

DANIEL'S SIXTY-NINTH WEEK FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST

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ABSTRACT

Christ conclusively fulfilled the functional, personal-circumstantial, and chronological specifications of the sixty-ninth week personage of Daniel's sixth century B.C. seventy weeks prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27). Based on a comparison of Daniel, its scriptural context, apocalyptic works and those from the period of their influence, and history, the prophecy is not subject to the naturalistic hermeneutic of the apocalyptic genre, but is to be interpreted as a divinely inspired prediction subject to exegetical and historical verification.

The prophecy's chronological increments, "weeks," are units of seven literal years, which is evident from the context of the prophecy's reception, related Old Testament terminology, and pertinent scriptural references. The decree of Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah (ca. 445 B.C.) is the prophecy's a quo; this is ascertainable from a comparison of the prophecy's specifications with pertinent periods of history. An investigation of Scripture and history reveals that the prophecy sets forth sixty-nine consecutive weeks of literal solar years and specifies relatively close approximation as its degree of chronological precision of fulfillment. That Jesus Christ fulfilled the sixty-ninth week presentation of the "Anointed One, the ruler" is supported by the biblical comparison of "the ruler who will come" (Dan. 9:26, 27) with the figure of Antichrist, as well as by the general failure of fulfillment evident in the Onias III--Antiochus IV scenario, the second most feasible position.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

The Problem Defined

The problem to be addressed by this thesis may be defined as the answering of the question: Can Jesus Christ be Scripturally and historically demonstrated, to a reasonable degree, to be the fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week of Daniel's sixth century B.C. seventy week prophecy (as set forth in Dan. 9:24-27)?

Purpose with Regard to the Problem

The purpose of this thesis with regard to the stated problem is: (1) to set forth Scriptural, exegetical, and historical evidence (some from traditional and established argumentation and some previously not applied to the question) to establish to a reasonable degree Daniel's sixty-ninth week fulfillment in Christ; (2) to provide basic refutation of alternative fulfillments (especially that of Onias III with Antiochus IV) in the process of bringing forth the aforesaid evidence; (3) to provide, by this aforesaid evidence and through specific argumentation, basic vindication of the genuinely predictive nature and divine origin of Daniel's prophecy, and, thus, to show the divine attestation and sanction it gives to Jesus Christ's identity, ministry, words, and redemptive and salvific efficacy.

Position with Regard to the Problem

The thesis position is that Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27) can be Scripturally and historically demonstrated to be a genuine sixth century B.C. divine prediction foretelling the presentation of Jesus Christ as "the Anointed One, the ruler" at the completion of its sixty-ninth week. Christ conclusively fulfilled the functional, personal-circumstantial, and chronological specifications of this prophecy--and this to the exclusion of all other contending fulfillments, including the second most Scripturally and historically feasible, that of Onias III with Antiochus IV.

Limitations and Assumptions

The thesis discussion will devote a majority of attention to the setting forth of positive evidence to sufficiently support Christ's fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week, because this endeavor is barely contained within the space parameters of such a paper and constitutes the major thrust of the thesis. Only the most salient aspects of the most feasible of the more liberal views will be addressed, since historically the scholarly (even liberal) discussion has refuted virtually all of these views, space limitations necessitate this, and the tenets of alternative interpretations of the prophecy will be invalidated as Christ's fulfillment is exposed. However, the proposed fulfillment scenario of Onias III with Antiochus IV will be refuted on crucial points because of its present popularity in critical circles and due to the fact that this alternative probably exhibits the second highest degree of conformity to the prophecy's specifications to that of the Christ--Antichrist scenario. For chronological reckoning, argumentation

throughout the paper utilizes the received chronology, taken to be approximately correct. Particularly pertinent are the portions of the Canon of Ptolemy relating the periods of Babylonian and Persian dominion (see table 1 in the Appendix). All quotations of Scripture are taken from the New International Version of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.

Alternative Perspectives on the Problem

The critical non-predictive perspective frequently rejects the possibility of historical verification of the supernatural, and thus of the Dan. 9:24-27 prophecy (e.g., see Pfeiffer¹). This view sees Daniel to be a human production utilizing traditional means; it is judged to be of late (Maccabean) origin, have an immediate focus, and be chronologically inaccurate.² It is thought that the book's human literary family forms the essential interpretive context for Daniel's prophecy.³

The symbolic-predictive perspective rejects the definite chronological nature of the seventy weeks prophecy, denying that its durations are calculable.⁴ However, it does consider Daniel's prophecy to be a divine production, and thus genuinely predictive. Divinely inspired Scripture is asserted to be the essential interpretive context.

The literal-predictive perspective accepts the definite chronological nature of the Dan. 9 prophecy. It views this passage to have been composed in the sixth century B.C. and to be of divine origin, and, so, to be genuinely predictive. The divinely inspired canon is seen to be the essential interpretive context.

Historical Views

Due to space limitations we will limit our discussion of the historical views to the most representative and tenable views, and focus on aspects directly pertinent to sixty-ninth week fulfillment. The basic chronological understandings and key personages set forth by the views will form the major fabric of the concise outlines presented. Brief critiques of the historical views will be given in this section while more complete refutation will become apparent as the proposed solution is supported. A concise tabular presentation of the various critical views, including the outdated and obsolete, is included in table 2 in the Appendix.

Critical Non-Predictive

Maurer

Maurer's view avers that the terminus a quo of the seventy weeks prophecy is the 588 B.C. destruction of Jerusalem. His chronological understanding is that the first seven weeks extend to the ca. 538 B.C. decree of Cyrus (Ez. 1:2-4), who he believes to be the Anointed One of Dan. 9:25. From this decree the sixty-two weeks run to the death of Seleucus Philopator, his Anointed One of Dan. 9:26. Maurer offers an indefinite beginning of the final week, sometime after 176 B.C., and places the terminus ad quem at the restoration of temple sacrifices (ca. 165 B.C.).⁵

A critique of Maurer's view may begin with his choice of a terminus a quo. For, there was no clear going forth of a divine or human decree to rebuild the city in 588 B.C.; there was perhaps more appropriately a word to destroy. Next, we should consider

that choosing Cyrus as the Dan. 9:25 Anointed assumes a syntactical break between the seven weeks and sixty-two weeks of years that is exegetically unlikely, as will be shown; this also forces the Anointed One of Dan. 9:26 to assume an identity different from that of the one in verse twenty-five, which is again exegetically improbable, running counter to the simple and most direct understanding of the passage. The death of Seleucus Philopator is untenable as the post sixty-second week event for several reasons. Firstly, there are less than fifty-nine weeks of years from the proposed a quo to his ca. 176 B.C. death of Seleucus Philopator, so this event is not describable as even approximately after the sixty-two weeks. History in no way indicates that the life or death of Seleucus Philopator can be tied to the accomplishment of the profound functions listed in Dan. 9:24. His death was not remarkably significant for the Jews,⁶ nor was its circumstances or manner unusual for the ancient Orient.⁷ Lastly, Seleucus Philopator was not violently cut off, but poisoned. This would seem to violate Dan. 9:26, for the Hebrew word rendered "cut off" here is not exclusively the term for a violent death but can generally be understood as such.⁸

Hitzig

Hitzig's view designates the first Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem (ca. 606 B.C.) as the prophecy's a quo. Hitzig's chronology posits not an epoch of seventy weeks of years but rather of sixty-three weeks of years. His first seven weeks begin at the 588 B.C. destruction of Jerusalem and end circa 536 B.C. at the decree of Cyrus, his Dan. 9:25 Anointed. His sixty-

two weeks extend from 588 B.C. to about 172 B.C., just before the murder of Onias III, Hitzig's choice for the Dan. 9:26 Anointed. He begins the final week of years with the involvement of Antiochus Epiphanes in the affairs of the Jewish priesthood (ca. 172 B.C.) and ends the sixty-three week sequence at the 165 B.C. restoration of temple sacrifices.

A first critique of Hitzig's interpretation is that the 606 B.C. invasion fails the criteria of a word concerning restoration, since a siege portends more reasonably of future desolations irrespective of subsequent rebuilding. The 606 B.C. a quo appears to be a fabrication to accommodate Hitzig's sixty-three week total duration, for it does not allow for a seven week interval to Cyrus, his Anointed. His a quo is an unnatural interpretation and his sixty-three week parameter is exegetically unfounded, especially since verse twenty-four most understandably calls for a seventy week period. Antiochus IV did not make a formal covenant with Israel, as stipulated by Dan. 9:27; he simply utilized his power to better control the Jews through the office of high priest and to hellenize Judaea, as will be later acknowledged. The restoration of temple ritual does not technically qualify as the ad quem of the prophecy, for verse twenty-seven designates the demise of the coming ruler (Dan. 9:26,27) as such.

Heinisch

Heinisch maintains the prophecy's a quo to be a divine decree inacted ca. 587 B.C. as promulgated by Jeremiah (see Jer. 37-39). The first seven weeks of years he concludes at the edict

of Cyrus in about 538 B.C. Heinisch understands the sixty-two weeks cut off point to be the 171 B.C. murder of Onias III. He places the mid-point of the final week at 167 B.C. when Antiochus IV perpetrated the abomination in the temple. His ad quem is the 165 B.C. restoration of temple sacrifices.⁹

The sixty-two week cut off point chosen by Heinisch does not meet the prophecy's requirement of sixty-nine weeks extending from the a quo to the Anointed's death (Dan. 9:26). The 171 B.C. murder of Onias is not sixty-nine weeks from 587 B.C. but only about fifty-nine weeks away. Even if the first seven weeks are made to run concurrently with the sixty-two weeks--a thing in violation of the prophecy's structure and most apparent intended meaning--Onias III's death did not occur after sixty-two weeks. It is also noteworthy that neither history nor Scripture attest that either the life or death of Onias produced the drastic effects prescribed in Dan. 9:24. Finally, Heinisch's view fails to adequately identify the striking of the covenant specified in verse twenty-seven.

Symbolic-Predictive

Because of considerations of space and the focus of this paper, we will limit our examination to the Christian church interpretation. The traditional Messianic view will not be directly addressed since it holds to Christ's fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week and has other similarities with the proposed solution; and, for the most part, where the traditional Messianic view differs with the proposed solution, it can be answered with critiques set forth for the Christian church interpretation.

The Christian church interpretation rejects the definite numerical chronology of the prophecy and the concept of literal weeks (or sevens) of years, holding instead to a purely symbolic understanding of the numbers used. It affirms the a quo to be the end of the exile, circa 538 B.C., and extends the first seven weeks to the first coming of Christ. The sixty-two week period immediately following is considered to be an indefinite interval during which the Gospel is propagated and the elect are regenerated.¹⁰ It is believed that during the first half of the seventieth week the church loses its influence and effectiveness.¹¹ The last half of this final week is characterized by the Anti-christ's covenant of savage power over the masses, proscription of worship, and destruction of the church.¹²

As will be discussed later, this view's arbitrary and indefinite numerology has no sure precedent in Scripture and is inconsistent with the prophecy's Scriptural and revelatory context. Also, the decree of Cyrus does not adequately meet the a quo specifications of Dan. 9:25. For, this decree had only to do with restoration of the temple, as is borne out by the first three chapters of Ezra where only the temple's rebuilding is mentioned, while verse twenty-five calls for a decree to cause the city of Jerusalem to return by building. This interpretation assumes a unique type in verse twenty-five, that of Jerusalem for the church; and, the idea of rebuilding the church might be inappropriate since the church would have just been born after the first seven heptads. If verse twenty-seven intends to relate sacrifice, offerings, and temple ritual to the church, this would

also be rather typologically unique and would hardly have been understood as such by Daniel (cf. Dan. 9:23). Finally, making the last week an indefinite period would seem to render more obscure other descriptions of this last week (i.e., in Daniel and Revelation), since they define it even as a specific number of days.

A Proposed Solution

Having briefly outlined the historical views, and having seen them to be inadequate interpretations of Daniel's prophecy by exposing their failures on key points, we are now ready to propose an interpretation that would seem to be adequately consistent with the prophecy's specifications and with the Scriptural and historical records. This interpretation is of the literal-predictive perspective. Although the number of possible views within this grouping is many, for a single variation in one of the chronological or personal-circumstantial variables could constitute a distinct view, one combination of variables will be presented as a proposed solution. As this combination is supported throughout the paper, the deficiencies of alternative variables will become apparent by implication or direct refutation.

The proposed solution understands the prophecy's chronology to be essentially definite and literal. It features the decree of Artaxerxes I, Longimanus, to Nehemiah in ca. 445 B.C. as the a quo. The first seven weeks of years, or about forty-nine literal years, extend to the completion of the Jerusalem restoration (i.e., with protective boundary and interior streets and buildings). From here the sixty-two weeks, or approximately 434 literal years, stretch to the presenting of the Anointed One,

Jesus, probably in His triumphal entry (see Dan. 9:25). After the sixty-two weeks, Jesus is crucified fulfilling the Dan. 9:26 death of the Anointed One. Subsequent to this, the 70 A.D. Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the temple fulfills the remainder of verse twenty-six. Antichrist's future seven year covenant with Israel fulfills the final week in verse twenty-seven. The ending of sacrifice and offering refers to his prohibition of Jewish temple ritual 3 1/2 years into the last week. The abomination refers to his placing of an unholy thing in the temple at this same time. The intended degree of chronological accuracy is proposed to be that of an amazingly close approximation, so close an approximation as to leave little reasonable doubt as to fulfillment in the minds of unbiased inquirers. The proposed solution views the Book of Daniel as composed in complete form in the sixth century B.C. as it purports; thus, it sees the seventy-weeks prophecy to be genuinely predictive and ultimately of divine origin.

Summary

We defined the thesis problem to be the question of whether Jesus Christ can be reasonably demonstrated to be the fulfillment of Daniel's sixty-ninth week. Our purpose was shown to be the bringing forth of Scriptural, exegetical, and historical evidence to support this fulfillment, while, by this same endeavor, invalidating alternative fulfillments and vindicating the divine origin and predictions of Daniel's prophecy--thus, demonstrating God's attestation to the identity, work, and salvific efficacy of Christ. We have provided a delineation of some of the major inadequacies

of the historical views, and have outlined a proposed solution. As this view is supported throughout the paper, it will become apparent that the tenets of alternative views fail to exhibit sufficient consistency with the prescriptions of the prophecy and do not carry the witness of Scripture or history that those of the thesis view do.

Our discussion will begin with an examination of the authorship and date of the Book of Daniel and thus of the seventy weeks prophecy. This will be followed by a consideration of the effect one's understanding of the apocalyptic genre should have upon the hermeneutic he brings to the prophecy. Next, the concept of "weeks" (KJV) and its chronological ramifications will be examined. After this, we will endeavor to identify and date the prophecy's terminus a quo. Next, the proposed application of durations for the sixty-nine week chronology will be set forth. Finally, the prospect of Jesus Christ having actually fulfilled the sixty-ninth week will be assessed. We will begin with an examination of Daniel's authorship and date.

CHAPTER II

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF COMPOSITION

Introduction

This thesis endeavors to defend the position that the Book of Daniel, including the seventy weeks prophecy, was authored by the Daniel of Dan. 1:6; 9:2; and 9:22, as the book purports, in its complete form sometime after the establishment of the Medo-Persian empire, or about 530 B.C. This position will be supported by citing and answering the major objections that have been brought against it. In this process key positive evidences for the position will be set forth. We will discuss these major objections and the concomitant supporting evidence under three categorical headings: theological, literary and linguistic, and historical.

Theological Objections and Support

The Impossibility of Genuine Prediction

It has been alleged, first by Porphyry and down through such as Bertholdt to the German literary-critical movement, that the accurate details of the Maccabean age given in the later chapters of Daniel could not have been predicted by a sixth century B.C. author. Thus, it is thought that Daniel should be assigned a date of authorship at the time of Antiochus IV. For, it is averred that its author apparently lied so as to encourage Jewish hopes in the midst of Syrian oppression.¹³

This objection constitutes an a priori rejection since it presumes away the question of Daniel's sixth century B.C. authorship

without respect to the preponderance of conflicting evidence. It assumes either that an omni-competent God is incapable of detailed future knowledge and/or the communication of it by human agency, or that God has bound Himself to never do this, which runs contrary to Scripture (for, prediction pre-dates Daniel as an integral part of Old Testament prophecy--see Hos. 8, 9; Mic. 4, 5; Am. 9; Is. 52-54; Jer. 25-29; and Ez. 26, 27 for examples) and is not logically necessary nor reasonable. Wilson states,

to one who grants the possibility and the fact of a revelation from God it is unreasonable to lay down the limits and to define the character of that revelation The length, the detailed descriptions, and the literary form of the revelation, may differ as widely as the truth permits; but they do not affect the truth. God alone can be the judge of how, and when, and where, and to whom, He will reveal His thoughts and plans.¹⁴

This allegation of the impossibility of Daniel's predictions rests on another faulty premise, namely, that Daniel accurately details events during the reign of Antiochus IV, but fails to correctly predict anything occurring thereafter. An examination of history and the predictions' Scriptural context invalidates this premise. Daniel's emphasis of the era surrounding and including the reign of Antiochus IV (Dan. 8, 11) is quite understandable since it represented one of the greatest threats to the survival of Israel and her faith subsequent to Daniel; and, Antiochus IV and his persecutions serve as excellent types of the Antichrist and tribulation period (cf. Dan. 11:40 ff. where the Antiochus IV narrative has apparently shifted to that of Antichrist, as also may be the case in Dan. 8:25 ff.). Daniel, in his chapters two and seven prophecies of four world empires, does accurately predict history which post-dates Antiochus IV. Late date theorists

are forced to interpret Greece as the fourth world empire mentioned by Daniel, since interpreting it to be Rome yields a genuine prediction even of a supposed author writing between 168 and 165 B.C. However, Rome and not Greece appears to be the fourth empire. The symbolism in Dan. 7 precludes separate Median and Persian empires, for the bear devouring three ribs corresponds to the Medo-Persian conquests of Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt. Dan. 8 also indicates that one Medo-Persian empire is intended (8:20). The third empire of Dan. 7 is represented as a four winged and four headed leopard. There is no record of the Persian empire dividing into four parts, but it is well known that after Alexander's death Greece separated into Macedon, Asia Minor, the Seleucid realm (including Syria, Babylonia, and Persia), and Egypt. The ten horned beast of Dan. 7 corresponds to the ten toes of Dan. 2, which are associated with two iron legs; these legs picture the Eastern and Western Roman empires at the time of Diocletian, but are irreconcilable with the history of the Greek empire after Alexander the Great. The fourth empire is, thus, verified by the Dan. 2 and 7 symbolism to be that of Rome. So, even granting the supposed 165 B.C. authorship, Daniel is shown to be genuinely predictive; for, the Roman empire did not begin for the Jews until the 63 B.C. conquest of Palestine by Pompey. As of 165 B.C. the Romans had advanced beyond Europe only to establish a vassal kingdom in Asia Minor and a protectorate over Egypt.¹⁵

Daniel's Developed Apocryphal Themes

It is commonly argued that Daniel contains a fuller development of apocryphal theological themes than do the early canonical books. It allegedly gives an advanced representation of theological

subjects such as angels, resurrection, the last judgment, and the Messiah. This is taken to be evidence of a Maccabean date of authorship for Daniel.

However, if God's revelation is progressive, we would expect some progression in these themes; and, Daniel presents nothing new or radically developed. These doctrines appear in other Old Testament books, many of which are older than Daniel. For instance, the theme of angels appears in Genesis, Joshua, Judges, Isaiah, Zechariah, and Ezekiel, while the concept of resurrection is in Job, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. The last judgement is touched upon in Isaiah, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Psalms, and Exodus. The Messianic theme occurs in Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Micah.¹⁶

Although the Book of Daniel does share some similarities with the apocryphal literature, that of its era, and especially with the apocalyptic genre (to be more completely examined in chapter three), it also differs vastly in many instances and respects. This would seem to mitigate against any chronological identification of Daniel with these literatures, making it appear more likely that Daniel influenced the content of these later intertestamental works, given the strong evidence for Daniel's early authorship appealed to in this chapter. I Maccabees, Baruch, Judith, and the Greek additions to Daniel all date from the second century B.C., yet do not contain Daniel's themes of angels, resurrection, the last judgement, or the Messiah; and, only two of the sixteen Jewish apocryphal works (first century A.D.), namely The Vision of Isaiah and The Ascension of Isaiah, have all four of these doctrinal elements.¹⁷

Apocalyptic works like The Assumption of Moses differ from Daniel in their basic construction and most salient details. Consider porter's description of The Assumption of Moses:

It consists in the last charges and revelations of Moses to Joshua, and contains a brief history of Israel from Moses to the Messianic age, told in literal, not in figurative, speech. The most striking point in this history is the unsparing condemnation of the priesthood before, during, and after the Maccabean age, and a depreciation of the temple services because of the unworthy character of those who officiate.¹⁸

Many emphases of the apocalyptic works substantially differ from those of Daniel. While Daniel points to a royal yet earthly Israel, Apocalyptic often gives an unearthly or heavenly emphasis to its new world type of eschatological kingdom. Daniel's preoccupation with earthly destinies and Israel's nationalistic hopes contrasts with apocalyptic emphases of soulsh realities in the hereafter and the dichotomy between world ages.¹⁹ Works found in the Dead Sea Scrolls also distinctly differ with Daniel on key points. The Community Rule, for instance, sets forth the expectation of three separate Messianic characters: the Prophet, the Messiah of Aaron, and the Messiah of Israel.²⁰

Literary and Linguistic Objections and Support

Daniel's Placement in the Canon

The Book of Daniel is within the Jewish canon placed in the Hagiographa rather than with the prophets. It is argued that this indicates Daniel was written after the canonical prophets. However, writings of great antiquity are included in the Hagiographa (e.g., Job, Psalms, and Song of Solomon). Daniel's inclusion with these writings is likely partly due to the fact that his work is to a

large extent history rather than prophecy.²¹ Daniel was probably not considered a prophet in the traditional sense of the term. The visions of the latter half of Daniel were received and communicated by him after sixty years of service as a state leader. The populus would have regarded Daniel more as a government leader and statesman. This must be weighed along with the fact that "Daniel contains the record, not of God-breathed words uttered by the seer, but of the words spoken to him, and of dreams and visions accorded him."²²

Dual Authorship

The concept of the authorship of Daniel by a sixth century B.C. Daniel is assailed on the grounds that the book evidences dual authorship. It is alleged that the differences between the two major sections of Daniel, chapters one through six and chapters seven through twelve, make it clear that Daniel is of two authors; the first author is responsible for the earlier composition of the first half of the book, while the second author penned the last half later during the Maccabean era in about 165 B.C. However, even Pfeiffer, who holds to a Maccabean date for Daniel, sees this allegation as rather baseless. He writes,

dual authorship can be established only by proving that in style and ideas the two parts are incompatible, and that the first part was written before the lifetime of the man who wrote chs. 7-12 in 168-165. In reality, the differences between 1-6 and 7-12, aside from those inevitably distinguishing stories from prophecies, are elusive.²³

We might add that any other differences are most easily accounted for by Daniel's cognitive development during intervals between writing as utilized in the inspired process--especially considering the weight of all other evidences for the book's early authorship by Daniel.

Aramaic as Evidence of Late Composition

That Daniel's chapters two through seven are in Aramaic is interpreted by some as evidence of late authorship. It is believed that Aramaic would have been shunned for the traditionally sacred Hebrew until so late a Jewish period that Hebrew had almost been forgotten. Notwithstanding, the sacrosanctity of Hebrew is a poorly substantiated theory, particularly when one notes that the Jews accepted the Aramaic portions of Ezra. In Babylon Aramaic was the predominant language of the late sixth century B.C. The reason chapters two through seven were written in Aramaic was likely to allow all of the public to read the portion dealing with gentile affairs.²⁴

A Phoneme as Evidence of Lateness

It is alleged that since in early Aramaic inscriptions and in the Elephantine Papyri (ca. fifth century B.C.) there is a phoneme that appears 'z' which practically always is 'd' in biblical Aramaic, Daniel's Aramaic is proven to be later than that of the aforesaid inscriptions and papyri. However, no sixth century B.C. Aramaic documents from any region have been discovered to verify that the 'd' reading was not normative for the period. The Aramaic of Ezra is likely of the Persian variety and shows this same shift which, thus, appears to have happened sooner in the east than in the west. This kind of regional development has occurred in other languages as well. It is strange that Daniel does not even vaguely parallel works that are certainly from the era of its supposed writing with regard to the number of grammatical and lexical characteristics that clearly distinguish them as of late date. For example, the Genesis Apocryphon, part of the Qum Ran material, has many gram-

matical characteristics dating it centuries after works like Ezra and the Elephantine Papyri; also, its vocabulary betrays its date.²⁵

An Infinitive-Preposition Usage as Late

Daniel's use of the infinitive with the prepositions 'b' (ל) [in] and 'k' (כ) [as] is asserted to be indicative of a date of authorship subsequent to that of Nehemiah. This is believed for two reasons: first, because this type of sentence rarely occurs in the earlier books of Scripture, and, second, because these earlier books position the infinitive clause later in the sentence. However, in Ezekiel, a book accepted in its entirety by even the critics, there are forty-nine occasions where ל alone is used with the infinitive early in the sentence--not to mention those where כ finds usage. Ezekiel was written before 570 B.C., so why should Daniel's use of the construction in only seven phrases designate his work as later than Nehemiah in 440 B.C.? Consider also that Ben Sira, writing just sixteen years before many critics hold Daniel to have been written, in about sixty pages of Hebrew applied this usage only six times. Compare this with the seven occurrences in the ten pages of Hebrew in Daniel and the forty-nine occurrences of the same in Ezekiel's eighty-five pages of Hebrew. Obviously, the usage of the ל and כ constructions could only attest to an early date for Daniel.²⁶

Three Greek Words as Evidence of Lateness

It is maintained by some that the presence of three Greek words in Dan. 3 shows the book to have been composed after the conquest of the Near East by Alexander the Great. The three words

are symphonia, psalterion, and kitharis--all names of musical instruments. Although "symphonia" does not occur in extant Greek literature until Plato (ca. 370 B.C.)--which by some has been taken as proof that Daniel could not have been written until the fourth century B.C.--it must be remembered that we possess less than ten percent of the significant Greek works from the classical period. This is insufficient information for determining the time of origin for any Greek word or the developing usage of a word. Being names of instruments, these three words would be expected to have crossed national borders via foreign market trade. As early as the reign of Sargon (about 722-705 B.C.), Greek slaves from Cyprus, Ionia, Lydia, and Cilicia were in Babylon, perhaps having brought Greek terminology with them. The Greek poet Alcaeus of Lesbos (ca. 600 B.C.) said his brother Antimenidas was in the Babylonian army. So, Greek mercenaries could also have arrived with Greek paraphernalia and terminology before Daniel's time. The relative absence of Greek words in Daniel constitutes good evidence that the book could not have been written as late as the Greek period. For, by 170 B.C. Greece had controlled Palestine for 160 years. Thus, one would expect to see Greek political and governmental terminology in Daniel, but it does not occur. Neither are seen words originating in Greek culture which particularly the Maccabees show as having penetrated Jewish life, especially in big cities.²⁷

Persian Loanwords as Evidence of Lateness

The occurrence of Persian loanwords in the text of Daniel is thought to indicate that it was written well after the Persian

empire was organized. However, it was after the Persian takeover that Daniel was written from earlier notes and recollections. The chapter ten vision came five years after the new empire arrived, and after this the book was likely set in its final form. This being the case, Persian loanwords should be expected in this sixth century B. C. book.²⁸

Historical Objections and Support

Omission of Daniel in an Early List

Jesus, the son of Sirach (Ben Sira), at about 200 B. C., included in his writings mention of significant Israelites including all of the canonical prophets, but excluded Daniel. This is taken as proof that the Book of Daniel did not exist at this time and/or that Daniel was not even considered an historical personage. Let us answer that, presuming Jesus intended by his enumeration to exhaustively list all of the canonical prophets, Daniel was not a prophet in the traditional sense. Jesus Ben Sira could well have been focusing on only heroes associated directly with the land of Israel and the struggles of her people; Daniel was for the duration of his life isolated from his homeland and people. Jesus also omitted the names of Melchisedec, Job, Gideon, and Samson, not to mention Ezra, who was a vital character in Israel's national history and even lent his name to a book of the canon. So, Jesus' list was not decisive of canonicity nor personal historicity.²⁹

With regard to the question of Daniel's personal historicity, Wilson has pointed out that the speech of Mattathias recorded in I Macc. 2:51-61 provides valid evidence that before the supposed late date of authorship (i.e., about 164 B.C.) the Jews of the same

era esteemed Daniel to be just as historical a personage as Abraham, Joseph, and David. This he believes because Mattathias would not have tried to encourage his people against a real historical threat with an unhistorical story. Wilson considers the author of I Maccabees to be reliable both generally and specifically in reporting this speech; however, even if it was fabricated, the author demonstrated confidence that his contemporaries believed in the historical Daniel. This would suggest that a canonical Daniel had existed prior to about 169 B.C. (the reported date of the speech) and probably from of old.³⁰

Error About the Maccabean Period as Definitive of Date

The critics affirm that history proves that Daniel was written sometime between the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV (ca. 167 or 166 B.C.) and its cleansing (ca. 164 or 163 B.C.). Evidence of this is thought to be that a real though erroneous prediction is represented by the author's having missed the actual duration between the desecration and cleansing by about a half year.³¹ This supposed late author does appear to have missed the duration of the last half of the final seven year period, but he also missed the duration of the first half of this same period by an even greater margin. In other words, if minute historical accuracy is the criterion for dating authorship, even the critical view must choose a date before Antiochus' Jewish involvement--and then earlier still at the time of its proposed terminus a quo (sixth century B.C. or earlier; see table 2 in the Appendix), since inaccuracy would be apparent in the predicted duration unto Antiochus IV. So, this allegation assumes away the question,

which is particularly relevant in light of the significant inconsistencies of historical accounts of Onias III and Antiochus IV with the specifications of the seventy weeks prophecy, as will be shown later.

This proposed Maccabean authorship would not seem to be a likely explanation for the old, established, and widespread first century A.D. expectation of Messiah which prevailed in the Orient.³² For, this author's chronology supposedly focused on the coming of Onias III and the ensuing events to the reconsecration of the temple, obviously known to be of the past and as having ushered in neither a messianic age nor a Messiah. Certainly this later author made no chronological provision for a Messiah to appear over two hundred years after the temple cleansing. This is especially clear as it is remembered that a key explanation of the late date theorists for Daniel's having been accepted into the canon was that God had mandated that the prophecy not be revealed until the time of its application (see Dan. 12:9), that is, presumably during the persecutions by Antiochus IV. This supposed late prophecy contained in a book received in this manner could hardly have inspired widespread first century messianic expectations. Weigh this alongside history's testimony of the outbreak of Jewish hostilities toward Rome in 66 A.D. when, partly due to the existence of an ancient oracle foretelling the arrival of the messianic world ruler, the Jews began their quest for independence. This ancient oracle was most feasibly an early and genuine Dan. 9:24-27, especially considering that neither Jacob's prediction regarding Judah's sceptre (Gen. 49:10)

nor Balaam's prophecy of the coming "star" (Num. 24:17) include the necessary chronological specification.³³

Errors About the Exilic Period as Support for Late Authorship

Year of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem

It is suggested that Daniel's statement (Dan. 1:1 ff.) that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim is historically inaccurate since Jer. 46:2 states that Nebuchadnezzar's first year of reign was Jehoiakim's fourth. However, this apparent discrepancy can be explained by the differing methods of reckoning regnal years applied. Harrison explains that

in Babylonia the year in which the king ascended the throne was designated specifically as 'the year of the accession to the kingdom,' and this was followed by the first, second, and subsequent years of rule. In Palestine, on the other hand, there was no accession year as such, so that the length of rule was computed differently with the year of accession being regarded as the first year of the particular reign. Daniel thus reckoned according to the Babylonian system of chronology, while Jeremiah followed the normal Palestinian pattern.³⁴

Lack of historical support for Nebuchadnezzar's madness

That the depiction of Nebuchadnezzar's period of madness (Dan. 4) lacks extra-biblical evidence for support is charged. This is answered in that three different extra-biblical sources do provide corroboration for the story. Josephus records a report by Berossus, a Babylonian priest, to the effect that Nebuchadnezzar had been ill prior to his death. Eusebius attests to another early tradition that held Nebuchadnezzar to have exhibited strange behavior in the latter stage of his life. Lastly, an inscription by Nebuchadnezzar

himself avers that he had ceased from his usual activities for a curious period of four years.³⁵

Belshazzar as king and son of Nebuchadnezzar

The critics question the accuracy of Daniel's representation of Belshazzar as being both Nebuchadnezzar's son and king of Babylon, their understanding of history being that Nabonidus was the last king of the Chaldean empire and father of Belshazzar. In response, let us first acknowledge that in ancient usage the term 'son' referred to a successor to the throne regardless of any blood relationship. But, there could have been a genetic tie between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar if Nabonidus married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar in an effort to legitimize the usurpation by Nabonidus of the Babylonian throne. It should be noted also that the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III refers to Jehu as Omri's son, although Jehu was Omri's destroyer. Second, with regard to the designation of Belshazzar as king of Babylon, it should be borne in mind that it was a common practice in ancient times to elevate the son of a king to secondary kingship during the father's reign to insure a peaceful succession. This occurred between King Uzziah and his son Jotham and could explain the Dan. 5 offering of the position of third ruler to Daniel. Third, recent archaeology indicates that while Nabonidus was headquartered at Teman in North Arabia, Belshazzar was in charge of the northern section of the Babylonian empire. For example, an inscription found at Ur is a prayer for Nabonidus followed by another for Belshazzar; it was customary to offer such prayers only for the reigning king. Additionally, cuneiform documents depict Belshazzar as having offered sheep and oxen at the temples

in Sippar in the capacity of his kingship. Fourth, a positive evidence for an early date of authorship resides in Daniel's mention of the name 'Belshazzar'. For, by the time of Herodotus (ca. 450 B.C.) this name had been forgotten by the sources of this Greek historian. Thus, the author of Daniel was considerably more familiar with the historical facts than a second century B.C. fraud would have been.³⁶

Darius the Mede

An allegation of error is made also regarding Daniel's mention of Darius the Mede (Dan. 11:1). It is thought that this character represents a confusion with Darius the son of Hystaspes, a Persian and not a Mede, who was third successor to the throne after Cyrus. However, Darius son of Hystaspes was well-known to be of the ancient royal line of Persia. Daniel says Darius was sixty-two years old when given rule, whereas Darius the Great was relatively young when he began to reign. Dan. 9:1 says Darius was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, and Dan. 5:31 says Darius received the kingdom; so it appears he received his power from a higher authority. The Behistun inscription has a reference of Darius I to his father Hystaspes as having been made a king by Cyrus; this shows that it was a common policy of Cyrus to permit subordinate rulers to bear the title of King.³⁷

Archer sets forth a conservative explanation of the identity of Darius the Mede as he writes,

there is powerful cumulative evidence to show that he is to be identified with a governor named Gubaru, who is referred to both by the cuneiform records and by the Greek historians as playing a key role in the capture of Babylon and its subsequent administration.³⁸

W. F. Albright agrees with this identity for Darius and assesses Daniel's demonstration of familiarity with the exilic era to be uncharacteristic of a Maccabean writer. He states,

It seems to me highly probable that Gobryas did actually assume the royal dignity along with the "Darius", perhaps an old Iranian royal title, while Cyrus was absent on an Eastern campaign. At all events Gobryas presently disappears, and is followed in the viceroyalty of Babylon by Cambyses, so we may suppose that he died suddenly, before Cyrus had arrived on the scene. After the cuneiform elucidation of the Belshazzar mystery, showing that the latter was long coregent with his father, the vindication of Darius the Mede for history was to be expected.³⁹

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter our focus has been upon the defense and substantiation of the thesis position regarding the authorship and date of composition of the Book of Daniel and, thus, of the seventy weeks prophecy as well. This position, which has been shown quite defensible, is that the historical Daniel, referred to within the text itself and writing during the Medo-Persian domination (i.e., ca. 530 B. C.), was responsible for the book and prophecy. If this position is not clearly proven by the extant biblical and historical evidence, we have seen that it is actually closer to the relevant data than is the critical position of late authorship.

Our discussion has shown it unreasonable to reject a priori the possibility of the genuinely predictive nature of the seventy weeks prophecy, especially when history seems to indicate this and Daniel's theology cannot be chronologically identified with that of the literature of the supposed period of composition. We have seen that the position assigned Daniel in the Jewish canon does not prove a late date for Daniel, but is consistent with an

early date. In contradiction to the idea of dual authorship based on differences between the first and last halves of the book, the admission of a lack of material differences between the two even by the critical school itself has been pointed out. The fact that Daniel's Aramaic does not indicate a late date but supports a sixth century date has been presented. Daniel's Hebrew usage was seen to be compatible with this early date as well. We have shown the critical argument based on the occurrence of Greek and Persian loanwords to be diffused, and even detrimental to the late date theory.

We have looked at a defense against the allegation regarding Jesus ben Sirach's omission of Daniel in his second century B.C. list of Jewish nobles. We have seen the inadequacies of dating the composition of Daniel between the desecration and cleansing of the temple based on the supposed author's detailed accuracy about the Greek persecution presumably only up through the desecration. We saw that this Maccabean dating is inconsistent with historical expectations subsequent to the supposed date of writing. Finally, we surveyed the major allegations pertaining to supposed historical blunders and anachronisms in Daniel's details of the Exilic period. These allegations were seen to be generally baseless and to have only provided impetus for the investigation and uncovering of information clearly consistent with and even in support of a sixth century B.C. date for Daniel.

It would appear that a 530 B.C. date of composition by a historical Daniel as referred to in the text is a very viable position in light of the historical data supporting it and the lack of

validity just demonstrated in its opposers' allegations. Let us now turn to consider the degree to which, if any, our knowledge of the apocalyptic genre, from the era of authorship supposed by the critics, should affect the formation of our hermeneutical approach to the prophecy of the seventy weeks.

CHAPTER III

APOCALYPTIC GENRE AND HERMENEUTIC

Introduction

The question of whether or not the Book of Daniel should be classified as of the apocalyptic genre is essential to the establishing of this thesis as a viable defendable position. For, if Daniel is only an apocalypse in the conventional sense of this supposed genre, it must almost certainly not be considered genuinely predictive, early, or a directly inspired work of God. The question of genre determines the proper hermeneutic for the book and the seventy week prophecy. Collins writes, "When due account is taken of the genre, then such matters as pseudonymity and ex eventu prophecy are no longer theological problems, but conventions which indicate the nature and function of the book."⁴⁰ If Daniel is to be rightly considered a normal part of this supposed genre, Dan. 9:24-27 could reasonably be taken as an ex eventu prophecy relating to the era of Antiochus Epiphanes' persecution of the Jews and Onias III might be understood as the person cut off after the sixty-ninth week; this being true, the proposed solution of this thesis would be erroneous.

However, it is much debated among scholars as to what form and content can definitely be designated as of the apocalyptic genre. Barr states that "it must be expected that the new examination of apocalyptic now taking place will upset many of the generalizations about the movement which have become current

coin"41 So, there is some question as to whether the proposed genre possesses a unified field of doctrine; and later we will touch upon the genre's diversity of forms, and thus its lack of familial uniformity regarding form. This being the case, it is perhaps appropriate to question the existence of the apocalyptic genre, place little confidence in any supposed chronological decisiveness offered by such a vague and ambiguous categorization, and distrust any detailed hermeneutic that might be set forth as essential to proper interpretation of any literary work bearing some of the supposed family traits. Nevertheless, for the sake of argument, we will assume apocalyptic to be a valid genre, and show that, even so, Daniel clearly cannot be said with certainty to belong in the genre in the sense of being subject to its hermeneutic and broad generalizations. The rather literal hermeneutic assumed in the proposed solution will thereby be shown the most viable and preferred option. We will attempt to do this by first pointing out dissimilarities between Daniel and the supposed genre. Next, we will survey the lack of evidence for Daniel having originated in the apocalyptic era. Then we will briefly touch upon other early Old Testament canonical books that have apocalyptic characteristics. Finally, we will see that Daniel has a greater affinity to these other canonicals than to books allegedly of the supposed apocalyptic genre.

Dissimilarities Between Daniel and the Supposed Apocalyptic Genre

Although Daniel does have some of the supposed apocalyptic characteristics, it also differs with the genre in many respects and in fundamental ways; and this mitigates against the assumption

that Daniel is unquestionably and of a certainty a part of the apocalyptic genre with respect to the choice of a proper hermeneutical and analytical approach to the book. As Daniel's important dissimilarities with apocalyptic are considered, note first of all that apocalyptic works do not emphatically claim direct inspiration from God as clearly Daniel does. By the time of apocalyptic origins (ca. 200 B.C. to 100 A.D.) the Old Testament canon had closed, so the genre's authors sensing the absence in their works of a direct inspiration like that of prophets resorted to pseudonymity.⁴² Daniel differs with regard to pseudonymous authorship as well. Morris indicates that Daniel would not be a likely choice of an ancient character by a second century B.C. author wishing to write pseudonymously. He states,

Daniel is often claimed as an ancient hero, but not much evidence is cited for this view. The name does not occur again in the Old Testament, though the very similar name Dan'el is found in Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3, and in the Ras Shamra tablets. Many claim that this is no more than a variant of Daniel and that the two refer to the same man. This is far from certain, but even if it is the same man these passages add nothing to our knowledge of him. They certainly do not prove that he was a folk hero or the like. When all is said, the fact remains that "Daniel" appears only in the book bearing his name. . . . Here then, on the evidence so far known to us, there is no attempt at fathering a book on to an illustrious predecessor.⁴³

Not only does Daniel not fit the mold of an ancient Jewish hero apart from his own work, but he would not seem to need the benefits of pseudonymity, especially in light of the evidence we have seen for the probability of a sixth century B.C. date for his book. Pseudonymous authors write thus to secure prestige and authority for their works, and to utilize the opportunity for vaticinium ex eventu which would appear to verify the reliability of their

prophecies.⁴⁴ However, Daniel's authority is established in his detailed historical accuracy and his reliability is supported by the fulfillment of his predictions even if, as already shown, we wrongly assume a second century B.C. date of authorship. Daniel is also not datable by the normal methods used by scholars to define chronologically the origin of the apocalypses. These works are analyzed as to the point where their historical knowledge proves to wane, and approximately here the date of writing is affixed.⁴⁵

If, as it appears, Daniel was authored in the sixth century B.C., then it is obvious that the book differs with the genre's writings on another crucial point. The apocalyptic works emphasize the nearness of the consummation. They view their own time and desperate struggle as the last, their persecution as the final one just previous to the imminent end.⁴⁶ But, in Daniel we have an author far removed from the last day (see Dan. 12:4, 13) and not personally suffering under unbearable persecution; for, he was a respected government official serving a regime that was, if history may be trusted, relatively friendly toward his people at the time of authorship. The apocalyptics portray the end as near as a part of their most basic purpose, i.e., to encourage God's people experiencing severe suffering by communicating their salient message to stand firm in faith until God shortly brings the triumph of good over evil.⁴⁷ This conflicts somewhat with Goldingay's explanation of the "allusiveness" of Dan. 9:24-27 in its supposed description of the consummation as at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; for, the supposed Maccabean author, he thinks, does

not refer "specifically to concrete persons and events" as in "historical narrative," but refers by symbology to what the persons and events embody.⁴⁸ This would hardly be consistent with the apocalypics' objective of consoling nonsymbolic sufferers in the midst of very historical traumas. Daniel, however, purposed to record the real divine revelation he received, one setting forth the concrete though distant event of the ultimate restoration of Jerusalem and her people. His message was, foundationally, that God is always in total sovereign control of history. He mentions a proximate rebuilding of God's earthly city but does not seem to persuade his readers primarily toward encouragement in this. Rather, his underlying encouragement is due to God's faithfulness to the faithful until, during, and after this eventual preliminary return.

Daniel differs with apocalyptic with regard to the terms or mode of communication as well. The apocalypses attempt to communicate divine truths through mythical terms. Morris describes the mode thus:

Perhaps "pious fiction" is a little hard as a description of apocalyptic. But no one takes seriously the idea that when an apocalypticist speaks of certain revelations as made, say to Baruch, he is describing what actually happened to Baruch, or, for that matter, what actually happened to himself. He is using a literary device to convey a message, not describing events of the past. He may well feel that what he says Baruch (or whoever his hero is) saw and heard were the kind of things that Baruch was likely to have seen and heard. But in the last resort his attribution of these things to Baruch is imaginative. It is not, and is not meant to be, factual.⁴⁹

The objectively true aspects of such mythic communication is emphasized by some modern scholarship; for instance, Frost describes

this type of myth as not merely an explanatory tale, allegory, or parable, and most importantly not as something completely untrue.⁵⁰ Myth in this sense, though not descriptive of historical reality, is thought a reliable means of communicating ultimate and divine truths. However, in contrast, Daniel purports to set forth a historically accurate account of the divine revelation and its reception. Daniel even goes into painstaking detail about what literally happened to him as he was receiving God's revelation (e.g., Dan. 10). Daniel assumes the reader will interpret his book's direct and symbolic representations as descriptive of literal history and real future events, respectively. This is evident in that he provides literal meanings alongside his symbolism. He relates ultimate truths--yes--but accurate temporal and future details as well.

Daniel is dissimilar to apocalyptic with respect to some key theological emphases. Where Daniel tends to give a rather primary emphasis to God's Anointed One, and in fact much of his book looks forward to the establishment of His ultimate earthly rule, the apocalypics afford the Messiah only a secondary emphasis.

According to Porter,

In general the Messiah occupies a very secondary position in the apocalypses. In Enoch 90 he appears only after the kingdom has been established by God, as the head of the community. There is no Messiah in Enoch 1-36, 91-104, or in the Assumption of Moses. In only one apocalyptic writing does he occupy the central place, namely, in Enoch 37-70. Here in the effort to exalt the national hope and give it a transcendent character, the figure of the Messiah is carried up and given a heavenly nature and place. Though still a man he is a companion of God and the angels in heaven⁵¹

In addition to Daniel's theological difference with the Qumran eschatology (residing in works that are not revelation accounts and, thus, not technically apocalypses--nevertheless, penned in the era of apocalyptic⁵²) on the number of Messiahs expected, as mentioned in chapter two, Daniel is theologically dissimilar on other points also. For instance, Daniel does not conceive of a final Day of Atonement wherein only then all children of light receive forgiveness of sin as described in The Triumph of God.⁵³ Daniel's atonement and forgiveness are available to the repentant throughout the period leading up to the final consummation. Daniel does not even utilize this concept of a Day of Atonement. The scenario pictured in the Dead Sea literature of a bloody forty year war fought between the "elect," lead by the "Prince of Light," and the "sons of darkness," lead by the "Angel of Darkness," just previous to the final consummation, is also foreign to Daniel.⁵⁴

In the apocalypses there is generally an otherworldly emphasis. The present age is portrayed as hopelessly corrupt and the author focuses on the hope of a new creation, ultimate justice, and the bliss of the righteous.⁵⁵ Frost explains this conception thus:

However gloomily the apocalyptic writer viewed the present state of affairs, no terms were too extravagant to describe the good time that was coming. Indeed, so violent was the contrast, that he saw no hope whatsoever of that glorious future evolving out of this disastrous present. This Age, this whole order, must end, completely, utterly, finally; then the New Age would be ushered in by God. Man could do nothing either to hasten or to delay that End and the Age to Come. He must just wait patiently for its coming. When it came, it would be with disaster and catastrophe, for it would be the destruction of a universe. Civilizations would totter and commit suicide by internecine wars, nature

itself would display portents and furnish cataclysmic disasters, and finally all-devouring fire would consume everything and the New Age would dawn.⁵⁶

Daniel differs in that it encourages hope based on the definite inbreaking of God's rule into this temporarily vexed world. Where the apocalyptists emphasize God's cataclysmic cessation of earthly history, Daniel pictures God working in it and bringing transformation to it a definite though distant point in the future. The genre in discussion also takes its emphasis a step further; it gives considerable attention to the details of the new age. In fact, a Christian apocalypse, The Apocalypse of Peter, describes with some detail the appearance of the blessed, their abode of bliss, and the place of torment. Consider this account of the book's treatment:

The Lord then takes the twelve disciples into a mountain, and there, at their request, he shows them two of their departed brethren, that they may know the appearance of the righteous in the other world. They have a dazzling lustre and an inexpressible glory and beauty of body and raiment. Peter asks to see the abode of these glorified ones, and is shown a place outside of this world, characterized by brilliant light, and fair flowers, and fragrant and fruitful trees, where men are clad like angels, and have angels as their companions. Here there were no distinctions of rank, but all had the same glory.

Over against this heaven Peter saw the place of punishment. Here the punishments were appropriate to the sins. Blasphemers were hanging by their tongues. Adulterers hung by hair or feet over a lake of flaming mire. . . .⁵⁷

Daniel, in contradistinction, barely touches upon the conditions to prevail in the coming kingdom (see Dan. 12:2, 3, and 13).

Similarities between Daniel and apocalyptic can be explained most reasonably to be due, not to simultaneous origination nor like circumstances, but, to the genre's use of Daniel as an originating prototype with respect to overall structure and constituent

elements. Some apocalyptic texts have been shown to exhibit a predominant reliance upon Daniel as a structural model, and to even utilize specific features and usages of Daniel.⁵⁸

Evidence of Origin in the Apocalyptic Era Lacking

It is a misconception to suppose that Daniel must be considered apocalyptic based on conclusive evidence of the book's homogeneity with post-exilic works commonly categorized as apocalyptic. In fact, as important features are considered, Daniel is shown to be quite atypical of these writings. If Hanson is correct, apocalyptic was born in the post-exilic period as a result of the struggle between two opposing religious elements--the visionary element, or those interested in reforming the temple cult and its priesthood to its divinely sanctioned order, and the element of realism, or those concerned with preservation of the institutional status quo and continuity in the community life. It is supposedly the visionary element that would tend to retreat into thought forms of dreams and visions of a coming divinely executed reform. Thus, it would be expected that the author of Daniel should betray his membership in this element of the second century B.C.⁵⁹ It has been a popular scholarly suggestion that the author may be identified with the maskilim or wise teachers (mentioned in chapters eleven and twelve and alluded to in chapter one) which could be the equivalent of the Hasidim referred to in 1 Maccabees. However, the Hasidim were militants, vigorously in support of Judas Maccabee; and, Daniel does not seem to promote militant resistance at all.⁶⁰ In explanation of this rather passive orientation of Daniel, von Rad

offers that the book was written by the opponents rather than the supporters of the Maccabees:

Without any doubt, the writer of Daniel sides with those who endure persecution rather than those who take up arms against it, and in so doing he is only being true to his own basic conviction that what must be will be. He is far removed from the Maccabees and their policy of active resistance; their large following is actually suspect in his eyes. There is something almost sublime about the way in which, as he tells the story, he sets down a whole series of their amazing victories simply as something relatively unimportant, "a little help" which the oppressed receive at this time (Dan. XI. 34). His gaze is imperturbably fixed on the goal which God has appointed for history, and this forbade him to glorify this mighty upsurge of human fortitude.⁶¹

It is debatable, however, that Daniel contains any clear evidence of this kind of authorship either. It is hard to imagine that an opponent of the Maccabees would not at all have critiqued the policy of active resistance and/or the group espousing it. Daniel's omission of any accounts of the Maccabean conflicts also is somewhat inconsistent with the post-exilic authorship view, since the inclusion of such accounts would have better approximated real predictive prophecy and could only have more encouraged and confirmed the persecuted. A dominating focus on history's consummation is also at odds with the underlying objective of the book according to late date theorists; to this camp the proximate divine help is only an agent to better fulfill the fundamental purpose of encouraging the presently perplexed people.

Daniel's focus upon God's coming ruler and final kingdom stands in opposition to the mood of the post-exilic era. For, the history and literature of this time is void of any indication that Jewish aspirations were toward a return of the old monarchy or

establishment of any new one. Rather, the concensus opinion seems to have preferred an oligarchical form of rule.⁶²

It is also questionable whether Daniel's form of apocalyptic is even common to the second century B.C., the alleged time of origin. As Wilson has pointed out, of all the Hebrew apocalyptic works only five are believed to be partly or in whole products of the second century B.C.--Jubilees, The XII Patriarchs, the Sibylline Oracles, Baruch, and Enoch. As these are examined for similarities with the form of Daniel the point is established. Jubilees, The XII Patriarchs, and the Sibylline Oracles have nothing in common with the form of Daniel. The only similarity Baruch has with Daniel is that the confessions of the people contained therein are possibly taken from Dan. 9. Enoch, however, does seem to have a slight similarity with Daniel. Wilson points this out as well as the gross dissimilarities of the two:

There remain only the portions of Enoch which are said to have been written before 100 B.C. These are the only apocalyptic writings of this period which in form may be said to resemble Daniel. The principal argument is that both authors assert that they have received the subject-matter (?) of their narratives by a revelation and this commonly from an angel. But as we have seen above, nearly all of the prophets say that they had visions; and angels are said to have spoken to Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and especially to Zechariah. The differences however between Daniel and Enoch are very great and should not be overlooked. For example, Daniel always gives a definite time and place for his visions, Enoch never. Daniel confines himself to earthly localities for his revelations. Enoch is snatched off to the heavens for his. Daniel speaks of well known potentates of earth, such as Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus; whereas Enoch mentions no man by name, but confines his personal designations to archangels, good and bad. Daniel confines himself to dreams and visions such as would naturally be suggested by his earthly surroundings, situated as he is said to have been in the courts of the kings of Babylon and Persia; but

Enoch hies away like a witch on a broomstick to sweep the cobwebs from the sky.⁶³

Supposed Apocalyptic Characteristics in Other Early Old Testament Canonicals

Although Daniel contains elements considered by many scholars to be definitively apocalyptic, another crucial question remains: Does the mere incidence of these characteristics force upon Daniel a hermeneutic like that appropriate to the apocalypses of the second century B.C. and shortly thereafter? Here, we want to try to establish that it does not. This will be attempted by briefly surveying the fact that other Old Testament canonical books, which cannot be shown to be rightly subject to such a naturalistic non-literal hermeneutic, also bear apocalyptic traits. It would then logically follow that Daniel also cannot automatically be subjected to such interpretation based upon its traits common to the genre. Rather, Daniel should be interpreted as ultimately a divinely produced revelation; this would mean that if the text clearly indicates that a supernatural prediction is intended, it should be literally interpreted as such.

Apocalyptic eschatology occurs in other prophetic portions of Scripture; for instance, Is. 24-27 and 56-66, Joel, and Zech. 9-14 all contain shades of the genre's eschatology. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is likely seen in Is. 26:19, where the bodies of the dead are described as rising from the earth in the future. The first six chapters of Zechariah display the literary form of the apocalypse, namely, visions.⁶⁴ But, one canonical which antedates Daniel by perhaps forty years would seem to be a major prototype of the apocalyptics with regard to their

literary devices and form. The Book of Ezekiel is called the "fountain" of the genre by Barr who writes:

. . . the book that more than any other single book must be considered the fountain from which the apocalyptic river flowed, i.e. the book of the prophet Ezekiel, with its vision of the heavenly chariot, its strange transportations of the prophet from place to place, its use of the symbolism of eagle and tree (ch. xvii), its allegory of the sisters Oholah and Oholibamah (ch. xxiii), its vision of the dry bones and the revivifying of the people of Israel (ch. xxxvii), its picture of Gog and Magog and the final conflict with the enemies of Israel, and its vision of the future city, temple and land.⁶⁵

In an area as important as the Messianic idea, again, the origin can most probably not be found in a second century B.C. literary movement or a supposed pseudepigraphal Daniel. In fact, there is no evidence that the Messianic idea originated or experienced growth and development in the Pseudepigraphical, Apocryphal, Alexandrine, or Rabbinical writings. If anything these works exhibit a retrogression of the Messianic concept, while they imply that the idea existed in a fuller form previously.⁶⁶ It is in the Old Testament canon that the origin of the Messianic idea is found; throughout this canon its development is readily traceable, and this "pari passu with the progress of Israel's history."⁶⁷ So we see that the divinely inspired works of the Old Testament would appear to be primary candidates as sources of the apocalyptic characteristics and originating influences of the genre. This is buttressed by the fact that proposed outside influences such as Persian dualism and Hellenism appear to have impacted the apocalyptic genre only slightly and late, after its foundational emphases were already developed.⁶⁸

Daniel's Greater Affinity with Other
Old Testament Canonicals

We have seen that among the Old Testament canonical writings Daniel does not alone show forth the supposed apocalyptic features. This being true, we are to some degree justified in the conclusion that Daniel should call forth the same hermeneutical treatment afforded the other canonicals by their original recipients, the Hebrews, and orthodox scholars. But, is there any reason or good evidence to support the contention that Daniel's aboriginal and major affinity is with the inspired canonicals? If there is, the propriety of our considering Daniel appropriately interpreted only in the context of inspired Scripture is to a reasonable degree sustained. Let us briefly establish that sufficient evidence does exist.

With regard to eschatology, it can be well argued that Daniel demonstrates the prophetic variety rather than the apocalyptic variety, as they are defined by Hanson:

Prophetic eschatology we define as a religious perspective which focuses on the prophetic announcement to the nation of the divine plans for Israel and the world which the prophet has witnessed unfolding in the divine council and which he translates into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality; that is, the prophet interprets for the king and the people how the plans of the divine council will be effected within the context of their nation's history and the history of the world.

Apocalyptic eschatology we define as a religious perspective which focuses on the disclosure (usually esoteric in nature) to the elect of the cosmic vision of Yahweh's sovereignty-especially as it relates to his acting to deliver his faithful-which disclosure the visionaries have largely ceased to translate into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality due to a pessimistic view of reality growing out of the bleak post-exilic conditions⁶⁹

Although Daniel does use symbolism in communicating God's revelation of the consummation and final age, he does not cease to think in terms of real history and human involvement. Also, Daniel's book would appear to be written for all of his countrymen since they themselves, their city, and their God are the main focuses of the writing. There is no designation of an esoteric elect as the target populus, neither is this obviously implied in the text.

There are instances where Daniel's description of the eschatological scene in heaven more closely resembles that of other canonical works. As Charlesworth has pointed out, in several of the Qum Ran eschatological writings the heavenly courts of God are depicted as functioning in judgement. Whereas, the court of Dan. 7 is involved in constant worship of God as representatives of their people; Daniel's court, thus, parallels more exactly that of Is. 24 than those of the materials from the apocalyptic era.⁷⁰

The circumstances that earned for Daniel a place in the Old Testament canon definitely indicate that Daniel has a much greater affinity with the canonicals with respect to the reception it received from its Jewish audience. In contradiction to the curious assumption that Daniel was a failure as a prediction of the end but a powerful spiritual source of encouragement, which was largely responsible for its reception into the canon of Scripture,⁷¹ let us assert quite the opposite. Daniel, like the other prophets, proclaimed the past exploits of God and His future works with equal accuracy. The ability to correctly predict the future acts of God was prescribed by God as a mark of a true prophet; a false prophet was to be known by the failure of his predictions

(Deut. 18:22).⁷² Daniel's reception into the Old Testament canon strongly aligns it with the prophetic circle and constitutes a major disparity with the late works of the apocalyptic genre. The well versed Jewish leaders received the visions of the book as truly those of Daniel; this attests strongly against pseudipigraphal authorship. The historicity and literal accuracy of Daniel is supported by the fact that Mattathias referenced Daniel's accounts to encourage the oppressed Jewish people. The educated Jewish religious community would not have assessed Daniel to be holy and divinely inspired teaching if it did not have confidence that Daniel's visions were genuinely and accurately predictive.⁷³ These points clearly distinguish Daniel from the apocalypics and show it to be more closely akin to the Old Testament canonicals in key respects. So, inspired Scripture appears to be a defensible interpretive context for Daniel and the seventy weeks prophecy.

Summary and Conclusion

We have noted the fact that the question of genre directly affects the hermeneutic that we take to a text; that Daniel is not to be interpreted like the late apocalypses is posited in this thesis. We have seen that there is not conclusive evidence that apocalyptic rightly constitutes a homogeneous genre. However, for the sake of argument we have assumed the genre does exist.

We have seen some of the key dissimilarities between Daniel and the apocalyptic genre in the areas of the nature of authorship, the nature of purpose and means, and theological emphases. These differences mitigate against any tendency to identify the two closely enough to apply a common hermeneutic. It has been shown

that the Book of Daniel does not wear the marks we would expect of a work produced in the mood of the post-exilic era, nor does it find significant parallels with apocalypses of the supposed date of its writing (i.e., in the second century B.C.). We have looked at the fact that Daniel is not alone among the canonicals in having some of the supposed apocalyptic characteristics. This would indicate that Daniel is just another one of the early inspired works which were originating influences of apocalyptic; here again, the apocalyptic hermeneutic appears inappropriate for Daniel in light of the evidence. Finally, we surveyed some of the key areas in which Daniel shows a greater affinity with the inspired canonicals than with the works of the apocalyptic era and influence; this constitutes reasonable evidence to suggest that Daniel is not of certain necessity subject to the naturalistic hermeneutic of the apocalyptic genre, and is to be appropriately interpreted in the context of divinely inspired Scripture.

We conclude, therefore, that the Book of Daniel is to be interpreted as the genuine and authentic work of the historical sixth century Daniel. It should be taken as a historically accurate account containing genuinely predictive prophecy, and that without error. Thus, the seventy weeks prophecy should be interpreted not as an ex eventu prediction but as a divinely inspired and wholly accurate prediction. Its chronological designations are to be taken as pointing to literal and discernible fulfillments. The chronological increments utilized by Daniel are ascertainable through common sense, careful exegesis, and the analogy of faith. The descriptions, durations, and termini of the prophecy

are subject to historical investigation. We shall now move on to attempt to identify the durations of the seventy weeks prophecy in an examination of the concept of "weeks."

CHAPTER IV

THE CONCEPT OF "WEEKS"

Introduction

The chronological increments of the seventy weeks prophecy are represented by the Hebrew word שָׁבָעַיִם , rendered "weeks" in the authorized version. This term has been interpreted by the majority of scholars to mean, more exactly, a period of seven units of something. Conservatives and critics alike have been all but unanimous that the units are years. "That these weeks of Daniel are weeks of years and not of days has been commonly accepted by critics from the very earliest of times," writes J. Dyneley Prince.⁷⁴ The viability of this interpretation is attested as well in the Community Rule (ca. the late second century B.C.) of the Dead Sea literature. Here we find a grouping of multiple years referred to as "weeks (of years)," immediately followed by an obvious allusion to the idea of groupings of seven years, which reads: "and at the beginning of their weeks for the season of Jubilee."⁷⁵

However, a few scholars have dissented from understanding the units as years. By and large they have resorted to taking these units as indefinite intervals, and have emphasized the symbolic value of their numerical determinants, i.e., the terms 'seventy' and 'seven'. These views have been confidently rejected by many like Prince who sees them as "extravagant theories of some orthodox expositors like Kliefoth, Keil, etc. who, in their efforts to prove the divine character of the prophecy, distort the interpre-

tation grotesquely and needlessly."⁷⁶ Nevertheless, these theorists have based their ideas on their understandings of biblical numerical symbology and exegetical observations, and, thus, can contribute to the scrutiny and establishment of the thesis position on the concept of "weeks." This paper posits that the weeks in question are units of seven literal years. It should be pointed out as we move to further explicate the prophecy's literal hermeneutical intentions, that, although the critical position regarding the prophecy's date of authorship (i.e., that it was penned in the second century B.C.) is most probably erroneous, even using a late date of composition, the position and objectives of this paper might still follow; for, the critical theorists have still to deal with the literal intentions of Dan. 9:24-27.

The course of establishing the thesis view will take us to a perusal of pertinent themes and related terminology in Daniel and other parts of Scripture. We will also mention relevant facts of the prophecy's content and context. First, the aforementioned symbolic interpretation will be concisely set forth in antithetical challenge to the thesis position, and addressed.

The Symbolic Interpretation

If the symbolic school of thought is defined as to two major undergirding propositions, they are perhaps (1) that the period of time described by the seventy sevens is continuous without significant interruption or interlude, and (2) that this same period extends from the a quo of verse twenty-five to the consummation of history in God's establishing of His earthly reign and kingdom. It is from these premises that the seventy שבעים are made to be

symbolically defined durations since it would follow that sevens of days or years would be untenable.⁷⁷ This understanding is believed to be supported by Christ's declaration (Mt. 24:36; Mk. 13:32) that the date of the second advent is known only by God, supposedly making it impossible that Daniel's prophecy intends chronological exactness.⁷⁸

The proposed solution of this thesis assumes that the second undergirding proposition is true, but the first false; it provides that the end of the sixty-ninth week and beginning of the seventieth week are separated by an indefinite period, the Church age. This comprehends both the second proposition and Christ's words regarding the concealed date of His second coming. Since this paper focuses only on the increment of the first sixty-nine weeks, suffice it to say that the proposition that the seventy sevens are to be taken as continuous hardly explains the correlation of the final week in Daniel with the tribulation period of Revelation. This proposition is shown to be unlikely by the apparent identification of the two periods and their designations as literal seven year periods in terms of days and months.

In response to the critique that the symbolic interpretation of the weeks abates the consoling effect of the prophecy, especially as set against Daniel's definite chronological mindset, the adherents assert that just the opposite prevails as to consolation. Keil writes,

. . . by the announcement of the development (of the kingdom of God) in its principal stadia, according to a measure fixed by God, the strong consolation is afforded of knowing that the fortunes of His people are in His hands, and that no hostile power will rule over them one hour longer than God the Lord thinks fit to afford time and space, in regard to the enemy for his unfolding and ripening for the judgment, and in regard to the saints for the purifying and

confirmation of their faith for the external life in His kingdom according to His wisdom and righteousness.⁷⁹

However, this response can be questioned as to its reasoning. For, the definitely prescribed return of Jer. 29:10 would seem to offer the same confidence, if not more incisively. It is also to wonder if such an assertion of God's sovereign control to limit the subservience of His people would not be superfluous since God's prowess had been ably demonstrated in his orchestration of the warning unto, the accurate prophetic description of, and the advent of the exile. Perhaps the better question was not if God could bring about the restoration, but, rather, if Daniel had correctly understood the books in interpreting seventy literal years from the exile's start to the ultimate and consummating restoration of Israel. Perchance, God answered Daniel's primary question of 'when' with a qualified yes, for the predicted temporal precursory restoration was imminent; however, even if unwittingly to Daniel, God simultaneously exposed Daniel's misunderstanding of which restoration was upon him by setting forth the intervals of time, particularly pertinent to the Hebrews, determined to the accomplishment of the final and spiritual restoration of the Jews.

Irrespective of this more tenable definite chronological understanding of the prophecy's context and content, the symbolic interpreters see very clear indications, from like usages elsewhere in Scripture, that the numerical parameters only carry symbolic meanings. Leupold summarizes the symbolic translation of the prophecy:

Since there is nothing in our chapter that indicates a "heptad of days" as a meaning for shabhu'im or a "heptad of years," the only safe translation, if we do not want to resort to farfetched guesses, of this fundamental expression is seventy "heptads"--seventy "sevens"--

seventy Siebenheiten. Now, since the week of creation, "seven" has always been the mark of divine work in the symbolism of numbers. "Seventy" contains seven multiplied by ten, which, being a round number, signifies perfection, completion. Therefore, "seventy heptads"--7x7x10--is the period in which the divine work of greatest moment is brought to perfection. There is nothing fantastic or unusual about this to the interpreter who has seen how frequently the symbolism of numbers plays a significant part in the Scriptures.⁸⁰

It is unwarranted to rule out the 'heptad of years' interpretation solely because nothing in Dan. 9 designates the units to be such, especially since context and usage in other canonicals point to this interpretation, as will be later discussed. Using this same reasoning the symbolic interpretation is eliminated as well, since history can argue to a literal seventy year exile, thus, rendering Dan. 9 inconclusive as to numerical interpretation. The symbolic meanings assigned to the numbers 'seven' and 'ten' would seem to have some feasibility, particularly considering the Biblical attestation to 'seven'. But it should be pointed out that Scripture often presents seven literal things or units which are simultaneously endowed with symbolic meaning (e.g., seven literal days of creation, Gen. 2:2, 3; Jacob's seven years, Gen. 29:18, 27; seven lamps, Ex. 25:37). How exclusively characteristic it would be of God's incomprehensible sovereignty and wondrous providence to describe history in divinely symbolic terms and then execute it literally according to the terms of His symbolism.

The Impracticableness of the 'Days' Interpretation

One of the three main translation options for שִׁבְעִיָּהּ can be almost certainly eliminated. That the term cannot refer to common seven day weeks is all but universally accepted. This interpretation is

prohibited by two primary factors, the events predicted to occur and the reference to Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy year captivity. According to Keil:

The reasons for the opinion that common (i.e., seven-day) weeks are not intended, lie partly in the contents of vers. 25 and 27, which undoubtedly teach that that which came to pass in the sixty-two weeks and in the one week could not take place in common weeks, partly in the reference of the seventy שבעים to the seventy years of Jeremiah, ver. 2.⁸¹

It is quite obvious that the destroyed city of Jerusalem could not have been rebuilt to the specifications of verse twenty-five, and afterward see the events of verse twenty-seven all within 490 days. A seven day covenant in verse twenty-seven is also hard to imagine. It is extremely significant that even if it is granted that Daniel erroneously intended 'days' as his increments, it is unlikely that from a human perspective he would have predicted that the 9:24-27 events would occur within 490 days. History fails to indicate the occurrence of such events within 490 days of any of the prophecy's proposed terminus a quos. Daniel's reference to the seventy years of Jeremiah shows that 'day weeks' could not be the intended meaning, "For what sort of a consolation would it have been for Daniel, if it had been announced to him, that, as a compensation for the seventy years of desolation, the city should continue seventy ordinary weeks until a new destruction?"⁸² So, it is safe to consider the days interpretation to be impracticable.

Support for the 'Literal Years' Interpretation

Daniel's Use of "time, times, and half a time"

Daniel uses the terminology "time, times, and half a time" in Dan. 7:25 and 12:7, both occurrences in reference to the great tribu-

lation period. Many believe these phrases equate with the half-week of Dan. 9:27. However, some interpreters like Keil see a major difficulty in trying to equate these references:

. . . where does Daniel speak of the three and a half years of the time of the end? He does not use the word year in any of the passages that fall to be here considered, but only $\int \int \int$ or $\int \int \int$, time, definite time. That by this word common years are to be understood, is indeed taken for granted by many interpreters, but a satisfactory proof of such a meaning has not been adduced.⁸³

In response let it first be pointed out that $\int \int \int$ does mean a definite duration of time and can be equated with year.⁸⁴ The term $\int \int \int$ means most generally "appointed time,"⁸⁵ however it is significant that this term is seen in Dan. 12:7 where it appears to bear the meaning of 'year' based on the further description of it in terms of days in Dan. 12:11. This would seem to indicate that the half-seven in 9:27 is likely a 3 1/2 year period as well. This would also correlate well with the designations of the last half of the tribulation period in Revelation: "forty-two months" in Rev. 11:2; "1260 days" in Rev. 11:3; "1260 days" in Rev. 12:6; and "forty-two months" in Rev. 13:5. It would of course follow that if the final $\int \int \int$ represents seven years, so would each of the preceding sixty-nine; and, the thesis position is thus supported.

Pertinent Themes and Related Terminology Elsewhere in the Old Testament

Jeremiah's prophecy and related legislation

Since the seventy weeks prophecy is actually a response from God to Daniel, and since God intended for Daniel to "consider" and "understand," we must premise this section accordingly. The premise is that God probably would have communicated the prophecy in the

terms of the content of Daniel's thinking at the time, and this content would have included Old Testament terminology and context as seen in Dan. 9:2.

An integral part of the context of the seventy weeks prophecy is Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy year duration of the captivity (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10). Thus, while receiving the angelic herald, it would seem highly probable that Daniel would have been disposed to recognize seventy as a symbol of exilic punishment and to think in terms of years with regard to increments. Writes Cooper:

The angel's first utterance is a play upon words. Daniel had read and had been thinking of the seventy years of the desolation of Jerusalem. Then this heavenly messenger informed him that the great kingdom age would not be ushered in at the conclusion of the "seventy years" of Jerusalem's desolations, as he had thought, but that there would be "seventy sevens" of years for the accomplishment of the glorious forecast given by Jeremiah.⁸⁶

This assessment comprehends the prophecy's context and seems to be a very direct and reasonable understanding of Gabriel's response. Cooper goes on to emphasize that the natural increments for the seventy sevens would be years, since Daniel had been thinking in these terms.⁸⁷ This also would stand to reason.

Although many take the seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy to be a round or approximate number, and it could be argued that Daniel understood it as such, this does not diminish the likely fact that Daniel's perception of increments would have been of literal years. A good case can be made for a literal seventy year captivity anyway; and this only lends additional credence to the idea that literal years are intended in the "weeks" terminology. As Feinberg has related, many take the captivity to have been precisely seventy years, from the fourth year of Jehoiakim to the end of the

Babylonian empire at the ascent of Cyrus, or from 606 B.C. to 536 B.C. Alternatively, some have held the exact seventy to run from the 586 B.C. captivity to the completion of Zerubbabel's temple in 516 B.C. Feinberg has also pointed out that those who espouse this precise understanding find apparent support in Dan. 9:1, 2, since Daniel went to Babylon in the first deportation and was aware that the seventieth year of his exile was soon approaching.⁸⁸ So, it is highly probable that Daniel's chronological mindset was tuned to literal years at the onset of Gabriel's arrival.

Not only can we safely suppose that Daniel was focused on literal years, but it is also probable that Daniel's attention had been drawn to the concept of seven year land use cycles. For, Daniel mentions his source of understanding to be books; thus, in addition to Jer. 25 and 29 Daniel found elsewhere in the Old Testament reference to the concept of a prescribed number of years of exile as punishment. If, as it appears, Daniel's other sources were like references in Ex. 23 and Lev. 25 and 26, we have strong evidence that the literal seven year land use cycle was at the front of Daniel's mind also. Newman states the case as follows:

In the first two verses of Daniel chapter nine, we have the setting for Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks. Daniel has just understood from "books" (plural) that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. Since Jeremiah is mentioned by name, his prophecy is obviously one of the books (the length of the captivity is predicted in Jeremiah 25:11, 12 and 29:10), but what other books were involved?

The second book of Chronicles also mentions the seventy years (36:21), but it probably was not completed at the time of Daniel's vision. However, the Chronicler explains that the captivity was seventy years long in order to compensate for seventy sabbath years in which the Jews had disobeyed God's command for the land to lie fallow (see Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:3-7, 18-22). In fact,

Leviticus 26:32-35, 43, [sic] predicts that just this punishment would come upon Israel if they violated the sabbatical-year regulation. Perhaps Exodus and Leviticus were the other books Daniel consulted; Daniel at least had all the materials necessary to reach the conclusion found in II Chronicles, even if he never saw that work.

It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that Daniel had been thinking about the seven-year land use cycle and the period of seventy such cycles during which Israel had disobeyed this command.⁸⁹

This contention that Daniel was cognizant of the seven year land use cycle is given even more feasibility by two observations: (1) that the Old Testament proclamations of exile are generally related to the idea of neglected sabbath years when commensurate years of punishment are referred to (cf. Lev. 26; Deut. 27-30), and (2) that although it is arguable that sins other than neglect of the sabbath year can be visited with punishment by exile for years in some way commensurate with their commission, Scripture is sore pressed to reveal specifically another national sin that had been committed for seventy years, or some proportion thereof, and that would be dealt with at the Babylonian exile. Contrast this second observation with the fact referred to in 2 Chron. 36:21 which was also perhaps known to Daniel. Since Gabriel's message intends to Daniel's understanding, and since literal seven year periods were very likely in Daniel's mind, we have strong indication that the שָׁבָעִים or "weeks" mean the same.

If by reference to Jeremiah's prophecy and the sabbath legislation in Exodus and Leviticus Daniel was aware of the fact that the seventy years captivity had been meted out for the omission of the sabbatical year, a literal 490 year period is thus established as a most tenable meaning for the "seventy weeks." This would

quite obviously arithmetically prove the "weeks" to be literal seven year periods since the "seventy" is an established meaning. Wood writes concerning the prospect of Daniel's having had this awareness:

Third, since Daniel was here thinking in terms of the seventy-year captivity, he, as a Hebrew, could have easily moved from the idea of one week of years to seventy weeks of years. This follows because, according to 2 Chronicles 36:21, the people had been punished by this Exile so that their land might enjoy the sabbath rests which had not been observed in their prior history (cf. Lev. 26:33-35; Jer. 34:12-22). Knowing this, Daniel would have recognized that the seventy years of the Exile represented seventy sevens of years in which these violations had transpired; and he would have understood Gabriel to be saying, simply, that another period, similar in length to that which had made the Exile necessary, was coming in the experience of the people.⁹⁰

Although 2 Chron. 36:21 is commonly dated to the latter half of the fifth century B.C. and Daniel thus would not have had access to this written record, he may have had knowledge of the reason for the captivity or could have deduced it from his understanding of the law. Therefore, it is not impossible that Daniel would have recognized the seventy "weeks" or "sevens" to be a 490 year period like the one that had of late come into his field of perception.

Some commentators have held this point to be valid. For instance, Bertheau believed the seventy years of the captivity represented a period of 490 years in which sabbaths were not kept. This period, he assured, began about the year 1000 B.C. with the commencement of the monarchial period. Bertheau saw support for this idea in 2 Chron. 35:18 where the celebration of the Passover according to the law is supposedly represented as having been curtailed with the end of the period of the judges.⁹¹

However, that Daniel synthesized Jeremiah's prophecy of the captivity's duration (Jer. 25:11; 29:10) with Lev. 26:34 to arrive at this concept of 490 years is not certain. Keil holds that such a synthesis would not justify the conclusion that the sabbath year lacked through 490 years anyway, and he asserts that Bertheau's understanding of 2 Chron. 35:18 is likely in error. He points out that the 490 years assumption is unjustified since with respect to 2 Chron. 36:21:

the words, that the land, to make full the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah, kept the whole time of desolation holy, or enjoyed a sabbath rest such as Moses had proclaimed in Lev. XXVI. 34, do not necessarily involve that the land had been deprived of its sabbath rest seventy times in succession, or during a period of 490 years, by the sin of the people. The connection between the prophecy of Jeremiah and the provision of the law is to be understood theologically, and does not purport to be calculated chronologically. The thought is this: By the infliction of the punishment threatened against the transgressors of the law by the carrying of the people away captive into Babylon, the land will obtain the rest which the sinful people had deprived it of by their neglect of the sabbath observance commanded them.⁹²

And, regarding the notion that 2 Chron. 35:18 means that Passover celebrations ceased with the beginning of kingly government in Israel, he writes:

But this is itself unlikely; and still more unlikely is it, that in the time of the judges the sabbath-year had been regularly observed until Samuel; and that during the reigns of the kings David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, this celebration remained wholly in abeyance.⁹³

Keil goes on to clarify that 2 Chron. 35:18 simply means to state that no Passover of the same quality or degree as that of the Passover in the time of Josiah's reign had been held since the period of the judges.⁹⁴ This point would seem sustained; and his contention that the joining of Jeremiah's prophecy and the sabbath

year legislation does not certainly and without question equate with a 490 year neglect of the sabbath has some validity. However, though it is not certain that Daniel's comparison of prophecy and law incoded 490 consecutive years to his thinking, it seems probable that he would have at least hypothesized a broken or disconnected series of 490 years without sabbath year observances; this series he may have taken as having begun as early as just after the conquest of Canaan. This supports, though deductively and somewhat retrospectively, that by שָׁבַע is intended 'seven literal years.'

From this look at Jeremiah's prophecy and the related Old Testament legislation we have good reason to conclude that Daniel was most probably focused upon the idea of literal years of exilic punishment and the seven year increment of the legislated land use cycle; and we may have some confidence that Daniel at least entertained the notion of a disconnected series of 490 years void of sabbath year observance. Therefore, from these three conclusions, we may safely understand the שָׁבַע or "weeks" of the prophecy to be periods of seven literal years.

The seventh year "sabbath"

The Old Testament designates the seventh year of the legislated land use cycle as the "sabbath." Contained herein is an obvious allusion to the seven day week set forth in the law. This is taken by some interpreters to be support for understanding the "sevens" or "weeks" of Dan. 9:24-27 to be literal seven year periods since each of the land use cycles could be considered 'sevens' or 'weeks' based upon the analogy suggested in the labeling of the seventh year as "sabbath." Accordingly, Hengstenberg, for

instance, espouses that although the seven year land use cycles are not called שָׁבֻעִים or שְׁנֵי עָשָׂר in the law, they are still to be considered as 'weeks' since the law so frequently designates their seventh years as "sabbaths." He sets forth in example Lev. 25:2, 4, 5; 26:34, 35, 43 and 2 Chron. 36:21.⁹⁵

Keil takes exception to this idea, however. He explains that this argument from analogy lends no exegetical basis for interpreting 'year-weeks' in Dan. 9:

But since these periods of seven years, as Hengstenberg himself confesses, are not called in the law שָׁבֻעִים or שְׁנֵי עָשָׂר , therefore, from the repeated designation of the seventh year as that of the great Sabbath merely (Lev. XXV. 2, 4, 5, XXVI. 34, 35, 43; 2 Chron. XXXVI. 21), the idea of year-weeks in no way follows. The law makes mention not only of the Sabbath-year, but also of periods of seven times seven years, after the expiry of which a year of jubilee was always to be celebrated (Lev. XXV. 8 ff.). These, as well as the Sabbath-years, might be called שָׁבֻעִים . Thus the idea of year-weeks has no exegetical foundation.⁹⁶

Keil's observation needs to be tempered by consideration of a few other points, however. While it is true that the seven year land use cycles are not called שָׁבֻעִים or שְׁנֵי עָשָׂר in the law, it is simply not at all the emphasis of Scripture to refer to them as whole units. The Old Testament references to these seven year periods focus on the implementation of their durations and the designation of their consummating and crucial seventh year religious observances. So, the occasion to refer to them as 'sevens' or 'weeks' is generally lacking. Secondly, that the series of seven literal seven year land use cycles between jubilees could be referred to as 'sevens' or 'weeks' is not an analytically valid objection. For, the last cycle of seven literal years is nowhere in Scripture designated as the 'sabbath.' Also, a hypothetical

designation of the jubilee year as 'sabbath' fails in argument since this would not receive the analogy from seven day weeks; the jubilee year would be an eighth unit in the series and would not be uniform in duration with the previous seven units. Therefore, Keil's assertion that the concept of year-weeks is without exegetical foundation is in this way not established. The contrary opinion does seem to carry some validity, however, and especially as considered among the other biblical passages relevant to the 'years' interpretation, which we now will survey.

Other Biblical support for the 'years' interpretation

Elsewhere in the Old Testament are several examples of the coincidence of terms meaning 'seven' or 'sevens' (week or weeks) with the interpretation of seven literal years. Let us cite three references.

First, we must notice with Baldwin that in Lev. 25:8 where the seven year land use cycles are referred to as שַׁבָּתִים or "sabbaths," we have proof that this Hebrew term so obviously analogous in usage to the שָׁנִים in question, means seven literal years. This is so because seven of these sabbaths are in this verse equated with forty-nine literal years.⁹⁷

Secondly, Gen. 29:27, in the account of Jacob's fulfilling of the bridal weeks, implicitly equates שָׁבֹעַ or "week" with שָׁנִים-שֶׁבַע or "seven years." This must be considered strong evidence for the 'weeks of years' understanding.

As a last example, the Gen. 41 account of Joseph's interpreting of Pharaoh's dream demonstrates "seven" being used in a symbolic construct to denote 'seven literal years.' Gen. 41:26 reads, "The

seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years"

Summary and Conclusion

We have noted that the 'seven literal years' interpretation has found majority and early acceptance among scholars. Conversely, we have seen that the major alternative view, understanding "weeks" to be symbolic and indefinite intervals, is the minority opinion. This view features a continuous and unbroken period from its a quo to the ultimate and spiritual restoration of Israel at Christ's second advent. We have critiqued this position for its failure with regard to the objective of consolation, its inconsistency in ruling out the literal years interpretation on irrelevant and indecisive grounds, and its failure to appropriately acknowledge the coincidence of numerical symbology and literal application in Scripture.

The impracticableness of the 'ordinary days' interpretation has been demonstrated by pointing out that the events of the prophecy would not fit into seventy ordinary weeks and by acknowledging that the reference to Jeremiah's seventy years by context and logic renders this interpretation essentially impossible. We have seen that Daniel's use of the "time, times, and half a time" terminology does tend to support the 'seven literal years' understanding of the "weeks," since the Hebrew words chosen can be taken as 'years,' one term is defined as such in Dan. 12:7 and 11, such an interpretation correlates well with the New Testament representation of the great tribulation, and the half-week of 9:27 is thus easily understood as the same 3 1/2 year period.

Based on the logical premise that God intended for Daniel to understand the prophecy and would have communicated using the concepts currently in Daniel's mind, we have shown that periods of seven literal years equate with the "weeks" since a comparison of Daniel's probable sources indicates that Daniel was most understandably thinking: (1) in terms of literal year increments, (2) in terms of literal seven year cycles, and (3) very possibly in terms of a literal, even if discontinuous, 490 year overall duration. We noticed briefly that the literal seven year land use cycles of the Pentateuch can in all likelihood be considered 'weeks' since they adequately receive the analogy of the ordinary seven day week suggested in the designation of their seventh years as "sabbaths"; here again we find Scriptural support for the idea that the שָׁבָעִים are units of seven literal years. Finally, even more biblical references were adduced in defense of this view; the Hebrew term for seven and a related form were shown to be representative of seven literal years, and "week" was Scripturally equated with this same duration in the account of Jacob and the bridal weeks.

The corporate evidence weighs heavily in favor of our understanding the prophecy's שָׁבָעִים or "weeks" to be units of seven literal years. This then forms our conclusion as to the proper interpretation of the concept of "weeks," and the thesis position is further established. We now proceed in our discussion to determine when these literal "weeks" begin.

CHAPTER V

THE IDENTITY AND DATE OF THE DECREE

Introduction

Now that we have established the early origin of Daniel's prophecy, its literal chronological intentions, and the duration of its increments, it remains to demonstrate the actual historical execution of its prescribed chronology. This chapter and the two following attempt this demonstration as the prophecy's sixty-nine weeks are shown to expire in the presentation of Christ and His death. This chapter will set forth the thesis view as to the identity of the decree in Dan. 9:25, the prophecy's terminus a quo; it will then relate history's appreciably informed and reasoned approximation for the date of this command. Chapter six will be occupied with the proper application of the Dan. 9 prophecy's intended chronological parameters against the backdrop of the scholarly precaution warranted by certain considerations from the nature of chronology. Chapter seven shall attempt a proof of Christ's having fulfilled the sixty-ninth week of Daniel's prophecy; this will be tried utilizing the witness of Scripture, chronology, and history.

Let us look first to Scripture's representation of the nature of the decree and its essential content. Next, we will study the factors that identify the a quo, refuting the salient alternatives in the process. Last, we will examine scriptural and historical evidence for the date of the a quo decree.

Nature and Content of the Decree

Nature of the Decree

Gabriel informed Daniel, according to Wood, that the sixty-nine sevens of years unto the Anointed One would be "from the time when a word of direction will be given for rebuilding Jerusalem." This word, Wood explains, should be a generally known edict like those of the Persian Kings down through Artaxerxes I.⁹⁸ However, a close examination of the immediate context of Dan. 9:25 seems to reveal a more detailed designation of the a quo. For, context via comparison with the $\begin{matrix} \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \\ \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \end{matrix} \text{ך} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ of verse twenty-three, can be understood to narrow our perception of $\begin{matrix} \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \\ \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \end{matrix} \text{ך} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ to the idea of a "divine word or command," since this verse twenty-three terminology clearly refers to the giving of a divine word.⁹⁹ This connection is confirmed by Keil who writes, " $\begin{matrix} \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \\ \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \end{matrix} \text{ך} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ (from the going forth of the commandment) formally corresponds, indeed, to $\begin{matrix} \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \\ \text{ך} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} \end{matrix} \text{ך} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ (the commandment came forth), ver. 23, emphatically expressing a decision on the part of God, but the two expressions are not actually to be identified"¹⁰⁰

That ultimately the word given in verse twenty-five is from God is agreeable to scholars from various opinions, for Young also concedes that verse twenty-five "has reference to the issuance of the word, not from a Persian ruler but from God."¹⁰¹ Although we may safely assume to look for a divine word, Scripture does not list the giving of any audible word from God. Therefore, we are directed to a perusal of Scripture and history to find a providentially given word; and since the prophecy intends to specify a calculable chron-

ology we may expect the time of this providence to be at least approximately distinguishable (cf. Harmon's discussion¹⁰²).

Content of the Decree

The NIV renders the decree: "to restore and rebuild Jerusalem." Hengstenberg exegetes the verb combination $\text{בָּנִינָהּ} \text{וְיָבִינָהּ}$ more specifically to mean "to bring back and to build, . . . to build up the city again in its ancient circumference," or the city's "complete restoration to its former condition."¹⁰³ Young sides with Hengstenberg that בָּנִינָהּ cannot be adverbially joined as in "to build again," but objects that what is intended is not a directive unto complete restoration but only the beginning of such operations.¹⁰⁴ In opposition to this it has been asserted that בָּנִינָהּ must be literally rendered when applied to a city as "to cause to return to its original state."¹⁰⁵

Wood argues that any of the three major Persian decrees qualify as the a quo since, "The words 'to restore and build Jerusalem' no doubt carry reference to all that was concerned with the reestablishment of Jerusalem as God's city, with God's people in it, doing the work of God."¹⁰⁶ However, this is answered in that בָּנִינָהּ cannot refer to the restoration of the people to Jerusalem since this would demand a forced ellipsis, and by the observation that בָּנִינָהּ must refer to Jerusalem since this is "sufficiently evident from the word בָּנִינָהּ , which is closely related to it, and which, like בָּנִינָהּ , can only refer to בָּנִינָהּ , the street."¹⁰⁷ The subject of the decree is primarily and may even be limited to the inanimate city of Jerusalem without respect to the people or their functioning,

for the occurrence of בָּנִינָה , "to build," defines the total restoration of the city to be within the category of building.¹⁰⁸

Identity of the Decree

Our focus now shifts to the searching out of the historical execution of the divine word to cause Jerusalem to return to its original extent and to build it. Since history indicates that building activity was initiated with the edicts or permission of several Persian kings, and since at least one theory holds that a prior prophetic utterance constitutes the a quo, we will establish the thesis identity of the decree after refuting the alternative theories. Only brief refutations will be afforded the most obsolete and discarded of these options. The thesis position is that God's execution of the restoration in point was providentially initiated with the decree of Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah (ca. 445 B.C.). We will deal with the two least viable theories first and proceed to the three major views in contention.

Refutation of Alternatives

Jeremiah's prophecy of the captivity or the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem

Whether one holds the prophecy's a quo to be Jeremiah's utterance of the prophecy of the captivity (dated at 594 B.C. by Hartman¹⁰⁹) or to be the actual destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., as does Montgomery,¹¹⁰ this view is fraught with problems in essential aspects. This persuasion takes the Anointed One of Dan. 9:25 to be Cyrus in 538 B.C. Therefore, chronologically, the 586 B.C. a quo initially seems to fulfill the parameters since it yields an adequate approximation of the first seven sevens,

figuring fifty-six actual years to Cyrus. However, it cannot produce the same fulfillment of the following sixty-two weeks of years, taking as it does the Anointed of verse twenty-six as slain in the time of Antiochus IV.

In addition to chronological inconsistency this view carries no obvious adherence to the scriptural specifications for the decree. For, the destruction of the city hardly constitutes an initiation of the restoring process; and the words of Jeremiah do not appear to relate the content of the Dan. 9:25 command. Jer. 25:11 refers to the "whole country" becoming a desolation, without mentioning Jerusalem. Jer. 29:10, 11 contains the plans of God to bring the people back from captivity and prosper them--again nothing of the city. Jeremiah does not mention a city restoration until his prophecy of the ultimate restoration in chapters thirty and thirty-one. Here we have the statement that "the city will be rebuilt on her ruins," (30:18) and the like assertion that "this city will be rebuilt for me from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate" (31:38). But, that this refers to the future and final restoration of the people is evident from the description of the nature of this restoration and from the promise of verse forty that the city would "never again be uprooted or demolished," which is irreconcilable with the 70 A.D. Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

This view suffers from other unfounded interpretive assumptions as well. As Goss has pointed out, its subjecting of Jeremiah's prophecy to double interpretation assumes his prophecy "must be re-interpreted in order to get from it the 'true' meaning."¹¹¹ This of course is built upon the dubious assumption that Israel

failed to serve Babylon for the predicted seventy years. This theory assumes in addition that Daniel derived his prophecy from Jeremiah's, and that both share the same a quo.¹¹² In contradiction to this, Scripture shows the prophecy to have literally derived from God via the angel Gabriel--and we have already referred to the disparity between Daniel's a quo and Jeremiah's.

Decree of Darius

Since the edict of Darius (ca. 520 B.C.) is not by today's scholarship seriously considered to be the a quo of Daniel's seventy weeks, we will dismiss it with a word. This decree was actually based on the earlier decree of Cyrus, ca. 536 B.C. In the directive Darius did make additions to the Cyrus decree, but these were unrelated to the city of Jerusalem.¹¹³ An examination of Ez. 6:3-12 reveals that the only intention of Darius was to aid the construction of the Jerusalem temple and functioning of its daily worship.

Decree of Cyrus

Although the 538 B.C. decree of Cyrus (Ez. 1:2-4) says nothing about the consummate restitution of Jerusalem and speaks only of the rebuilding of the Lord's temple, some have understood this initiative to be the a quo in question. Proponents of this understanding see Scriptural confirmation in Is. 44:28; 45:13. Regarding Is. 45:13, Cooper writes: "The words, 'he shall build my city,' are clear and unmistakable to everyone who will accept this language at its face value. It is abundantly evident that Cyrus would issue a decree authorizing the building of the city of Jerusalem."¹¹⁴

We must keep in mind, however, that the crucial issue is whether or not Cyrus was God's instrument in initiating the uninterrupted process of totally rebuilding Jerusalem. Not even the apparent chronological proximity of the Cyrus decree to Daniel's prophecy is essentially relevant. For, it is possible that Cyrus' decree actually antedated the prophecy; and, even if the decree followed, one must remember that Dan. 9:24-27 does not mention proximity of execution to its utterance as a criterion, but does stipulate the content and effects of the decree which Cyrus' demonstrated neither scripturally nor historically.

Is it not possible that the Is. 44 and 45 references should be taken to mean that merely 'building activity' would be initiated for the first time since the captivity, and this by Cyrus? After all, the Hebrew utilized in these passages denotes 'building' and not 'total reconstruction'. Perhaps God was acknowledging that the advent of the Persian domination of Babylon would be the first profoundly significant turn in Jewish history since the desolations and capitulation of Israel; Cyrus was first to allow a partial return of God's people to their land and to sanction any building activity at all. One may also wonder if Cyrus, the founder and overshadowing personage of the Persian empire, is used in a somewhat symbolic way or generic sense to spotlight the succession of Persian rulers that would produce the initiation of the total rebuilding of Jerusalem.

In response to the absence of reference to the city in the Ez. 1 decree, Cooper assures,

There is nothing in the text of this decree which would preclude the authority to rebuild the city. Furthermore,

when one remembers the fact that the temple was the one institution in which all the interests and activities of the community were headed, he may correctly conclude that, since the lesser is included in the greater, the authority to rebuild the temple also permitted the reconstruction of the city.¹¹⁵

viewed from this assumption and taken at isolated face value, Is. 45:13 would seem to designate Cyrus as the one to execute the bringing back of the city of Jerusalem. However, sound hermeneutical methodology would have us consider Is. 45:13 in the light of other related Scripture. This one verse accompanied by only one other major supporting reference is to be compared with the overwhelming number of seemingly contradictory passages in Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, and elsewhere in the Old Testament. This much greater weight of biblical evidence, which we will survey as we progress, should be allowed to refine and qualify the face value understanding of the Is. 44 and 45 references; and this clearer and more careful interpretation appears to be vindicated by the testimony of historical evidence.

Cooper's contention that nothing in Cyrus' decree precludes the city rebuilding invites several critiques. First, the notion that the returnees would have presumed upon the grace of the monarch of the prevailing world empire suffers from a certain incredulity. Second, that a total restitution of the city as called for in Dan. 9:25 should be providentially carried out from this edict would almost seem to make veiled or secretive the revelation of the seventy weeks' a quo; and, Scripture and history indicate that this restoring providence lacked subsequent to the Cyrus decree. Furthermore, the common practice of the Persian kings mitigates against the idea that Cyrus intended that Jerusalem should be wholly brought back. For, although the Persians tolerated variant

religions, even supporting the temple-worship of foreign gods, contributing to the construction of their temples, and granting special privileges on priesthoods,¹¹⁶ it was not their policy to refortify cities like Jerusalem. Elliott relates:

The permission of Cyrus, and that of Darius (Ezra 6:8-12), related only to the restoration of the Temple. This involved, to a certain degree, that of the city; but there is no intimation, in the proclamation, of permission to rebuild the walls and fortifications. It is probable that the Persian kings had no inclination to restore Jerusalem as a fortress, and thus afford the Jews, who always showed a readiness to revolt, a firm basis of defence and resistance.¹¹⁷

Elliott's assessment would seem to gain credence from reference to Ez. 4:19, 20 where Jerusalem is ascribed a long history of political rebellion and unrest. This all indicates that authority to rebuild the temple would not have included permission to return Jerusalem to its pre-exilic form.

Concerning Is. 44:28 where Cyrus is portrayed to say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid," Thomson adequately explains,

The evident intention of this passage is simply to recognize the good-will of the great Persian in terminating the Captivity, by permitting the exiles to return to their ruined city to rebuild the Temple, and with it their forsaken homes. His own official language determines that his design extended no further. That the Jews were allowed this much fully justifies the poetical expressions of the prophet, but by no means the modern inference that Cyrus granted to Zerubbabel the same privilege extended by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah. Ezra's record as to the after-conduct of the king proves just the reverse.¹¹⁸

As a final observation on the Is. 44 and 45 references, Harmon notes that Dan. 9:25 is concerned with restoring to bring back and building, but the Isaiah passages relate only the concept of

building.¹¹⁹ So, we may justifiably conclude that Isaiah does not set forth the Cyrus decree as the seventy weeks' a quo.

Young maintains that permission to build the temple implied royal authorization for the building of homes in Jerusalem as well. He sees Hag. 1:2-4 as proof positive that the people understood the Cyrus decree as such.¹²⁰ While Hoehner concedes that some of the returnees did inhabit Jerusalem constituting a semblance of a city incapable of defending itself like the one in Dan. 9:25,¹²¹ Walvoord answers that the homes of Hag. 1:2-4 were evidently not in Jerusalem. He sees this borne out by the Neh. 2:12-15, 17 description of the city ruins, and by the fact that in Neh. 11:1 one out of ten people by the casting of lots was obligated to move to Jerusalem.¹²² Notice also that in Neh. 11:2 the people commended all who volunteered to reside in the city. Here again the 538 B.C. edict appears to fail the criteria of the prophecy's a quo, a providential word from God to wholly restore Jerusalem and build it.

Cooper translates Ez. 4:12 to read ". . . they are building the rebellious and the bad city, and have finished the walls, and repaired the foundations"; this he takes to be proof that Cyrus' decree commenced the weeks.¹²³ Notwithstanding the fact that this verse might be better translated as in the NIV, "They are restoring the walls and repairing the foundations," even if new walls were erected at this time we have seen from the book of Nehemiah that they must have been later demolished. This would render curious God's consoling of Daniel by mention of such a short lived reconstruction of Jerusalem. If the walls and interior buildings were not completed before the Ez. 4 allegations, then we have proof

that the Cyrus decree did not initiate God's providential restoration of Jerusalem. For, these allegations resulted in a stop of the work, and God's sovereign hand is not subject to pagan objection or interruption.

Ez. 9:8, 9 cannot be rightly considered proof that the walls of Jerusalem had been restored by the time of Ezra's arrival. The wall in Judah and Jerusalem referred to here can only be a figurative wall of protection; this is clear from the structure and content of the passage. That "wall" here is used figuratively is apparent from its placement in parallel with another figure of speech occurring earlier in the passage. Since this wall is represented as protecting the land of Judah it is obviously not a literal structure.¹²⁴ We will later adduce an exegetical proof of the figurative nature of this wall as Ezra's statement is referenced in the refutation of the decree he received.

Another valid critique of the Cyrus view is that the major focus of his decree is not even mentioned in Dan. 9:25.¹²⁵ Leupold has attempted to answer this by pointing out that Daniel's prayer and his wording in general are products of his mental preoccupation with Jeremiah's prophecy at the time. Where Jeremiah mentions the seventy years (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10) he speaks in terms of the whole land, so it follows, according to Leupold, that Daniel's text must also speak in terms of the overall or outward aspects--though more specifically intending the temple, it designates the city in which it is contained. Leupold also espouses that Daniel's prophecy emphasizes,

the eternal and lasting verities (cf. v. 24) and therefore does not say much about a temple that is destined to become

outmoded. In other words, the decree of Cyrus mentions the Temple and implies the city; the passage in Daniel mentions the city and implies the eternal temple. That Cyrus' decree and God's permission ran parallel is strongly asserted by Ezra 6:14.¹²⁶

In response to Leupold, let us consider that Daniel's understanding of the numerical symbology and increments of Gabriel's message may have been affected by Daniel's recent exposure to Jeremiah's prophecy of the captivity; but, that his prayer terminology and the wording of the 9:25 prophecy reflect this same influence is neither actually evident nor logically inferable. While Jeremiah's deals with all of Judah (see Jer. 25:1, 2), Daniel's primary concern is shown by the focus on Jerusalem in his prayer (cf. Dan. 9:2, 16, 18, 19). Since God is ultimately responsible for the wording of the 9:25 prophecy and since the prophecies of Jeremiah and Daniel are distinctly separate revelations, it is a fallacy of non sequitor to conclude that the seventy weeks prophecy's wording necessarily follows from Daniel's familiarity with Jeremiah's prophecy. Had Daniel conjured his prophecy, inspired only by the captivity prediction, we might expect him to have written more in terms of the whole land of Judah as did Jeremiah. In light of the chronological intentions of the prophecy and the verse twenty-three admonition which indicates that God intends for Daniel's prophecy to be discernible, it seems somewhat incredulous, considering the nature of the Cyrus decree, that God would implicitly but not explicitly and emphatically mention the temple here in Dan. 9:25. Leupold's chain of expressed and intended meanings would certainly not be the simple face value understanding of the average reader. His contention about Daniel's eternal focus skews our picture of

the observable emphasis of Daniel's prophecy, for the certainty and time of the advent of these ultimate blessings is more probably the prediction's focus.

Finally, let us notice that if one chooses the 538 B.C. Cyrus decree as a quo he will be unable to fit a literal seven sevens between it and the city restorations of either Ezra or Nehemiah. But, the adherent can in his own mind dispose of this problem by embracing the already addressed symbolical numerical interpretation as does Young.¹²⁷ As Goss has related,¹²⁸ the other option is emendation of the received chronology, and it should perhaps be added, significant or even gross emendation. This will become more apparent as the received chronology is discussed in the next chapter.

Decree of Artaxerxes I to Ezra

The decree of Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) to Ezra (ca. 458), presented in Ez. 7:12-26, does not in any way grant permission for reconstruction of Jerusalem's walls or restitution of her internal complex of buildings. History does not attest to such a restoration subsequent to the decree of Ezra. Thus, this view fails the criterion of Dan. 9:25, or the total bringing back and building of the physical city. However, some believe this decree was the impetus for a less tangible kind of restoration of the city. They point out that Ezra and Nehemiah were both about the work of restoration--Ezra primarily spiritually, Nehemiah primarily physically.¹²⁹ This decree is seen as the only one that confers the authority to restore proper worship as well as the power to initiate political organization and administer civil justice.¹³⁰ Although these things are true, we must allow the text of the seventy weeks prophecy

to choose the a quo by its own criteria, and it speaks of the totality of the city--the physical aspect being the salient emphasis. Supposing for the sake of argument that the first half of Dan. 9:25 refers to this spiritual socio-political restoration, we must still admit that the verse's latter half disqualifies this interpretation; for, we are at a loss to assign spiritual meanings to the physical concepts of "streets" and "trench" which would clearly have been understood by Daniel (verse twenty-five begins: "Know and understand") to have been mentioned to further define the 'rebuilding' in the first half of verse twenty-five. Consistency would demand that after verse twenty-five is spiritualized as such we must also exegete spiritual socio-political interpretations from the contents of Dan. 9:26 and 27, a thing not easily obtainable and the results of which are not objectively verifiable.

Arguing along these same lines of interpretation Pusey writes,

Ezra had full powers to settle it according to the law of his God, having absolute authority in ecclesiastical and civil matters. The little colony which he took with him, of 1683 males (with women and children, some 8400 souls), was itself a considerable addition to those who had before returned, and involved a rebuilding of Jerusalem. This rebuilding of the city and reorganization of the polity, begun by Ezra and carried on and perfected by Nehemiah, corresponds with the words in Daniel, From the going forth of a commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.¹³¹

Regarding these powers of civil reorganization we must respond that an examination of the historical setting yields a clearer perception. Although Ezra, being a devotee to the Law of the Lord and its teaching (Ez. 7:10-12, 21, 25), was granted release to Jerusalem primarily to propagate the tenets of the Law of God and to facilitate His prescribed worship (Ez. 7:14, 23), he was also directed to esta-

publish a civil justice system based in the Law of God and the law of the king (Ez. 7:25, 26); but, just how closely this seemingly new autonomy and independence paralleled that of the pre-exilic Jerusalem is revealed in the fact that Persia tended to use the ethnic religions of its subjects to establish a more stable control of its peoples. This regime was tolerant of religious organization as long as it promoted Persian interests and upheld the king's law. Olmstead states:

Persia was tolerant of the various ethnic religions but insisted that their cults should be well organized under responsible leadership and that religion should never mask plans for rebellion. The head of the Jewish community in Babylonia was charged with the administration of its own new lawbook, significantly entitled data like the king's law; he might be expected to remain as loyal to the royal lawbook to which he owed his authority as to that which laid down the procedure for Jewish religion.¹³²

It is therefore probable that Ezra, having abandoned nationalistic hopes, arrived in Jerusalem to promote loyalty to Persian rule and to preserve the Jews' guardianship and practice of God's Law.¹³³ Jerusalem was not seeing a restoration of her former political autonomy.

Pusey's suggestion that a rebuilding of the city was involved in Ezra's return is rendered invalid by a couple of considerations. First, we have seen that the a quo must evidence the actual execution of the uninterrupted rebuilding (i.e., one promising total restoration) of Jerusalem since it is a providential act of God ultimately. Second, Scripture gives no evidence that any significant rebuilding of this nature was completed between the decree to Ezra and Nehemiah's arrival in Jerusalem (Neh. 1:3); for, Nehemiah found Jerusalem in ruins and her walls razed (Neh.

2:17; 3). If it is argued that Ezra had time and intention to build the supposed literal wall of Ez. 9:9, our negative response rests on three reasons: (1) Scripture does not indicate that Ezra had any intentions, plans, or permission to rebuild the walls; to have carried out such a formidable task within the few months that he had been in the city Ezra should be expected to have made plans and preparations. (2) Scripture does not record this supposed construction although it would have carried great significance. (3) Exegesis shows the wall to be a figurative one. We noted earlier the evidence from the structure and content of the passage, but the term translated "wall" in verse nine only confirms that a figurative wall is intended. $\aleph \aleph \lambda$ is not the typical word for the literal walls of a city; it is most commonly used of a general landmark or figuratively of an obstacle or protective barrier.¹³⁴ The Bible typically uses the term $\aleph \aleph \aleph$ for literal city walls.¹³⁵

The decree to Ezra has been defended by reference to the supposition that, assuming a 458 B.C. date for this decree, the first seven sevens of Daniel's prophecy can be shown to be almost exactly fulfilled. It is thought that Neh. 13:28 is the key to determining the time of the sufficiently important and thus final act of the restoration of Jerusalem, namely, the purification from mixed marriages. The assumption is made that verse twenty-eight shows that the first forty-nine years of the seventy weeks expired while Joiada was high priest.¹³⁶ Prideaux sets forth this supposed proof by positing the a quo of Dan. 9:25 to be the decree "to restore and build up again the church and state of the Jews at Jerusalem by a thorough reformation of both."¹³⁷ He under-

stands this reformation to be fully represented within the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. He further stipulates that "high priest" in Neh. 13:28 should be attributed to Joiada and not to Eliashib. He then discerns the year of this final expulsion by reference to Chronicon Alexandrinum which represents the first year of Joiada's high priesthood to have been the eleventh year of Darius Nothus according to the Canon of Ptolemy. He then goes on to assume that the verse twenty-eight expulsion must have occurred in Joiada's fifth year (408 B.C.) since this would yield an exact forty-nine year fulfillment of Daniel's first seven heptads.¹³⁸

This argument, however, is plagued with several invalidating problems. As we have already shown, the scripturally prescribed a quo is not the start of a spiritual socio-political reformation but, more exactly, a beginning of total physical restoration. The text of Neh. 13:28 does not clearly indicate that Joiada was high priest at the time of the expulsion; it can be translated properly as showing Eliashib as high priest at the time. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah do not purport to exhaustively record the total post-exilic restoration of Jerusalem, so the recorded expulsion in Neh. 13 cannot be said to be the final restorative act. Assuming hypothetically that Neh. 13:28 does intend Joiada as high priest, Prideaux's choice of the fifth year of his priesthood for the expulsion, in order to make the forty-nine years fit, clearly constitutes a circular and, thus, invalid proof.

For some, probably the strongest attractive aspect of the choice of the decree of Artaxerxes I to Ezra (ca. 458 B.C.) is the promise it shows for a chronologically exact fulfillment of the

sixty-nine weeks in Christ. For instance, reckoning by solar years this decree has the sixty-nine weeks expiring in 26 A.D., very possibly the beginning of Christ's public ministry.¹³⁹ However, this is clearly an a priori acceptance of the 458 B.C. decree and is invalidated by the facts that there are several different events in the life of Christ that could feasibly conclude the sixty-nine sevens of years, and that it is not obviously apparent from the text itself that the seventy weeks revelation intends to precisely calculate the Anointed's arrival. One must also bear in mind that the Canon of Ptolemy, upon which the verity of the calculation relies, appears to be a relatively accurate estimate of history's chronology but one that is still subject to correction from future findings. To assert that "there is no other decree given during the period of the restoration which, if reckoned by either prophetic years or regular solar years, runs out in the lifetime of Christ"¹⁴⁰ is to assume we have more certainty with regard to the exact delineation of the more remote and ancient histories than we do. These matters remain to be further discussed in the next chapter.

Defense of Artaxerxes I's Decree to Nehemiah

The thesis position is that the initiation of the providential a quo referred to in 9:25 coincided with the permission to restore Jerusalem granted by Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) to Nehemiah (Neh. 2:1-9). We will now seek to show that this royal authorization fulfills the a quo criteria of the Dan. 9 prophecy and that history witnesses to the feasibility of this choice. The date assigned to this edict by the received chronology, 445 B.C., is taken to be

approximately correct; but, the establishing of this approximation remains to be treated in the following section.

Before the attestation of the cuneiform inscriptions, scholars entertained the possibility that the Persian kings were known by double names, thus rendering obscure and uncertain the historical evidence from the period. However, the decipherment of the inscriptions has revealed that the Persian kings were each identified by a single name in all parts of their kingdoms. Therefore, we may profitably utilize secular historical studies in identifying the kings referred to in biblical accounts.¹⁴¹

History paints just the picture of Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) and his era that we would expect of the monarch and circumstances humanly responsible for the execution of the building back again of Jerusalem to the status of a rather self sufficient and defendable city. Unlike his immediate predecessor, Xerxes, who found himself for much of his reign in the warring mode with the major powers of his day, Artaxerxes Longimanus was able to maintain his dominion for a large part of his reign by more gentle and passive strategies. However, the first portion of Artaxerxes I's reign set the political stage for the Jerusalem restoration. Hystaspes, brother to the king, instigated a revolt in Bactria which was easily quelled. A subsequent revolt involving nationalist tensions in Egypt was much more serious, however. It was led by Inarus, reportedly son to Psammetichus, who with the help of the Athenians was able to gain some control of Egypt, conquering and killing a Persian satrap and taking Memphis in 459 B.C. But, the very capable General Megabyzus successfully recovered Egypt, crushing the

Egyptians and their Athenian allies in 455. Athens later dispensed an embassy to Susa and the peace of Callias was established in 449. Though Persia later had to resolve minor skirmishes,¹⁴² it largely entered a period of relative tranquility suitable to detente and the granting of politically advantageous favors. During the reign of Artaxerxes I, Herodotus visited Egypt and found it to be in peaceful order and "in full acceptance of a mild and gentle though strong rule."¹⁴³ Longimanus is pictured by Herodotus as striving to maintain the political friendships inherited from his father.¹⁴⁴ Artaxerxes I enjoyed peaceful relations with Athens throughout Pericles' archonship and interestingly enough, Zopyrus, son of Megabyzus, was extended a friendly welcome in Athens in 445 B.C.¹⁴⁵ We see then that Longimanus' reign saw an interlude particularly conducive to the buttressing of Persian control via diplomatic favors; and, a fortified and loyal Jerusalem could hedge against future Egyptian expansionism.

Against a suggested possibility that Nehemiah's Artaxerxes should actually be identified with the historical Artaxerxes II or III we can make a few observations. First, a comparison of the succession of kings mentioned in Ezra and history's attestation shows that Artaxerxes I fits in the Nehemiah narrative, given that he is referred to by the same name as in Ezra (cf. Neh. 2:1 and Ez. 7:1). Second, the reign of Artaxerxes III did not reach thirty-two years in duration (cf. Neh. 13:6). Finally, the political situations confronting both of these kings did not facilitate favors such as granted to Nehemiah. Culican writes, "Almost the entire reign of Artaxerxes II was drained by the war against

the Cadusian tribes which broke out in his father's reign."¹⁴⁶ Artaxerxes II "lived only to see his empire gradually weakening and breaking to pieces amid an almost continuous series of rebellions."¹⁴⁷ Artaxerxes III inherited a troubled empire. Its outer holdings were all but lost. This king was forced to deal with rebellion--backed by an independent Egypt--in Syria and Phoenicia. He was occupied with returning Egypt to satrapal status until 343 B.C. He was eventually able to regain some control in Asia Minor as well, but here he saw the rising threat of the Macedonian kingdom.¹⁴⁸

As we turn to focus on the decree to Nehemiah against the backdrop of the Dan. 9 a quo determinants, we realize that 9:25 mentions nothing of the temple; this would suggest that the a quo should occur when the temple existed and would favor a directive that excluded reference to the temple.¹⁴⁹ This seems to be a valid inference in light of verses twenty-six and twenty-seven. Here the descriptions of the destruction of the city mentions the temple. Since the temple is not referred to in the rebuilding prediction (Dan. 9:25), but only the streets and trench, one would seem justified in supposing that at the a quo commencement of building the temple should already have been built;¹⁵⁰ and it was at the Artaxerxes I decree to Nehemiah.

The 445 B.C. decree to Nehemiah is the only alternative that clearly gives permission to initiate a total building again of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:4-8); and, we have seen this to be the extent of restoration specified in our prophecy. We have seen that as a providence of God the a quo would have to be actually executed,

that is, such an unbroken rebuilding would have to be initiated. History and Scripture tell that Nehemiah's grant qualifies. Concerning Nehemiah's restoration of Jerusalem's walls, Olmstead states, "Hasty as was the repair, Nehemiah preserved the ground plan of the pre-Exilic city, and this continued without essential change until a few years after the death of Jesus."¹⁵¹ That Nehemiah was the impetus for the repopulation of the city and its interior reconstruction is evident. For Neh. 7:4 shows that houses had not yet been rebuilt as of the completion of the walls; but, the necessary precursor to the resurrection of the city proper, the infusion of people to build and build for, is shown to be begun by Nehemiah (Neh. 11:1). Josephus attests that Nehemiah was also about the task of exhorting the priests and Levites to leave the country for the city.¹⁵² In Neh. 13:15, 16 we see that Jerusalem had developed into a center of commerce and that by this time even foreigners were living inside its fortification. Let us finally note that, as Hengstenberg¹⁵³ observes, it is likely that in Herodotus' histories (cf. II, 159; III, 5),¹⁵⁴ written roughly when the first seven sevens of years from 445 B.C. had elapsed, we have a reliable witness to Jerusalem's having by this time returned to greatness. Similar testimony is provided by Hecataeus Abderita who wrote about seventy years later. According to Josephus, Hecataeus describes Jerusalem as being of excellent structure, very large, and long inhabited. Josephus quotes him thus: "There are many strong places and villages (says he) in the country of Judaea; but one strong city there is, about fifty furlongs in circumference, which is inhabited by a hundred and twenty thousand men, or there-

abouts; they call it Jerusalem"155 So, we may consider it a relative certainty that Nehemiah's initiative was the beginning of the restoration process that did in fact cause Jerusalem to wholly return; and it appears that history can verify that the city was adequately restored forty-nine years later to merit the description "with streets and a trench" (Dan. 9:25).

If it is questioned as to why Nehemiah's book does not record the final act of Jerusalem's total restoration, one must consider, firstly, that Nehemiah may have returned to his royal post before such an event. Secondly, Nehemiah may have deceased prior to this. Lastly, we should notice the fact that neither does the Book of Ezra include an account of the final restoring act, explicitly designating it as such; this might suggest that God does not intend to emphasize the earthly city's reconstruction but, rather, the ultimate spiritual restoration in the Anointed One and the arrival of His earthly kingdom.

It appears that Artaxerxes I's decree of his twentieth year to Nehemiah alone meets all of the specifications of Dan. 9:25. It allowed for the total restoration of the city, initiated the actual zealous rebuilding of Jerusalem, and it was carried out amidst trouble (Neh. 4; 6:1 - 7:3). Additionally, Harmon has noted several significant parallels which the circumstances of the decree to Nehemiah alone exhibit with those of the decree received by Daniel in chapter nine. A word went forth after Daniel fasted and prayed. Both men were concerned with the desolations of Jerusalem, and both received a word from God regarding the city's restoration.

daniel received the seventy heptad prophecy; Nehemiah received the directive for its commencement.¹⁵⁶

Date of the Decree of Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah

We now seek to briefly support our contention that the a quo of the seventy weeks prophecy is to be placed at approximately 445 B. C., the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus according to the Canon of Ptolemy. We shall appeal to both Scriptural verities and the established probabilities of secular history in this endeavor. Evidence for the accession of Artaxerxes I, the computation of his twentieth year in light of this accession and the biblical specifications, and historical corroboration for the date arrived upon for the a quo decree will all be addressed. For the sake of argument we will assume in this section that the received chronology is perfectly correct; however, in the following chapter we will discuss the possibility of some degree of error in the Canon, and how this should bear upon the thesis question.

The Death of Xerxes and the Accession of Artaxerxes I

According to Diodorus of Sicily, Xerxes, father and kingly predecessor to Artaxerxes I, was slain by Artabanus in the year before the celebration of the Seventy-ninth Olympiad (i.e., 465 B.C.¹⁵⁷).¹⁵⁸ This would reconcile with Thucydides' representation of Artaxerxes I's having just come to the Persian throne at the time of Themistocles' appeal, if we may assume a short co-regency between Xerxes and Artaxerxes I; for, the flight of Themistocles is generally dated to about 472 B.C. and this letter appeal to Artaxerxes I would have occurred some time after this.¹⁵⁹ The

placing of Artaxerxes I's accession in 465 B.C. is rendered a certainty by the dating of Cowley's Aramaic Papyrus No. 6, according to Parker and Dubberstein.¹⁶⁰ This document opens, "On the 18th of Chisleu, that is the 7th day of Thoth, in year 21, the beginning of the reign when King Artaxerxes sat on his throne, . . ." ¹⁶¹ Cowley assures, "The date is the 21st year of Xerxes, which is stated to be the 1st year of Artaxerxes (i), i.e. 465 B.C." ¹⁶²

Since Persia reckoned its kings' reigns according to the accession-year system,¹⁶³ we must locate Artaxerxes Longimanus' first regnal year after the expiration of 465 B.C., Xerxes last regnal year. Therefore, according to the Persian Nisan to Nisan reckoning, Artaxerxes I's first regnal year was Nisan 464 to Nisan 463, and, according to the Jewish Tishri to Tishri year, it was Tishri 464 to Tishri 463¹⁶⁴ (see table 3 in the Appendix); this is essential to our discussion of the a quo twentieth year to follow.

The Twentieth Year of Artaxerxes I

Having established a best approximation of the accession and first regnal year of Artaxerxes I, we are now prepared to consider the date of his decree to Nehemiah, or the a quo of Daniel's seventy weeks. Nehemiah received the discouraging report about the conditions in Jerusalem from Hanani's company in the month of Kislev in Artaxerxes I's twentieth year (Neh. 1:1). The fact that Nehemiah received permission to return to rebuild Jerusalem later in the same year yet in the month of Nisan can be explained in that the Jewish Tishri to Tishri method would make this possible

(see table 3 in the Appendix);¹⁶⁵ and, this explanation is supported by the fact that proof of the use of such a calendar by the fifth-century Jews has been found in the Elephantine Papyri.¹⁶⁶ The twentieth year of Artaxerxes I would then be 445/444 B.C. and the a quo approximation to the day, assuming that Neh. 2:1-9 is rightly understood as having transpired on the first day of the month, should be April 13, 445 B.C.¹⁶⁷

Historical Support for the Approximated A Quo

Secular history does seem to corroborate this 445 B.C. a quo. Diodorus indicates that the Peace of Callias was concluded four years previous to this date in the year before the eighty-third Olympiad was celebrated (i.e., 449 B.C.).¹⁶⁸ This proved to be a lasting agreement, for the Persians and Athenians enjoyed peaceful relations for thirty-six years.¹⁶⁹ This environment of peace would of course only tend to facilitate Persia's attention to and involvement with such politically advantageous benevolences as the reconstruction of its subjects' desolated cities.

One of the Elephantine Papyri dated to the seventeenth year of Darius or ca. 408 B.C.¹⁷⁰ offers virtual certainty that Nehemiah was contemporary with Artaxerxes I and could have received leave of him to return to Jerusalem in the middle of the fifth century B.C.¹⁷¹ Aramaic Papyrus No. 30 mentions Johanan as being high priest in 408 B.C.; compare this with the fact that Nehemiah was in Jerusalem when Eliashib, Johanan's father, was high priest (Neh. 3:1; 12:23). This document also indicated that the governors of Samaria in 408 were the two sons of Sanballat, Nehemiah's aggressive opponent (Neh. 2:10, 19; 4:1, 2, 7, 8,

etc.).¹⁷² The historical support just cited combined with the aforementioned fact that Jerusalem was eventually restored after Nehemiah initiated his zealous physical rebuilding constitutes good reason for confidence in the thesis position, i.e., that the a quo occurred ca. 445 B.C.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter's discussion has revealed that the decree referred to in Dan. 9:25 is ultimately a divine word providentially given and executed at a certain point in history so as to be humanly discernible. To cause Jerusalem to return to its original pre-exilic state was shown to be the content of the decree; and, we saw that this causing to return focuses primarily and, in the immediate and strict exegetical sense, exclusively, on the physical inanimate city rather than on people and their functioning.

In establishing the identity of the a quo decree we have set forth refutations of the major alternative views. That which identifies Jeremiah's prophecy of the captivity or the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem as the a quo was rejected because of its chronological inconsistencies, its breach of Scriptural specifications, and its basis in unfounded interpretive assumptions. Regarding the view espousing the decree of Darius it was pointed out that this decree was based on the earlier Cyrus decree and added nothing to it in relation to the city's rebuilding, and that this view is not seriously considered by modern scholarship.

The decree of Cyrus was refuted, firstly, for its content which precludes a total rebuilding of Jerusalem, a fact verified by scriptural-historical evidence. Secondly, this view's supposed

support from Ezra and the Is. 44 and 45 passages was shown to be only apparent; for, interpreting these verses in light of the strict denotations of their terminologies, the essential criteria set in Dan. 9:24-27, the preponderance of Scripture, and the testimony of history we see this support disappear. Thirdly, we saw that immediately subsequent to the Cyrus decree few homes were built and mostly outside of Jerusalem in safer towns and hamlets. Fourthly, we noted that Dan. 9:25 omits any mention of the temple, the focus of the Cyrus decree. Lastly, we related the chronological failure of this view.

Our refutation of Artaxerxes I's decree to Ezra as the a quo included the fact that this edict did not give permission to rebuild the walls or internal complex of Jerusalem. It also did not restore the city's former political autonomy. We mentioned that there is no scriptural or historical evidence that any significant building of the city was involved in Ezra's return. We discussed Prideaux's argument that the Neh. 13:28 expulsion marks the final act of Jerusalem's restoration (408 B.C.) and proves the 458 Ezra decree; this was shown to be hermeneutically, exegetically, and logically invalid. Finally, we warned that the apparent chronological validity of this view is an a priori consideration and must be balanced by the understanding of the prophecy's intended precision and our chronological uncertainty (to be later discussed).

The decree of Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah (ca. 445 B.C.) was established to be the a quo of Daniel's seventy weeks through first noting that history shows Artaxerxes I and his era favorable to a complete restoration of Jerusalem. Second, an examination of Scripture and history was shown to preclude the possibility

that Nehemiah gained permission from Artaxerxes II or III. We related, third, that Dan. 9 portrays the temple as already built at the time of the a quo, as it was at the decree to Nehemiah. Fourth, this decree was said to be the only one which permitted the total rebuilding and saw its execution, and that amidst trouble. Last, the fact was added that the circumstances of the decree to Nehemiah alone parallel those of Daniel's word from God.

The approximate 445 B.C. date of the decree to Nehemiah was substantiated by first establishing the accession of Artaxerxes I. We noted the strong historical support for Xerxes' death having occurred before the end of 465 B.C., which made Artaxerxes I's first regnal year according to Jewish reckoning Tishri 464 B.C. to Tishri 463 B.C. since Persia used the accession year system. The twentieth regnal year was thus shown to be 445/444, and, assuming the first of Nisan is intended in Neh. 2, the a quo was approximated to the day as April 13, 445 B.C. Finally, historical corroboration for Nehemiah's reception of Artaxerxes' decree at this time was set forth.

We have seen that Artaxerxes I's grant of permission to Nehemiah is clearly the alternative which best fulfills the requirements of Dan. 9:25, and this will be even further established as its apparent chronological weakness is addressed in the next chapter. We now advance to consider the computation of the sixty-nine weeks from our approximated a quo.

CHAPTER VI

The Chronology of the Sixty-Nine Weeks

Introduction

Having defended that Daniel's text intends to predict a literal interval expressed in units of seven year periods unto an Anointed, and having identified the epoch of this interval and approximated its date, we will engage the question of the prescribed length and nature of the interval. In addition we will consider the ability of secular chronology to verify our approximated dates and to provide a valid matrix for the application of one's understanding of the prophecy's durations.

The first topic of discussion will be the consecutive relationship between the seven sevens and sixty-two sevens of Dan. 9:25 and the intentions for this partition. Next we will entertain the prospect of ascertaining the prophecy's specified type of literal year. Then we will mention the degree of accuracy inherent in chronological verification in general. Finally we will examine the degree of precision intended in the seventy weeks prediction. All of this should adequately facilitate an informed evaluation of the chronology of Jesus' presentation as the Anointed; this will be included in chapter seven.

The Sequence of the Seven and Sixty-two Weeks

Dan. 9:25 expresses the sixty-nine weeks of years in question in segments of seven sevens and sixty-two sevens; and the punctuation designating this segmentation has caused some to understand

the seven sevens as the interval unto the Anointed, and the sixty-two sevens as the duration of Jerusalem's rebuilding unto the completion of "streets and a trench." This punctuation involves the use of two Hebrew disjunctives; a Zakeph Qaton follows the sixty-two sevens, while they are separated from the immediately preceding seven sevens by an Athnah (the stronger of the two disjunctives). This has been a factor for some, like Keil,¹⁷³ in interpreting the aforementioned sundering of clauses. This is understandable, since, as Davidson has observed, Athnah generally represents the chief pause within a verse,¹⁷⁴ while, according to Weingreen, an Athnah in the tone-syllable of a word divides the verse into logical parts¹⁷⁵. However, others like Baldwin connect the seven and sixty-two to understand sixty-nine sevens unto the Anointed (v.25), maintaining that this punctuation was not in the original text.¹⁷⁶ Keil concedes regarding this punctuation that "it first was adopted by the Masoretes, and only shows the interpretation of these men, without at all furnishing any guarantee for its correctness."¹⁷⁷ Boutflower offers an alternative interpretation of the Masoretic intentions of this punctuation based upon another function of the Athnah and Zakeph Qaton, about which he writes:

. . . we have to remember that though they are of the greatest value in indicating the connection or otherwise of any word with the words before and after it, and thus discovering to us the arrangement of the clauses, yet at the same time they are something more than mere marks of punctuation. They are accents in the true sense, and as such they lend themselves to mark emphasis as well as pause. Dan. 9:25 thus affords us an instance of what is called emphatic accentuation.¹⁷⁸ The Masoretic punctuators desired to call attention to the fact that sixty-nine weeks, which were to elapse before the appearance of the Messiah, are for a good reason divided into two periods of seven weeks

and sixty-two weeks; a fact which explains why the smaller number stands first.¹⁷⁹

Boutflower appears to make a very valid observation and interpretation here--one that makes good sense of the verse's context and the witness of history. This interpretation also preserves the parallelism discernible in verses twenty-five and twenty-six, which Newman diagrams as follows:

From the going forth of the word to build again Jerusalem
To Messiah the Prince shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks
The street and wall shall be built again
And after the 62 weeks Messiah shall be cut off.¹⁸⁰

In addition, we should note that if the segments of seven and sixty-two are attributed to separate clauses, an extremely forced if not disallowed interpretation of the proposed second clause (that of the sixty-two sevens) is necessitated according to Young. He states, "I question whether it is really in accord with the rules of Hebrew syntax to render, '(for the space of) sixty-two sevens,' i.e., as an accusative of duration."¹⁸¹ We conclude on review of all the discussion's pertinent facts that the seven and sixty-two weeks should be taken sequentially as constituting a continuous interval between the prophecy's a quo and the presentation of the Anointed. The thesis position is, thus, further established.

The Prophecy's Intended Type of Literal Year

If we are to demonstrate the likelihood that Christ was presented in fulfillment of the Dan. 9:25 sixty-nine sevens of years, we must arrive at a best understanding of the length or lengths of the individual years intended by the text. Let us first recognize that the text itself, including even the whole of chapter

nine, does not explicitly specify these durations; and it only implicitly specifies the durations if it in fact intends the sevens as the Jewish culturally determined sabbath year cycles, a proposition we will discuss as the second alternative. 360 day 'prophetic years' will be our first alternative of discussion. Third and last, we will consider the alternative of understanding the prophecy to refer to solar years.

The 360 day "prophetic" year proposed by Anderson,¹⁸² has of late been espoused by such as Hoehner, who sees valid support for this interpretation in the ancient calendars of the Orient and elsewhere; these calendars, he asserts, utilized twelve thirty-day months or eighteen twenty-day months and intercalary days, making it common in those times to think in terms of 360 day years. He points to the thirty day months calculable from the correlation of Daniel's great tribulation references (7:24-25; 12:7) with the expression of this period in terms of days and months in Rev. 11, 12, and 13, and the relation to Dan. 9:27 as referred to in chapter four. He also cites the Genesis account of the flood as having lasted exactly five months and its equating of this with 150 days (Gen. 7:11, 24; 8:3, 4), which yields thirty day months and 360 day years. Like Anderson, Hoehner shows the 360 day year to produce a precise fulfillment of the sixty-nine weeks on the day of Christ's triumphal entry.¹⁸³

Hoehner would seem to have some valid points here and his view has attractiveness for some since, even admitting of considerable uncertainty in secular chronology, the 360 day reckoning does seemingly approximate an amazingly precise sixty-ninth week ful-

fillment in Christ. However, our other alternatives yield astounding accuracy also (as will be shown) and can perhaps be shown more realistically the intention of the prophecy.

Hoehner's reference to the ancient foreign calendars may establish that it was common to Daniel's day to conceptualize the year as 360 days, but the reckoning of actual durations must have differed from this; for, from before the Exodus from Egypt the Hebrews calculated the durational year by intercalating to the dimensions of the solar year.¹⁸⁴ Although the references in Dan. 7 and 12 can rightly be taken as 3 1/2 years of 360 day years, the notion of transferring this standard to the first sixty-nine sevens of years in Daniel's prophecy suffers from five fundamental uncertainties: (1) We cannot be sure that the 3 1/2 years defined as 1260 days in Daniel and Revelation do not refer to years between years of intercalation; (2) We cannot be assured that Daniel equated the 3 1/2 times of 7:25 and 12:7 with 1260 days, especially in light of Daniel's lack of understanding about the last half-week (Dan. 12:8), and considering the 1290 day and 1335 day durations given him in 12:11, 12; (3) It is uncertain, perhaps even improbable, that Daniel by comparing Scripture with Scripture would have assumed 360 day years since, although the flood account shows thirty day months, earlier in Genesis (1:14) God established the solar year as the normative reckoning; (4) We cannot be confident that the 360 day year extrapolated from Gen. 7 and 8 does not establish only that durations of less than one year (or of less than the duration between intercalations) were expressible in terms of months of thirty days each; (5) We cannot be sure that God intends

the 360 day year to apply to the first sixty-nine weeks or even the first half of the seventieth week since Scripture nowhere states this.

Based upon the prophecy's contextual allusion to the Leviticus sabbath year cycles, Newman suggests that the years of the sixty-nine weeks should be understood to be those constituting the culturally determined succession of sabbath year cycles. This would render the actual durations of the individual years void of uniformity and essentially superfluous, as the record of the sabbath cycles would then be the chronological determinant. He demonstrates continuity from ancient to modern times in the Jewish observance of these seven year cycles by comparison of the dates of modern sabbath years with one mentioned in the Maccabees as having been celebrated in the 150th year of the Seleucid era or ca. 163-162 B.C.¹⁸⁵ Having established 1951/2 A.D. as a modern observance, Newman calculates backward to the Nehemiah a quo and forward from there to the sixty-ninth cycle; he describes the calculations and the resulting accuracy of Christ's fulfillment:

Calculating backwards (and remembering that A.D. 1 immediately follows 1 B.C.), we find that the 69th cycle is A.D. 27-34. This certainly brackets the crucifixion of Jesus Christ; in fact, it extends over most of His public ministry also.

Some may be troubled by the fact that Daniel says, 'after the 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off . . .,' whereas according to this calculation the crucifixion occurs on the 62nd 'week' (the 69th, adding the first seven). But this, too, is a conventional Jewish idiom. Recall that our Lord's resurrection is variously spoken of as occurring 'after three days' (Matt. 27:63; Mark 8:31) and also 'on the third day' (Matt. 20:19; Mark 9:31).¹⁸⁶

The sabbath year cycle schema does produce a notably exact sixty-ninth week fulfillment in Jesus, and is an arguable alter-

native; but, it is perhaps an inferior choice to the solar year partly for the reasons to follow. If God wanted to specifically designate seventy sabbath cycles, we must wonder why He did not use the Lev. 25:8 terminology for the seven year periods (i.e., "sabbaths") instead of "sevens." It should be remembered that the sabbath year cycle is not the only seven year period in the prophecy's biblical context (see p. 61). Let us note, also, that this reckoning approximates that of solar years, since, as will be shown, the observance of the Jewish feasts mandated adjustments in the Hebrew years to solar dimensions at least as taken collectively; and Daniel would have been familiar with these adjustments.

This thesis proposes that the years of Dan. 9:24-27 are by divine intention solar years. This is supported by the fact, already mentioned, that God established the solar year as the normative standard in Gen. 1:14-16. We can have good confidence that Daniel perceived the years as such from this fact and from those to follow. A comparison of Lev. 23:5 and Lev. 23:34, 39-41 shows that the Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles were defined as to the month and day of their celebrations; also, we see that the Feast of Tabernacles was pinpointed to the season and day in 23:39, for this fifteenth day of the seventh month was to always be "after you have gathered the crops of the land." This would require that the year be consistently reckoned according to the maturation of crops, and, thus, the sun. Faber concludes:

Their two great festivals, being fixed both to a particular month and to a particular season of

the year, prove (as it appears to me) beyond a possibility of doubt, that by some expedient or other the months Abib and Tisri were always made to fall out in spring and autumn: and, if this be evident, as it must be from the mode of celebrating those two great festivals, then it will follow, equally beyond a possibility of doubt, that, whatever might be the form of a single Jewish year, a series of them taken collectively must have been equal to a corresponding series of natural solar years.¹⁸⁷

The Hebrews' early adoption of the more scientifically informed Egyptian solar year makes it apparent that at the time Daniel penned the seventy weeks prophecy the solar year would have been most immediately familiar to him, as Faber explains,

When we consider that the more ancient Jews seem to have used the Egyptian year (as may be inferred from the silence of Scripture with respect to intercalation), and when we further consider that this year was undoubtedly used at Babylon when Daniel wrote (as appears from the chronology of the era of Nabonassar), we have every reason to conclude that the years of the seventy weeks are solar years.¹⁸⁸

All three of the alternatives discussed are defensible.

However, we have seen that the best alternative based upon scriptural-historical criteria and reason is that of solar years. Therefore, this thesis concludes that solar years are most realistically intended by the prophetic text as the increments of the seventy weeks.

The Degree of Accuracy of Chronological Verification

In order to perfectly verify the sixty-ninth week fulfillment in Christ, an absolute and certain chronology would be necessary. However, scriptural-historical investigation has not been able to synthesize this schema as of yet. To establish a clear and proper perspective on the results of our chronological investigation of the sixty-ninth week fulfillment, let us outline some

of the factors contributing to possible inaccuracy in current chronologies and chronological verification.

A first consideration might be the number of details required for a true understanding of the chronological procedure used in the development of the chronology of any particular nation.

Thiele, setting forth these details, explains:

In working out the chronology of a nation, a primary requisite is that the chronological procedure of that nation be understood. The following items must be definitely established: (a) the year from which a king began to count the years of his reign - whether from the time of his actual accession, from the following year, or from some other time; (b) the time of the calendar year when a king began to count his reign; (c) the method according to which a scribe of one nation reckoned the years of a king of a neighboring state, whether according to the system employed in his own nation or according to that of the neighbor; (d) whether or not the nation made use of co-regencies and whether interregna occurred; (e) whether during the period under review a uniform system was followed or whether variations took place; and, finally, (f) some absolute date during the period in question from which the years can be figured backwards and forwards so that the full chronological pattern might be secured.¹⁸⁹

A second factor would be uncertainties regarding the Olympiad system of dating. Unrecorded interruptions of the Olympic sequence due to war or catastrophe, for instance, would affect inaccuracy of reckoning. Another factor is the possibility of errors in astronomical observation and interpretation. Lastly, we should include, as a factor, the general obscurity of Persian history due to the relative scarcity of pertinent sources.

Although perhaps containing some degree of inaccuracy, Ptolemy's Canon is regarded as the best chronology for the study of the periods pertaining to the thesis questions--and it, thus, serves as the chronological frame of reference in this paper. The

canon has been assailed by some as of questionable value because of its underlying method. Anstey, regarding Ptolemy and his method, writes,

But he did not possess sufficient data to enable him to fill the gaps, or to fix the dates of the Chronology of this period [Persian period, or before Alexander], so he had to resort to the calculation of eclipses. In this way then, not by historical evidence or testimony, but by the method of astronomical calculation, and the conjectural identification of recorded with calculated eclipses, the Chronology of this period of the world's history has been fixed by Ptolemy¹⁹⁰

However, many like Faber would answer:

But the canon of Ptolemy is built upon astronomical demonstrations, and no one has hitherto detected any error in his calculation of the eclipses by which his chronological eras are determined. It is moreover verified by its agreement every where with Scripture. Hence it is the surest guide in chronology, and cannot be set aside for the authority of any other human writing whatsoever.¹⁹¹

Even allowing for some possible degree of error, Ptolemy's Canon can be demonstrated the best approximation of the true chronology of the period in focus. The canon has been checked against one of Ptolemy's companion volumes which records some rather extensive and accurate astronomical data. Thiele states,

What makes the canon of such great importance to modern historians is the large amount of astronomical material recorded by Ptolemy in his Almagest, making possible checks as to its accuracy at almost every step from beginning to end. Over eighty solar, lunar, and planetary positions, with their dates, are recorded in the Almagest which have been verified by modern astronomers. The details concerning eclipses are given with such minuteness as to leave no question concerning the exact identification of the particular phenomenon referred to, and making possible the most positive verification.¹⁹²

Thiele goes on to mention three eclipses, accurately recorded by Ptolemy. These verify his chronology at the points of 721, 523, and 491 B.C. Thiele believes that the dates of Nabonassar's era

have in Ptolemy's work been fully determined; and, he thinks, pending a sure understanding of his reckoning of kings' reigns, Ptolemy's Canon may be fully trusted as a historical guide.¹⁹³

Also, we should recognize that Ptolemy had a substantial pool of information with which to check and construct his approximation.

For, even Anstey admits,

He also had access to the information contained in Berossus, (B.C. 356-323). He based his chronology upon the calculations of Eratosthenes (b. B.C. 276) and Apollodorus (2nd Century B.C.), and he had before him all the information contained in Diodorus Siculus (fl. A.D. 8), and all the literature of Greece and Rome and Alexandria.¹⁹⁴

Let us conclude that our chronological data does not make possible perfect chronological verification, but does allow for a high degree of verification--even practical perfection, perchance. This is assuredly adequate for verification of the seventy weeks prophecy, since, as will be shown, it does not call for perfect chronological precision of fulfillment.

The Prophecy's Intended Degree of Chronological Precision

Endeavoring to avoid the error of assuming a priori that the chronological precision discernible unto Christ (using our chosen a quo and type of literal year) is automatically that specified by the prophecy, let us proceed to establish, through scriptural and historical means, the prophecy's intended degree of chronological precision. Having done this, we will later be able to legitimately demonstrate Christ's fulfillment of the prophecy's durational specifications. We now begin to reveal that the prophecy specifies relatively close approximation and not perfect chronological precision.

First, let us consider that the prophecy (v. 25) gives a chronologically ambiguous designation of the sixty-ninth week event. The Hebrew literally reads "until the Anointed One, the ruler." Are we to take this as 'arrives,' 'begins His anointed ruling function,' or 'is made known'? Should it be understood that the Anointed was to be presented shortly before or immediately after the sixty-ninth week elapsed, or sometime between the sixty-ninth week expiration and the completion of what would constitute a seventieth week?

Second, the prophecy's context provides a prototype for its intended degree of precision of fulfillment. For, as Walvoord has noted, the seventy years predicted of the captivity (Jer. 25:11) saw only a chronologically approximate fulfillment, as the duration between the initial Babylonian invasion and the first return under Cyrus was likely about sixty-seven years (606 B.C.-538 B.C.), and that from temple destruction to rededication was just under seventy-one years (586 B.C.-515 B.C.).¹⁹⁵ Comparing Dan. 9:2 with 9:24 reveals that the seventy weeks prophecy was given in terms of, and against the backdrop of, the captivity prophecy and thus could be expected to exhibit the same degree of precision of fulfillment allowed by God of the captivity prediction. So, in light of this prototype example, relatively close approximation appears to be intended by God of the Dan. 9 prophecy's fulfillment.

Third, the prophecy contains within itself a precedent for the nature of its intentions for chronological fulfillment. As already noted in chapter five, God neither recorded in Scripture nor providentially deposited in the annals of secular history a

datum event or precise date for the first seven heptads' completion of Jerusalem to the extent of "streets and a trench." We should note too that it could be debated as to when "streets and a trench" had been adequately constructed: was it anytime after two streets were returned to their original functioning and the trench initially or partially dug?--or, was it when all the streets of pre-exilic Jerusalem had been restored and the trench totally completed? Conversely, is it not likely (assuming "streets and a trench" to represent Jerusalem restored generally to its pre-exilic condition) that the forty-nine years is a close approximation calculated to facilitate reasonably sure identification of its fulfillment, since shortly before and perhaps even another seven years after the forty-nine years elapsed the city could probably also have been described as having of late been restored to its pre-exilic status? So, we see that God intended in the forty-nine year prediction not absolute chronological precision of fulfillment, but, certainly as seen in chapter five, relatively close approximation sufficient to demonstrate prophetic fulfillment to a reasonable degree. We might, thus, expect the same of God's intentions for the 483 year prediction.

Fourth, not only does the text of the seventy weeks prophecy itself not explicate absolute chronological precision of its sixty-ninth week fulfillment, but neither does the New Testament clearly facilitate this. For, although there are instances in the New Testament where the fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies (without chronological parameters) are explicitly identified as

their events are recorded (cf. Is. 61:1, 2 and Lk. 4:16-21; Ps. 41:9 and Jn. 13:18-30), yet never does it indubitably identify a recorded event as the fulfillment of the Anointed's presentation prophesied in Dan. 9:25. The fulfillment of a very similar if not equivalent prophecy in Zech. 9:9 is lucidly identified as it is accounted in Mt. 21:1-11; and, God intending absolute chronological precision, we should look for an unquestionable identification of some happening as the consummation of the sixty-ninth week of Dan. 9:25, along with a limpid indication of its year and day. Instead, as will be addressed in chapter seven, the New Testament contains several milestones in Christ's life and ministry that could feasibly be the Dan. 9:25 presentation, none of which at present have been dated with certainty, even as to year, from the chronological data provided by Scripture.

It might be argued that, granted the prophecy does not specify absolute chronological precision of fulfillment, it would still be more characteristic of God to carry out the predictions precisely, and that evidence of this in any particular schema of interpretation would tend to verify the particular view. However, we must wonder why God, intending to precisely fulfill His prediction, would not have clearly indicated this in His prophecy so as to lend greater verification to its fulfillment. Also, would it not seem more characteristic of God to carry out His word according to His word? For, God is unerring and changeless. Seeming evidence of precise fulfillment offered by a particular view would not conclusively verify it since Scripture does not prescribe absolute precision, but does seem to specify other elements essential to

verification of any particular interpretation. Views supposedly demonstrating perfect chronological precision, like those of Anderson¹⁹⁶ and Wood,¹⁹⁷ may initially appear to have secular chronology as sure support, but seem to violate the scriptural specifications for the prophecy's basic increments (i.e., solar years) and its a quo (i.e., Artaxerxes' twentieth year decree at ca. 445 B.C.) respectively. The thesis view, by contrast, is consistent with the prophecy's chronological specifications (and is even in amazing conformity with the same, as we shall see in the next chapter) but, as importantly, also fulfills the Scriptural requirements as to increments and the a quo. Our conclusion is that the seventy weeks prophecy's intended degree of chronological precision is describable as relatively close approximation, sufficient to demonstrate to a reasonable degree genuine prophetic fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week. Before proceeding it should be noted that, based on this conclusion, the historical views addressed in chapter one are further refuted, since they do not yield this degree of precision in their proposed fulfillments.

Summary and Conclusion

The seven and sixty-two week periods were shown to be properly taken in consecutive sequence since this is consistent with context, history, and Hebrew syntax and grammar. In determining the prophecy's intended type of literal year, we first eliminated the 'prophetic year' alternative based on these facts: (1) The argument from ancient foreign calendars is indecisive, even invalid, since it does not apply to the popular reckoning of durations in Daniel's

day; (2) Prophetic years would not necessarily have been ascertained by Daniel from his text; (3) Gen. 1:14 established solar, not prophetic years, as the normative reckoning; (4) Scripture does not indicate that 360 day years apply to the sixty-nine weeks or even to the first half of the seventieth week. Second, we pointed out that sabbath year cycles do not define the intended years because: this alternative cannot explain God's not using the Lev. 25:8 terminology for the seven year periods (i.e., "sabbaths"); the sabbath year cycle is not the only seven year period in the prophecy's biblical context; and, this option approximates solar years collectively anyway, since adjustments to preserve the seasons of the Hebrew feasts mandate this. Solar years were set forth as the prophecy's intention. For, they were made normative by God (Gen. 1:14-16) and were necessitated by the fact that the feasts were tied to specified seasons, months, and days. Also, the solar year was in majority use in Daniel's era and would have been most familiar to him.

Concerning the degree of accuracy offered by current resources for chronological verification, we first noted some of the factors contributing to inaccuracy of national chronologies: (1) the number of details required to establish the chronology of any nation; (2) uncertainties in the Olympiad system of dating; (3) errors of astronomical observation and interpretation; and (4) the general obscurity of Persian history. We mentioned that although Ptolemy's Canon has been questioned as to the use of conjectural dating, it can be trusted as the closest approximation of the periods of our investigation. We based this on the facts

that Ptolemy's calculations of the eclipses used in dating have not been determined invalid, and that the canon has been checked against the substantial amount of astronomical data in Ptolemy's Almagest and has been shown largely accurate. We have determined that the chronology offers a high degree of accuracy in its ability to verify and is, thus, adequately suited to scrutinize the views discussed.

It was determined that the seventy weeks prophecy does not intend absolutely precise chronological fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week since: (1) The prophecy gives an ambiguous designation of the sixty-ninth week event, the presentation of the Anointed. (2) The prophecy's prototype, the captivity prediction, exhibited only chronologically approximate fulfillment. (3) The prophecy contains a precedent for its intentions for chronological fulfillment in the historical record of the fulfillment of the first seven weeks; this exhibited relatively close approximation, sufficient to demonstrate to a reasonable degree prophetic fulfillment. (4) The New Testament does not facilitate this since it does not indubitably identify an event and its date as the fulfillment of the Anointed's presentation, although it does explicitly identify the fulfillments of other Old Testament prophecies which do not even specify chronological parameters; however, the New Testament does relate several events, feasibly the sixty-nine weeks' fulfillment. Finally, it was expressed that, for several reasons, it would not be more characteristic of God (granting the apparent non-absolute intentions of the prophecy in v. 25) to fulfill the sixty-ninth week

with absolute chronological precision; and it was concluded that seeming evidence of this in any view does not conclusively verify it.

Since we may conclude that Daniel's prophecy intends sixty-nine consecutive weeks of literal solar years, and specifies relatively close approximation to facilitate reasonable persuasion, and that Ptolemy's Canon represents a remarkably accurate and reliable approximation of the pertinent periods, we are prepared to advance. Let us now consider how the sixty-nine sevens of years from the a quo (ca. 445 B.C.) can be assessed against Scripture, Ptolemy's chronology, and secular history. This will allow us to further test whether Christ fulfilled the personage of the "Anointed One, the ruler," and whether He fulfilled the sixty-nine weeks precisely enough chronologically to demonstrate to a reasonable degree genuine prophetic fulfillment. Chapter seven is occupied with this endeavor.

CHAPTER VII

Christ as the Fulfillment

Introduction

The starting point, duration, and chronological frame of reference of Daniel's sixty-nine weeks have been discussed and may now be utilized in testing the thesis position, i.e., that Jesus Christ alone fulfilled the sixty-ninth week as "the Anointed One, the ruler." In addition, this fulfillment may be tested against several other key prescriptions of the Dan. 9 prophecy. So, in this chapter we are occupied with demonstrating Christ to be the fulfillment of the prophecy's functional, personal-circumstantial, and chronological specifications. To further establish this we will seek to expose the next best proposed fulfillment (i.e., the alternative demonstrating the second largest extent of conformity to the seventy weeks prophecy's specifications), the Onias III - Antiochus IV scenario, as unviable on several grounds.

Christ's Fulfillment of the Prophecy's Specifications

Christ's Fulfillment of the Functional Specifications of Verse Twenty-Four

Let us begin by noting Christ's fulfillment of the profound functions listed in Dan. 9:24. Christ may be seen as having achieved in part or whole some of these in His first advent, while some will have their entire fulfillment in His return and earthly reign. The six major functions of verse twenty-four will be addressed as they occur in the biblical text.

The first function that Daniel's prophecy portends is "to finish transgression." $\chi\text{ז}?$, to "shut up, restrain, withhold,"¹⁹⁸ is in the piel and, thus, might be taken as "to shut up completely or forever." The term for "transgression" relates the idea of infraction in the relationship between two parties,¹⁹⁹ the parties likely being God and Israel here. For, as Cooper has observed, Gabriel referred to "the transgression" as relating to Israel's major history-encompassing problem and, thus, "we are logically forced to conclude that it was this sin against King Messiah which the angel had in mind."²⁰⁰ Israel's rejection and crucifixion of her Messiah, despite ample testimony from God to Christ's identity and coming, would seem to be the salient infraction referred to, especially in light of the New Testament's revelation (e.g., Mt. 21:42, 43; Jn. 5:31-40, 46, 47; Rom. 10:1-4; 11:11, 12).

Next, the weeks are "to put an end to sin." $\Pi\text{X}\text{ז}$ used here "denotes sin/s against man . . . or against God."²⁰¹ Since Israel is the primary focus of Gabriel's message, "'to seal up' or 'to make an end of' sin, would seem to indicate that this statement is a prediction of the time when sinning shall cease in Israel."²⁰² However, Scripture indicates that, although Christ's death and resurrection has made possible the elimination of progressively more and more sins from Christians' lives, not until after Jesus returns will the Israelites receive their new regenerated hearts (Jer. 31:33, 34) which will end their sins (see also Rom. 6:17, 18; 7:5, 6; 8:1-4; 2 Pet. 3:13; Is. 61:10, 11; 62:1, 2; Ezek. 43:7; Zeph. 3:9-13; Zech. 12:10, 11; 13:1, 2).

"To atone for wickedness" follows. כַּפֵּר in the piel infinitive construct form means to "cover over, atone for sin,"²⁰³ or "to pardon, to blot out by means of a sin-offering, i.e., to forgive."²⁰⁴ פְּשָׁעִים , rendered "wickedness," is a collective term conveying the concept of sins in total.²⁰⁵ So, with Wood we may understand this clause to foretell Christ's atonement for sins in His death on the cross, which is mentioned in 9:26.²⁰⁶ The New Testament bears this out (e.g., Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:11, 12; 1 Jn. 2:2).

An obvious reference to Christ's return and coming kingdom is "to bring in everlasting righteousness." לְבָרֵךְ represents the hiphil infinitive construct of the verb, thus it is to "cause to come in, bring in."²⁰⁷ כְּפָאֵר used here "basically connotes conformity to an ethical or moral standard,"²⁰⁸ but when juxtaposed with עוֹלָמְיָוָה , "everlastingness, eternity,"²⁰⁹ can only refer to that which will obtain during Christ's earthly reign. Keil explains,

Righteousness comes from heaven as the gift of God (Ps. 85:11-14; Isa. 51:5-8), rises as a sun upon them that fear God (Mal. 3:20), and is here called everlasting, corresponding to the eternity of the Messianic kingdom (cf. 2:44, 7:18, 27). כְּפָאֵר comprehends the internal and the external righteousness of the new heavens and the new earth, 2 Pet. 3:13."²¹⁰

"To seal up vision and prophecy" occurs next and is concerned with רְאוּיָהוּ , "revelatory vision granted by God to chosen messengers, i.e. prophets,"²¹¹ and לְבָרֵךְ , essentially "authorized spokesman"²¹² of God. Keil writes that,

both words are used in comprehensive generality for all existing prophecies and prophets. Not only the prophecy, but the prophet who gives it, i.e. not merely the prophecy, but also the calling of the prophet, must be sealed. Prophecies and prophets are sealed, when by the full realization of all prophecies prophecy ceases, no prophets any more appear.²¹³

Moreover, Keil continues that this ceasing of prophecy will not occur "till the kingdom of God is perfected in glory at the termination of the present course of the world's history."²¹⁴ This termination of history will arrive with Christ's triumphal return (cf. Is. 66:15-17 with Rev. 19:11-21), His millennial reign (cf. Zech. 8; 14:9-11, 16-21 with Rev. 20:2-5), and His creation of a new heaven and earth (cf. Is. 65:17-25; 66:22 with Rev. 21:1-5). However, in His first advent, Jesus made significant progress toward the complete sealing or total accomplishment of Old Testament prophecy. For instance, He fulfilled all prophecies regarding the Messiah's birth and lineage (e.g., cf. Mic. 5:2 with Mt. 2:1, 4-8 and Lk. 2:4-7; Jn. 7:42 and Is. 11:1-12 with Mt. 1:6 and Lk. 3:23, 32). He fulfilled all predictions about Messiah's ministry (e.g., cf. Is. 40:3; Mal. 3:1 with Mt. 3:1-3; 11:10; Lk. 1:17; Jn. 1:23). He fulfilled every prophecy relating to Messiah's passion (e.g., cf. Is. 50:6 with Mt. 26:67; Lk. 22:63 and Zech. 12:10 with Jn. 19:34).

The final function mentioned in 9:24 is "to anoint the most holy." קִדְּשׁוּ basically means to "consecrate to religious service . . . sacred things."²¹⁵ The object of this verb, $\text{קִדְּשׁוּ־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ}$ is here in anarthrous form and occurs:

either with or without the article, thirty-nine times in the Old Testament, always in reference to the Tabernacle or Temple or to the holy articles used in them. When referring to the most holy place, where the Ark was kept, the article is regularly used (e.g., Ex. 26:33), but it is not when referring to the holy articles (e.g., Ex. 29:37) or to the whole Temple complex (e.g., Ezek. 43:12). In view of these matters, it is highly likely that the phrase refers to the Temple also here, which, in view of the context, must be a future Temple; and, since the phrase is used without the article, reference must be to the complex of that Temple, rather than its most holy place.²¹⁶

Pertinent Old Testament references indicate that this eschatological temple will be anointed by the very presence of God (e.g., Ezek. 37:26-28; 43:4-7; Zech. 2:4, 5, 10-13). The New Testament gives a harmonious testimony (e.g., Rev. 20:4-6).

"The Anointed One, the Ruler," and Christ

מָלֵךְ מְשִׁיחַ, translated "the Anointed One, the ruler," in verse twenty-five, presents an interpretive challenge. For, both terms can be readily translated "king" or "anointed prince." Harmon, recognizing this, maintains that the terms should be translated, "Messiah, the prince," since "an anointed one, a prince" would be redundant to the Hebrew mind which would equate it with "an anointed prince, a prince."²¹⁷ Harmon explains the lack of the definite article on מָלֵךְ by reference to the fact that it regularly appears in anarthrous form throughout the Old Testament even in instances exactly parallel to its usage in 9:25; he lists parallel occurrences (i.e., 2 Ki. 20:5; 1 Chron. 9:11; 27:16; 2 Chron. 28:7; 31:13; Jer. 20:1; and Neh. 11:11) and two exceptions to this general usage - 1 Chron. 27:4 and 2 Chron. 19:11.²¹⁸ However, although it does most often mean "king" in the Old Testament, מְשִׁיחַ can also refer to "an office such as the high priest (Lev. 4:3)."²¹⁹ Leupold avers that naghidh covers the reference to king and regal character while Mashi(a)ch designates the priestly office of the Messiah who, as Ps. 110:4 and Zech. 6:13 indicate, combines both offices.²²⁰ Keil is in agreement and understands Christ to be the only personage in conformity with this terminology - Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Onias III all being inconsistent with the same. He writes that מְשִׁיחַ:

is a noun, and $\tau' \lambda' j$ is connected with it by apposition: an anointed one, who at the same time is a prince. According to the O.T., kings and priests, and only these, were anointed. Since, then, $\pi' \psi' \nu'$ is brought forward as the principal designation, we may not by $\tau' \lambda' j$ think of a priest-prince, but only of a prince of the people, nor by $\pi' \psi' \nu'$ of a king, but only of a priest; and by $\tau' \lambda' j \pi' \psi' \nu'$ we must understand a person who first and specially is a priest, and in addition is a prince of the people, a king.²²¹

Keil further supports the thesis position when he states that only in Christ are found "the two essential requisites of the theocratic king, the anointing and the appointment to be the $\tau' \lambda' j$ of the people of God (cf. 1 Sam. 10:1; 13:14; 16:13; 25:30; 2 Sam. 2:4, v. 2f.)."²²² Keil maintains that the definite article is lacking in this terminology to preserve these same ideas. Let us conclude Jesus Christ to be referred to here in verse twenty-five.

"And will have nothing" Implies Something Extraordinary
as Rightfully the Anointed's

In verse twenty-six we see that "the Anointed One will be cut off." Pusey believes that it is certain that this cutting off refers to either God-inflicted death or violent death affected by man.²²³ Culver explains that the term for "cut off" used here, $\pi \tau \tau$, "is used almost without exception of one of two things: either the making (cutting off) of a covenant or of the violent death of man or beast. There is no sound reason for departing from the usual idea of violent death here."²²⁴ So, we have in verse twenty-six the Anointed One experiencing personal, physical death; as a consequence of this He "will have nothing," which implies that something extraordinary to the possession of common dead persons is rightfully His. Concerning "will have nothing" Hengstenberg states,

It is certain, that the words are not complete in themselves, and that something must be supplied. This must be taken only from what immediately precedes, and all interpretations, in which this is not done, are entirely capricious, and cannot receive our concurrence. That which is wanting must be something which belongs to the Anointed, as such. As 'he will be cut off' expresses the extinction of his personal existence, so must 'and is not to him' express the extinction of his possession, and that not an accidental one, but that which constitutes his essential characteristic. What that is, in respect to an Anointed One, a Prince, cannot in itself be doubtful, and appears plainly enough from Ezek. 21.32; 'until He comes, to whom the judgement (the dominion) is, and I give it to him.' That the dominion is to him, is here the characteristic of the Messiah, as King.²²⁵

Even Montgomery, who translates לֹא מְעַלְמֵי as "there is nothing against him," acknowledges that the literal translation would be "and have naught," or "without anything, any one."²²⁶ We may draw the conclusion with Young that the original text of verse twenty-six indicates "that all which should properly belong to the Messiah, He does not have when He dies,"²²⁷ i.e., Christ was for a time deprived of His rightful world dominion and kingdom possession (see Lk. 23:3; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:13; 2:8; Rev. 19:15, 16), and no other proposed Anointed One could upon his death claim ownership of this or anything else that would merit the mention of its forfeiture as in verse twenty-six.

"The city and the sanctuary" to be Destroyed
Subsequent to the Anointed's Death

Verse twenty-six also indicates that the Anointed One's death is to be followed by the destruction of Jerusalem and her temple. The word translated "destroy" in this verse, i.e., הָרַס , does definitely carry this meaning as its major denotation. It occurs as a hiphil transitive eighty-two times in the Old Testament and translates as "destroy" in seventy of these references.²²⁸ So,

the prophecy calls for a virtual total tearing down or demolishing of the city and sanctuary; and, this is exactly what occurred subsequent to the death of Christ. The prophecy stipulates, with regard to the time of this destruction, only that it is to occur after the death of the Anointed--not necessarily immediately afterwards or even at anytime relative to the sixty-ninth or seventieth weeks. The focus appears to be not on when, but on why. The text seems most directly and simply to indicate that the destruction was to occur as a consequence of the cutting off of the Anointed; and, as predicted by Jesus in Lk. 19:41-44, the destroying raid of Titus Vespasianus was allowed by God as a result of the brutal rejection of His Messiah about forty years before.²²⁹ This attack most assuredly fulfilled the prescribed destruction of both city and temple:

Titus, with all his staff, hastened to save what he could. He exhorted the soldiers to spare the building. He stood in the Holy of Holies itself, and beat back the soldiers who were pressing to the work of destruction. But in vain: one of the soldiers threw a torch upon the gateway of the sanctuary, and in a moment the fate of the building was sealed.²³⁰

Jerusalem was a desolated city whose people had been killed, taken captive, or dispersed. For the next fifty years it would be a dreary waste inhabited primarily as a Roman outpost.²³¹

Antichrist's Fulfillment of the Seventieth Week Details

If one concedes that the Prince of Dan. 9:27 is the king of Dan. 7:25 (which is most feasible especially in light of 7:25's use of "time, times and half a time," likely the equivalent of the half seven of 9:27; cf. these also with Dan. 12:7, 11, 12; Rev. 11:2; Rev. 12:6, 14), Antichrist would seem quite possibly

to be the fulfillment of the final seven of 9:27. This is seen from a comparison of Dan. 7 with the book of Revelation. All of Dan. 7 seems to bear this out in its comparison with Rev., but notice particularly how Dan. 7:11, 21-26 compares (cf. Dan. 7:21 with Rev. 13:7; Dan. 7:25 with Dan. 11:36 and Rev. 13:5-6; Dan. 7:25 with Rev. 16:6; Dan. 7:11, 26 with Rev. 19:20). Here we see a notable correlation with the details of Dan. 9:26, 27.

Rev. 13:14, 15 gives additional evidence of the correlation between the Antichrist scenario and the last week of Dan. 9:27. Here we see the entire earth conscripted to the worship of the Antichrist's image; this would be consistent with a worldwide covenant, the ending of sacrifice and offering, and the setting up of the abomination of Dan. 9:27.

Rev. 10 may also give a symbolic picture of Antichrist carrying out the details of the seventieth week. Verse two may portray Antichrist by his political prowess gaining power and control by covenant over sea and land commerce or over peoples and resources. The "loud shout like the roar of a lion" (v. 3) may be a figurative representation of Antichrist as the imposing head of his new pagan world power. The "seven thunders" (v. 3) could allude to the unified leaders (seven kings subordinate to Antichrist) over the beastly empire. The "scroll that lies open" (v. 8) perhaps shows Antichrist offering the seven year covenant to Israel after he is by and large in control of the earth's inhabitants and trade. Verse nine would then represent Israel entering into the initially attractive covenant only to have it broken against them later, 3 1/2 years later perchance.

Christ's Fulfillment of the Sixty-Nine Weeks
According to the Chronological Parameters

Christ's death, the important parameter

Six different events in the life of Christ (i.e., His birth, His arrival in Palestine from Egypt, the ministry of His forerunner - John the Baptist, His baptism, His triumphal entry, and His crucifixion; e.g., see Goss' discussion²³²) have been suggested as the presentation of the "Anointed One, the ruler" (Dan. 9:25). However, a best case can probably be made for the triumphal entry being this presentation. According to Culver, the usage of $\tau' \lambda' \int$ in verse twenty-five shows the presentation to be the appearance of the Messiah-leader of Israel, most particularly something that only the triumphal entry fulfilled. He states concerning $\tau' \lambda' \int$, "it is never used of any except an Israelitish ruler of Israelites For this reason it seems clear that it applies to Messiah's supreme position among Israelites."²³³ Culver goes on to conclude:

So, the terminus of this prophecy of sixty-nine weeks is the appearing of Christ as the Messiah-leader of 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' to whom alone, in His first advent, our Lord said He came The plain fact is that at no time in His life did Christ plainly and publicly present Himself to Israel as their Messiah Nagid, except at the time of the so-called triumphal entry.²³⁴

This conclusion is supported by the observations that: the birth narratives portray Jesus mainly as Savior-God to a selected few; the baptism accounts show Jesus to be the Savior-Anointed to a larger number of the repentant; and that Jesus, though revealing Himself to individuals, generally urges public secrecy as to His identity as rightful Anointed-Ruler until the triumphal entry. It is also significant that the New Testament

reveals the triumphal entry to be the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy in Zech. 9:9 of Zion's king coming to her, riding on a donkey's colt (see Mt. 21:1-11; Mk. 11:1-10; Lk. 19:29-44; and Jn. 12:12-19). Another relevant observation is the number and location of New Testament references to Jesus as "king." These occur almost exclusively during and after the accounts of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as is represented in table 4 in the Appendix. Also one should note that the triumphal entry occurred just days before the cutting off of Christ. This would render quite understandable God's mentioning the Anointed's presentation and death immediately together in Dan. 9:25, 26, since reference to His death would be so chronologically definitive of His presentation in addition to being explanative of the destruction of the city and sanctuary in verse twenty-six.

Therefore, let us consider that a strong, perhaps even strongest though inconclusive, case can be made for the triumphal entry of Christ being the prophesied presentation of the Anointed One in Dan. 9:25. For, the historical discussion of the question as to the identity of this presentation has established that the two most feasible options (i.e., the baptism of Christ and His triumphal entry) can both be ably argued from Scripture (see Goss²³⁵ for example); and, the fact is that the New Testament does not explicitly identify the Anointed's arrival. So, since we can Scripturally and historically identify an event immediately proximate to the termination of the sixty-ninth week, namely the death of the Anointed One, and since Scripture appears to imply that the presentation of the Anointed One (i.e., in the triumphal entry)

occurred just days before this cutting off (and since even Christ's baptism was only about three years prior), we may safely demonstrate Christ's fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week presentation by calculating our approximation from 445 B.C. to the approximate year of His crucifixion.

An approximation of the crucifixion date and the duration from the a quo

We proceed now, appealing to the evidence of Scripture and history, to approximate the date of Christ's crucifixion and, thus, establish an approximation of the duration from the a quo of the seventy weeks prophecy to His death. This will allow us to determine if Christ fulfilled the sixty-ninth week presentation to an adequate degree, which will constitute a test of the thesis position. Our objective is to make a safe, conservative approximation. Therefore, we will survey the scholars who are chronologically and interpretatively at both ends of the spectrum of conservative views established by careful and thorough research, and then choose the view least chronologically consistent with the thesis position, demonstrating the validity of the position nevertheless.

An approximate date of Christ's crucifixion is calculable from the approximations of both the beginning of His ministry and its duration; therefore, we must first consider the date of its beginning. This can be estimated from the close proximity of Christ's baptism (Lk. 3:21, 22), at the start of His ministry (Lk. 3:23), to the beginning of John's baptismal ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberius' reign (Lk. 3:1-3). Turner's view makes the fifteenth year of Tiberius to run from A.D. 25 to A.D.

26, with Christ's baptism occurring between 26 and 27 A.D. and His first Passover in the spring of A.D. 27.²³⁶ Turner develops this dating upon the premise that Luke reckoned the reign of Tiberius from his co-regency with Augustus. Ramsay supports this understanding as he finds the reign of Tiberius to have begun in A.D. 11 as well. He bases this upon the testimony of Velleius, of which he relates:

Again according to Velleius, the admirer and friend and faithful follower of Tiberius, associated with him in nine years of warfare, authority equal to that of Augustus in all the provinces and armies of the empire was granted to Tiberius by the senate and people, on the proposal of Augustus himself, before he returned to Rome to celebrate his triumph over the peoples of Pannonia and Dalmatia.²³⁷

Since Ramsay takes the historical evidence to be that Augustus' celebration of this victory occurred on January 16, 12 A.D.,²³⁸ he concludes that Augustus' decree of equal power was enacted before the end of 11 A.D.; this puts Tiberius' first year in the end of A.D. 11 and major portion of A.D. 12 and, thus, his fifteenth at 25 to 26 A.D.²³⁹

Hoehner's view, on the other hand, proceeds on the opinion that Luke reckoned Tiberius' reign from his accession as sole emperor. Hoehner takes this to have occurred August 19, 14 A.D. He maintains that Luke in Lk. 3:1-3 utilized either the Julian calendar with the accession year system (making Tiberius' fifteenth year: January 1 to December 31, 29 A.D.) or the regnal year system from Tiberius' actual accession (making his fifteenth year: August 19, 28 A.D. to August 18, 29 A.D.). So, Hoehner places the beginning of John's baptizing between August 19, 28 A.D. and December 31, 29 A.D. He writes that accepting A.D. 29 as the

beginning of John's ministry puts the beginning of Christ's in 29 A.D. or "shortly thereafter."²⁴⁰ This view finds support in history's testimony regarding Tiberius' behavior upon the death of Augustus. For, he seemingly did not regard himself even as already a Co-Emperor, and until some time later eschewed making any gesture that would indicate he had definitely assumed the throne. Suetonius, regarding events immediately subsequent to Augustus' death, attests:

Tiberius did not hesitate to exercise imperial power by calling on the Praetorians to provide him with a bodyguard; which was to be emperor in fact and in appearance. Yet a long time elapsed before he assumed the title of Emperor. When his friends urged him to accept it he went through the farce of scolding them for the suggestion, saying that they did not realize what a monstrous beast the monarchy was; and kept the Senate guessing by his carefully evasive answers and hesitations, even when they threw themselves at his feet imploring him to change his mind.²⁴¹

At last, however, Tiberius did cease to feign disinterest in the Imperial headship. Tacitus states, "Finally, exhausted by the general outcry and individual entreaties, he gradually gave way - not to the extent of admitting that he had accepted the throne, but at least to the point of ceasing to be urged and refuse."²⁴² Finally, yet still in A.D. 14, Tiberius officially accepted the title, though with outward signs of reservation. Suetonius records, "Finally, with a great show of reluctance, and complaints that they were forcing him to become a miserable and overworked slave, Tiberius accepted the title of Emperor; but hinted that he might later resign it."²⁴³

Fotheringham, maintaining that Tiberius' reign was reckoned throughout the entire Roman empire from his succession to full

imperial authority, points out in defense of Hoehner's position (i.e., that Christ's ministry began about A.D. 29) that if Luke reckoned this reign from the co-regency with Augustus he would have needed access to some rather doubtful documentation - records expressed in terms of the names of consuls perhaps, and a chronological table indicating the beginning of the co-regency.²⁴⁴

Fotheringham observes,

Now it is extremely unlikely that St. Luke had any such table before him. All his indications of time are related to local tetrarchs, the local governor, the high priests, and the years of Tiberius, i.e. to the era in common use in the country. If he was converting the date from consular years, he would doubtless have named the consuls. And, if he wished to indicate the exact year, as he must have done, he certainly would not knowingly have used a phrase which, in the ordinary chronological lists, had a different meaning.²⁴⁵

Also significant is the fact that coins post-dating the death of Augustus indicate the era of Tiberius' sole rule. This would suggest that if an era of co-regency was ever in common use for dating, it was superseded when Tiberius assumed the title of Emperor upon the death of Augustus.²⁴⁶

General corroboration of the dates chosen by Turner and Hoehner is found in the scriptural assertion that Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry (Lk. 3:23). That the views of both men are roughly consistent with this is both scripturally and historically evident. For, Jesus was born during the reign of Herod (Mt. 2:1), who is known to have died in 4 B.C. and who may have lived as long as two years after the birth of Christ (Mt. 2:16). Though once questioned as historically valid, the Luke 2:2 dating of Christ's birth at the time Quirinius was governor of Syria has now been vindicated. Ramsay has ably shown

that history does place Quirinius in this office at an interval around c.a. 6 B.C.,²⁴⁷ the same birth period designated by Turner and Hoehner and consistent with all of the aforementioned nativity references.

Next we examine the question of the duration of Christ's ministry. Hoehner believes the ministry lasted about 3 1/2 years. He avers that the Synoptics indicate that an additional Passover occurred between those of Jn. 2:13 and Jn. 6:4. He writes,

the Synoptic accounts require another year between the Passovers of 2:13 and 6:4. One point of chronology that is common to all four Gospels is the feeding of the 5,000 (Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15) which is dated sometime near the Passover of John 6:4. Confirmation of this is given in Mark 6:39 where there is the incidental mention that the grass was green - indicating the springtime, the time of the Passover. But earlier in the Synoptic Gospels there is recorded the incident of the disciples plucking grain (Matt. 12:1; Mark 2:23; Luke 6:1) which would point to the harvest season a year earlier. On the other hand the Passover of John 2:13 is too early for the incident of the disciples plucking grain for John 2:13 occurred shortly after He had been baptized and had started His ministry. Also, after the Passover of John 2:13 His ministry was in Judea whereas the plucking of grain occurred after He had been in Galilee. So the plucking of the grain would fit well around the time of the Passover between the Passovers mentioned in John 2:13 and 6:4.²⁴⁸

Hoehner points to two additional notes of time indicating an additional year between Jn. 2:13 and 6:4. Jn. 4:35 he believes is not a parable utilizing the time interval between sowing and harvesting but rather a reference to the actual time of year. He bases this upon the total lack of evidence for the existence of this proverb, and the fact that there are six months between sowing and reaping in Palestine. He also notes that the word "yet" is unusual to a proverb and that the phrase "since the

sowing" would have been essential to the supposed proverb. This reference, he concludes, establishes the time of year it was spoken and therefore Jesus was in Samaria in January/February after the Passover in Jn. 2:13.²⁴⁹ Hoehner interprets the feast of Jn. 5:1 to be the Feast of Tabernacles since: (1) The Feast of Tabernacles is referred to elsewhere in John as "the feast" (7:2, 10, 14, 37); (2) The Passover is in John referred to as "the Passover" (2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:39; 19:14); (3) This feast seems to fit most adequately in the chronology of John since the 4:35 reference to January/February follows the first Passover in 2:13 and would have been immediately followed by the feast of 5:1 if it were the next Passover; however, the text appears to suggest an extended time interval between 4:35 and 5:1 before Christ returned to Jerusalem.²⁵⁰ So, Hoehner establishes his case for an unmentioned second Passover between the Jn. 4:35 and 5:1 references, which puts four Passovers within the chronology of Christ's ministry and accounts for its duration being between three and four years. He stretches the ministry from about 29 A.D. to 33 A.D.

Turner runs Christ's ministry from c.a. 27 A.D., for a length of between two to three years, to 29 A.D. A two to three year ministry, he thinks, is borne out by the exhaustive listing of Passovers in John's Gospel. For, the plucking of grain in Mk. 2:23 he believes can be placed soon after the Passover of Jn. 2:13:

the harvest of the ears of corn (Mk. 2:23), must, if recorded in its proper place, belong to the months immediately succeeding the passover of Jn 2. It would follow at once that the visit welcomed by the Galileans (Jn 4:45), being the first visit to Galilee after Jn 2, must precede Mk 2:23; and St. John's note

of time in Samaria (Jn 4:35) must be placed between the passover and the episode of the ears of corn, i.e. at the actual harvest season.²⁵¹

Turner sees some validity in the critique that this view cramps Christ's early Galilean ministry into too small an interval; however, he believes it is not decisive and refuses to grant the reality of a Passover unmentioned by John even upon the supposition that his view is chronologically infeasible. He states,

No doubt, however, such a scheme as this would crush the early Galilean Ministry into an uncomfortably narrow space; the double call of his apostles, for instance, is more appropriate if a substantial interval, during which they had returned to their ordinary avocations, elapsed between the return to Galilee in May and the second and final call. But if the harmonization is thought impossible, it is the chronological order of the events in St. Mark, and not the limitation of the Ministry to two years, which must be given up. The corn episode must be transferred to the second year of the Ministry, and placed after the miracle of the Five Thousand.²⁵²

So, Hoehner's view approximates a 33 A.D. crucifixion and Turner's yields a 29 A.D. date for the same. Since the thesis position is to be tested using the conservative view least chronologically consistent with it, Turner's 29 A.D. date will serve as our approximation of Christ's crucifixion and His proposed presentation as the Anointed One in Dan. 9:25. From our 445 B.C. approximated a quo to 29 A.D. is 473 years, our approximate duration to be tested against the prophesied sixty-nine weeks or 483 years. This variation of ten years from 483 is clearly consistent with the two years from seventy eventuated in the 97 percent chronological fulfillment of the prophecy's prototype prediction, i.e., Jeremiah's seventy year captivity oracle; for our test reveals that Christ, in His presentation, fulfilled about 98 percent of the 483

literal years predicted in Dan. 9:25 (This is not to say that the two prophecies just mentioned were three and two percent, respectively, in error; for, the ranges of their respective chronological fulfillments were within the parameters prescribed by Scripture and the prophecies themselves.). Given the prophecy's intended degree of chronological precision, this constitutes reasonable proof that Christ fulfilled Daniel's sixty-ninth week and especially since, as will be seen, no other "Anointed One" contender even remotely as scripturally anticipated and extraordinary as Jesus presented himself within even 57 percent of the predicted 483 years (i.e. Onias III). It is interesting to note, as a postscript, that if one assumes the 33 A.D. date for the crucifixion and the triumphal entry as the predicted presentation of the Anointed One, Christ is shown to have been presented in the sixty-ninth week.

Overall, we may conclude that Christ perfectly fulfills the functional, personal-circumstantial, and chronological specifications of the Dan. 9 prophecy. That this type of fulfillment is exclusive to Christ will become apparent as we continue. For, now we turn to examine the general failure of fulfillment that characterizes the second most feasible contending scenario to that of Christ and Antichrist, i.e., that of Onias III and Antiochus IV.

Onias III's Failure of Fulfillment

Onias III's Failure of the Verse Twenty-Four Functions

Whereas, we have seen that Christ in His first and second comings perfectly fulfills the functions listed in Dan. 9:24, Onias III will be shown to have not significantly fulfilled any

of the functions. First of all, regarding the function of "finishing the transgression," we should observe that the era of Onias III and matters occupying him were unrelated to Israel's ultimate and salient sin of the rejection of the Anointed One. If "the transgression" is construed to be Israel's general infidelity as a nation to God, it must be answered that Onias III certainly did not affect a complete and eternal end to this; although his zeal and faithfulness exerted a positive influence upon the nation while he occupied the high priesthood, Israel remains unfaithful to and estranged from Christ to this day--and she is not as a nation even in conformity with the legal requirements of her original Old Testament relationship with God.

For basically the same reasons just cited, Onias III fails the requirement of putting "an end to sin." Few would argue that since Onias' day sinning has ceased in Israel. Onias may have been instrumental in bringing revival to some quarters of God's people, but sin ending regeneration must await Israel's regathering unto Christ upon His return.

As to the function "to atone for wickedness," it is clear that Onias III did not in any way personally in himself atone for the totality of sins (wickedness). He did, on the day of atonement, through God's sanctioned ordinance affect God's atoning for the past sins of the nation, but, even in this, he accomplished nothing uncommon to any previous high priest. The notion that the murder of Onias somehow repaired the breach in Israel's relationship with God--a breach caused by her allegiance to Antiochus and move toward pagan culture--is infeasible, for it is inconsistent

with the terminology employed and its context; a final and ultimate removal of wickedness in general is in Dan. 9:24 intended, which is only too obvious from a comparison of the all encompassing and profound nature of the five other functions listed.

There was not begun an eternal age of righteousness subsequent to the death of Onias III. Neither the world nor Israel herself has as yet been purged of unrighteousness. We may be assured also that many of the Old Testament eschatological visions and prophecies have yet to come to pass. No, the death of Onias, prior to the Maccabean resistance, did not usher in any new kind or age of everlasting righteousness; it neither even approximated a final sealing of vision and prophecy. In fact, the situation in Jerusalem forty years after the death of Onias III reveals a clear picture of what his life and death truly accomplished with regard to God's ultimate purposes:

the walls of Jerusalem were pulled down. Hyrcanus was required to provide hostages, pay tribute, and yield up all the conquests of the Maccabees outside Judea. Even Gezer was taken from him. In 130 he was required to accompany the King upon his Parthian campaign with a Jewish levy. The achievement of Jonathan and Simon seemed to have been destroyed at a single blow. Jerusalem was again a dependent city, as in the days of Epiphanes and Demetrius I. But now the High Priest was not of the legitimate house, but was a grandson of that Mattathias who, thirty years previously, had begun the insurrection against the great-uncle of Antiochus VII.²⁵³

The final function represented by "to anoint the most holy" cannot refer to the rededication of the temple after the success of the Maccabean revolt. Because, as previously mentioned, the comprehensive nature of the other functions (v. 24) contextually forbids this. The anointing referred to is most probably that of

the temple complex by the presence of God Himself. From this and the general failure of Onias III at fulfilling the other Dan. 9:24 functions, we are moved toward the conclusion that Onias III is not the "Anointed One, the ruler" of Dan. 9:25.

Onias III, Not Technically a Prince or Ruler

In contrast to Christ who could rightfully claim the title "King of Kings," Onias III was not technically a civil governing ruler. Although Onias was considered by the majority of Judean Jews and those of the Diaspora communities to be the sole spiritual leader, he was not in reality exerting control of civil temporal affairs.²⁵⁴

That the Seleucid kings gave claim to the public and private funds of Israel is evident in Simon's accusation before Apollonius against the store of funds in the Jerusalem temple. For, Simon informs him in the king's best interests, "that many immense sums of private money are hoarded up in the treasuries in Jerusalem, which monies have no connexion [sic] with the temple, but belong of right to king Seleucus."²⁵⁵ Since a measure of control over monetary resources is essential to a government leader, Onias is shown lacking of an element fundamental to the office of a prince or ruler.

The result of the expulsion of Heliodorus from the sacred temple areas housing the treasury reveals that Onias did not possess sovereign civil authority. For, Onias was quick to explain the action, as a subject to the king, as being no contemptuous attempt to usurp the authority of Seleucus (or the

succeeding Antiochus). Pearlman, concerning the expulsion of Heliodorus, explains,

it exposed Jerusalem to reprisal action and endangered the position of Onias. He therefore decided to proceed to Antioch in order to explain to the king that no insult had been intended - it was simply that the Temple was sacrosanct to the Jews - and also to clear himself of Simon's charges.²⁵⁶

It is clear then that Onias III did not possess adequate monetary or civil governing authority to qualify as the ruler referred to in Dan. 9:25.

Onias III, No Notable Possession at Death

As already mentioned, Dan. 9:26 indicates that the Anointed One was to be deprived of some extraordinary possession at death. In contrast to Christ, unto whom world dominion belonged at death, Onias III upon his murder rightfully possessed nothing notable. Onias could claim ownership only of the kinds of things any high priest before him owned. He was a man and rightfully due nothing uncommon that might distinguish him from other men and be of such importance as to be referenced in this passage dealing with the ultimate fate of the nation of Israel.

Onias III's Death Did Not Precipitate Total Destruction of the Temple

We have seen that the Anointed's death was to have a causal relationship with the total destruction of the temple mentioned directly after it in Dan. 9:26. Whereas Christ's death did precede the resulting Roman demolishing of the sanctuary, the death of Onias III was not followed by a total destruction of the temple by Seleucid forces. The fact of the only partial destruc-

tion by the Seleucids will be set forth in the discussion of Antiochus IV in the next section. Also, there is no evidence in Scripture or history that God, the Seleucids, or Israel considered the murder of Onias III to be the cause of the subsequent assault on the temple.

Onias III Did Not Fulfill Sixty-Nine Weeks According
to the Chronological Parameters

Onias III was murdered c.a. 171 B.C., which is 274 years from the approximated 445 B.C. a quo. This means that he fulfilled less than 57 percent of the predicted 483 years of the sixty-nine weeks. This is obviously not close enough conformity to the prophecy's chronological prescriptions to constitute reasonable proof of fulfillment. Christ, on the other hand, was not cut off in the fortieth week after 445 B.C. (as was Onias III) but, according to even the earliest scholarly estimate, in the sixty-eighth week after almost 98 percent of the predicted years had elapsed; this demonstrates to a reasonable degree the prophecy's chronological stipulations for fulfillment.

Based upon all of the discussed evidence concerning Onias III, we must conclude that he was not the Anointed One of the seventy weeks prophecy; and this conclusion will be rendered only more certain as Onias' counterpart, Antiochus Epiphanes, is shown to have failed to fulfill the prophecy's description of "the ruler who will come."

Antiochus IV's Failure of Fulfillment

Antiochus' People Did Not Destroy the City and Temple

In contrast to the remarkable conformity Antichrist shows to the Dan. 9:25, 26 picture of "the ruler who will come," Antiochus IV evidences much dissimilarity. Verse twenty-six tells us that the people, from whom will come the covenanting ruler of verse twenty-seven,²⁵⁷ will destroy Jerusalem and the temple after the Anointed One's (v. 25) death. The question is, did the forces of Antiochus IV destroy the city and sanctuary? 1 Maccabees 1:30, 31 indicates that the city in general could be described as destroyed; here, it is said that Apollonius "fell suddenly upon the city, and smote it very sore, and destroyed much people of Israel. And when he had taken the spoils of the city, he set it on fire, and pulled down the houses and walls thereof on every side."²⁵⁸ However, the Seleucid forces did not destroy the temple but rather converted it into a temple of Zeus, as is reported by Pearlman:

Forcing their way into the Temple precincts, Antiochus' troops proceeded systematically to remove or rip away whatever precious and sacred appurtenances had escaped the heavy hand of earlier Seleucid pillaging and to tear down all signs of Judaic association. Then, under the guidance of an elderly Athenian philosopher, edifice and courts were prepared for the ritual that was to follow: the formal conversion of the Jewish sanctuary into a pagan hellenist shrine The Temple of the Jews was now to be dedicated to Olympian Zeus, and an image of this Greek deity was installed above the altar.²⁵⁹

Even after the recapture of the temple area by the Maccabean forces the temple was still standing intact, though overgrown and long without maintenance. The Maccabees found the temple gates destroyed and its buildings in need of repair but standing nonetheless. So, Antiochus' army did not destroy both the city and temple.

Antiochus IV Did Not Confirm a Seven Year Covenant

Antiochus IV also failed to confirm the seven year covenant mentioned in Dan. 9:27. For, history attests only that Antiochus, in response to the initiative of a few disloyal Jews, simply allowed the hellenizing activities undertaken by a constituency in Jerusalem and apparently without striking any formal agreement or making reference to any duration of time. Antiochus

gave them license to do after the ordinances of the heathen: whereupon they built a place of exercise at Jerusalem, according to the customs of the heathen: and made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do evil.²⁶⁰

In conclusion, let us note that after the death of Onias III no formal covenant was made between Antiochus and the Jews, any informal agreement that was made specified no time frame, and this agreement was initiated not by Antiochus IV but by "certain transgressors"²⁶¹ among the Jews.

Antiochus IV Did Not Fulfill the First Half-Week or Full Week of Verse Twenty-Seven

Dan. 9:27 calls for a period of 3 1/2 years from the striking of the covenant by "the ruler who will come" (v. 26) to the ending of sacrifice and offering and the setting up of the abomination (v.27) by this same ruler. History indicates that the Antiochus pseudo-covenant began c.a. 174 B.C. and that he revoked temple rights and erected the abomination about seven years later in 167 B.C.,²⁶² clearly not an adequately close approximation of the prescribed 3 1/2 year period. Antiochus also failed to fulfill the seven years of the entire seventieth week which was to conclude with the death of "the ruler who will come." For he died c.a. 163

B.C. shortly after the 164 B.C. rededication of the Jerusalem temple²⁶³ and eleven years after his supposed covenant was inacted, obviously not a reasonable approximation of the predicted duration.

Neither the Abomination nor Desolations of War
Continued to Antiochus IV's Death

That the abomination is to stand and the desolations of war are to continue until the death of "the ruler who will come is indicated in Dan. 9:26, 27. But the abomination erected by Antiochus was removed by the Jewish resistance a considerable time before his death, in fact near the beginning of his lingering illness.²⁶⁴ It is also assertable that desolating war actions did not continue until Epiphane's death. The last Seleucid raid of Jerusalem consisted of a non-violent siege of Mount Zion. Lysias chose to starve out Judah's army in this encounter. Prior to this campaign, from the beginning of 163 B.C. to summer of the same year, was a period lacking of desolating conflict when Judah waited in siege of Acra.²⁶⁵ Again, Antiochus IV is shown to have failed the specifics of the prophecy.

Antiochus IV's Death, Not "Poured Out"

"Poured out" in Dan. 9:27, describing the way the evil prince is to meet his doom, translates a Hebrew term usually employed to express the dispensing of God's fierce wrath (e.g., Jer. 44:6; Nah. 1:6). So, we should understand this to predict that this prince will personally die at the hands of God, suffering His overwhelming and violent retribution. However, the most reliable historical sources seem to indicate that the death of Antiochus IV was not at all in this manner. As Pearlman has observed, in

contrast to the imaginative and dramatic description of Antiochus' terminal illness in 2 Macc. 9:5, 6, 9 (which tells of his treacherous bowel affliction, mass dislocation of joints, and worm eaten and rotted flesh), the older First Book of Maccabees (6:8) attributes his death to personal and military failures yielding severe depression which lapsed into a lingering illness.²⁶⁶ Josephus gives the same general description of a psychological malady, brought on by his failure to loot the temple of Diana in Elymais and news of the military defeat of his forces in Judea, turning into a physical illness.²⁶⁷ Polybius relates that Antiochus was "smitten with madness, as some people say, owing to certain manifestations of divine displeasure" while he was attempting to pillage the temple in Elymais.²⁶⁸ However, one would not expect God to so closely associate retribution from Himself with a transgression against a pagan shrine; and, Antiochus IV seems to have been of sound mind just prior to his death, for his last act was a rational and strategic decision to transfer the regency and guardianship of his son from the defeated Lysias to Philip, an experienced and trusted counsellor.²⁶⁹ At any rate, it would seem that Antiochus IV experienced an end nothing like the one foreseen in Dan. 9:27 and, thus, is shown to have again failed fulfillment. Based upon this and the weight of all the foregoing evidence we may conclude that Antiochus IV did not adequately fulfill the seventy weeks prophecy's predictions regarding "the ruler who will come."

Summary and Conclusion

We have seen that Jesus Christ perfectly fulfills the immensely profound functions of Dan. 9:24. His first coming and atoning death saw the fulfillment of some portions, while some parts will have their fulfillment in His second coming; and all of the functions are rendered explainable by the identity and accomplishments of Christ. Christ was shown to have possessed the priestly and kingly characteristics essential to the verse twenty-five, "Anointed." Jesus was seen to have rightful ownership of the extraordinary possession (i.e., world dominion) implied by "and will have nothing" in verse twenty-six. Our discussion revealed that Jerusalem and her temple were destroyed subsequent to and as a result of Christ's death, as required by 9:26. Attention was given to the fact that a comparative analysis of Scripture indicates that Antichrist perfectly fulfills the details of the seventieth week.

This chapter has established that the death of Christ is an appropriate historically estimable event to which to calculate an approximate duration from the prophecy's a quo to test the proposed sixty-ninth week fulfillment in Christ. This was based on valid Scriptural observations and exegesis. Two scholarly views, i.e., those of Turner and Hoehner, representing differing interpretations of the biblical and historical evidence regarding the crucifixion date were delineated. Turner maintained a 29 A.D. crucifixion premised on Tiberius' reign being reckoned from A.D. 11 and the length of Christ's ministry being designated by the Gospels' references to Passovers as two to three years. Hoehner differed

in that he held Tiberius' reign to have been reckoned from his accession to sole emperorship in A.D. 14 and believed a fourth unmentioned Passover to exist between those of Jn. 2:13 and 6:4--making Christ's ministry 3 1/2 years long and yielding a 33 A.D. crucifixion. The thesis position was tested utilizing the approximated crucifixion date of the view least consistent with it. Turner's 29 A.D. date showed Christ to have fulfilled about 98 percent of the predicted 483 years, a fulfillment conforming to the prophecy's intended degree of precision and one constituting reasonable proof of Christ's identity as the "Anointed One" of Dan. 9:25, 26 when considered alongside His fulfillment of the prophecy's functional and personal-circumstantial specifications. This conclusion was supported also by mention of the fact that the closest contending scenario does not demonstrate fulfillment of even 57 percent of the 483 years and is characterized by general failure of the other prophetic specifications.

The thesis position was buttressed by reference to the obvious failure of Onias III to fulfill the functional, personal-circumstantial, and chronological predictions about the verse twenty-five "Anointed." Our discussion revealed that neither the person and accomplishments of Onias III nor the history surrounding him met the functional requirements of Dan. 9:24; the only fulfillments Onias demonstrated were of a symbolical and superficial nature, for the verse twenty-four functions are clearly most profound and spiritually beyond the reach of any merely human accomplishment. We noticed that, although Onias was considered by most of the Jews to be the nation's spiritual leader, he did

not possess the kingly characteristics of "the Anointed One, the ruler." Onias simply lacked the monetary and civil governing authority essential to a ruler. Onias was shown to have not been deprived of any extraordinary or notable possession at death as required by the implication of the verse twenty-six "will have nothing."

It was explained that the Jerusalem temple was not totally destroyed after and as a result of the murder of Onias, as would be required by the prophecy. Lastly, reference was made to Onias' failure to meet the chronological parameters of the sixty-nine week prediction. He was killed in the fortieth week after the a quo, having fulfilled less than 57 percent of the required 483 years.

The thesis conclusion was further supported in outlining the inconsistencies of Antiochus IV with the distinctives of the Dan. 9:26, 27 "ruler who will come." That the forces of Antiochus did not totally destroy both Jerusalem and the temple, as required by verse twenty-six, was set forth by citing history's testimony that although the city was destroyed, the temple was spared and converted for pagan ritual. We noted that Antiochus did not strike the seven year covenant of verse twenty-seven; it seems that he simply agreed to the hellenizing of Jerusalem at the initiative of certain disloyal Jews, and this without reference to a seven year period or any other time interval.

We saw that Antiochus did not demonstrate 3 1/2 years from his hellenizing agreement to the ending of sacrifice and offering (v. 27), for this took seven years in his case; and, he died not

seven years after his pseudo-covenant commenced (as v. 27 would have required) but eleven years later. We noted also that in Antiochus' case neither the erected abomination nor desolations continued until the time of his death; thus, he failed this verse twenty-seven prediction. Finally, we pointed to the fact that the verse twenty-seven requirement that Antiochus' death be "poured out on him" (denoting divine wrath being dispensed in retributive fury upon him) does not appear from history to have been fulfilled. Antiochus IV likely died of a lingering illness brought on by some psychological trauma, possibly severe depression.

Comprehending all of the aforementioned evidence, we are compelled to conclude that Jesus Christ is "the Anointed One, the ruler" of Dan. 9:25, 26 and that He did fulfill the sixty-ninth week presentation predicted as part of the seventy weeks prophecy. For, Christ was shown to be clearly the most feasible agent for accomplishing the Dan. 9:24 functions, and the perfect demonstration of the prophecy's personal-circumstantial prescriptions for the Anointed. The presentation of Christ occurred with such chronological precision to the predicted sixty-nine weeks of years as to constitute reasonable proof; we may safely understand that Christ did fulfill the sixty-ninth week of Daniel's seventy week prophecy. This conclusion is only confirmed by the conformity of the biblical description of Antichrist to the prophecy's predictions regarding "the ruler who will come," referred to in Dan. 9:26, 27. The thesis position is even further validated by the relative failure of Onias III and

Antiochus IV to adequately fulfill the specifications of the Dan. 9:24-27 prophecy, since this second most feasible scenario was shown to be the least viable based on the evidence.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In chapter one the main objective of this paper was stated to be the setting forth of Scriptural, exegetical, and historical evidence to demonstrate Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week of Daniel's sixth century B.C., divinely inspired, seventy weeks prophecy. In this same chapter, brief initial critiques of the major tenets of several representative historical views were provided, as further refutations remained to be seen in the body of the paper in the process of supporting the thesis view. In chapter two the prophecy's authorship by the sixth century Daniel was demonstrated as the major historical allegations (theological, literary and linguistic, and historical) against the same were invalidated by the bringing forth of scriptural and historical evidence clearly contradictory to these allegations and supportive of the sixth century B.C. date.

Chapter three's discussion established that Daniel (and, thus, the seventy weeks prophecy) is not subject to the naturalistic hermeneutic of the supposed apocalyptic genre; this was based on a comparison of Daniel, its scriptural context, apocalyptic works and those from the period of their influence, and history. Daniel's prophecy was concluded to be appropriately interpreted as a divinely inspired, wholly accurate, sixth century B.C. prediction, and, as such, designating literal and discernible specifications disposed

to exegetical and historical verification. The prophecy's stated chronological increments were dealt with in chapter four; "weeks" were shown to be units of seven literal years based on an examination of the context of the prophecy's reception, related Old Testament terminology, and pertinent scriptural references. Alternatives to this view were invalidated as scripturally and logically inconsistent.

Having defended the seventy weeks prophecy to be a genuine sixth century B.C. writing, appropriately interpreted in the context of divinely produced Old Testament canonical works, and, thus, an authentic, definite, and testable prediction, we proceeded to examine the execution of its specifications. The prophecy's terminus a quo was first established. Chapter five determined the decree of Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah (ca. 445 B.C.) to be the intended a quo based on a comparison of the prophecy's specifications with pertinent periods of history; alternative fulfillments were discredited by the same scriptural-historical criterion.

In chapter six, scriptural and historical investigation revealed that Daniel's prophecy sets forth sixty-nine consecutive weeks of literal solar years and specifies relatively close approximation as its degree of chronological precision of fulfillment. Ptolemy's canon was shown to be a reliable matrix against which to assess the sixty-nine weeks in testing the thesis position. Finally, chapter seven, in uncovering the scriptural and historical evidence, concluded that Jesus Christ fulfilled the sixty-ninth week presentation of the "Anointed One, the ruler." Christ was shown to be in perfect conformity to the prophecy's functional,

personal-circumstantial, and chronological specifications. This conclusion was seen to be supported by the biblical comparison of "the ruler who will come" (Dan. 9:26, 27) with the figure of Antichrist, as well as by the general failure of fulfillment evident in the Onias III--Antiochus IV scenario (the second most feasible position).

The paper's progressive argument, just outlined, established two foundational conclusions: (1) that Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy is an authentic sixth century B.C. divinely-inspired prophecy and, thus, is genuinely predictive; and (2) that Jesus Christ can be scripturally and historically demonstrated, to a reasonable degree, to be the fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week prediction as to "the Anointed One, the ruler."

From these conclusions and the facts exposed in this thesis several important inferences would seem to follow, although they cannot be argued here. First, our findings indicate that Christ, in His first advent, possessed the sanction and anointing of God. Second, the evidence seems to indicate (especially as it is compared with other pertinent portions of Daniel and Revelation) that Christ will in the future receive earthly dominion. Third, we may understand as an implication that Christ is the central figure in God's dealing with man's sin; and, the prophecy can even be taken as an indication that Christ's death is directly related to atonement for sin. Last, these conclusions lend credence to the New Testament's attestation to the divine nature of Christ and its accounts of His miraculous deeds.

The thesis' cited evidence and conclusions regarding Daniel's sixty-ninth week prediction and Christ's fulfillment of it can, as applied by the Holy Spirit, have a significant effect upon both Christians and the unsaved. The faith of Christians can be strengthened as they are spurred to more confident and intense devotion to Christ. The unregenerate can be enlightened as to the true identity of Christ and to the verity of what the New Testament clearly relates that He has accomplished in His death, burial, and resurrection, namely, the forgiveness of sin and salvation of those who turn from their sin to Him in faith (see Rom. 3:9, 10, 23; 1 Cor. 15:1-8; Eph. 1:7; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 10:9, 10). These Christological and soteriological truths would seem to follow from the cited evidence; however, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to prove them.

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205Harris, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, vol. 2, pp. 650, 651.

- 206Wood, A Commentary on Daniel, p. 249.
- 207Brown, Driver and Briggs, The New Brown - Driver - Briggs - Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon, p. 99.
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- 227Young, The Prophecy of Daniel, p. 207.

²²⁸Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, Revised ed., s.v. "Destroy," "Shachath."

²²⁹Young, The Prophecy of Daniel, p. 207.

²³⁰Walter Besant and E. H. Palmer, Jerusalem, The City of Herod and Saladin (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1899), p. 43.

²³¹Ibid., p. 52.

²³²Goss, "The Chronological Problems of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel," pp. 134-147.

²³³Culver, Daniel and the Latter Days, p. 146.

²³⁴Ibid., p. 147.

²³⁵Goss, "The Chronological Problems of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel," pp. 139-147.

²³⁶A Dictionary of the Bible, 1st ed., s.v. "Chronology of the New Testament," by Cuthbert Hamilton Turner.

²³⁷W. M. Ramsay, Was Christ Born at Bethlehem? (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), p. 200.

²³⁸Prosopographia Imp. Rom., vol. 2, p. 183 and Mommsen, Staatsrecht, vol. 2, p. 1159, cited by W. M. Ramsay, Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?, p. 200.

²³⁹Ramsay, Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?, pp. 200, 201.

²⁴⁰Hoehner, Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, pp. 35-37.

²⁴¹Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars, trans. Robert Graves (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1957), p. 123.

²⁴²Tacitus, The Annals of Imperial Rome, trans. Michael Grant (London: Cassell & Company LTD, 1963), p. 39.

²⁴³Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars, p. 123.

²⁴⁴J. K. Fotheringham, "The Evidence of Astronomy and Technical Chronology for the Date of the Crucifixion," The Journal of Theological Studies 35 (April 1934): 150.

²⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 150, 151.

²⁴⁶Ibid., p. 152.

²⁴⁷Ramsay, Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?, pp. 227, 228, 243-247.

- 24⁸Hoehner, Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, p. 56.
- 24⁹Ibid., pp. 56, 57.
- 25⁰Ibid., p. 59.
- 25¹Turner, "Chronology of the New Testament," p. 410.
- 25²Ibid.
- 25³Elias Bickerman, The Maccabees (New York: Schocken Books, 1947), pp. 72, 73.
- 25⁴Moshe Pearlman, The Maccabees (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), p. 27.
- 25⁵Henry Cotton, The Five Books of Maccabees, Introduction and notes by Henry Cotton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1832), p. 230.
- 25⁶Pearlman, The Maccabees, p. 30.
- 25⁷Wood, A Commentary on Daniel, p. 258.
- 25⁸Cotton, The Five Books of Maccabees, pp. 47, 48.
- 25⁹Pearlman, The Maccabees, p. 63.
- 26⁰Cotton, The Five Books of Maccabees, pp. 45, 46.
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- 26³S. A. Cook, F. E. Adcock and M. P. Charlesworth, gen. eds., The Cambridge Ancient History (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), vol. VIII: Rome and the Mediterranean, Ch. XVI, by E. R. Bevan, pp. 514, 515.
- 26⁴Cotton, The Five Books of Maccabees, p. 78.
- 26⁵Bickerman, The Maccabees, pp. 45, 47.
- 26⁶Pearlman, The Maccabees, p. 161.
- 26⁷Josephus, The Works of Flavius Josephus, p. 376.
- 26⁸G. P. Goold, gen. ed., The Histories of Polybius, 6 vols. (The Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), vol. VI: Polybius VI, trans. W. R. Paton, p. 177.
- 26⁹Pearlman, The Maccabees, p. 163.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1

THE RULERS OF BABYLON AND PERSIA ACCORDING
TO THE CANON OF PTOLEMY

		BABYLON		
Ruler		Years	Years of the Nabonassar Era	Years of the Christian Era
Nabonassar	Nabonassaros	14	1-14	747-734 B.C.
Nabu-nadinzir	Nadius	2	15-16	733-732
Ukinzer, Pulu	Chinziros and Poros	5	17-21	731-727
Ululai	Iloulaios	5	22-26	726-722
Marduk-appal-iddin	Mardokempados	12	27-38	721-710
Sargon	Arkeanos	5	39-43	709-705
.....	First Interregnum	2	44-45	704-703
Bel-ibni	Belibos	3	46-48	702-700
Assur-nadin-shum	Aparanadios	6	49-54	699-694
Nergal-ushezib	Regebelos	1	55	693
Ushezib-Marduk	Mesesimordakos	4	56-59	692-689
.....	Second Interregnum	8	60-67	688-681
Assur-akh-iddin	Asaridinos	13	68-80	680-668
Shamash-shum-ukin	Saosdouchinos	20	81-100	667-648
Kandalanu	Kineladanos	22	101-122	647-626
Nabopolassar	Nabopolassaros	21	123-143	625-605
Nebuchadnezzar	Nabocolassaros	43	144-186	604-562
Amel-Marduk	Illaoroudamos	2	187-188	561-560
Nergal-shar-usur	Nerigasolassaros	4	189-192	559-556
Nabonidus	Nabonadios	17	193-209	555-539

TABLE 1-Continued

Ruler	PERSIA		
	Years	Years of the Nabonassar Era	Years of the Christian Era
Cyrus	9	210-218	538-530 B.C.
Cambyses	8	219-226	529-522
Darius I	36	227-262	521-486
Xerxes	21	263-283	485-465
Artaxerxes I	41	284-324	464-424
Darius II	19	325-343	423-405
Artaxerxes II	46	344-389	404-359
Darius III	21	390-410	358-338
Artaxerxes III	2	411-412	337-336
Darius III	4	413-416	335-332

SOURCE: Edwin R. Thiele, The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 293.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL CRITICAL VIEWS

	70 Weeks Begin B. C.	First 7 End	Messiah v. 25	62 Weeks Begin	62 Weeks End	Messiah v. 26	Last Week Begins	Last Week Ends
Harduin	606	557	Cyrus, typically	606	172	Onias, (type of Christ)	171	165
Marsham	607	538	Cyrus	607	175	. . .	175	168
Collins	followed Harduin. Cyrus and, better, Judas Maccabaeus.							
Eckermann	537	537	Zerubbabel	536	536	Jewish high priest suspended by Antiochus	174	165
Corrodi	588	none	The Christ	588	170	Onias' death, 172	170	164
Eichhord Ammon	536	588	Nebuchadnezzar	606	175	Onias deposed, 175 hiatus 5 years	170	165
Paulus	536	588	Zedekiah	588	154	Jewish high priesthood between Onias and Jonathan 175-157	175	165
Bertholdt Rosenmuller	588	536	Cyrus	536	170	Alexander	170	164
Bleek	588 or Jeremiah's time of prophesying generally	536	Cyrus	536	175	Seleucus Philopator (at first Nicator)	175	164
Maurer	588	Cyrus	Cyrus	Cyrus	176	Seleucus Philopator	. . .	165

TABLE 2-Continued

	70 Weeks Begin B. C.	First 7 End	Messiah v. 25	62 Weeks Begin	62 Weeks End	Messiah v. 26	Last Week Begins	Last Week Ends
Hitzig, 1st	588	539	Cyrus	588	175	Seleucus Philopator hiatus 5 years	170	164
Hitzig, 2d	606, but the 7 at 588	536	Cyrus	606	172	Onias	172	165
Rosch	609	560	Cyrus	609	175	Seleucus Philopator	175	164
Lengerke	588	538	Cyrus	588	220	Seleucus Philopator	178	164
Wieseler, 1st	606	none	Onias III	606	172	Onias	172	164, Feb.
Wieseler, 2d	606	none	The Christ	606	175	Onias hiatus 3 years	172	165, Dec.
Ewald, 1st	607	Cyrus	Cyrus	Cyrus	176	Seleucus Philopator	. . .	. . .
Ewald, 2d	588	539	Cyrus	539	176	. . .	. . .	. . .
Bohmer	654	605	. . .	605	171	. . .	. . .	. . .
Hilgenfeld as Harduin but dropping the types.								
Herrfeld	587	538	Joshua	538	170	priesthood 170 after Jason	. . .	. . .

SOURCE: E. B. Pusey, Daniel the Prophet (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers, 1885), p. 219.

TABLE 3

The Jewish Year With Nisan 1 as New Year's Day		The Jewish Year With Tishri 1 as New Year's Day	
1. Nisan	Mar/Apr	7. Tishri	Sep/Oct
2. Iyyar	Apr/May	8. Marheshvan	Oct/Nov
3. Sivan	May/Jun	9. Kislev	Nov/Dec
4. Tammuz	Jun/Jul	10. Tebeth	Dec/Jan
5. Ab	Jul/Aug	11. Shebat	Jan/Feb
6. Elul	Aug/Sep	12. Adar	Feb/Mar
7. Tishri	Sep/Oct	1. Nisan	Mar/Apr
8. Marheshvan	Oct/Nov	2. Iyyar	Apr/May
9. Kislev	Nov/Dec	3. Sivan	May/Jun
10. Tebeth	Dec/Jan	4. Tammuz	Jun/Jul
11. Shebat	Jan/Feb	5. Ab	Jul/Aug
12. Adar	Feb/Mar	6. Elul	Aug/Sep

SOURCE: Jack Finegan, Handbook of Biblical Chronology (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 92.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF ALLUSIONS OR DIRECT REFERENCES
TO JESUS AS "KING" (BASILEUS) IN THE GOSPELS

Gospel Book	Before the Triumphal Entry	During the Triumphal Entry	After the Triumphal Entry	Total References During and After the Triumphal Entry
Matthew . .	1	1	4	5
Mark . . .	0	0	6	6
Luke . . .	0	1	4	5
John . . .	2	0	11	11
Totals . .	3	2	25	27

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