are stated separately. Genesis therefore does not establish that one *shavua* equals seven years; it distinguishes the week from the seven-year period associated with it.

Outside Daniel 9, the Hebrew word translated "weeks" is used most often in Scripture in connection with the Feast of Weeks and its harvest count (Exodus 34:22; Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:9–10, 16; 2 Chronicles 8:13). Jeremiah likewise speaks of "the appointed weeks of the harvest" (Jeremiah 5:24). This association is especially significant because Daniel states at the beginning of

Daniel 9 that he had been reading Jeremiah's prophecies. The biblical usage therefore provides a basis for understanding the "weeks" in Daniel 9 within the setting of Israel's sacred calendar.

The preceding expositions of Daniel's prophecies have already established this method of interpretation. Daniel 8 uses "evening-morning" as a cryptic reference to the annual Passover night. Daniel 12 uses "days" for the annual Great Days of the Feast of Tabernacles. In Daniel 9, "weeks" points to the Feast of Weeks, the pilgrimage festival whose date is determined by counting the omer from the Feast of Unleavened Bread and observing the festival on the fiftieth day. Each prophetic week is therefore represented by one annual Feast of Weeks, identified in this exposition by its concluding Day of Pentecost. Thus, seventy weeks are seventy annual Pentecosts, not 490 ordinary years.

This identification completes the pattern formed by the three pilgrimage festivals. The "evening-mornings" of Daniel 8 are counted by Passover nights, the "weeks" of Daniel 9 by annual Feasts of Weeks, and the "days" of Daniel 12 by the Great Days of the Feast of Tabernacles. These cryptic units are not interchangeable and do not establish a general day-for-year rule. Each belongs to the language and events of its own prophecy.

The Seven Weeks and the Sabbatical Cycle

The first division in verse 25 contains seven weeks. Since each week represents one Feast of Weeks, the seven-week division contains seven annual Pentecosts. The next step is to determine whether those seven annual observances can be aligned with a seven-year unit already established in Israel's sacred calendar. The obvious candidate is the sabbatical cycle. Such an alignment would supply a reason for separating the first seven weeks from the sixty-two that follow and establish a starting point for locating the entire seventy-week span in history.

No original register of ancient sabbatical and jubilee years has survived. The chronology used to locate the sabbatical years is therefore anchored to the well-attested destruction of Herod's Temple in the summer of 70 CE, which multiple Jewish sources—the *Seder Olam Rabbah, Tosefta,* and *Jerusalem Talmud*—describe as occurring at the close of a sabbatical year. Counting backward from 70 CE in seven-year increments identifies the Jewish year beginning in 43 BCE as a sabbatical year. The next sabbatical cycle began in 42 BCE and concluded in 36 BCE, another sabbatical year.

Table 6.1 – How to Count the 70 "Feasts of Weeks" (Pentecosts)

Each Day of Pentecost (the 50th day in the Feast of Weeks) is shown under its equivalent Gregorian year. Sabbatical 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 year in a seven-sabbatical cycle. For a listing of all sabbatical and jubilee years, see page 123.

44 BCE Year of Julius Caesar's Decree to Hyrcanus II

43 BCE Sabbatical Year, Jerusalem's street and wall rebuilt

The 7 "weeks"

Year 1	*Year 2*	*Year 3*	*Year 4*	*Year 5*	*Year 6*	*Sabbath Year*
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"

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 by John in the Jordan River and then tempted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. On the Day of Pentecost in 28 CE, he proclaimed the Acceptable Year of the Lord in the synagogue at Nazareth. His public ministry extended from that period until his ascension from the Mount of Olives in 30 CE. In the sabbatical and jubilee chronology used in this exposition, the year of the seventieth Pentecost, 28 CE, was also a jubilee year.

The chronology is not established by the calendar alone. Events involving Hyrcanus II also mark both ends of the division. Caesar's decree restored him to authority in Jerusalem in 44 BCE. In 40 BCE, his nephew Antigonus allied with the Parthians, captured the city, removed Hyrcanus from office, mutilated him so that he could no longer serve as high priest, and sent him into captivity. Herod fled to Rome, where the Senate declared him king of the Jews. He then returned with Roman legions and recaptured Jerusalem.

The seven-week division is thus marked by two restorations of Hyrcanus: Caesar's restoration of his authority in Jerusalem before the count began and Herod's restoration of the former ruler to the city during its seventh year. After suppressing the revolt, Herod invited Hyrcanus to return from the east. Hyrcanus came back to Jerusalem in 36 BCE, the year of the seventh Pentecost in the sabbatical cycle. He did not regain his former power, but the former anointed one and prince identified in the prophecy was again restored to the city.

The seven-week division therefore begins with the first Pentecost of the sabbatical cycle following Caesar's decree and the rebuilding of Jerusalem's defenses. It ends with the final return of Hyrcanus from Babylon to Jerusalem during the seventh year of that cycle.

Finishing the Transgression

Daniel 9:24 states that one purpose of the seventy weeks is "to finish the transgression." The Hebrew word translated "transgression," פֶּשַׁע *pesha*ʿ, can denote rebellion or revolt. Within the historical setting established by Caesar's decree, the expression is therefore best understood as bringing a national revolt to its conclusion. The revolt of Antigonus supplies the corresponding event.

Antigonus's seizure of Jerusalem was both political and religious. He displaced the high priest and ethnarch confirmed by Caesar, took control of the Temple, and attempted to restore Hasmonean rule with Parthian support. Herod's capture of Jerusalem in 36 BCE ended that revolt, and Hyrcanus's return to the city followed. Both Herod's capture of Jerusalem and Hyrcanus's return occurred after Passover in 36 BCE and before Passover in 35 BCE, within the final year of the seven-year sabbatical cycle.

The words do not describe the end of all human transgression. They refer to an accomplishment determined for Daniel's people and holy city within the historical period of the prophecy. The national revolt that interrupted the

political order established by Caesar ended when Jerusalem fell to Herod and Hyrcanus was brought back.

The Sixty-Two Weeks

The sixty-two-week division begins with the Pentecost following the completion of the seven-week cycle. Its first Pentecost occurred in 35 BCE. Counting sixty-two annual Pentecosts places the final one in 27 CE. The entire sixty-nine-week sequence therefore extends from Pentecost 42 BCE through Pentecost 27 CE.

The endpoint is historically important. After the Pentecost of 27 CE, John the Baptist began calling Israel to repentance and announcing the approaching kingdom of God. His ministry introduced the covenant events that occupy the final portion of the prophecy. The sixty-two weeks do not themselves contain the public ministry of Jesus; they bring the chronology to the threshold at which the anointed one of verse 26 appears and the covenant events of verse 27 begin.

The Seventieth Week

The prophecy announces seventy weeks in verse 24, while verse 25 accounts only for seven weeks followed by sixty-two. One week therefore remains. Because the city's defenses had already been restored before the count of the seventy weeks began, no additional week can be placed before the first seven. The remaining week must therefore follow the sixty-two and is represented by the annual Feast of Weeks culminating on Pentecost in 28 CE. As will be shown, the events associated with that seventieth week were not confined to the days of the festival itself. They unfolded throughout the festival-to-festival year following Pentecost in 27 CE and concluding on Pentecost in 28 CE.

The sequence is therefore exact. The first seven Pentecosts extend from 42 to 36 BCE. The next sixty-two extend from 35 BCE to 27 CE. The seventieth Pentecost occurs in 28 CE. Together they form one continuous count of seventy annual Feasts of Weeks (*see chart on page 69*).

The final week cannot be understood only as another date on the calendar. Daniel 9:24 assigns six accomplishments to the seventy weeks: to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint

the Most Holy. The first has already been located at the end of the seven-week division. The others lead directly into the ministry of Jesus and the confirmation of the covenant.

The Pentecost of 28 CE provides the terminal observance of the seventy-week count. It also belongs to the year in which Jesus was baptized, anointed by the Holy Spirit, and began his public ministry. In the synagogue at Nazareth, he announced the acceptable year of the Lord. Those events will be examined in the next chapter. The covenant, the cutting off of the anointed one, and the week in which the covenant was confirmed will then be examined in Chapter Eight.

The Later Desolations

The chronology of the seventy weeks ends with the Pentecost observed in 28 CE, but the events of the prophecy continue beyond it. Daniel 9:26–27 foretells that the city and sanctuary will be destroyed by the people of a coming prince and that desolations will continue through the war. Those statements describe consequences that follow the redemptive events located by the chronology.

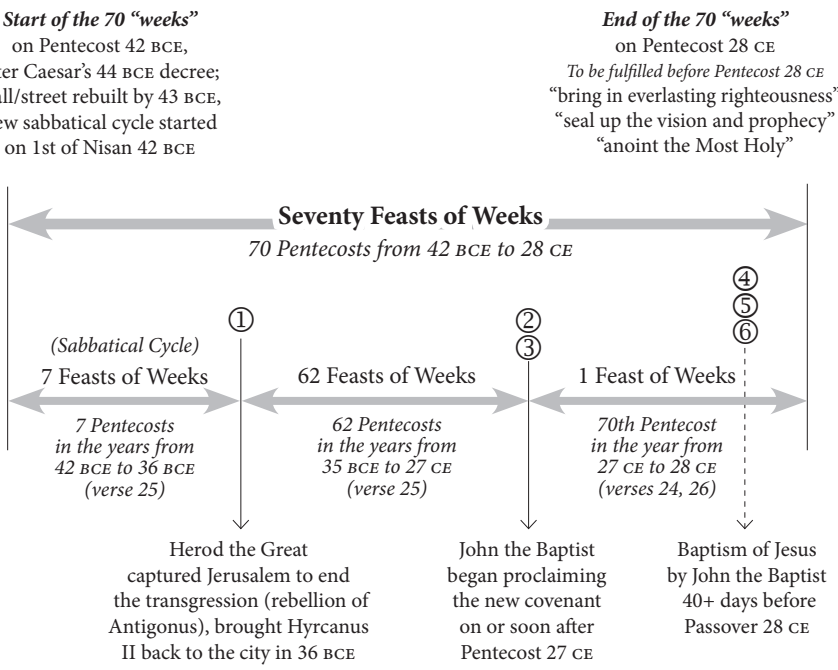
Roman forces destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 CE during the First Jewish War. The wider desolation continued through the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt in 135 CE, after which Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina and excluded the Jews from the city. The closing language also reaches toward the prolonged desolation of the Temple Mount under Roman and Byzantine rule, the history already traced in Chapters Four and Five.

Once the seventieth Feast of Weeks culminates on Pentecost in 28 CE, the count has reached its stated conclusion. This chronological limit properly locates the appearance and beginning of the covenantal ministry of the promised Anointed One, who must come before the subsequent destruction of the city and sanctuary. Keeping the later destruction, war, and continuing desolations outside that defined period preserves both its chronological limit and the historical sequence stated in the prophecy.

A Chronology of Jewish History

The seventy weeks do not begin with a Persian decree whose details fail to correspond fully with the biblical text, nor do they reach fulfillment through approximations imposed upon a 490-year period. They begin after the decree

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



that precisely satisfies Daniel 9:25. Julius Caesar confirmed Hyrcanus II as high priest and ethnarch (the equivalent of the prophecy's "anointed one and prince"), restored his authority in Jerusalem, and permitted the city's defenses to be rebuilt. When that work was completed, the next sabbatical cycle supplied the first seven Pentecosts.

The seventh Pentecost in the seventy-week period fell in 36 BCE, the year that saw the end of the revolt of Antigonus and the return of Hyrcanus to Jerusalem. Sixty-two more Pentecosts extended the count through 27 CE. The final Pentecost occurred in 28 CE, by which time the six requirements of verse 24 had been fulfilled, as the next chapter will explain.

The chronology does not yet identify the covenant-confirming Anointed One by name, but it determines when that promised one had to appear. He had to enter Jewish history before the seventieth Pentecost brought the appointed period to its conclusion in 28 CE. The chronology therefore supplies an objective historical test for the identification examined in the next chapter.

The strength of this chronology does not rest on the count alone. The initiating decree concerns Jerusalem, confirms an anointed high priest as its political ruler, and permits the rebuilding of the city's defenses. The first seven Pentecosts occupy a complete sabbatical cycle and conclude with an identifiable event involving that same ruler. The sixty-two Pentecosts then continue without interruption to the beginning of the final festival-to-festival year.

Each element provides a separate point at which the interpretation can be tested. If the decree, the two offices of Hyrcanus, the rebuilding, the sabbatical cycle, the revolt, or the divided count failed to correspond with history, the proposed chronology would fail with it. Instead, all the elements converge within one continuous sequence. The result is not a date selected first and reached by adjusting the count, but a chronology located by following the terms of the prophecy through history.

As in the prophecies examined earlier, the sacred calendar supplies the recurring unit, and documented history supplies its placement. The count of Feasts of Weeks explains the otherwise unexplained division of seven and sixty-two weeks and preserves the relationship among the divisions. A chronological framework is now in place. The next two chapters will identify the anointed one who appeared within that defined time span and examine the covenant he confirmed during a Passover week, in the midst of which sacrifice and offering were brought to their intended end.

The Anointed One Is Identified

READ DANIEL 9:1-27 ON PAGE 148 | SEE ❼ ON OVERVIEW CHART

Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.—Daniel 9:24

The prophecy of the seventy weeks revealed in Daniel 9:24–27 contains three consecutive periods totaling seventy "weeks." As established in Chapter Six, each "week" is the annual Feast of Weeks, the Jewish pilgrimage festival that concludes on its fiftieth day, the Day of Pentecost (see Table 6.1 on page 69).

The first period consists of seven weeks corresponding to a seven-year sabbatical cycle, extending from Pentecost in 42 BCE through Pentecost in 36 BCE. The second consists of sixty-two weeks extending from Pentecost in 35 BCE through Pentecost in 27 CE. The third extends from Pentecost in 27 CE through Pentecost in 28 CE, when the seventieth Feast of Weeks occurred.

After the seventy Feasts of Weeks were completed on Pentecost in 28 CE, verse 27 states that an anointed one would confirm a covenant "with many" for one week. In this instance, the word denotes an ordinary seven-day week, with the confirmation occurring in its middle. What covenant was introduced during the seventy weeks, and who was the anointed one who confirmed it? This chapter will answer those questions by examining the six requirements specified in verse 24. All six had to be fulfilled before the seventy weeks ended, and together they identify both the covenant and the anointed one who confirmed it.

The New Covenant

The key to identifying the covenant described in verse 27 is found in verse 24, the opening verse of the prophecy: "Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." That verse specifies six requirements that had to be fulfilled before the seventy weeks concluded in 28 CE. The first,

"to finish the transgression," was fulfilled when Herod the Great besieged and captured Jerusalem from Antigonus and the Parthians before Pentecost in 36 BCE. That event brought the transgression—the civil and religious revolt led by Antigonus—to an end. The next two requirements, "to make an end of sins" and "to make reconciliation for iniquity," provide the key to identifying the covenant. The language used to describe the six requirements corresponds to that used to describe the new covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31–34:

> *Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when 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 lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For* ***I will forgive their iniquity,*** *and* ***their sin I will remember no more.***"

Notice the concluding promises: "I will forgive their iniquity" and "their sin I will remember no more." These correspond directly in meaning to the second and third requirements in Daniel 9:24: "to make an end of sins" and "to make reconciliation for iniquity." The parallel language identifies the covenant in Daniel 9:27 as the new covenant promised by God through Jeremiah.

However, the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon did not establish the promised new covenant. After returning to Jerusalem, they rebuilt the Temple and resumed the sacrifices prescribed by the covenant made at Sinai, just as their ancestors had done before the Exile. The restored system of worship remained under Mosaic Law and continued so until the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. It represented a restoration of the existing covenant, not the establishment of the new covenant promised through Jeremiah.

Nor can the establishment of the new covenant be postponed until a future messianic age. Such an interpretation falls outside the chronological limits established by Daniel 9:24–27. John the Baptist had to introduce the new covenant, and the Anointed One who would confirm it had to appear, before the seventieth week ended on Pentecost in 28 CE. The later confirmation of that

covenant, described in verse 27, would occur in the middle of the Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread week in 30 CE.

Some modern Jewish interpretations understand Jeremiah's new covenant as the Mosaic covenant that will be placed anew within the hearts of the Jewish people by the Messiah, often in connection with the future construction of a third Temple. Whatever appeal that interpretation may have within rabbinic theology, it cannot satisfy the chronological requirements of Daniel 9, which place the introduction of the covenant and the appearance of the Anointed One within the timeline defined by the seventy weeks.

Fulfillment in History

The historical narrative of the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) does not extend to the events examined in this chapter, which fall within the period beginning after Pentecost in 42 BCE and ending on Pentecost in 28 CE. For the record of the introduction of Jeremiah's new covenant and the fulfillment of the six requirements specified in Daniel 9:24, which had to occur before the seventy weeks ended on Pentecost in 28 CE, we must turn to the *B'rit Hadashah*, the book of the new covenant commonly called the New Testament. Like the *Tanakh*, it preserves God's continuing revelation within Jewish history and provides the testimony by which the new covenant and the anointed one who confirmed it can be identified during the precise historical period in which Daniel said these events would occur.

The first requirement in verse 24, "to finish the transgression," was examined in Chapter Six. The remaining five identify the new covenant and reveal the identity of the anointed one who would confirm it. The circled numbers in the following chart correspond to those in Diagram 6.1 on page 73:

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

② *"to make an end of sins"*
③ *"to make reconciliation for iniquity"*

As shown in the preceding section, the second and third requirements in Daniel 9:24—"to make an end of sins" and "to make reconciliation for iniquity"—identify the covenant mentioned in verse 27 as the new covenant foretold in Jeremiah 31:31–34. The wording of these two requirements closely parallels Jeremiah's description of what the covenant would accomplish. Jesus would later confirm the covenant through his sacrifice on the cross. The covenant's introduction to Israel is recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Matthew 3:1–12 describes the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry:

> *"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight."' Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'"*

John the Baptist was the messenger whose ministry introduced the new covenant to Israel. His ministry proclaimed forgiveness in connection with repentance and baptism, without making participation in the Temple sacrifices part of that proclamation. His use of baptism by immersion drew upon the

Jewish practice of the mikveh, a ritual bath associated with purification. By baptizing in the flowing water of the Jordan, water regarded as "living water," John gave visible expression to his call for repentance and moral cleansing.

John's baptism nevertheless differed from ordinary ritual washing. It was directed not merely toward ceremonial purity but toward repentance and the forgiveness of sins. In doing so, his ministry introduced the promise at the heart of Jeremiah's new covenant: God would forgive Israel's iniquity and remember its sin no more. This message also challenged the exclusive place of the Temple sacrifices in obtaining atonement under the Mosaic Law.

The authorities did not initially prevent John from baptizing, for the people regarded him as a prophet. However, they did send priests and Levites to determine who John claimed to be and by what authority he baptized. Their questions and John's answers are recorded in John 1:19–28:

> *"Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, 'I am not the Christ.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?' He said: 'I am "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.' Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, 'Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?' John answered them, saying, 'I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.' These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing."*

When questioned by the Jewish authorities whether he was the Messiah, John the Baptist said that he was not, answering this way: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said" (John 1:23). After denying that he was the promised anointed one who would confirm the covenant, he announced that the anointed one they were seeking was already standing among the people of Israel, though they did not yet recognize him. His identity would be disclosed through the fulfillment of the fourth, fifth, and sixth requirements listed in Daniel 9:24.

④ *"to bring in everlasting righteousness"*

The fourth requirement in Daniel 9:24 is "to bring in everlasting righteousness." It was fulfilled when Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River. Because all six requirements had to be fulfilled before the seventy weeks ended on Pentecost in 28 CE, the baptism must also have occurred before that date. The account most directly related to this requirement is found in Matthew 3:13–17:

> *"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"*

Mark provides a second account in Mark 1:1–11:

> *"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 Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.' 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight."' John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, 'There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.' It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, 'You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"*

Luke provides a third account, one containing chronological information important to locating the baptism within the seventy weeks. Luke 3:1–22 states:

"Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."' Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' So the people asked him, saying, 'What shall we do then?' He answered and said to them, 'He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.' Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, 'Teacher, what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Collect no more than what is appointed for you.' Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, 'And what shall we do?' So he said to them, 'Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.' Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all, 'I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.' And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison. When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, 'You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.'"

These three accounts provide two pieces of information essential to the interpretation of Daniel 9:24. The first concerns prophetic fulfillment; the second concerns chronology.

The statement most directly related to prophetic fulfillment is the explanation Jesus gave for submitting to baptism: "for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." The Greek word plērōsai, translated "fulfill," is frequently used for the fulfillment of Scripture. Its use here indicates that the baptism was more than an act of obedience or a public beginning to Jesus' ministry.

Because John's baptism called sinners to repentance, the question naturally arises why Jesus submitted to it. If he was without sin, he had no sin of his own to confess and no personal need for repentance. His baptism instead fulfilled the requirement in Daniel 9:24 "to bring in everlasting righteousness."

The second important detail is Luke's statement that the ministry of John began "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar." Luke reinforces that date by naming the rulers and high priests then in office. Because the baptism of Jesus had to occur before Pentecost in 28 CE, Luke's chronological information can be tested against the officials named in the biblical text.

Joseph Caiaphas served as high priest from 18 to 36 CE. Pontius Pilate governed Judea from 26 to 36 CE. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee from 4 BCE to 39 CE, Philip ruled Iturea and Trachonitis from 4 BCE to 33 or 34 CE, and Lysanias ruled Abilene during a period extending to about 29 CE. The overlap among these terms of office establishes a span from 26 to 29 CE. A baptism occurring between Pentecost in 27 CE and Pentecost in 28 CE falls within that span.

The remaining question is whether at least part of the fifteenth year of Tiberius could also have occurred before Pentecost in 28 CE. Many traditional chronologies identify his fifteenth year with 29 CE because they count from the beginning of his sole reign following the death of Augustus in 14 CE. That result, however, depends upon several choices that are not specified by Luke:

- 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.

With 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.[1] They range from 26-27 CE to 29-30 CE. Five of the sixteen configurations allow for part of the fifteenth year of Tiberius' reign to occur after Pentecost in 27 CE and before Pentecost in 28 CE, which is the Pentecost that concluded the prophecy of the seventy weeks.

The following date ranges, calculated from the year of Tiberius' joint rule, show possible spans within which part of his fifteenth year could have fallen.

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]

Luke wrote within a Jewish historical and religious setting, and his work may have been prepared as a formal account for Theophilus, possibly the former high priest of that name. A Jewish method of reckoning the reign of Tiberius is therefore possible. The interpretation does not, however, depend upon identifying the particular calendar Luke used. The necessary point is more limited: "the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar" can be placed, by several recognized methods of reckoning, before Pentecost in 28 CE. The terms of office of the officials named by Luke are consistent with a baptism occurring between Pentecost in 27 CE and Pentecost in 28 CE.

Luke provides an additional chronological indication in Luke 3:23: "Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age." Assuming Jesus was born just before the death of Herod the Great in 4 BCE, a straightforward calculation places him at about thirty years of age during the period between Pentecost in 27 CE, which ended the sixty-ninth week, and Pentecost in 28 CE, which ended the seventieth week. His stated age is thus consistent with the chronology established from Daniel and Luke. (See Table 7.1 on the next page.)

Four of the six requirements in Daniel 9:24 can now be located in history in the order given. The transgression led by Antigonus ended before Pentecost in 36 BCE. John the Baptist introduced the new covenant to Israel through a baptism of

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

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

repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus was then baptized before Pentecost in 28 CE, fulfilling the requirement "to bring in everlasting righteousness." At the same time, it was the event that allowed John the Baptist to publicly identify him to the people of Israel as the anointed one who would confirm the new covenant. Two requirements remain: "to seal up vision and prophecy" and "to anoint the Most Holy." Both were also fulfilled in connection with the baptism of Jesus, preparing the way for his public ministry.

⑤ *"to seal up the vision and prophecy"*

The fifth requirement in Daniel 9:24 is "to seal up vision and prophecy." A more literal rendering of the Masoretic Text is "to seal vision and prophet." This requirement was fulfilled in connection with the baptism of Jesus, when God publicly authenticated both his identity and his prophetic office. Jesus later referred to that divine authentication in John 6:27, saying of the Son of Man, "Him God the Father has sealed."

The seal placed upon Jesus signified that God had attested him as the Messiah and as "the Prophet" promised to Israel. At the same time, the meaning of his message remained sealed from many among the religious leadership and the people, while being disclosed to those whom God enabled to understand it. The sealing therefore involved two related actions: Jesus was authenticated by God, but the full significance of his identity and message remained hidden from those who heard without understanding.

Moses had warned Israel of the consequences that would follow continued disobedience, including exile from the land. Daniel referred to those warnings in his prayer of confession preceding the prophecy of the seventy weeks. Isaiah later

foretold that Israel would also experience spiritual blindness. His commission is recorded in Isaiah 6:1–10:

> *"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."*

Isaiah's declaration, "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged," closely parallels the language of Daniel 9:24: "to make an end of sins" and "to make reconciliation for iniquity." The passage therefore joins the promise of forgiveness with the warning that many would hear God's message without understanding it. Isaiah 29:10–14 further describes that spiritual condition by comparing the vision given to Israel to the words of a sealed book:

> *"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."

The prophecy extends beyond Isaiah's immediate generation. It anticipates a future "marvellous work and a wonder" in which the wisdom of the wise would perish and the understanding of the prudent would be hidden. The people would continue to honor God outwardly while failing to recognize what he was accomplishing among them.

During the ministry of Jesus, this condition affected many among both the religious leadership and the people. It was not universal, for John the Baptist, the disciples, and many other Israelites recognized at least part of what God was revealing. Nevertheless, the meaning of Jesus' identity and mission remained concealed from many who witnessed his ministry. Jesus explained this restricted understanding by applying Isaiah's prophecy to his own use of parables, as recorded in Matthew 13:10–17:

"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."

Jesus distinguished between those who saw and heard without understanding and those whose eyes and ears had been opened. The disciples were the fortunate ones who were witnessing events that prophets and righteous people had long desired to see. The words and works of Jesus were public, but their full prophetic meaning was not equally understood. In that sense, the vision remained sealed even while it was being fulfilled.

Isaiah had also foretold that the servant through whom redemption would come would not be recognized by the people he came to serve. Isaiah 53 describes his rejection, suffering, death, and redemptive work:

> *"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."*

Isaiah brings together the themes already embraced in Daniel 9:24. The servant would be wounded for transgressions, bear iniquities, make his life an offering for sin, justify many, and intercede for transgressors. Yet he would also be despised and rejected, fulfilling his redemptive mission without being recognized by many who witnessed it.

The fifth requirement was therefore fulfilled in both senses conveyed by the language of sealing. At the baptism of Jesus, God placed his seal upon the one he had chosen, publicly authenticating him through the descent of the Holy Spirit and the voice from heaven. At the same time, the prophetic meaning of his identity and mission remained sealed from many, just as Isaiah had foretold. Jesus was the authenticated prophet, but full understanding of the vision fulfilled through him was given only to those whose eyes and ears had been opened.

⑥ *"to anoint the Most Holy"*

The sixth and final requirement to be fulfilled before the seventy weeks ended was "to anoint the Most Holy." This also occurred at the baptism of Jesus, when the Holy Spirit descended upon him and consecrated him as the servant of God who would confirm the new covenant promised through Jeremiah.

The Hebrew expression translated "Most Holy" is קֹ֥דֶשׁ קָדָשִׁ֖ים *qōdeš qādāšîm*, literally "holy of holies." Under the Mosaic covenant, the expression refers to the inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle or Temple, the altar for sacrifices, the furnishings of the sanctuary, and certain consecrated offerings (Exodus 26:33–34; 29:37; 30:26–29; Leviticus 6:17, 25; 24:9; Numbers 18:9). Daniel, writing within that covenantal setting, would naturally have understood the anointing of the Most Holy in relation to the consecration of the sanctuary and its altar (Exodus 40:9–10; Leviticus 8:10). The New Testament, however, identifies the physical body of Jesus as the true Temple (John 2:19–21) and Jesus as the cornerstone of the new-covenant dwelling place of God (Psalm 118:22; Mark 12:10–11; Ephesians 2:20–22; 1 Peter 2:6).

Jesus is therefore the Holy One anointed by the Spirit (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38). Through the later outpouring of the Spirit, those who believe in him also become a dwelling place for God (Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:21–22). Understood in this way, the language preserves the sanctuary meaning of *qōdeš qādāšîm* while identifying Jesus as the locus of God's presence and the one in whom the new-covenant Temple is established.

> *"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 [the servant] in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the [Jewish] 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" (*Isaiah 42:1–8a).

The correspondence between Isaiah's prophecy and the baptism is direct. Isaiah foretold that God would place his Spirit upon the servant in whom he delighted. At the Jordan, the Spirit descended upon Jesus while the voice from heaven declared that he was God's beloved Son, in whom God was well pleased. Isaiah also states that the servant would be given "for a covenant of the people," connecting his anointing directly with the covenant he would confirm.

The immersion of Jesus in the Jordan River portrayed beforehand the death, burial, and resurrection that would complete his ministry, providing at the beginning of his ministry a visible representation of what would occur at its end. His baptism also identified him as the servant described in Isaiah 53, the one who would bear iniquities and justify many. John the Baptist explained to his disciples how Jesus had been made known to him. John 1:29–36 records:

"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!"

John explained that through his own ministry, Jesus was to be "made manifest to Israel." The sign by which John would recognize him as the Anointed One was the descent and continuing presence of the Holy Spirit upon him. When that sign occurred, John could testify with confidence that Jesus was the Son of God and the Lamb of God who would take away sin.

The placement of the Spirit upon Jesus fulfilled the sixth requirement, "to anoint the Most Holy." With that anointing, all six requirements specified in Daniel 9:24 were fulfilled before the seventy weeks ended.

Jesus was then led into the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan for forty days and forty nights. During the Passover observed soon thereafter, he appeared in Jerusalem and restored the purity of the Temple by driving out the merchants and money changers whose activities had corrupted its purpose. A period of public ministry in Judea followed.

The six requirements in verse 24 were given to identify Jesus to Israel as the promised Messiah—the Anointed One foretold in Daniel's prophecy. With his identity established, Daniel 9 turns to the work he would accomplish: "He shall confirm a covenant with many." The nature of that covenant and the manner in which Jesus confirmed it are examined in the following chapter.

He Shall Confirm a Covenant

READ DANIEL 9:1-27 ON PAGE 148 | SEE ❼ ON OVERVIEW CHART

And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.—Daniel 9:26–27

Chapter Seven examined the six requirements specified in verse 24, identifying the promised new covenant and Jesus as the Messiah who would confirm it. With his identity established, attention now turns to the action attributed to him in verse 27: "He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week." In this context, "week" denotes an ordinary seven-day week, during which the covenant was confirmed and, in its middle, sacrifice and offering were brought to an end. The remaining questions concern the covenant itself: What covenant did Jesus confirm, and how did he confirm it?

The Acceptable Year of the Lord

Following his baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the Judean wilderness, where he was tested by Satan for forty days and forty nights. During the Passover week observed soon thereafter, Jesus appeared in Jerusalem and purified the Temple of the commercial practices that had corrupted its sanctity and purpose. A period of public ministry in Judea followed. After John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus returned to Galilee and began preaching repentance and the forgiveness of sins to his Jewish brethren. Luke 4:13–21 records his appearance in the synagogue at Nazareth:

"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."

By declaring, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," Jesus identified his ministry as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. The Spirit had anointed him to proclaim good news, release, restoration, and "the acceptable year of the Lord." His declaration at Nazareth therefore provides a starting point for identifying the message he proclaimed and the covenant he would confirm.

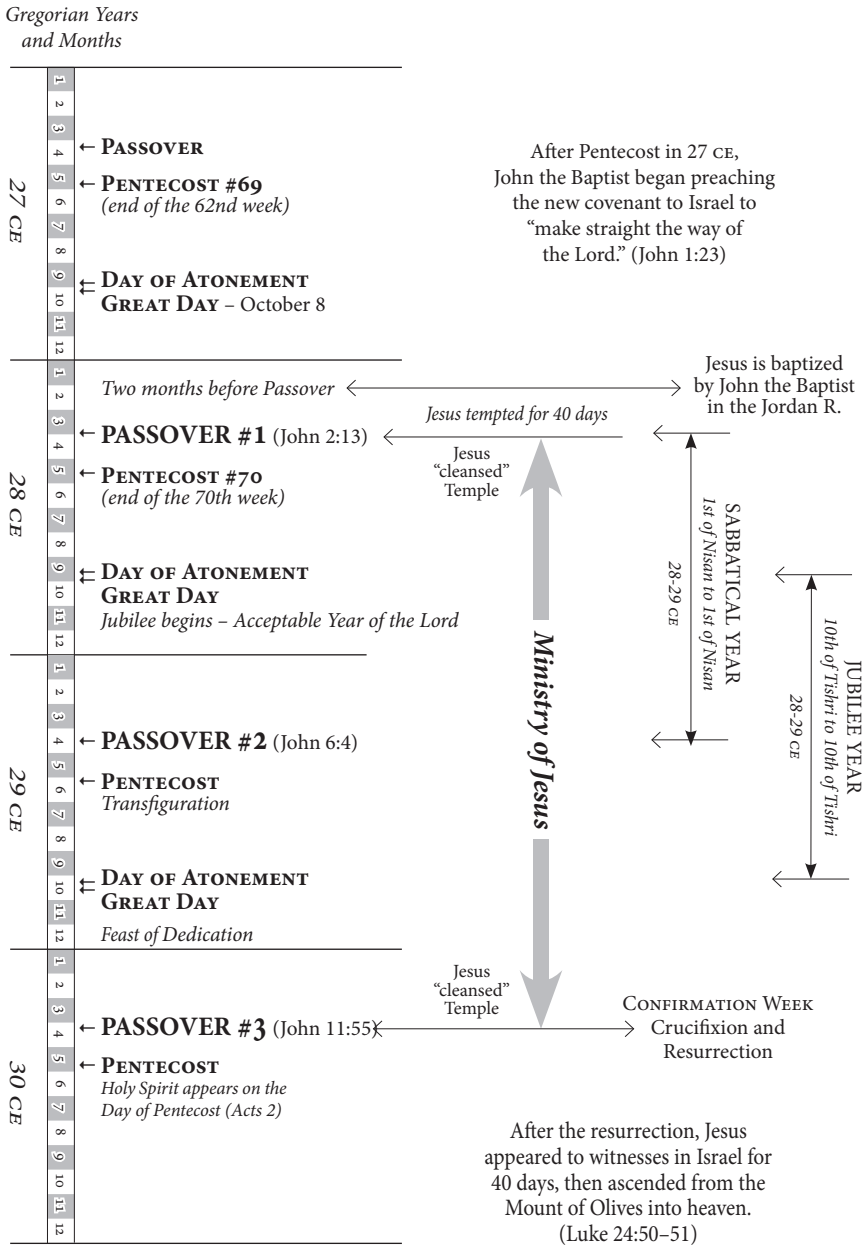
Jesus' public ministry lasted approximately twenty-seven months, from his baptism by John the Baptist to his ascension from the Mount of Olives (see Diagram 8.1 on the facing page). During that period, he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom and the promised new covenant throughout Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Jerusalem, and other parts of Israel.

The Gospel of John specifically mentions three Passovers during his ministry. The first appears in John 2:13: "And the Jews' passover was at hand." The second appears in John 6:4: "And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." The third appears in John 11:55: "And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand." Within the chronology developed here, these were the Passovers of 28, 29, and 30 CE.

Some have proposed an additional Passover based upon John 4:35, where Jesus said, "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 interpret the reference to four months literally and place the statement in winter, four months before the spring harvest and near the beginning of another Passover year.

The chronology shown in Diagram 8.1 places the statement after Pentecost in 28 CE during a sabbatical year and immediately before the beginning of the

Diagram 8.1 – The Ministry of Jesus



jubilee year on the tenth of Tishri. The surrounding fields would have been lying fallow, their previous crops having been harvested before the sabbatical year began. Because the coming year was also a jubilee, the disciples would have known that ordinary sowing and harvesting could not resume until the jubilee ended and the autumn festival season of 29 CE had passed.

Jesus was therefore not pointing to a grain harvest expected four months later. He was speaking figuratively about the gathering of people. Although his ministry was directed to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," the Samaritans then coming toward him provided a visible illustration of people already "white for harvest" and ready to hear the message of the kingdom.

Many among the Temple authorities, Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes did not accept the authority of Jesus as mediator of the new covenant foretold by Jeremiah, and some condemned him for blasphemy. Many other Jewish people did believe, however, especially among the people of the countryside and even among some respected members of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.[1]

John 3:26–36 records the response of John the Baptist when his disciples told him that people were turning to Jesus:

> *"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*

[1] Some New Testament passages portray "the Jews" in a harsh light when describing the internal dispute within first-century Judaism over the messianic identity of Jesus (*e.g.,* Matthew 27:20–25; John 5:16–18; 7:1; 8:37–47; 9:22; 10:31–33; 19:7–16; Acts 13:45–50; 1 Thessalonians 2:14–16). Those passages cannot be detached from their historical and ancient doctrinal setting to justify anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish, or anti-Israel beliefs and actions today. Such hostility is contrary to a correct reading of both the *Tanakh* and the *B'rit Hadashah*. Because misinterpretations of these accounts have helped foster centuries of persecution of Jews, it must be stated plainly that the rejection of Jesus as Messiah by first-century Judaism provides no justification for assigning collective guilt for his death to Jews of any generation anywhere in the world.

is above all. And what he hath seen and 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."

John understood that his ministry was preparatory. He had been sent before the Christ, not to compete with him. His declaration, "He must increase, but I must decrease," marked the transition from the messenger who introduced the Messiah to the Anointed One who would confirm the covenant.

Confirmation of the Covenant

The public ministry of Jesus reached its climax during Passover week in 30 CE, as shown by Diagram 8.2 on page 97. During that week, the opening statement of Daniel 9:27 was fulfilled: "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." 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."

By entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, Jesus presented himself as Israel's promised King in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9 (Matthew 21:4–5; John 12:14–15). His claim to kingship was not accepted by the Jewish religious leadership. As he entered Jerusalem, some of the Pharisees objected and demanded that he silence his disciples. Luke 19:39–44 continues:

> *"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 Passover lamb. Four days later, on the fourteenth of Nisan, he was tried for blasphemy and condemned to death by the religious authorities who opposed him. He was then turned over to the Roman authorities, who authorized and carried out his execution. He was crucified during the afternoon, when the Passover lambs were being slain.

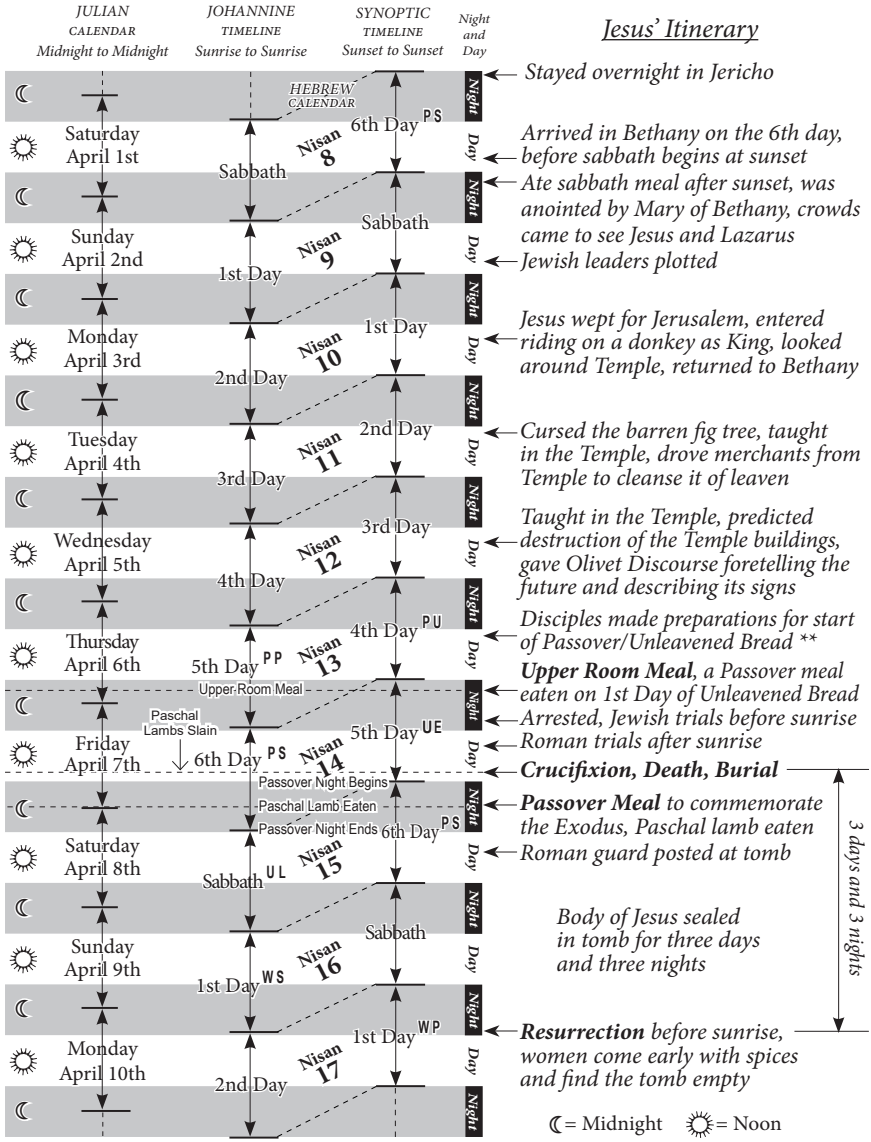
At the supper with his disciples in the upper room (often referred to as the "Last Supper") shortly before his arrest and his trials before Jewish and Roman authorities, Jesus explained to his disciples that his approaching death would provide the blood of atonement by which the new covenant was confirmed. Matthew 26:26–28 records:

> *"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 language corresponds directly to Daniel 9:27. Jesus identified the covenant as the new covenant, declared that it would be confirmed by his blood, and stated that his blood would be shed "for many." Its purpose was "the remission

Diagram 8.2 – The Confirmation Week (30 CE)

Showing the Relationship among Julian, Johannine (Sadducean), and Synoptic (Pharisaic) Days



PP Day of Preparation for Passover *(Johannine)*
PU Day of Preparation for 1st Day Unleavened Bread *(also called Passover in the Synoptics)*
PS Day of Preparation for Sabbath Day
UE 1st Day of Unleavened Bread *(Exodus 12:18)*
UL 1st Day of Unleavened Bread *(Leviticus 23:6)*
WP Feast of Weeks, 1st Day *(for Pharisees)*
WS Feast of Weeks, 1st Day *(for Sadducees)*

*** Luke 22:1 "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover."*

of sins," again joining the confirmation of the covenant to the requirements in Daniel 9:24 and the promise in Jeremiah 31:34.

The confirmation week concluded with the burial of Jesus in a rock-hewn tomb and his bodily resurrection on the third day, after three days and three nights. The resurrection occurred before sunrise, which was 16 Nisan by Sadducean reckoning and 17 Nisan by Pharisaic reckoning. Under either reckoning, it occurred on the first day in the count to the Feast of Weeks, the day associated with the offering of first fruits.

During the following forty days, Jesus appeared to the eleven remaining disciples and to many others, establishing numerous witnesses to his bodily resurrection. He then ascended from the Mount of Olives. Ten days later, on the fiftieth day counted from the resurrection, his disciples and other followers were gathered in Jerusalem as he had commanded. The Holy Spirit then descended upon them and indwelt them as Jesus had promised. Acts 2 records:

> *"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, both Lord and Christ."

The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus during Passover week in 30 CE confirmed the new covenant and ended the divinely appointed redemptive function of the Temple sacrifices that were instituted by the Sinai covenant. The sacrifice of Jesus accomplished what the sacrifices under that covenant had foreshadowed but could not accomplish. Daniel had foretold this result: "In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." The Temple sacrifices continued outwardly for another forty years, but the effective and final sacrifice for sin had been made by the anointed one.

Jewish tradition preserves reports of ominous signs during those final forty years. The *Jerusalem Talmud* states: "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" (Tractate Yoma 6:3 [43c]).

The Temple continued to function until Titus and the Roman forces destroyed Jerusalem and the sanctuary in 70 CE, fulfilling the prophecy that "the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." The remaining clauses of Daniel 9:26–27 describe war, desolations, and abominations continuing to the end. Jerusalem and the Temple Mount subsequently experienced prolonged conflict, destruction, and Gentile dominion, extending the consequences of the prophecy far beyond the confirmation week itself.

Meanwhile, the message of the new covenant went forth from Jerusalem and spread throughout the world, proclaiming salvation through faith in Jesus, the anointed Messiah who had confirmed it.

The Wise Shall Understand

Daniel received visions of kings and kingdoms, wars and desolations, the corruption and restoration of the sanctuary, the suffering of his people, and the coming of an anointed one who would confirm the covenant. He was given measured periods by which those events would be located in history. Yet after hearing the revelation and its explanation, Daniel confessed, "Although I heard, I did not understand." He understood parts of what had been revealed, but not the complete historical meaning of the prophecies or the events by which their chronological expressions would be disclosed. The angel did not provide a final key to the chronology. He answered, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Daniel 12:8–9).

That command governs the exposition presented in this book. Daniel's prophecies were not lost, suppressed, or unavailable. Their words were preserved in Scripture, copied by scribes, translated into other languages, and examined by generations of Jewish and Christian interpreters. Nor did every part remain equally sealed until 1967. As successive events occurred, portions of the prophecies became historically recognizable, allowing later interpreters to understand more than those who had lived before them. Their complete chronological relationships, however, could not be identified until all the necessary events had entered history. The unsealing was therefore progressive: understanding increased as fulfillment supplied the evidence.

The restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to Jewish sovereignty in June 1967 supplied the culminating event that brought the connected chronology into view. Daniel 8 asks how long the sanctuary and host will be trampled and answers, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings." When the unusual expression is understood as 2,300 annual Passover nights, the count begins with the first Passover after Alexander entered Persian territory and ends with Passover in 1967. Six weeks later, the sanctuary named in the prophecy was restored to its rightful state. History had supplied the concluding event needed to disclose the chronological meaning that the words alone had concealed.

The interpretation of Daniel 8, made possible by its fulfillment in 1967, revealed the importance of the Jewish festival calendar as an expository key to Daniel's chronological prophecies. That increase in knowledge opened the way for the other time-specific prophecies to be reconsidered.

Daniel 12 uses "days" to mark the Great Days of the Feast of Tabernacles. Its periods extend from the establishment of the caliphate to the eve of the restoration in 1967. The preceding expression, "a time, times, and half a time," accounts for the 798 Passovers between the desecration of the Temple under Antiochus and the beginning of the caliphate. Daniel 7 uses the same chronological value in a different historical setting, extending from Judah Maccabee's appeal to Rome to the end of Roman-Byzantine dominion over Jerusalem. Daniel 11 traces the history of Daniel's people and their sacred places through the successive powers that affected the covenant, Jerusalem, and the Temple. Daniel 9 then locates the restoration of Hyrcanus II, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the end of the revolt led by Antigonus, and the introduction and confirmation of the new covenant within a chronology structured around seventy Feasts of Weeks and a subsequent confirmation week.

These prophecies do not stand as isolated numerical curiosities. They overlap, join, and confirm one another to form a continuous history centered upon Daniel's people and the places and covenant given to them. Kingdoms and rulers enter the prophetic record when they affect Israel, Jerusalem, the covenant, or the sanctuary. The chronological periods begin and end with events specified by the text. Together they extend from the ancient Persian and Greek worlds, through Roman and Byzantine dominion and the establishment of Islamic rule, to the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in modern times.

Sealed by Command

The command to seal Daniel's prophecies must be acknowledged as having interpretive force, warning that their complete meaning could not be understood prematurely. If the book was to remain sealed until the time of the end, the full significance of its chronological expressions cannot be assumed to be exhausted by their apparent plain meaning. The "evening-mornings," "days," "weeks," and "times" function as cryptic markers whose meanings are disclosed through the language of the text, Israel's sacred calendar, and the historical events that establish their endpoints.

This does not permit unrestricted symbolism. A sealed expression cannot be assigned whatever meaning produces a desired result. The text must control the interpretation, and completed history must test it. The proposed unit must arise from biblical usage; the starting and ending events must correspond to the events named in the prophecy; and the resulting count must be exact. The prophecies were therefore

neither unintelligible nor fully transparent. They were written so that they could be preserved and studied while something essential to their complete historical meaning remained withheld.

Israel's three pilgrimage festivals provide the principal chronological framework. Passover and Unleavened Bread are represented by the evening-until-morning observance of Passover night. The Feast of Weeks is represented simply by "weeks." The Feast of Tabernacles is represented by its Great Day. These were not arbitrary symbols imposed upon the text after the calculations had been made. They were observances commanded in the Torah and embedded in the religious life of Daniel's people. Their recurring annual place in Israel's sacred calendar made them suitable units for measuring long periods, while the terms by which they were represented concealed their chronological function.

The two periods described by expressions translated "a time, times, and half a time" illustrate the sealing particularly well. Both contain 798 Passovers, yet they do not occupy the same historical years. The period in Daniel 12 begins with the first Passover after the desecration in 167 BCE and extends to the establishment of the caliphate in 632 CE. The period in Daniel 7 begins with Passover in 161 BCE, following Judah Maccabee's appeal to Rome, and extends to the last Passover before Roman-Byzantine dominion over Jerusalem ended in 638 CE. Their similar wording and identical numerical value conceal their distinct historical locations. The events within each prophecy identify the proper endpoints and prevent the periods from being confused.

The same discipline applies to Daniel's seventy weeks. The word "weeks" does not justify an assumed period of 490 years. It names the Feast of Weeks itself. Seventy annual Pentecost observances, arranged in the three divisions given by the angel, lead from the restoration of an anointed high priest and prince to the identification of Jesus as the Anointed One. The confirmation of the new covenant follows.

What Could Not Be Known

Over the years, hundreds of commentaries have been written on Daniel, testifying to the seriousness with which its prophecies have been studied. Collectively, they have preserved important interpretive insights. Their existence, however, does not establish that Daniel's complete historical meaning was accessible when they were written. If God commanded that the prophecies be sealed until the time of the end, interpreters living before the terminating events had occurred in history were working without all of the evidence essential to

complete understanding. Their limitation was not insufficient learning, diligence, or faith. It was the absence of history that had not yet unfolded.

Earlier interpreters could preserve the text, analyze its languages, compare manuscripts, reconstruct its ancient setting, and propose fulfillments. As history unfolded, they could recognize events that had already occurred, but they could not verify anything by using events still centuries away or test the idea of a Daniel 8 restoration of the Temple Mount before June 1967. Only God, acting in history, could supply the evidence by which what he had sealed would become understandable.

This conclusion neither dismisses earlier scholarship nor treats a recent interpretation as correct merely because it is recent. Traditional interpretations remain subject to the same test as the interpretation advanced here. Do the proposed chronological units arise from Scripture? Are the endpoints required by the prophecy? Do the counts join those endpoints exactly? Do the persons, places, and actions correspond to documented history? An interpretation should be accepted or rejected according to that evidence, not according to its age or the reputation of the person presenting it.

It is important to stress, therefore, that I am not claiming to have unsealed Daniel. I possess no new revelation and claim no prophetic authority. When I began this work in 1973, the prophetic words were already present in Scripture and the events required for their complete interpretation had already occurred in history. If this exposition is correct, God progressively unsealed the prophecies as he brought their predicted events to pass. My task has been that of an expositor-reporter and witness: to place the biblical words beside the historical record and explain the correspondences between them.

The obstacle to earlier understanding was not a deficiency in the text or in the intelligence of those who studied it. It was the divine restriction announced within the book itself.

God's Sovereignty Over History

Although it may seem so at first read, the unsealing of Daniel presented in this book is not chiefly an achievement in chronological calculation. Its importance lies in what the fulfilled chronology reveals about God. The events extend across more than two millennia, through the rise and fall of empires, the scattering and preservation of the Jewish people, repeated changes of dominion over Jerusalem,

the coming of the new covenant, and the restoration of the city and sanctuary to Jewish sovereignty in modern times. Human rulers acted from ambition, fear, faith, rebellion, or political necessity, yet their actions entered a history already known to God. The resulting correspondence between prophecy and history offers evidence of God's providential rule that can be examined by believer and skeptic alike.

The central place of Jewish history in these prophecies must not be overlooked. Daniel was told what would happen to "your people" in the latter days. The chronology follows them because God's covenant purposes in history follow them. Their dispersal did not erase their identity, their long exclusion from Jerusalem did not annul the prophetic promises, and their restoration in recent times was not incidental to the unsealing. The event that made Daniel 8 historically intelligible was the return of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to the people to whom God had given the land as an everlasting possession.

The Fullness of History

The same prophetic history leads to Jesus. Daniel 9 locates him within the history of the Jewish people as the Anointed One—the promised seed of Abraham through whom all nations would be blessed—who fulfilled the requirements of the prophecy and confirmed the new covenant revealed by God through Jeremiah. John the Baptist introduced him to Israel as the one who would take away the sin of the world. At his baptism, Jesus was anointed by the Spirit, affirming his everlasting righteousness and identifying him as the unblemished One who would offer himself for sin. He obediently confirmed the new covenant through his death and bodily resurrection during Passover week in 30 CE. The message then went forth from Jerusalem to the nations. The *B'rit Hadashah* does not replace the testimony of the *Tanakh* with an unrelated religion; it records the continuation and fulfillment of that testimony.

If Daniel's time-specific sealed prophecies can now be fully understood as this commentary claims, they leave no foundation for using this exposition to predict the date of any future event. The measured periods examined in this book have reached their historical conclusions. Daniel's own resurrection at the end of the days, to which the closing verse of the book alludes, remains future, but no date is supplied for it. The method followed here begins with completed history and interprets the prophecies in light of it because the purpose of Daniel's

chronology is evidentiary: what was foretold can now be compared with what has occurred. Its result is not a framework for predicting the future but a reason for confidence in the faithfulness of God.

Worship and Awe

More than fifty years ago, events in the Middle East led me to seek the meaning of the time-specific prophecy in Daniel 8. What began as a question about the restoration of Jerusalem led to the discovery of a connected chronology running through Daniel's prophetic visions. I offer this exposition as a work to be tested against Scripture and documented history.

The interpretations presented here should be examined carefully, neither accepted without verification nor rejected merely because they differ from familiar explanations. Examine the biblical terms. Verify the festival dates and endpoints. Test whether together they form the continuous chronology claimed here. If the correspondences withstand examination, their implications should not be dismissed merely to retain inherited assumptions.

The book of Daniel begins with Jerusalem defeated and Daniel in exile. It ends with the assurance that history remains under God's authority, that the faithful will arise, and that Daniel will stand in his inheritance at the end of the days. Between those points, kingdoms rise and fall, the sanctuary is desecrated and restored, and God's covenant purposes become evident as the prophecies are fulfilled and unsealed at his appointed times. What Daniel heard but did not understand was preserved until successive events supplied the evidence needed for understanding.

My hope is that this new exposition will direct attention to the God who declares the end from the beginning, governs the times and seasons, and fulfills his word. Fulfilled prophecy demonstrates that his plans are faithful and true. The appropriate response to his remarkable foreknowledge stretching across the ages can only be worship and awe.

Appendices

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 time-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 Daniel, a Hebrew of noble birth who was carried captive from Judah to Babylon in 605 BCE. Daniel records revelations given to him by God through visions, dreams, and angels. He was probably in his early teens when taken to Babylon. There he was educated for service in the royal court and eventually attained high office in the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Nebuchadnezzar made him *"chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon"* (Daniel 2:48). Although Daniel spent most of his life away from Jerusalem and Judah, he remained faithful to his Jewish heritage. He lived to see the fall of Babylon and the beginning of Persian rule, but nothing certain is known about his later life, death, or burial. The Hebrew name Daniel דָּנִיֵּאל means "God is my judge." Daniel never calls himself a prophet, and his book is not included in the Prophets section of the Jewish *Tanakh*. Jesus, however, specifically refers to *"Daniel the prophet"* (Matthew 24:15; see also Mark 13:14), and the book is placed among the Major Prophets in most Christian Bibles.

Date Written

It is not known whether Daniel recorded his visions and dreams separately when they occurred, later as several collections, or together near the end of his life. All were written after Nebuchadnezzar carried him to Babylon. This book assumes the following chronology for the prophetic chapters: 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; and chapters 10–12 in the third year of Cyrus the Great, ca. 536 BCE.

Languages Used

Daniel used two languages in composing his book: Daniel 1:1–2:4a is written in Hebrew, Daniel 2:4b–7:28 in Aramaic, and Daniel 8:1–12:13 in Hebrew (see the illustration of the language transition on the facing page). No explanation for this arrangement has gained general acceptance. One suggestion is that Daniel used Hebrew when addressing matters centered upon covenant Israel and Aramaic when describing Israel under Gentile dominion.

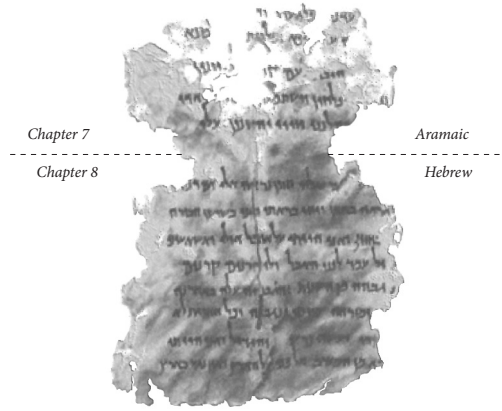
Historical Context

Daniel was born during the reign of Josiah (r. 640–609 BCE), who presided over a period of religious reform in Judah. Josiah repaired the Temple, removed objects associated with idolatry, renewed the covenant, and restored the observance of Passover. These reforms followed the wicked reign of Manasseh (r. 697–642 BCE), concerning whom God declared:

> *"Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols), therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day'"* (2 Kings 21:11–15).

Because Josiah humbled himself before God, the announced calamity did not occur during his lifetime.

Egypt was the great power south of Judah, while Assyrian power was declining in the north and Babylonian power was rising. In 609 BCE, Pharaoh Necho II led an Egyptian army northward to assist the remaining Assyrian forces against Babylon. Josiah attempted to stop him at Megiddo and was killed. After Josiah's death, the judgment deferred during his lifetime began to unfold.



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.

In 605 BCE, Babylon defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish and established its supremacy over Judah. During that period Daniel and other young Hebrews of noble birth were taken to Babylon. Several years later Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon. After his death, his son Jehoiachin inherited both the throne and the consequences of that rebellion. In 597 BCE, Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, and Jehoiachin surrendered. The king, the prophet Ezekiel, and many other Jews were then taken into exile.

Following another rebellion, the Babylonian army returned and besieged Jerusalem. The city fell in 586 BCE. Solomon's Temple and the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed, and most of the remaining population was carried away, although some were left in the countryside.

During the Babylonian domination, another power arose to challenge Babylon. As foretold in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1, Cyrus the Great united the Medes and Persians. In October 539 BCE, forces under his authority captured Babylon and incorporated it into the Achaemenid Persian Empire.

Cyrus generally permitted conquered peoples to retain their customs and religious practices. In the first year of his rule over Babylon, he decreed that the Jews could return to Judah and rebuild the Temple. The first returning exiles arrived about 536 BCE and began the work of restoration. Thus the period of Babylonian domination foretold by Jeremiah came to an end.

Before that return, God revealed to Daniel the course of Jewish history extending from the end of the Exile to the "time of the end." Because those prophecies were sealed, however, their full meaning could not be understood until the appointed historical events had occurred.

Place in the Canon

In the *Tanakh*, the Book of Daniel is not included among the Prophets but is placed in the Writings (Ketuvim), along with Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra–Nehemiah, and Chronicles. One common Jewish explanation is that Daniel's visions differ in form and prophetic function from those of the classical prophets and therefore belong more appropriately among the Writings.

By contrast, the Greek biblical tradition places Daniel among the prophetic books. Christian Bibles generally follow that arrangement, placing Daniel among the Major Prophets immediately after Ezekiel.

Roman Catholic editions of Daniel contain additional material not found in the Jewish or Protestant canon: Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Azariah, and the Song of the Three Young Men. These additions are preserved in the Greek textual tradition but are not recognized as Scripture by Jews or Protestants. This book therefore uses exclusively the twelve-chapter form of Daniel preserved in the Masoretic Text.

Manuscripts

Fragments of eight manuscripts of Daniel were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, one in Cave 1 and seven in Cave 4. Copied between the late second century BCE and the first century CE, they preserve portions of both the Hebrew and Aramaic sections. One manuscript preserves the transition from Aramaic to Hebrew between Daniel 7:28 and 8:1. Although these fragments cannot establish when the book was originally composed, they demonstrate that Daniel circulated in multiple copies and was treated as an important text at Qumran. Their wording generally agrees with the consonantal text later preserved by the Masoretes.

Timekeeping in Ancient Israel

The earliest biblical reference to sacred timekeeping appears in Genesis 1:14: "Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years.'" Timekeeping was therefore associated from the beginning with the recurring movements of the heavenly bodies. Days were marked by the succession of daylight and darkness, months by the phases of the moon, and years by the recurring solar seasons.

The Bible does not provide a technical description of the calendar used by the patriarchs or explain precisely how ancient Israel reconciled lunar months with the solar year. It supplies dates for events, names certain months, and specifies the times when festivals were to be observed, but it does not preserve a complete set of calendrical rules. The structure of the calendar must therefore be reconstructed from Scripture, astronomical necessity, and surviving historical evidence.

The first calendar component given numerical importance in the Torah is the month of the Exodus. God told Moses, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exodus 12:2). That month was called Abib, a name associated with ripening grain. The early books of the Bible mention only four months by name: Abib, the first month (Exodus 13:4); Ziv, the second month (1 Kings 6:1); Ethanim, the seventh month (1 Kings 8:2); and Bul, the eighth month (1 Kings 6:38).

The Agricultural Year

The agricultural associations of those months demonstrate that the Israelite calendar could not have operated as a purely lunar calendar. Twelve lunar months contain approximately 354 days, about eleven days fewer than the 365¼ days of a solar year. Without periodic adjustment, a twelve-month lunar calendar moves backward through the seasons. After three years, its dates fall approximately thirty-three days earlier in the solar year; after ten years, the displacement exceeds one hundred days.

Such movement would have made obedience to the festival commands impossible. Passover commemorated the Exodus, which occurred in the spring

during the month of Abib. The offering of firstfruits was associated with the beginning of the grain harvest, and the Feast of Weeks followed fifty days later at the time of the wheat harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles occurred after the produce of the land had been gathered. If the calendar had been allowed to move freely through the solar year, Passover would eventually have occurred in winter or autumn, while harvest festivals would have arrived when there were no crops to harvest.

The calendar therefore had to be lunisolar: its months were governed by the moon, while its year was kept aligned with the solar-regulated agricultural seasons. This required the periodic addition of an intercalary, or leap, month. The Bible does not explain how ancient Israel determined when such a month should be added. The condition of the crops, the arrival of spring, and other seasonal evidence could have supplied the necessary guidance.

The Gezer Calendar, generally dated to the tenth century BCE, illustrates the close relationship between the calendar and the agricultural year. Its brief inscription divides twelve months among such activities as gathering olives, sowing grain, late planting, cutting flax, harvesting barley, harvesting wheat, tending vines, and gathering summer fruit. Although the inscription does not explain how months were intercalated, it demonstrates that the annual cycle was understood through agricultural seasons extending across twelve months. Israelite timekeeping was lunar in its months but solar and agricultural in the placement of its year.

Lunar Months and Intercalation

A lunar month began with the recurring appearance of the moon and averages approximately 29½ days. Since a calendar cannot contain a fraction of a day, individual months ordinarily contain either twenty-nine or thirty days. Twelve such months produce an ordinary lunar year averaging approximately 354 days. An intercalated year contains a thirteenth month and is approximately thirty days longer. (See the modern rabbinic fixed calendar on facing page.)

The need for such adjustment was understood in Mesopotamia long before Meton of Greece described his nineteen-year cycle. Assyriologist Walther Sallaberger, in his study of the temple rituals of the Sumerian goddess Gula, examined contemporary records of cattle delivered for daily sacrifice. Some months received twenty-nine cattle and others thirty, corresponding to lunar months

Months of the Jewish Year				
Number	*Pre-Exilic Name*	*Post-Exilic Name*	*Length (days)*	*Gregorian Equivalent*
1st	Abib	Nisan	30	March-April
2nd	Ziv	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 a leap year)	February-March
13th (in LY)		Adar II	29	March-April
In a leap year (LY), an additional month, Adar I, is inserted before Adar II; a leap month occurs in the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, and 19th years of the nineteen-year cycle.				

of those lengths. The annual totals were variously 353, 354, or 384, demonstrating the use of ordinary twelve-month lunar years and an intercalated thirteen-month year. These records provide direct evidence that Mesopotamian calendars employed intercalation centuries before Meton. They do not establish that those early intercalations followed the later fixed nineteen-year sequence, but they demonstrate that the underlying lunisolar method was already ancient.

Abraham would therefore have been familiar with a lunisolar calendar in Ur. It is reasonable to suppose that he carried this knowledge into Canaan and transmitted it to his descendants, although the Bible does not state this directly. The similarity between Mesopotamian timekeeping and the calendar reflected in the Torah helps explain why the Law defines the months and appointed festivals without providing a new technical explanation of lunar observation and intercalation. God may have simply endorsed and redirected an existing method of celestial timekeeping, separating it from its associations with Mesopotamian deities and incorporating it into Israel's covenant life.

The Egyptian Calendar

During their residence in Egypt, the Israelites would also have encountered the Egyptian civil calendar. It contained twelve months of thirty days each, followed by five additional days, producing a 365-day year. Those five days were not leap days in the modern sense, because they were added every year rather than occasionally. Since the calendar did not account for the additional quarter-day in the solar year, it gradually moved through the seasons over a cycle of approximately 1,460 years.

The Egyptian calendar was useful for administration because of its regular structure, but no evidence shows that Israel adopted it as the sacred calendar while in Egypt or after the Exodus. The calendar reflected in the Torah remained associated with lunar months, the appearance of the new moon, and festivals fixed within the agricultural year. Nor does the Egyptian calendar supply evidence for a 360-day prophetic year. Its twelve 30-day months were followed every year by five additional days; the complete Egyptian civil year therefore contained 365 days, not 360.

The Seven-Day Week

The day, month, and year have visible astronomical correspondences. The seven-day week does not. Its origin in Scripture is theological rather than astronomical. God blessed and sanctified the seventh day after completing the work of creation (Genesis 2:1–3). Before Israel reached Mount Sinai, the gathering of manna was already regulated by a six-day pattern followed by a Sabbath rest (Exodus 16:22–30). The Sabbath command given at Sinai therefore did not originate the week but formally established its observance within Israel's covenant life.

Exodus 20 connects the Sabbath with creation, while Deuteronomy 5 connects it with Israel's deliverance from bondage. Every seventh day reminded Israel both that God is Creator and that he had delivered his people from Egypt. The week thus became a governing unit of Israelite time, independent of the observable movements of the sun and moon.

God also established annual festivals, sabbatical years, and jubilee years. These sacred cycles organized Israel's worship, agriculture, national life, and remembrance of God's acts. They did not replace celestial timekeeping but

operated within the calendar formed by days, lunar months, and seasonally aligned years.

Two Beginnings of the Year

Exodus 12:2 established Abib as the beginning of months for Israel's festival calendar. The Bible also contains evidence of a year reckoned from the autumn, particularly in connection with agriculture, royal administration, and the jubilee cycle. These were not necessarily competing calendars. A society can reckon different kinds of years from different starting points, just as the modern calendar year, fiscal year, school year, and agricultural year may begin at different times.

After the Exile, the Babylonian names of the months came into Jewish use. Abib became Nisan, Ziv became Iyyar, Ethanim became Tishri, and Bul became Heshvan. Those names remain in use today. The first day of Tishri eventually became known as Rosh Hashanah, "head of the year," although the Torah calls it a day of trumpet-blowing or memorial rather than New Year's Day. Nisan nevertheless retained its position as the first month in the numbering of the festival year.

The Nineteen-Year Cycle

The calendar used in Babylonia was also lunisolar. For many centuries, intercalary months were added according to observation and administrative decision. Babylonian astronomers eventually recognized that 235 lunar months nearly equal nineteen solar years. Since nineteen ordinary twelve-month years contain 228 lunar months, seven additional months are required to produce a total of 235.

Sometime prior to the sixth century BCE, the Babylonians gradually regularized intercalation through a repeating nineteen-year cycle containing seven leap years. The relationship later became associated in Greek astronomy with Meton of Athens and is commonly called the Metonic cycle. Meton did not originate the astronomical relationship, since Babylonian use of it is independently attested.

It cannot presently be demonstrated that Israel used a fixed nineteen-year cycle before the Exile. During the Second Temple period, Jewish authorities could still declare leap years according to seasonal and agricultural conditions

rather than by an unalterable cycle. Nevertheless, the same astronomical relationship necessarily governed any successful lunisolar calendar. Seven additional lunar months within nineteen solar years provide the long-term adjustment needed to keep the festivals within their appointed seasons.

Observation and Calculation

Before the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, and presumably for centuries earlier, the calendar governing Temple worship depended upon authoritative decisions made in Jerusalem. Witnesses reported the appearance of the new moon, and the beginning of the month was proclaimed accordingly. Intercalation was determined when seasonal conditions required an additional month. Signal fires, and later messengers, communicated calendrical decisions to Jewish communities elsewhere.

This system should not be understood as universally accepted by every Jewish group. The community represented by the Dead Sea Scrolls used a different calendar, generally using a 364-day solar scheme. The existence of competing calendars demonstrates that calendrical questions were debated during the Second Temple period. Nevertheless, the calendar centered upon Jerusalem governed the Temple festivals and became the basis of the later rabbinic calendar.

After the destruction of the Temple and the increasing dispersion of the Jewish people, dependence upon observation and communication from one center became progressively difficult. Rabbinic tradition attributes the establishment of a calculated calendar to Hillel II in the fourth century CE. Historical evidence indicates, however, that the fixed calendar developed gradually and did not attain every feature of its present form at one time.

The calendar used by most Jews today employs a repeating nineteen-year cycle containing seven leap months. It standardizes the possible lengths of ordinary and leap years and uses postponement rules governing the day on which Rosh Hashanah may occur. Those rules prevent Yom Kippur from falling immediately before or after a Sabbath and Hoshana Rabbah from falling on a Sabbath. Variations in the lengths of Heshvan and Kislev help accommodate the resulting year lengths. The modern calendar is calculated rather than dependent upon direct observation, but it preserves the fundamental lunisolar relationship between lunar months and the solar year.

Major Festivals on the Ancient Jewish Priestly Calendar			
Order	*Post-Exilic Name*	*Day of Month and Festival*	*Pilgrimage*
1st Month	Nisan	14th – Passover; 15th–21st – Feast of Unleavened Bread; 16th – First day of the count to the Feast of Weeks; Firstfruits (barley)	✓
2nd Month	Iyar	14th – Second Passover	
3rd Month	Sivan	50th Day – Feast of Weeks (Shavuot); Firstfruits (wheat)	✓
4th Month	Tammuz	- - -	
5th Month	Av	- - -	
6th Month	Elul	Firstfruits (figs, pomegranates, dates)	
7th Month	Tishri	1st – Day of Trumpet-Blowing; 10th – Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur); 15th–21st – Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot); 21st – Hoshana Rabbah; 22nd – Eighth-Day Assembly	✓
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)	
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).			

The 360-Day "Prophetic Year"

Some conservative expositors have proposed that biblical prophecy employs an artificial year of twelve 30-day months, totaling 360 days. It is noteworthy that the Bible nowhere explicitly defines a month as consisting of thirty days.

Some support that nonbiblical idea by pointing to the chronology of the Great Flood in Genesis 7 and 8, where 150 days were seemingly equivalent to five months during the time of Noah—a calculation that would indeed yield 30-day months. Advocates of that hypothesis then claim justification for using a 30-day month when interpreting other parts of Scripture. However, the number of days assigned to a month in the Flood chronology is irrelevant for later

expository purposes. That inferred month length does cannot supersede Genesis 1:14. The timekeeping method recorded by Moses and used by the Israelites from the time of the Exodus onward was based on the movement of the heavenly bodies specifically defined in Genesis 1. It followed the same underlying lunisolar principles preserved in the Jewish calendar today, which, as shown on the previous page, does not have twelve 30-day months.

The Flood passages demonstrate that biblical writers could use schematic months of thirty days when expressing a symbolic or approximate period. They do not establish that ancient Israel possessed an official 360-day sacred year, nor do they authorize every prophetic year or "week" to be converted into a period composed of 360-day units. A schematic calculation used within one passage must not automatically be imposed upon another passage whose terminology and context differ.

Most young children memorize "Thirty Days Hath September," the traditional mnemonic designed to help them learn the number of days in each month of the Gregorian calendar:

"Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November;
All the rest have thirty-one,
Save February at twenty-eight,
But leap year, coming once in four,
February then has one day more."

As those familiar verses remind us, the Gregorian calendar, first used in 1582 and still used worldwide today, does not have twelve equal 30-day months—and for good reason. Such an arrangement simplifies calculation because it consists of twelve equal months of thirty days. However, the lunar phase cycle, which provides the God-given basis for determining the number of days in a month according to Genesis 1:14, takes approximately 29½ days, not thirty days.

In biblical times, the number of days in each month of the Hebrew calendar was determined by the movement of the Moon relative to the Earth. The beginning of each month was signaled by the first visible crescent of the new moon. In fact, the Hebrew word חֹדֶשׁ (*ḥodesh*) can denote either a month or a new moon. The verification of the new moon and the observances associated with its appearance were important features of timekeeping in ancient Israel.

The council convened to confirm the sighting on the basis of testimony from witnesses qualified according to Jewish law. After examining their testimony, the head of the court proclaimed that the new month was consecrated, and the assembled people responded, "It is consecrated; it is consecrated." The determination was then communicated to Jewish communities. Signal fires were initially lighted on a succession of mountaintops, but after that system was disrupted, messengers were sent instead.

A 360-day administrative or schematic year was known in the ancient Near East and may also have been used for literary or computational purposes in Judah. Such a convention is convenient because twelve equal months of thirty days simplify calculation. But a schematic year is not the same as the calendar by which Israel observed Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. A 360-day year without intercalation would move through the seasons almost as rapidly as an unadjusted lunar year and could not keep the festivals aligned with their commanded agricultural settings.

19th-Century Imagination

During the nineteenth century, Samuel Prideaux Tregelles and other influential Protestant expositors helped popularize chronological interpretations of Daniel based upon a 360-day prophetic year. The method was subsequently employed by writers such as Sir Robert Anderson and disseminated widely through dispensational exposition and reference Bibles, such as the *Scofield Reference Bible*. Its familiarity, however, does not give it biblical authority.

The calendar revealed in Scripture is grounded in the lights appointed "for signs and seasons, and for days and years." Its months follow the Moon, while its festivals remain aligned with the solar-regulated agricultural seasons. An ordinary lunar year averages approximately 354 days; an intercalated year contains an additional month. Under the later calculated calendar, common years may contain 353, 354, or 355 days, and leap years 383, 384, or 385 days.

None produces an actual calendar year of 360 days. More importantly, a 360-day year contradicts the celestial basis for determining years established by God in Genesis 1:14. It corresponds neither to twelve lunar months nor to the solar cycle governing the recurring seasons. It is therefore an imagined mathematical convention that replaces Scripture rather than a measurable year produced by the heavenly bodies God appointed for timekeeping.

Timekeeping and Prophetic Interpretation

The rules governing ancient Jewish calendars were more complex than can be presented fully here, and the documentation is at times sparse. Their essential features, however, are clear. Israel used lunar months of twenty-nine or thirty days, kept those months aligned with the solar seasons by intercalation, observed the non-astronomical seven-day week, and located its sacred festivals within that lunisolar calendar.

Although later Jewish authorities gradually replaced direct observation with mathematical calculation, the underlying system remained based upon lunar months, solar-regulated seasons, annual festivals, sabbatical cycles, and other recurring observances established in Scripture. These supplied identifiable units by which prophetic periods could be expressed and, once the appointed events occurred, historically tested.

These distinctions are important when interpreting Daniel. A day, week, festival, month, or year should be understood according to its wording, biblical usage, and historical setting. It should not be converted automatically into a different unit merely because a proposed system requires it. Daniel's prophecies were given to a Jewish prophet concerning his people, Jerusalem, the Temple, and events unfolding within Jewish history. Their time expressions should therefore be examined within the calendar and sacred observances familiar to Daniel and his original readers.

That approach avoids imposing the later calculated Jewish calendar standardized under rabbinic Judaism upon earlier periods. It instead recognizes the continuity of the underlying lunisolar system without assuming that its later mathematical rules were already in use.

The time-specific prophecies examined in this book are interpreted according to that calendar and the sacred observances commanded in Scripture. Their fulfillment does not depend upon an artificial 360-day year or upon converting biblical terms into units foreign to their context. It depends upon identifiable observances recurring within documented Jewish history and upon historical events corresponding to the beginning and ending points specified by the prophecies in the biblical text.

Calendar of Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

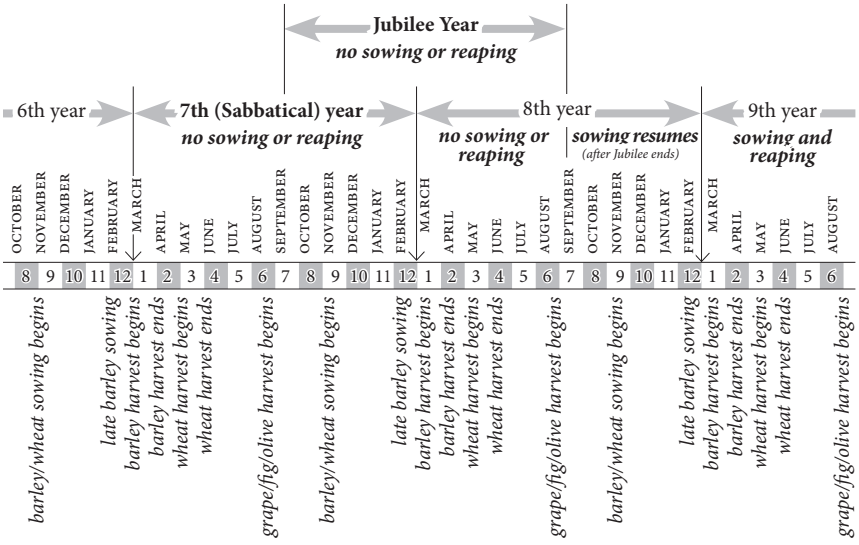
Leviticus 25:1–12 commanded the people of Israel to begin observing sabbatical and Jubilee years after entering the land. In practice, maintaining those cycles required counting the annual memorial Passovers:

> *"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 assured the people that obedience to the command would not leave them without food:

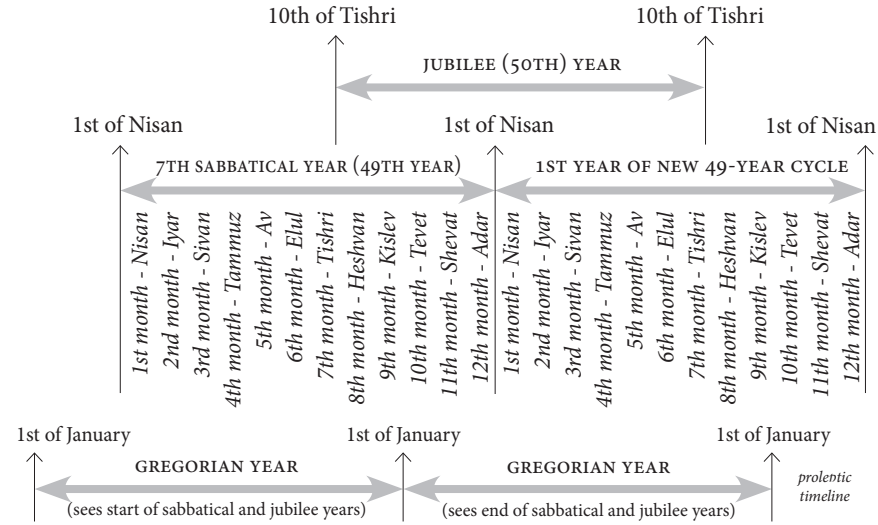
> *"And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow*

Diagram A – Relationship of Seasons to Sabbatical and Jubilee Years



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

Diagram B – Relationship of Sabbatical, 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 and reap the abundant sixth-year yield during the harvest months from March through June. They could sow again in November of the sixth year and harvest whatever ripened before the seventh year began on 1 Nisan.

No sowing would occur in November of the seventh year, so no barley or wheat would be harvested during the following spring and early summer of the eighth year. Sowing would resume in November of the eighth year, producing the next regular harvest in the spring and early summer of the ninth year. The produce gathered in the sixth year therefore supplied Israel through two harvest seasons during which no regular harvest was gathered.

No additional provision was required when a Jubilee overlapped a sabbatical year. The Jubilee ended on 10 Tishri of the eighth year, before the November sowing season, allowing barley and wheat to be planted on their normal schedule. Sabbatical years began on 1 Nisan every seventh year and continued until the following 1 Nisan. A Jubilee began on 10 Tishri during the forty-ninth year of a forty-nine-year cycle and continued until 10 Tishri of the following year. Both observances therefore began in one proleptic Gregorian year and ended in the next.

Although Scripture calls the Jubilee a "fiftieth year," it was not a separate year added after the forty-nine-year cycle. It overlapped the concluding months of the forty-ninth year and the opening months of the first year in the succeeding cycle, as shown in Diagram B on the opposite page.

Table of Sabbatical 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 Sabbatical 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	- - -	- - -

Table of Sabbatical 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							

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 sabbatical cycle in the land of Canaan, and the next five years in that first sabbatical cycle after the land was allotted were 1392 BCE, 1391 BCE, 1390 BCE, 1389 BCE, 1388 BCE. 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.

The Jubilee Year

At Mount Sinai, God commanded the people of Israel to observe a sabbatical year after every six years of cultivating the land. Seven of those seven-year cycles produced forty-nine years. The Jubilee was to be proclaimed on 10 Tishri, the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 25:8–10).

The Jubilee brought the sabbatical count to its fullest expression. Israelite servants were released, hereditary property returned to its original owners, and the land remained uncultivated. The sounding of the trumpet throughout the land announced that the year had been consecrated and that the liberty commanded by God had begun.

The expression "fiftieth year" has produced two different methods of reckoning. Some interpreters treat the Jubilee as an additional twelve-month year placed after the forty-nine years, producing successive Jubilee cycles of fifty years. If sabbatical years are reckoned from Nisan, however, waiting until the forty-ninth year had ended before proclaiming the Jubilee on 10 Tishri would leave a gap of more than six months between the two observances. A separate twelve-month Jubilee would then end on 9 Tishri, leaving another gap before the next sabbatical cycle began on 1 Nisan.

Other interpreters understand the sabbatical sequence as an uninterrupted series of forty-nine-year cycles. Under this reckoning, sabbatical years are counted from Nisan, while the Jubilee begins on 10 Tishri. It therefore begins during the final year of one forty-nine-year cycle and continues into the first year of the succeeding cycle (*see Diagram B on page 124*). The chronology used in this book follows this understanding.

The Jubilee did not interrupt the recurring seven-year sabbatical pattern or insert an additional year between two cycles. Instead, it overlapped the junction between successive cycles, beginning within the concluding year of one and continuing into the opening year of the next. The two counts therefore describe the Jubilee from different directions. It was the fiftieth year in relation to the preceding forty-nine-year count while overlapping the first year of the count beginning anew.

This relationship preserves both statements in Leviticus. Seven sabbaths of years comprise forty-nine years, while the Jubilee reached through that count is consecrated as the fiftieth year. It spans the junction between successive forty-nine-year cycles rather than enlarging each cycle into fifty years.

Chronology in the Book of Ezekiel

SEE TIMELINE ❽ ON OVERVIEW CHART

Daniel's prayer in Daniel 9 shows that he was familiar with the prophecies and terminology of Jeremiah—an important consideration in interpreting Daniel's "weeks" as observances of the Feast of Weeks, since Jeremiah speaks of "the appointed weeks of the harvest" (Jeremiah 5:24). Daniel and Ezekiel were contemporaries during the Babylonian Exile, and Ezekiel refers three times to a Daniel renowned for righteousness and wisdom (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3). Although the biblical text does not record a meeting between the two prophets, the chronological details contained in their prophecies came from the same divine source. Ezekiel's chronology therefore provides an additional biblical context for understanding the prophecies of Daniel.

Ezekiel 4 contains a time-specific prophecy that supplies the earlier boundary of the continuous chronology for Daniel 12:5–7 examined in Chapter Three. God commanded Ezekiel to portray the siege of Jerusalem and to bear symbolically the iniquity of Israel and Judah:

> *Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.* (Ezekiel 4:4–6)

The 390 days assigned to Israel and the forty days assigned to Judah produce a total of 430 days. For interpreting this prophecy, Scripture itself defines the relationship between the symbolic action and the historical period: "I have laid on you a day for each year." The action therefore represents 430 years of the iniquity of Israel and Judah. The question is where the 430-year period begins and ends.

The Historical Anchor: Jehoiachin's Captivity

Ezekiel repeatedly dates his prophecies from the captivity of King Jehoiachin (Ezekiel 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1). That

recurring chronological practice identifies Jehoiachin's captivity as the appropriate starting event for the period in Ezekiel 4.

The year of that event is securely established. The Babylonian Chronicle known as BM 21946 records that Nebuchadnezzar II captured the city of Judah and took its king captive on the second day of the Babylonian month Addaru in his seventh year. The event occurred in 597 BCE and corresponds to the capture of Jerusalem and the removal of Jehoiachin described in 2 Kings 24:10–17. Nebuchadnezzar installed Zedekiah in his place, but Jehoiachin remained the captive king from whom Ezekiel dated his prophecies.

The capture occurred shortly before Passover in 597 BCE. The removal of the king, the royal household, the leading officials, the soldiers and craftsmen, and the treasures from the Temple and palace followed the surrender of the city. Because the journey to Babylonia would have extended beyond Passover 597 BCE, Passover 596 BCE was the first Passover Jehoiachin and Ezekiel experienced in Babylonian exile. The chronology proposed here therefore treats that Passover as the first annual marker of the captivity. Although no surviving document dates the exiles' arrival in Babylonia, this reckoning produces the synchronization preserved in Ezekiel 40:1.

Locating the Destruction of Jerusalem

Ezekiel 40:1 joins two chronological statements: "In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was captured, on the very same day the hand of the LORD was upon me; and He took me there."

It equates the twenty-fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity with the fourteenth year after Jerusalem was captured and destroyed. Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar II shortly before Passover in 597 BCE. His surrender was followed by the removal of the royal household, leading officials, soldiers, craftsmen, and Temple and palace treasures.

Because assembling the captives and transporting them to Babylonia would have extended beyond that Passover, Jehoiachin and Ezekiel would not yet have entered their actual Babylonian captivity when Passover 597 was observed. Passover 596 BCE was therefore their first Passover in Babylonia and provides the first annual marker in the count used here. Counting twenty-five annual Passovers inclusively places the twenty-fifth in 572 BCE.

Ezekiel identifies that same year as the fourteenth year after Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonian forces of Nebuchadnezzar II and the Temple destroyed. Counting backward fourteen Passovers from 572 BCE places the first Passover after the destruction in 585 BCE. Jerusalem and the Temple must therefore have been destroyed after Passover 586 BCE and before Passover 585 BCE, locating the destruction in 586 BCE.

This relationship is shown in Table 3.1, "Locating Ezekiel 40:1 in History," on page 33. The sequence begins with Jehoiachin's surrender in 597 BCE and his subsequent removal to Babylon. Passover 596 BCE, the first Passover after his arrival in Babylonian captivity, begins the count. The twenty-fifth Passover falls in 572 BCE, which Ezekiel also identifies as the fourteenth year after Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians. The synchronization places the first Passover following that destruction in 585 BCE and consequently places the destruction itself in 586 BCE.

Counting the 430 Passovers

The starting event and first annual marker are now fixed. Jehoiachin was taken into captivity in 597 BCE, after the Passover of that year. The count therefore begins with the Passover of 596 BCE, the first Passover after his captivity began. Counting 430 annual Passovers inclusively from the Passover of 596 BCE places the 430th Passover in the spring of 167 BCE. Antiochus IV Epiphanes desecrated the Temple in December of that year and suppressed the worship prescribed by the Law of Moses. That event brought the period to the taking away of the daily sacrifices and initiated the crisis that produced the Maccabean revolt.

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 *see above*	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 367BCE	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	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -

The chronological correspondence is exact because the prophecy supplies its own year-day relationship and Ezekiel supplies the historical starting point. The count does not depend upon a general day-for-year rule imported into the passage. Nor does it depend upon an assumed date for Jerusalem's destruction. Jehoiachin's captivity in 597 BCE is independently anchored by the Babylonian Chronicle, and Ezekiel 40:1 then locates the destruction within the resulting chronology.

The 430-Passover period established here provides the earlier boundary used in Chapter Three. It begins with the first Passover after Jehoiachin's captivity and ends with the last Passover before the desecration under Antiochus. The next Passover, in 166 BCE, begins the 798-Passover interval described by "a time, times, and half a time" in Daniel 12:7. The two periods therefore meet at the desecration of the Temple without overlap.

Recognizing How Festivals Mark Time

Understanding how to interpret Daniel's time-specific prophecies did not begin by assuming that their unusual chronological expressions were based on Israel's sacred festivals. That possibility emerged through pattern recognition. My earlier training in cryptography had accustomed me to look for repeating structures, to preserve distinctions among seemingly similar expressions, and to test a recognized pattern against every part of the available evidence.

Interpreting one unusual expression, the "evening-morning" of Daniel 8, as referring to Passover raised the question whether other chronological expressions in Daniel might also refer to observances on Israel's sacred calendar. The pattern emerged progressively as information derived from one prophecy shed light on another. Recognizing the pattern alone, however, did not establish the individual interpretations. Each proposed relationship between a chronological expression and a sacred-calendar observance had to be tested against the biblical wording and documented history.

Testing that possibility demonstrated that the calendrical expressions are not interchangeable. An "evening-morning," a "day," a "time," and a "week" retain their different forms because they identify different features of the sacred calendar. Nor does each interpretation rest upon the same kind of evidence. In one case Scripture uses the term as the name of a festival; in another the wording describes the temporal limits of an observance; in still another the proposed relationship becomes evident only when independently established historical boundaries are tested by an exact count. The strength of the method therefore lies in the convergence of several kinds of evidence rather than in a single lexical rule.

Israel's Sacred Calendar

Genesis 1:14 states that the heavenly lights were given "for signs and seasons, and for days and years." The Hebrew word מוֹעֲדִים *moʿadim* translated "seasons" is also used for appointed occasions, including Israel's sacred assemblies. The nation's calendar was therefore more than a means of numbering ordinary days and years. It ordered the recurring observances by which Israel remembered the acts of God and maintained its covenant life.

Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread marked the annual memorial commemorating deliverance from Egypt. The Feast of Weeks marked an appointed harvest celebration determined by a count of days after Passover. The Feast of Tabernacles, culminating in its Great Day, completed the annual cycle of pilgrimage festivals. Each observance recurred once within the religious year. Consequently, counting successive observances also measured the passage of years, while preserving the particular sacred occasion named or described by the prophecy.

This calendrical setting is especially appropriate to Daniel. His visions concern his people, Jerusalem, the sanctuary, the sacrifices, the covenant, and events that desecrated or restored what belonged to God. References to the daily sacrifices, the sanctuary, and appointed times place the prophecies within the religious life of Israel. The sacred calendar is therefore not introduced from an unrelated system. It belongs to the biblical and historical world in which the prophecies were given.

Why the Pattern Was Difficult to Recognize

The sacred-calendar pattern is not stated explicitly in Daniel. Its components are distributed among several visions and expressed through different chronological terms. An "evening-morning" does not resemble a "day," a "time," or a "week," and nothing in the wording alone announces that the expressions belong to a common calendrical pattern. Their relationship becomes visible only when each is examined within its own biblical setting and the resulting periods are compared chronologically.

The familiar treatment of these expressions as ordinary units of elapsed time also concealed the pattern. Interpreters generally attempted to convert the numbers into conventional units—days, years, or calculated periods based upon an accepted eschatological framework. Once an expression had been assigned a numerical value, attention naturally turned toward finding historical events that approximated the resulting period. That procedure did not encourage consideration of annual festival observances as the units being counted.

The historical evidence required to recognize the complete pattern was also unavailable to earlier interpreters. Several prophecies terminate in events associated with the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in 1967. Before those events occurred, the final boundaries of those prophecies could not

be identified, and the exact festival counts leading to them could not be tested. Other periods became intelligible only after those terminating events supplied the framework within which the related prophecies could be compared.

The pattern was therefore concealed by more than unfamiliar terminology. Its components were separated among several visions, expressed through different features of Israel's sacred calendar, and dependent upon historical events that unfolded across many centuries. Only after the necessary events had occurred could the expressions be placed together and tested as parts of a coherent chronology. This accords with Daniel's own testimony that the prophecies were sealed until God's appointed time for their unsealing.

How the Pattern Was Recognized

As stated above, the first indication of the festival pattern came from the expression translated "evening-morning" in Daniel 8. The expression was obviously a time unit, but which unit of time was not as obvious. In looking at the chronological references involving the words "evening" and "morning," Passover was the annual observance most clearly bounded by the two points named in the vision. The lamb was prepared at evening, the memorial meal was eaten during the night, and nothing was to remain until morning. The expression therefore describes the temporal form of Passover night even though "evening-morning" is not elsewhere established as a lexical name for Passover.

Counting the Passover nights from the first Passover after Alexander's initial attack upon Persia, represented in Daniel 8:6, to the Passover preceding the restoration of the Temple Mount to Jewish possession in 1967 produced exactly 2,300 observances. That result did more than provide an interpretation of Daniel 8. It disclosed a possible feature of Daniel's prophetic language: a large number joined to an unusual time expression might count recurring observances rather than consecutive ordinary days or conventional years.

That recognition supplied a question, not an answer. Substituting Passover for the chronological expressions in Daniel's other time-specific prophecies did not produce satisfactory results. The expression used in Daniel 8 therefore could not be imposed upon the others. Each prophecy had to be examined according to its own wording and context. The emerging pattern was not that every expression meant Passover, but that different expressions might identify different recurring festivals on Israel's sacred calendar.

From Recognition to Verification

Pattern recognition can reveal a relationship that has not previously been noticed, but a recognized pattern may be real or imagined. It must therefore be subjected to controls that prevent a desired result from determining the interpretation. In the examinations presented in this book, the principal controls are the wording of the prophecy, the identification of historical boundaries from that wording, the use of appropriate time unitsbased on Israel's sacred calendar, and an exact count between the proposed chronological boundaries.

Exactitude requires that boundaries identified in the prophecy and established in documented history not be adjusted merely to make a proposed time span fit the prophetic text. Likewise, the time units cannot be lengthened or shortened, and the totals cannot be rounded or approximated to achieve a desired result. The number of time units between the specified starting and ending events must agree precisely with the number stated in the text. When those criteria are met, the resulting chronology must also agree with related prophetic periods when all are plotted to scale on a single timeline.

Any proposed interpretation that requires adjustable boundaries, arbitrarily places endpoints in an untestable future, leaves unexplained gaps in the timeline, or treats approximate correspondences as fulfillments fails to meet the standard required for the exposition of prophecy revealed by God.

Festival Counting Allows Latitude

When biblical festivals serve as prophetic time units, as shown in this book, the interval between successive observances of the same festival appears in calendar reckoning as approximately one year in duration. This permits exact chronological fulfillment without requiring the associated event to occur on the festival day itself. Successive observances of the festival mark the boundaries of the interval within which historical events specified in the text can occur. The chronology is therefore exact according to its stated unit without imposing a day-specific precision that the prophecy does not require. Thus, God's appointed chronology remains exact while human decisions and actions unfold naturally within those boundaries.

Daniel and Jesus Agree about 1967

Jesus foretold events involving the Jewish people and Jerusalem that would extend far beyond the lifetime of his hearers. He warned that Jerusalem would be surrounded by armies and declared: "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

The prophecy describes "the times of the Gentiles" as one historical period characterized by two related conditions: the captivity of the Jewish people among the nations and Gentile domination of Jerusalem. These conditions belong to a single prophetic account of what would befall the people and their city. Understood in that context, "until" marks the conclusion of the combined condition: the Jewish people would no longer be held in dispersion, and Jerusalem would no longer be under Gentile domination.

The fulfillment began during the Jewish revolt against Rome that broke out in 66 CE. Roman armies eventually captured Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple in 70 CE. After the Bar Kokhba revolt ended in 135 CE, Emperor Hadrian renamed Jerusalem Aelia Capitolina and Judea Syria Palestina, and restricted Jewish access to Jerusalem. The Jewish people remained dispersed among the nations, and Jerusalem remained under successive Gentile powers for centuries.

Roman rule was followed by Byzantine rule, then by Islamic, Crusader, Mamluk, Ottoman, and British control. The rulers changed repeatedly, but one condition remained constant: Jerusalem was governed by Gentile authorities.

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 provided a national home for Jews. In 1950, the Law of Return established that Jews anywhere in the world could return as Israeli citizens, thus ending the forced dispersion. Jerusalem, however, remained divided. Israel controlled the western city, while Jordan controlled East Jerusalem, including the Old City, Western Wall, and Temple Mount. The city's sacred center therefore remained under Gentile rule.

That condition changed during the Six-Day War. On June 7, 1967, Israeli forces gained control of the Western Wall and Temple Mount. For the first time since antiquity, Jerusalem's sacred center came under Jewish sovereignty and was thus no longer "trampled by the Gentiles." Israel permitted the Islamic Waqf to continue administering the Muslim holy sites, but retained sovereignty.

The event supplies the observable reversal required by the word "until." Jesus did not say that Jerusalem would always be trampled by Gentiles. He foretold a condition continuing until its appointed termination. The recovery of the Old City and Temple Mount in 1967 ended the succession of Gentile nations exercising sovereignty over Jerusalem and brought the period of history described in Luke 21:24 to its conclusion.

"The times of the Gentiles" in Luke 21:24 should not be confused with "the fullness of the Gentiles" in Romans 11:25. Paul's focus was on the inclusion of Gentiles in God's redemptive purpose. Jesus spoke about Jewish captivity and Gentile domination of Jerusalem, so his prophecy must be interpreted only by what happened to the Jewish people and Jerusalem.

Nor does Jesus's prophecy in Luke establish a chronology for the 2,300 "evening-mornings" time span in Daniel 8. The prophecies begin from different historical settings and are not identical chronological periods. Daniel's vision begins with the Greek attack upon Persia and extends through 2,300 Passover nights. Jesus spoke about captivity and Gentile domination of Jerusalem, so his prophecy must be interpreted by what happened to the Jewish people and Jerusalem, not by an assumed schedule for Gentile evangelization.

Nevertheless, the prophecies converge upon the same historical endpoint, and that agreement is significant. Daniel was told that after 2,300 evening-mornings the sanctuary would be restored to its rightful state. Jesus foretold that Jerusalem would be trampled by Gentile nations until their appointed times were fulfilled. The event of June 7, 1967, satisfies both descriptions: Jerusalem's sacred center and the place of the sanctuary were restored to Jewish sovereignty, ending the succession of Gentile powers that had controlled them.

This correspondence provides independent biblical confirmation of the endpoint identified in Daniel 8. The significance of 1967 does not arise merely from its importance in modern Jewish history or from a desire to assign prophetic meaning to a dramatic political event. Daniel foretold the restoration of the sanctuary, and Jesus foretold the termination of Gentile domination over Jerusalem and the sanctuary area. Both prophecies reached their common endpoint when Israel recovered the Old City and Temple Mount.

Jesus's prophecy therefore reinforces the interpretation of Daniel 8 presented in this book. Gentile domination had a defined endpoint, and that endpoint became observable in 1967. The event supplied the increased knowledge by which both prophecies could be more fully understood.

Transcript from 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! ...

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 ...

Commander 89 [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, elokeinu 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," Israel's unoffcial national anthem [made official in 2004] at the Western Wall ...

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-tsror 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!]

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Scripture

King James Version

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Book of Daniel

Chapters 7-12

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]*. ***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 supplications, 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; O 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 overflown 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 Chart

The timelines on the following pages 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.

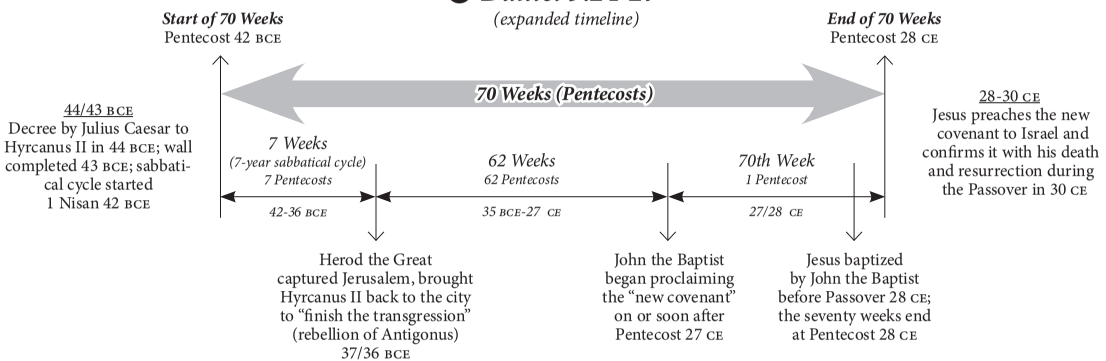
Overview of the Prophecies in Daniel

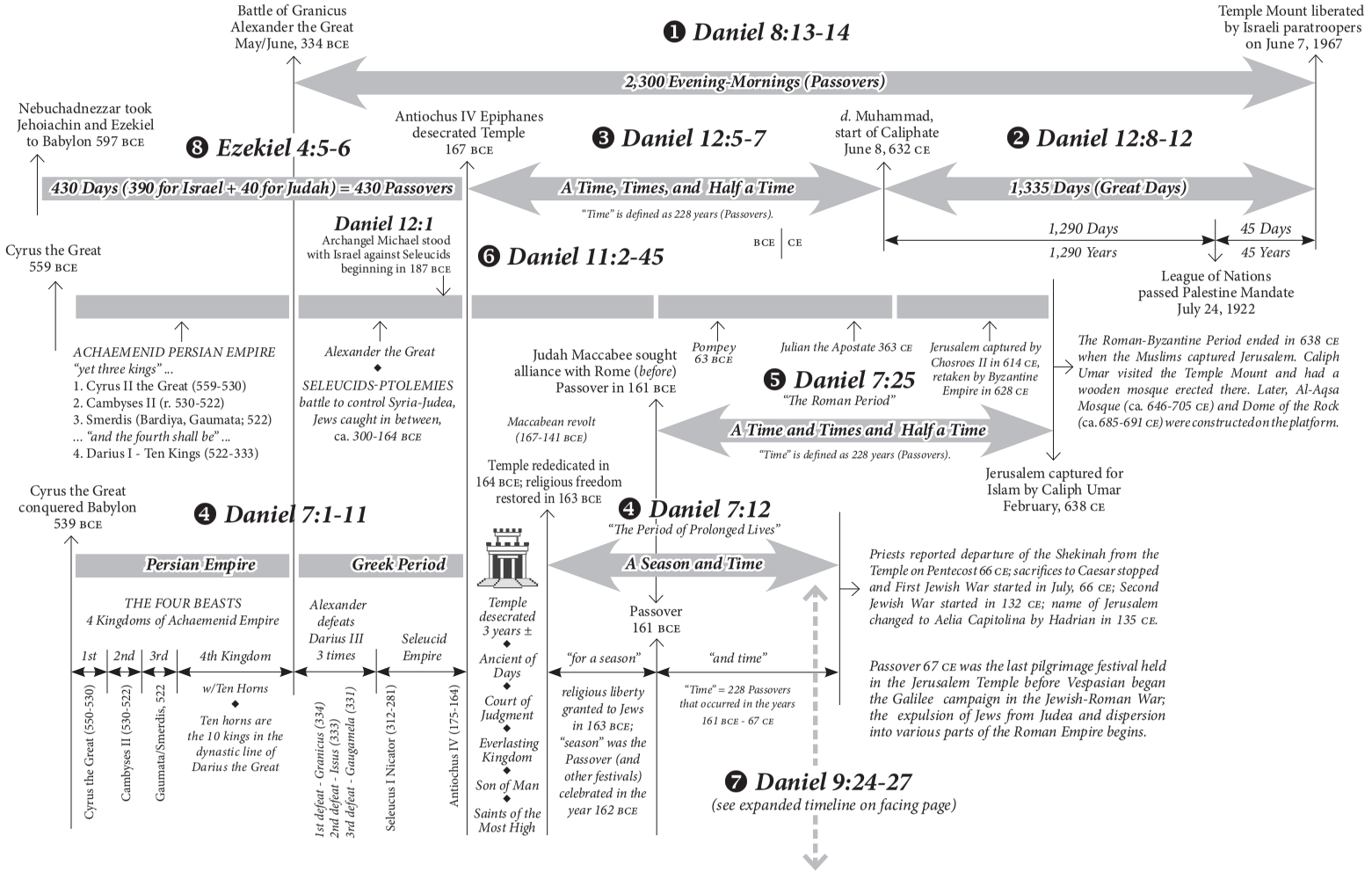
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(expanded view shown below, see timeline placement on facing page)

❼ *Daniel 9:24-27*

(expanded timeline)




Battle of Granicus
Alexander the Great
May/June, 334 BCE
❶ Daniel 8:13-14
Temple Mount liberated
by Israeli paratroopers
on June 7, 1967
2,300 Evening-Mornings (Passovers)
Nebuchadnezzar took
Jehoiachin and Ezekiel
to Babylon 597 BCE
❽ Ezekiel 4:5-6
Antiochus IV Epiphanes
desecrated Temple
167 BCE
❸ Daniel 12:5-7
d. Muhammad,
start of Caliphate
June 8, 632 CE
❷ Daniel 12:8-12
430 Days (390 for Israel + 40 for Judah) = 430 Passovers
A Time, Times, and Half a Time
"Time" is defined as 228 years (Passovers).
1,335 Days (Great Days)
1,290 Days
1,290 Years
45 Days
45 Years
BCE
CE
Daniel 12:1
Archangel Michael stood
with Israel against Seleucids
beginning in 187 BCE
❻ Daniel 11:2-45
Cyrus the Great
559 BCE
League of Nations
passed Palestine Mandate
July 24, 1922
ACHAEMENID PERSIAN EMPIRE
"yet three kings" ...
1. Cyrus II the Great (559-530)
2. Cambyses II (r. 530-522)
3. Smerdis (Bardiya, Gaumata; 522)
... "and the fourth shall be" ...
4. Darius I - Ten Kings (522-333)
Alexander the Great
◆
SELEUCIDS-PTOLEMIES
battle to control Syria-Judea,
Jews caught in between,
ca. 300-164 BCE
Pompey
63 BCE
Julian the Apostate 363 CE
Jerusalem captured by
Chosroes II in 614 CE,
retaken by Byzantine
Empire in 628 CE
The Roman-Byzantine Period ended in 638 CE
when the Muslims captured Jerusalem. Caliph
Umar visited the Temple Mount and had a
wooden mosque erected there. Later, Al-Aqsa
Mosque (ca. 646-705 CE) and Dome of the Rock
(ca. 685-691 CE) were constructed on the platform.
Judah Maccabee sought
alliance with Rome (before)
Passover in 161 BCE
❺ Daniel 7:25
"The Roman Period"
Maccabean revolt
(167-141 BCE)
A Time and Times and Half a Time
"Time" is defined as 228 years (Passovers).
Jerusalem captured for
Islam by Caliph Umar
February, 638 CE
Temple rededicated in
164 BCE; religious freedom
restored in 163 BCE
Cyrus the Great
conquered Babylon
539 BCE
❹ Daniel 7:1-11
❹ Daniel 7:12
"The Period of Prolonged Lives"
Persian Empire
Greek Period
A Season and Time
Priests reported departure of the Shekinah from the
Temple on Pentecost 66 CE; sacrifices to Caesar 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 CE.
THE FOUR BEASTS
4 Kingdoms of Achaemenid Empire
Alexander
defeats
Darius III
3 times
Seleucid
Empire
Temple
desecrated
3 years ±
Ancient of
Days
Court of
Judgment
Everlasting
Kingdom
Son of Man
Saints of the
Most High
Passover
161 BCE
1st
2nd
3rd
4th Kingdom
w/Ten Horns
◆
Ten horns are
the 10 kings in the
dynastic line of
Darius the Great
"for a season"
"and time"
religious liberty
granted to Jews
in 163 BCE;
"season" was the
Passover (and
other festivals)
celebrated in the
year 162 BCE
"Time" = 228 Passovers
that occurred in the years
161 BCE - 67 CE
Passover 67 CE was the last pilgrimage festival held
in the Jerusalem Temple before Vespasian began
the Galilee campaign in the Jewish-Roman War;
the expulsion of Jews from Judea and dispersion
into various parts of the Roman Empire begins.
Cyrus the Great (550-530)
Cambyses II (530-522)
Gaumata/Smerdis, 522
1st defeat - Granicus (334)
2nd defeat - Issus (333)
3rd defeat - Gaugamela (331)
Seleucus I Nicator (312-281)
Antiochus IV (175-164)
❼ Daniel 9:24-27
(see expanded timeline on facing page)

Questions and Comments

If you have questions about anything presented in this book, or if you believe I have made a mistake in interpreting the prophecies, identifying their historical fulfillments, or calculating their chronological periods, please feel free to contact me. Because I am a slow typist with an old man's eyesight, I prefer a friendly telephone discussion whenever possible.

Before beginning a discussion of a proposed error, confirm that you have read the entire book. If you need clarification, ask a question directly. If you disagree with anything, identify the single most important mistake you believe I have made and explain why you believe it is mistaken. To keep the discussion productive, please raise one issue at a time rather than presenting a long list of objections.

Any alternative interpretation of the chronological prophecies you present must correspond precisely with the biblical language and documented history. Approximation or conjecture cannot establish a chronology, because the prophecies concern actual events that occurred in real time. Where a prophecy specifies a continuous period between identifiable historical events, only one timeline can satisfy all its requirements.

I do not claim infallibility. To persuade me that my reasoning is flawed, however, you must demonstrate my error using only the biblical text or documented history. An appeal to what a respected commentator or study Bible says will not be acceptable as a substitute. Nor am I interested in reexamining denominational disagreements about eschatology.

Note that in my chronological research, I do not attempt to calculate biblical timelines farther back than the birth of Abraham and purposefully avoid debate about the date of Creation. Neither do I speculate about dates for future events. Scripture teaches that although we can sense eternity—that time extends into the past and continues into the future—in this life we cannot discover the beginning or the end of God's work (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Finally, if you do not accept the Bible as accurate in its chronological and historical details, we will have no common basis for evaluating this exposition. If you share that conviction and are willing to examine the biblical and historical evidence carefully, I welcome a thoughtful and sincere exchange of ideas.



You can check out our other books
on Bible prophecy and chronology at
www.prophecysociety.org