

Chronology 316: Timeline of Biblical World History



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Period Six: The Decree of Daniel 9 to the Messiah

In our previous section we discussed the prophetic timetable provided in Daniel 9. This timetable began with a decree to rebuild Jerusalem. Using Warner's biblical and historical insight we have been able to identify Daniel 9:25's decree as the decree which Cyrus gave in his first year to release the Jewish captives to return to Judah and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. That decree marked the onset of the timetable that Daniel outlines in his prophecy.

In this section of our study we will turn our attention to the next portion of that prophecy. Our investigation will involve two main issues. First, we will discuss the duration of the next segment of time that Daniel's prophecy presents, the period of the 7 and 62 weeks. Second, we will discuss what event should be understood to mark the end point of that 7 and 62 week period.

Below is the text containing Daniel's prophetic timetable. The relevant data for both of these two issues is provided in verse 25. According to verse 25, the amount of time between the command to restore and build Jerusalem and the Messiah the Prince will be a period of 7 weeks and 62 weeks. Likewise, verse 25 identifies the end point of this 7 and 62 weeks as simply "unto the Messiah the Prince."

Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. **25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.** 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

We will first address the issue regarding the amount of time contained in this period. There are several biblical details which inform us that Daniel is discussing weeks of years. We have already discussed some of them. Below we will provide a review.

First, we see that according to verses 24-25, Jerusalem would be rebuilt and restored after the Babylonian captivity had ended and the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled (see also Daniel 9:2). According to verse 26, at some point after the first 69 weeks, the city and the Temple would be destroyed for a second time. Likewise, according to verse 27, a third period of desolation would begin half way through the final “week.” We should note that all of the periods of desolation of Jerusalem including the desolation of the seventieth and final “week” ultimately involve the disruption or cessation of Temple activities. And we should note that this final desolation and cessation of Temple activities involves an abomination.

The desolation of the final (70th) week is discussed further in Daniel 12. In chapter 12, Daniel is informed that final week’s desolation, abomination, cessation of Temple activities, and scattering of the people of Israel will occupy a duration identified as “a time, times, and a half.” So, we can see from Daniel 9:27 and 12:7 that the period of desolation is equivalent to “the midst of a week” and “a time, times, and a half.” But Daniel 12:11 is even more clear about the duration of time occupied by these events. The text specifically states that these descriptions refer to a period of 1290 days.

Daniel 12:6 And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, **How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?** 7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that **it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people,** all these *things* shall be finished. 8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*? 9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. 11 **And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.** 12 Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. 13 But go thou thy way till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

The specification of 1290 days by Daniel 12:11 in conjunction with the term “weeks” plainly shows that the “weeks” of Daniel 9:24-27 are groups of 7 years. The middle of a “week” would be equal to 3 1/2 years. This is what is meant by the phrase “a time, times, and half,” which is equivalent to “a year, 2 years, and a half a year.”

In the ancient Jewish calendar, a 3 1/2 year period would contain either 1260 or 1290 days. This is because the ancient Jewish year was, in part, based a lunar cycle involving twelve months containing 29-30 days each. However, it was necessary to add an additional month every few years in order to keep the year synchronized with the seasons created by the earth's tilt as it revolves around the sun – a cycle which takes approximately 365-days.

The Jewish calendar – The Jewish calendar is lunisolar—i.e., regulated by the positions of both the moon and the sun. It consists usually of 12 alternating lunar months of 29 and 30 days each (except for Heshvan and Kislev, which sometimes have either 29 or 30 days), and **totals 353, 354, or 355 days per year.** – Encyclopedia Britannica

The Jewish calendar – The average lunar year (354 days) is adjusted to the solar year (365 1/4 days) by the periodic introduction of leap years in order to assure that the major festivals fall in their proper season. The leap year consists of an additional 30-day month called First Adar, which always precedes the month of (Second) Adar. **A leap year** consists of either 383, 384, or 385 days and **occurs seven times during every 19-year period** (the so-called Metonic cycle). – Encyclopedia Britannica

As we continue we should note that the context of Daniel makes it is clear that the 70 weeks are, in fact, weeks of years (groups of years containing 7 years each.)

A second biblical fact showing that Daniel 9's "weeks" are groups of seven years comes from the Book of Leviticus. The concept of a week of years was well-known to Jews of the biblical period. In the Book of Leviticus, God gave commands to the Israelites regarding periods of seven years. Every 7th year, the Israelites were to allow the land to remain fallow. That is, they were not to sow or reap crops during the 7th year. According to Leviticus 25, this resting of the land every 7th year was a type of Sabbath.

Leviticus 25:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,² **Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.** ³ **Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;** ⁴ **But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.** ⁵ That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for it is a year of rest unto the land.*

After establishing the 7th-year Sabbath of the land, Leviticus 25 immediately presents a grouping of 7 sabbatical year cycles (or 7 weeks of years). As verse 8 explains, the Israelites were commanded by God to count and group together 7 sabbatical year cycles (7 weeks of years). Seven weeks of years totals 49 years. According to Leviticus 25, the 50th year after every 49 years (7 weeks of years),

was a special, holy year for the Israelites. This 50th year was called the jubilee year.

Leviticus 25:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,² Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. **3** Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; **4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.** **5** That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest **thou shalt not reap**, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land...**8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.** **9** Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. **10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year**, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: **it shall be a jubile unto you;** and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

Like the sabbatical (7th) year, the Israelites were not allowed to sow or reap the land in this 50th (jubilee) year.

Leviticus 25:11 **A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undressed.**

So, the nation of Israel had a Sabbath each week on the seventh day of the week (see Exodus 20:11, Exodus 31:16-17, and Deuteronomy 5:14) and they had a Sabbath year every 7th year (Leviticus 25:1-7). After 7 weeks of years, in the 50th year, the nation of Israel held a jubilee year. These biblical observations leave little reason to doubt that the weeks of Daniel 9 are weeks of years.

As Tim Warner has rightfully observed in his study, the grouping of a week of years and the grouping of 7 weeks of years were both well-known aspects of the Old Testament sabbatical year cycle that we have discussed extensively throughout this study.

Yet, there is also a deliberate distinction between the first 7 Sabbatical cycles (49 years) and the remaining 62 Sabbatical cycles (434 years). Why? Scholars have struggled to explain this division. Yet, the answer is very simple. **The distinguishing of the first 7 Sabbatical cycles (49 years) was intended to let the reader know that this was one Jubilee cycle, and therefore the countdown of the 70 weeks prophecy begins in a Jubilee year. This little detail establishes a synchronization between the 70 Sabbatical cycles of Daniel's prophecy and the existing continuous Jubilee calendar.** – The Coming Millennial Sabbath – Part II, Tim Warner, Copyright © July, 2009, answersinrevelation.org

In Leviticus 25, God instructed Israel to keep a Sabbatical year calendar. They were to farm their land for 6 years and allow the land to rest the 7th year with neither planting nor harvesting...Chronologists and commentators have also been unable to adequately explain why the countdown to Messiah is not given as merely “69 weeks,” but is instead given as 7 weeks plus 62 weeks. Why divide the period of 69 weeks without any explanation? Once again, the problem is the failure to consider the Sabbatical year agricultural calendar. **Leviticus 25 goes on to prescribe a long cycle of 7 of these Sabbatical weeks plus one year – the Jubilee Year. That is, at the end of 7 of these 7 year periods (49 years), there is added an extra year. Just like the 7th year is in addition to the 6 regular agricultural years, so also the Jubilee year is in addition to the 7 weeks of years, being the 50th year. The Jubilee year is not the first year of the next Sabbatical cycle, nor is it the last Sabbatical year. Scripture states plainly that the Jubilee is the 50th year. Consequently, the Jubilee year rounds out the 49 years (7 weeks) to an even 50 years. In other words, there is one year intercalated after every 49 years. Therefore, only 7 of these Sabbatical cycles occur continuously. The cycle is interrupted for the Jubilee year, and then it begins again after the Jubilee year...The reason the prophecy is given in “weeks” is to inform us that it is using the Sabbatical Week calendar. The reason the 69 week period is divided into 7 weeks plus 62 weeks is to mark off the first Jubilee cycle, so that we know the prophecy is being given on the Sabbatical – Jubilee calendar,** reminding us to include the intercalated Jubilee years, one for every 7 weeks. – Tim Warner, Daniel’s 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

We can see then that Daniel’s prophetic timetable includes a period defined by 70 weeks of years. This period is divided into segments. The first segment is discussed in verse 25. It spans from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah the Prince. It contains 7 weeks and 62 weeks.

Biblically speaking, we know that each week contains 7 years. Based on this biblical information, it is conventional to conclude that Daniel 9:24 is specifying a period of time containing 490 years. Seventy weeks containing 7 years each would include 490 years. Likewise, 9:25 is understood to refer to a period of time containing 483 years. The 483 years are derived from adding the 7 and 62 weeks together for a total of 69 weeks of years. Since each week is comprised of 7 years, 69 weeks are then multiplied by 7 years to arrive at a total of 483 years. In this understanding then, Daniel is stipulating that there would be 483 years from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince.

This is the understanding of Daniel 9’s timetable that both we and Warner have presented in our previous studies.

Biblically speaking, there can be little doubt that the weeks of Daniel 9 are weeks of years. **Seventy weeks of years are equivalent to a total of 490 years** (70 weeks multiplied by 7 years in a week equals 490 years: $70 \times 7 = 490$.) – biblestudying.net, Addendum 2, 2010

From this biblical data we might supposed that the beginning of the 483 years (69 weeks of years) before the Messiah's coming and death would start in the first year of a new Jubilee cycle (containing 49 years or 7 weeks of years.) – biblestudying.net, Addendum 2, 2010

For most of my Christian life, I have accepted the unanimous chorus of conservative Christian chronologists, including Ussher, that the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 total 490 years...This article is a retraction of my former position, and explanation of why I have changed my opinion. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

As Warner once again observantly points out in his current chronology study, Daniel's use of the Levitical concept of weeks of years coupled with Daniel 9:25's intentional grouping of 7 of these weeks implies that Daniel intended to convey not only the sabbatical cycle, but the corresponding jubilee years as well.

Leviticus 25 goes on to prescribe a long cycle of 7 of these Sabbatical weeks plus one year – the Jubilee Year. That is, at the end of 7 of these 7 year periods (49 years), there is added an extra year. Just like the 7th year is in addition to the 6 regular agricultural years, so also the Jubilee year is in addition to the 7 weeks of years, being the 50th year. **The Jubilee year is not the first year of the next Sabbatical cycle, nor is it the last Sabbatical year. Scripture states plainly that the Jubilee is the 50th year.** Consequently, the Jubilee year rounds out the 49 years (7 weeks) to an even 50 years. In other words, there is one year intercalated after every 49 years. Therefore, only 7 of these Sabbatical cycles occur continuously. The cycle is interrupted for the Jubilee year, and then it begins again after the Jubilee year. **Consequently, "7 weeks" on such a calendar is not 49 years, but 50 years – a complete Jubilee cycle. The 69 weeks of years which precede Christ's crucifixion in Daniel's prophecy must include the extra Jubilee years, one year added after each 7 weeks of years (49 years).** The reason the prophecy is given in "weeks" is to inform us that it is using the Sabbatical Week calendar. **The reason the 69 week period is divided into 7 weeks plus 62 weeks is to mark off the first Jubilee cycle, so that we know the prophecy is being given on the Sabbatical – Jubilee calendar,** reminding us to include the intercalated Jubilee years, one for every 7 weeks. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

The reason the prophecy is given in "weeks" is to inform us that it is using the Sabbatical Week calendar. **The reason the 69 week period is divided into 7 weeks plus 62 weeks is to mark off the first Jubilee cycle, so that we know the prophecy is being given on the Sabbatical – Jubilee calendar,** reminding us to include the intercalated Jubilee years, one for every 7 weeks. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

The textual details presented in Daniel 9's prophetic timetable give us reason to conclude that Daniel is informing us of a total of 70 weeks containing all the sabbatical cycles and jubilee years of the Old Testament calendar system. If this is the case, we would need to add to the 490 years (comprising the 70 sabbatical

cycles) the accompanying jubilee years that this calendar system included as part of the sabbatical, calendar system. As Warner explains, adding in the requisite jubilee years means that Daniel 9's timetable would include a total of 500 years, not 490.

Since the total prophecy of 70 weeks consists of 10 of these Jubilee cycles of 50 years, the total for the entire period is 500 years. All other chronologists have interpreted the 70 weeks as spanning 490 years because they have failed to account for the 10 intercalated Jubilee years. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

Similarly, verse 25's discussion of 7 and 62 weeks would encompass 69 weeks of sabbatical cycles plus the jubilee years that occurred after every 7 sabbatical years. This would mean that the span of time between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the Messiah the Prince would contain a period of 492 years, not 483. This 492-year period includes 69 weeks of years (483 years) plus the 9 jubilee years that would accompany them according to the calendar system laid out in Leviticus.

Daniel 9:26 informs us that the Messiah would be cut off after the first 69 weeks of years had elapsed. In his system, Warner places the end point of the first 69 weeks of years at the Autumn (Fall) just before Christ's crucifixion. Therefore, the 69 weeks include 492 years which concluded just before the crucifixion and Warner dates the crucifixion to the 493rd year from the decree of Daniel 9:25. (We will discuss how the end of the 69 weeks may relate to the timing of Christ's crucifixion later on when we examine the question of the end point of the 69 weeks mentioned in Daniel 9:25.)

Using this new understanding of the 70 weeks, the crucifixion of Jesus after the end of the 69th week must be dated to 493 years after the command given by Cyrus, one week short of the 70 weeks which totals 500 years. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

That the 69 weeks encompass 492 years is also confirmed in Warner's audio file presenting his chronology of the time from Cyrus to Christ. Beginning at approximately 17 minutes and 19 seconds into the audio file, Warner states that the 7 and 62 weeks contained 492 years.

But then he says "And after 62 weeks." So, 62 weeks from after the end of that first jubilee cycle, **62 more weeks gives us a total of how many years?...Its actually 442 complete years more for a total of 492 years from the time of Cyrus until the Messiah the Prince.** – Tim Warner, From Cyrus to Christ, Part II, chron09.mp3, 16:54, www.120jubilees.org

As Daniel 9:25 declares, the 7 and 62 weeks of years begin after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. Since 7 weeks signifies the first 49 years of a jubilee cycle, this would indicate that the year of the decree itself was the previous jubilee cycle.

Therefore the year after the decree would start a new jubilee cycle. Again, Warner explains.

Since the 70 weeks prophecy is given on the Sabbatical – Jubilee calendar, the starting

point must be a Jubilee year. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

Cyrus' decree must be on a Jubilee year, that is, his decree is to be synchronized with the already existing Jubilee calendar. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

According to verse 25, 69 sabbatical cycles would occur before the Messiah the Prince. This means that one final sabbatical cycle and one final jubilee year from Daniel 9's 70 weeks timetable would remain for a future period. Therefore, the final week mentioned in Daniel 9:27 would most likely be followed by a jubilee year which was the final jubilee year in the entire 70 sabbatical cycles mentioned in Daniel's prophecy.

The biblical observations demonstrate that our first issue has two potential options. We are interested in determining the amount of years that are contained in Daniel 9:25's segment of time which spans from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah the Prince. Daniel states that this period is 7 weeks and 62 weeks for a total of 69 weeks of years. Conventionally, this is taken to represent 483 years which is simply the product of multiplying 69 weeks of years by the number of years in each week which is 7. The total period of time contained in the 70 weeks is likewise understood to be 490 years by the same mathematical application.

But, as Warner has shown there is good reason to conclude that Daniel 9:25 is intending to reference the entire sabbatical-jubilee calendar system by marking off the first portion of these 69 weeks as a group of 7 weeks. The grouping of 7 weeks corresponds to one jubilee cycle. As such, there is good support for the conclusion that Daniel's 70 weeks include 70 sabbatical cycles and the accompanying jubilee years which occurred after every 7 sabbatical cycles. If this is the case, then Daniel's 70 weeks include a total of 500 years and the first 69 weeks contain a total of 492 years with only one sabbatical week and one jubilee year remaining to complete the required total of Daniel's prophecy.

An additional consideration should be made as we discuss the amount of time included in Daniel's prophetic timetable. Some have suggested that the reason Daniel 9:25 distinguishes between the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks is because there is a gap between them. Though this approach does well to recognize a need to explain the reason for the distinction between the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks it seems less natural than the alternative conclusion in which the 7 and 62 weeks are consecutive without a gap.

First, the suggestion of a gap between the 7 and 62 weeks would only seem necessary if we had biblical data indicating that such a gap did occur. However, Daniel provides no indications of any gap. By comparison verse 26 clearly designates the occurrence of a gap between the first 69 weeks and the final week. This gap is conveyed by the description of events which take place after the 7 and 62 weeks but before the final week. These events include the death of the Messiah and a subsequent destruction of the city and the Temple. History confirms the textual indications of a gap between the first 69 weeks and the final week because the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple took place 40 years after Jesus' death. In contrast to his inclusion of events between the 69 weeks and the final week, no intervening events are placed between the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks in Daniel's text. Instead, Daniel groups the 7 and 62 weeks together to define a single segment of history which begins with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and ends with Messiah the Prince and which contains no intervening events according to the description provided by Daniel.

Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. **25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.**

Second, as Warner also discusses in his audio file (From Cyrus to Christ, Part II, beginning around 14:30), the initial 7 weeks also correspond historically to the time period in which the city of Jerusalem and the Temple were reconstructed after the return of the Jewish captives from Babylon. As the books of Ezra and Nehemiah show, this period of time was a difficult one just as the end of Daniel 9:25 describes. This provides a sufficient explanation for the textual distinction between the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks.

Third, we have adequate biblical explanation for why Daniel distinguished the 7 weeks from the 62. This designation contains an apparent and necessary reference to the jubilee cycles which accompanied the sabbatical weeks of years. Since there is a clear contextual and conceptual explanation for the distinction between the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks and since there is nothing in the text which would indicate a gap (including no intervening events listed by Daniel), it seems the evidence points toward the conclusion that the 7 weeks and 62 weeks run consecutively.

Having addressed our first issue regarding how many years are included in the segment of time from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, we can now turn to our second issue. Our second issue involved identifying the end point of the 7 and 62 weeks.

The first point worth noticing on this question is that Daniel 9:25 doesn't provide any particular explanatory detail regarding the end point of the 7 and 62 weeks. It simply states that from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, 7 and 62 weeks will occur "unto Messiah the Prince."

Daniel 9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

The word translated as Messiah is the Hebrew noun "mashiyach" (04899), meaning "anointed one."

04899 **mashiyach**

from 04886, Greek 3323 Μεσσίας; n m; {See TWOT on 1255 @@ "1255c"}
AV-anointed 37, Messiah 2; 39

1) **anointed, anointed one**

1a) **of the Messiah, Messianic prince**

1b) of the king of Israel

1c) of the high priest of Israel

1d) of Cyrus

1e) of the patriarchs as anointed kings

The word Messiah is here coupled with the Hebrew noun "nagiyd" (05057) which means "ruler, captain, or prince." The Hebrew noun "mashiyach" (04899) comes from the verb "mashach" (04886) which means "to anoint."

These two words are used to refer to the anointing of both Saul and David as kings over the people of Israel.

1 Samuel 9:16 To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and **thou shalt anoint (04886) him to be captain (05057) over my people Israel**, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

1 Samuel 10:1 Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because **the LORD hath anointed (04886) thee to be captain (05057) over his inheritance?**

1 Samuel 13:14 But now **thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain (05057) over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.**

1 Samuel 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed (04886) him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

2 Samuel 6:21 And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, **to appoint me ruler (05057) over the people of the LORD, over Israel:** therefore will I play before the LORD.

The linguistic and historic precedents established in these passages indicate that Daniel 9:25 (and 26) are discussing a messianic Davidic king. However, as we can see Daniel 9:25 simply states that the 69 weeks of years will span “unto Messiah the Prince.” We are not told what event involving the Messiah will signify the conclusion of the 69 weeks.

However, Daniel 9:26 does mention the death of the Messiah the Prince. The Hebrew word translated as “cut off” in verse 26 is the verb “karath” (03772). A survey of this word shows its close association with the concept of destroying or, when a person is in view, it refers to putting them death. It is the common Hebrew word used throughout the Law of Moses to refer to the enforcement of capital punishment upon a person. Below are a few examples to establish this fact.

Exodus 12:15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: **for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut (03772) off from Israel...**19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: **for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off (03772) from the congregation of Israel,** whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.

Exodus 30:33 Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut (03772) off from his people...38 **Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off (03772) from his people.**

Exodus 31:14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off (03772) from among his people.

Leviticus 7:20 But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off (03772) from his people. 21 Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean

beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which pertain unto the LORD, even **that soul shall be cut off (03772) from his people.**

Because Daniel 9:26 refers to the death (or execution) of the Messiah it is common to use this event as the conclusion of the 7 and 62 weeks of verse 25. This is the approach we present in the straightforward and simple count of biblical history which we offered in our previous chronology study.

This approach is natural given that the death of the messiah appears in Daniel 9:26 as part of the phrase, “after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off.” The coupling together of the death of the Messiah with the prepositional description “after the threescore and two week” might seem to suggest that the end point of the 69 weeks is the Messiah’s death. However, there are a few points that argue against such a conclusion.

First, we should take note that the death of the messiah is not the only event identified as occurring “after the threescore and two week” by verse 26. An even fuller look at the text of the verse reads, “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Notice that the destruction of the city and the sanctuary is also coupled directly alongside the messiah’s death as an event that occurs “after the threescore and two weeks.”

Second, historically we know that the city and the Temple were destroyed in 70 AD, roughly 40 years after Jesus’ death. Consequently, here we see that one of the events that verse 26 lists as occurring “after the threescore and two week” does not occur immediately after the threescore and two week. Nor is the end of the threescore and two weeks marked by the destruction of the city and the Temple.

Third, although the gap between the death of the messiah and the subsequent destruction of the city and the Temple may seem evident from a modern perspective looking backward at history, such a gap of 40 years is not apparent or at all implied by Daniel 9:26. At the very least, we must admit that no person reading or hearing this prophecy around the time it was first revealed by Daniel would have automatically separated the death of “Messiah the Prince” from the destruction of the city and Temple. This makes it impossible to insist that the text of Daniel 9:26 itself implies that the death of the messiah would not happen with any greater immediacy or proximity to the end of the 69 weeks than the destruction of the city and the Temple would have.

In short, we simply have two events identified by verse 26 as occurring “after the threescore and two weeks.” And we know that for at least one of those events the text does not necessitate its occurrence immediately after the 69th week or mark the ending of the 69 weeks. And we also know that no one in the original audience would have necessarily perceived from the text a reason to separate the death of the messiah by a gap of several years from the destruction of the city and

the Temple. Therefore, since the language pertaining to the first event (the death of the messiah) and the language pertaining to the second event (the destruction of the city and the temple) do not significantly differ in their temporal relationship to the threescore and two weeks in verse 26, we cannot demand that verse 26 requires the death of the messiah must occur immediately after the 69 weeks either. We simply have two events (the death of the messiah and the destruction of the city and the temple) both of which occur some time after the 69 weeks but the text does not necessitate their immediate proximity to each other or to the end of the 69 weeks. Ultimately, neither verse 25 nor verse 26 stipulates what event would mark the end of the 69 weeks.

Fourth, since verse 26 explicitly mentions the “cutting off” or death of the messiah, it stands to reason that if verse 25 was intended to have identified that same event as the immediate marker for the conclusion of the 69 weeks, then the text of verse 25 would likewise have said “from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the cutting off of Messiah the Prince [shall be] seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.” Daniel’s choice to mark the end of the 69 weeks by a different phrase, rather than the “cutting off of the messiah” described in verse 26, would suggest that Daniel did not mean to identify the death of the messiah as the ending marker for the 69 weeks in verse 25.

In this light, it is worth noting that in our previous study we specifically commented that the use the Messiah’s death as the endpoint of the 69 weeks was merely for simplicity’s sake. Because Daniel 9:25-26 does not stipulate what event in Messiah’s life would signify the end of the 69 weeks, it is possible to instead consider the 69 weeks to end with the Messiah’s coming.

For the purposes of simplicity we have taken Daniel 9:25-26 to count a total of 483 years (69 weeks of years) to the death of the Messiah. Using conventional chronologies, we then marked the end of this 483 period at the year 30 AD, which is commonly used as the date of Christ’s death. **However, there are two potential reasons that might require us to adjust our calculations somewhat.** – biblestudying.net, Timeline Addendum 1, 2010

There is a second potential reason to adjust our calculations of the end of Daniel 9’s first 69 weeks. This reason concerns which event should be considered to be the end point of the first 483 years of this prophetic timetable. For the purposes of simplicity we have used the Messiah’s death as the end point of the first 483 years (69 weeks of years) of Daniel 9’s timeline. However, it could be noted that the first 483 years of the prophetic timetable end with the Messiah’s coming, not his death. The Messiah’s death does, in fact, seem to be placed after the completion of the 483 years. But this statement would still be true in even if the end point of the timetable is the Messiah’s coming, assuming the obvious fact that his death would occur after his coming. – biblestudying.net, Timeline Addendum 1, 2010

There are at least three possible events which could conceivably be identified as the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks.

Option one would be to place the endpoint of the 69 weeks as close as possible to the death of the Messiah. We know that Jesus was crucified at Passover in Spring and that sabbatical and jubilee cycles were counted from the month of Tishri in the Fall. Therefore, option one would place the end of the 69 weeks at Tishri during the Fall before Jesus' crucifixion.

As we have already seen this is the method that Warner adopts in his current chronology study where he identifies the endpoint of the 69 weeks as the Fall festivals six months before Christ's crucifixion.

Using this new understanding of the 70 weeks, the crucifixion of Jesus after the end of the 69th week must be dated to 493 years after the command given by Cyrus, one week short of the 70 weeks which totals 500 years. – Tim Warner, Daniel's 70 Weeks On Second Thought, www.answersinrevelation.org

The 7 plus 62 that we see here until Messiah came to an end at those Fall festivals six months before Jesus was crucified. Now look what it says next. **It says "after the 62."** So, we've got the 7 and then the 62. It says "Messiah shall be cut off." And **I want you to note that its says "after," "after the 62 weeks Messiah will be cut off."** How long was it "after" that Messiah was cut off? **Six months. It was six months after because, remember, these years and these weeks go from Fall to Fall. They go from Rosh Hashanah to Rosh Hashanah. But Jesus was crucified on Passover which is six months later in Spring. So, when it says "after the 62 weeks" it is 492 complete years plus six months. So, it's in the middle of the 493rd year that Jesus was crucified counting from Cyrus and his decree.** – Tim Warner, From Cyrus to Christ, Part II, chron09.mp3, starting at 18:08, www.120jubilees.org

It should be noted that even a conventional model such as this, one which identifies the death of the messiah in verse 26 as occurring right after the close of the 69 weeks, still necessitates a gap of approximately half a year between the end of the 69 weeks and the Messiah's death. Of course, such a small gap (less than a calendar year) doesn't necessarily deviate from the expectation that the end of the 69 weeks would be marked by the death of the messiah in the immediately following year.

However, two points are worth making here.

Number one, we have already established that ultimately the text of Daniel 9:25-26 doesn't necessitate that the death of the messiah marked the end of the 69 weeks or occurred in the year immediately after the 69 weeks ended. So, even though there is no inherent gap for a view in which the death of the messiah occurs in Spring the year after the last of the 69 weeks, Daniel 9 does not demand the exclusion of a gap. Consequently, a gap is not a discriminating factor between this option and alternative options.

And number two, the text of Daniel would seem to rule out any gap longer than 7 years between the end of the 62 weeks and at least one of the events of Daniel 9:25-26. After all, if there were another full seven years between the 62nd week and the “the Messiah the Prince” in Daniel 9:25, then the text should specify 63 weeks rather than 62. Therefore, we can conclude that the text of Daniel does not prohibit a gap of less than 7 years nor does it permit a gap of more than 7 years.

Number three, even this timetable does not tell us what event is intended by verse 25’s use of the phrase “till the Messiah the Prince.” We have already seen that it is impossible to use the text of Daniel 9:26 to demand the death of the messiah is the event intended by verse 25. Consequently, so far we have not found in Daniel 9 any basis for discriminating between our three options here.

The second option which could be used as the endpoint of Daniel 9:25’s 69 weeks is the Messiah’s coming. In our previous studies, we offered this option in which the 69 weeks were calculated to Christ’s coming.

Daniel 9’s prophecy does not give us the exact amount of time between the Messiah’s coming and his death. Therefore, it may be more accurate to conclude that the end of this period of time (483 years) will bring us to the Messiah’s coming. – biblestudying.net, Timeline Addendum 1, 2010

Third, in our previous chronology study, we then used Christ’s baptism as a possible marker for his “coming” to Israel. Understanding Christ’s baptism as the endpoint of Daniel 9:25’s 69 weeks would conceptually make sense because it was at his baptism that Christ was anointed and pointed out to Israel by God through the Holy Spirit and through the work of John the Baptist. In this scenario, John the Baptist functions in a role similar to prophets and priests like Samuel, Zadok, and Nathan who anointed the kings of Israel (1 Samuel 10:1, 15:7, 16:13, 1 Chronicles 11:3, 1 Kings 1:38, 45).

In this way, we may understand that at his baptism, Jesus was declared by God (and by John the Baptist, the prophet and son of a priest) to be the Christ (John 1:6-8, 15-27, 29-41, especially John’s statements in verse 31). Of course, the term “Christ” means “anointed one” and is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word “mashiyach” used in Daniel 9:25. These New Testament texts indicate that at the time of the first century the people of Israel were correctly expecting the Messiah that Daniel had prophesied. (See also Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:16-17, 21-22.)

Here we should make a few basic points in comparison to option one above. First, both the coming of the messiah and the anointing (i.e. baptism) of the messiah would necessarily occur before the death of the messiah. Second, Daniel 9:25 could easily have identified the end of the 69 weeks by the messiah’s death but instead chooses not to use such a description. Third, in verse 26 the death of the messiah is described as occurring “after” the 69 weeks in the same sense that the destruction of the city and the Temple, events which by any historical reckoning

did not immediately follow the end of the 69 weeks. Fourth, if the death of the messiah is “after” the 69 weeks in the same sense as the destruction of Jerusalem 40 years later, then it stands to reason that the death of the messiah could itself be years or decades after the event which marks the end of the 69 weeks which is identified in Daniel 9:25 by the simple phrase “unto Messiah the Prince.”

If, for instance, Daniel 9:25 refers to the coming of the messiah in terms of his birth, then the death of the messiah (mentioned in Daniel 9:26) would be 33 years after the end of the 69 week as marked by his birth and the destruction of the city and the Temple (also mentioned in Daniel 9:26) would be approximately 73 years after the end of the 69 weeks. (Here our totals employ standard dates for Christ’s death and the destruction of the Temple.) Alternatively, if Daniel 9:25 refers to the coming of the messiah in terms of his baptismal anointing, then the death of the messiah (mentioned in Daniel 9:26) would be about 3 years after the end of the 69 week as marked by his baptism and the destruction of the city and the Temple (also mentioned in Daniel 9:26) would be approximately 43 years after the end of the 69 weeks. In terms of the text of Daniel 9:25-26, placing a distance of 3-30 years between the end of the 69 weeks and the death of the messiah is no more prohibited than placing the destruction of the city and the Temple approximately 40-70 years after the end of the 69 weeks, a conclusion which is historically and exegetically necessary.

Let us consider the public proclamation and ministry of the messiah particularly in relation to the timing of his death. Biblical information presented in the gospels indicates that Christ’s ministry began 3 1/2 years before this when Christ was baptized by John in the Jordan River. This would give us reason to place Christ’s baptism in the Fall of the year when sabbatical and jubilee years began and ended.

Furthermore, Luke’s gospel records for us an event very early in Jesus’ ministry. Jesus’ temptation by the devil is described in Luke 4:1-13. In the gospel accounts of Matthew and Mark, the temptation takes place just after Jesus’ baptism by John. Immediately after his account of the temptation, Luke presents an early account of Jesus in Nazareth. This account is contained in Luke 4:14-21. In this passage, Jesus stands up to read at the synagogue on the Sabbath. The reading is from Isaiah 61:1-2.

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. 15 And he **taught in their synagogues**, being glorified of all. 16 **And he came to Nazareth**, where he had been brought up: **and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.** 17 **And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,** 18 **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me** to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, **to preach deliverance to the captives**, and recovering of sight to the blind, **to set at liberty them that are bruised,** 19 **To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.** 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue

were fastened on him. 21 **And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.**

What is worth noting about Jesus reading this passage is that Isaiah 61 contains a probable reference to a jubilee year. This reference is seen in Isaiah 61:1 which uses the particular phrase “to proclaim liberty to the captives.”

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim (07121) liberty (01865) to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

This Hebrew phrase “proclaim liberty” is found in three places in the Old Testament. It is first used in Leviticus 25:10 in reference to the jubilee year. It is used here in Isaiah 61:1.

In fact, although he interprets it in regard to Christ’s second coming rather than his first, we have already seen Warner confirm that this language in Isaiah 61 refers to a jubilee year.

The second coming of Christ will occur on a Jubilee year, when “liberty” is proclaimed, as Isaiah proves. Isaiah 61:1-7... Compare this passage with the following instructions for the Jubilee year: Lev. 25:8-11... – Tim Warner, The 120 Jubilee Year Calendar, www.120jubilees.org

This same identifying language is used in Jeremiah 34:8, 15, and 17. Jeremiah 34 may indicate that this phrase can also be associated with a sabbatical year because it is used to describe Zedekiah’s pledge to free his servants which God equates to sabbatical requirements. However, the origin of the phrase in Leviticus indicates a unique connection with the jubilee year. In either case, Luke’s inclusion of these events at the start of Jesus’ ministry might be informative for our understanding of how Daniel 9:25 relates to events in Jesus’ life.

While it is perhaps less likely, it is possible that Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18 are using the phrase “proclaim liberty” to refer to a sabbatical year. If this is the case, then it fits very well with the concept that Jesus’ ministry may have begun in Fall (3 1/2 years before his death at Passover) in correspondence to a sabbatical year. This would work well with Daniel 9, which states that the 69 sabbatical weeks end with “Messiah the Prince.” Therefore, these texts could be understood to designate the beginning of the Messiah’s ministry just after his “anointing” during a sabbatical year or, perhaps just after a sabbatical year, as Daniel 9:25 may indicate.

On the other hand, a stronger exegetical case can perhaps be made that Isaiah 61:1 is referring to a jubilee year. If this is the case, then we would be lead to conclude that Jesus and Luke were intending their audiences to understand that Isaiah was only being applied in a larger and thematic sense depicting Jesus’ work as the

kinsman redeemer mentioned in Leviticus 25. This is a very sound possibility. In this case, Luke 4:18 would not indicate anything regarding the chronological relationship between the start of Jesus' ministry and the sabbatical-jubilee cycles mentioned in Daniel 9. It is important to recall that Daniel 9:25 marks only 69 weeks, rather than 70 weeks, between the decree and the Messiah. And 69 weeks end at only the sixth sabbatical year in a jubilee cycle rather than with a jubilee year itself. Therefore, if the start of Jesus' ministry was the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks it would not be possible to have that endpoint coincide with a jubilee year.

Even without the use of Luke 4:18, these biblical observations provide good reason to consider that Jesus' baptism may be the event signifying that the Christ which Daniel 9:25 spoke of had, in fact, arrived and that the 69 weeks of Daniel 9:25 had concluded. Christ's invocation of language pertaining to sabbatical-jubilee cycles from Isaiah 61 just after his baptism and at the beginning of his ministry would be an ideal way to announce the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy that there would be 69 sabbatical cycles until the Messiah starting from the jubilee year in which Cyrus released the Jews from captivity in Babylon. But, even though Christ's baptism by John has good credentials for being considered the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks, it is not the only New Testament event that is worthy of consideration.

As the New Testament presents it, Jesus' birth may also have good support as the endpoint of Daniel's first 69 weeks. Accounts of Jesus' birth and the accompanying events are found primarily in Matthew and Luke's gospels.

A survey of the contents of these narratives provides some potentially intriguing material that may support the conclusion that Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks should be counted to Christ's birth.

Matthew's account of Christ's birth begins in Matthew 1:18 where we are first told that Jesus' mother Mary conceived him by the power of the Holy Spirit. Events which may bear relevance to Daniel 9's prophecy are covered in chapter 2. Matthew 2:1 informs us that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wise men came from the east to Jerusalem. In verse 2 the wise men state that they had come seeking him who was born king of the Jews. Their specification that they sought the king of the Jews would connect with Daniel 9:25's use of the phrase "Messiah the Prince" which, as we have seen, is developed from terms and concepts associated with the earliest kings of Israel (Saul and David).

Matthew 2:1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, **there came wise men (3097) from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews?** for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

In Matthew 2:1, the words "wise men" are translated from a single Greek noun "magos" (3097) which refers to the Babylonian (Chaldean) wise men.

3097 magos

of foreign origin מג-רב, 07248; TDNT-4:356,547; n m

AV-wise man 4, sorcerer 2; 6

1) a magus

1a) **the name given by the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Medes, Persians, and others, to the wise men, teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams, augers, soothsayers, sorcerers etc.**

1b) the oriental wise men (astrologers) who, having discovered by the rising of a remarkable star that the Messiah had just been born, came to Jerusalem to

This Greek word is derived from the Hebrew word “Rab-Mag” (07248) which is also used to refer to a high-ranking “wise man” of Babylon.

07248 Rab-Mag

from 07227 and a foreign word for a Magian, Greek 3097 μαγος; n m; {See TWOT on 1143}

AV-Rabmag 2; 2

1) soothsayer, magician, **chief soothsayer**

1a) **Rab-mag, chief soothsayer, or chief of princes, an official of Babylonia**

Of relevance to our study is the fact that Daniel himself was, in his day, appointed by Nebuchadnezzar himself to be the chief of this same group, the Babylonian wise men or Chaldeans.

Daniel 2:46 Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. 47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret. 48 Then the king **made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.**

In fact, throughout the book of Daniel, the Septuagint uses the same Greek word employed in Matthew 2:1 to refer to these Babylonian wise men of whom Daniel was said to be the wisest and the chief.

Daniel 1:18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs **brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.** 19 And the king communed with them; **and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Therefore stood they before the king.** 20 **And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians (LXX: magos, 3097), and astrologers that were in all his realm.**

Daniel 2:2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians (LXX: magos, 3097), and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

Daniel 2:27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot **the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians (LXX: magos, 3097), the soothsayers**, shew unto the king;

Daniel 4:7 Then came in **the magicians (LXX: magos, 3097), the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers**: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

Daniel 4:9 and 5:11 even identify Daniel as the master of the magi.

Daniel 4:9 **O Belteshazzar, master (07229) of the magicians (LXX: magos, 3097)**, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

Daniel 5:11 There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; **whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master (07229) of the magicians (LXX: magos, 3097), astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers**;

The Aramaic word that is translated as “master” is “rab” (07229) which means “great.” More importantly, “rab” (07229) corresponds to the Hebrew word “rab” (07227) from which the word “Rab-Mag” is derived. In this way, the word “Rab-Mag” can be the term used to denote the master of the Babylonian wise men.

07229 rab (Aramaic) rab

corresponding to 07227; { See TWOT on 2984 @@ "2984a" }

AV-great 9, master 2, stout 1, chief 1, captain 1, lord 1; 15

adj

1) **great**

We should also note that throughout the book of Daniel, the Babylonian wise men and magicians are also identified as astrologers. The Aramaic and Hebrew words for “magician” (02749, “chartom” and “chartom” 02748) and “astrologers” (0826, “ashshaph” and 0825, “ashshaph”) refer to those who practice astrology.

The accounts in Daniel help us to understand the traditions that may have contributed to the visit of these Babylonian wise men to Jerusalem in search of the one who was born king of the Jews.

Several facts are worth considering. Daniel was the master of the wise men of Babylon. He remained in this position even during the reigns of Cyrus and Darius (Daniel 6:1-3). And it was Daniel who revealed the timetable for the coming of the Messianic Jewish king. Matthew reports that at the end of that prophetic timetable, Babylonian magi came to Jerusalem in search of the Jewish king. Given that Daniel foretold the coming of the Jewish Messianic king, the magi’s

specification that they sought the recently-born Jewish king provides good reason to consider that they were familiar with Daniel's prophecy or that Matthew may have intended for us to connect the events of Jesus' birth with Daniel 9.

We should also consider that both history and the bible itself report that such wise men existed in other kingdoms as well. For instance, we know that Egypt had wise men. Genesis 41:8 and Exodus 7:11 both report the presence of wise men (magicians) in Egypt at the time of Joseph and at the time of Moses and Aaron. There is a strong amount of overlap in the terminology used by the biblical authors to refer to these wise men and magicians who were in both Babylon and Egypt.

Daniel 2:2 Then the king commanded to call **the magicians (02748), and the astrologers (0825), and the sorcerers (03784)**, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

Daniel 2:27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot **the wise (02445) men, the astrologers (0826), the magicians (02749), the soothsayers (01505)**, shew unto the king;

Genesis 41:8 And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all **the magicians (02748) of Egypt, and all the wise men (02450) thereof: and** Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

Exodus 7:11 Then Pharaoh also called **the wise men (02450) and the sorcerers (03784): now the magicians (02748) of Egypt**, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

It is interesting to note that though Egypt also had wise men who studied the stars, we find no magi from Egypt visiting Judaea at the time of Christ's birth. We only have magi from the region over which Daniel once presided as the chief of the wise men. It is possible that the Egyptians were aware of the same data and signals from the stars that the eastern magi told Herod about and that the Egyptians simply found these things to be unimportant or uninteresting. But the visitation of magi from the east, not from Egypt, may very well imply that the eastern magi had information that their Egyptian counterparts did not. The fact that Daniel, the chief of the eastern magi, transcribed this prophecy coupled with the absence of the Egyptian magi gives good reason to suspect that Jesus' eastern visitors may have had knowledge of Daniel's prophecy of the coming of the Jewish Messianic king. They then linked this information to their customary observation of the star movements in relation to upcoming changes in political authority and they headed for Jerusalem. (Incidentally, the movement of stars would be an excellent way to count amounts of years over larger periods of time such as the long period contained in Daniel 9's prophecy.)

Whatever the exact motivations were that contributed to the visit of the magi from the east, their statements to King Herod and to Jesus' parents indicate their

knowledge of the arrival of the Messianic king that Daniel, their chief predecessor, had prophesied about. These observations provide good reason to consider that Jesus' birth may have marked the termination of the end of Daniel's first 69 weeks.

We should also note the impact of the magi's visit. According to Matthew 2:3-4, the arrival of the wise men seeking the birth of the Jewish king created a great stir from King Herod himself to all the chief priests and scribes, and, in fact, to all Jerusalem. Furthermore, verse 4 indicates that Herod and the religious authorities identified the magi's search for the Jewish king with the Anointed One (Christ). These parallel identifications fit well with Daniel 9:25-26's prophecy of the Messiah (Anointed One) the Prince (a title for the anointed kings of Israel). Again, these details may give us reason to conclude that Matthew intended for us to connect these events with Daniel 9's prophecy.

Matthew 2:3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

As Matthew's account continues, the magi arrive at the place where Joseph, Mary, and Jesus are living. In verse 11, we are told that the magi present Jesus with gifts and worship him as king.

Matthew 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Again, the concept of Babylonian magi coming to Jerusalem at the end of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks to honor the recently born Jewish king provides support for the conclusion that these men may have been aware of Daniel's prophecy or, at least that Matthew intended us to connect Jesus' birth with Daniel 9's prophecy. But, the account of the magi is not the only material that the New Testament may offer with respect to Daniel's prophetic timetable and Christ's birth. Luke's gospel provides other potentially relevant information.

Luke 1 recounts the story of the birth of John the Baptist. It begins with John's father Zacharias the priest serving in the Temple. While conducting his duty of offering incense, the angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias and announces that Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth will have a son. Outside the Temple, many people are gathered for prayer.

Luke 1:8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on

the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But **the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias:** for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. 19 And **the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God;** and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. 20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. 21 **And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.** 22 **And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them,** and remained speechless. 23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

With regard to Daniel 9, there are several points worth noting. First, we should note that according to Luke 2:8-11, Zacharias is performing the daily incense offering that was required by the Law of Moses. This duty was done every morning and evening. And it was at this precise point when Gabriel appeared to him in a vision.

Exodus 30:1 And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it...7 **And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning:** when he dresseth the lamps, **he shall burn incense upon it.** 8 **And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.**

Likewise, Daniel explains that Gabriel appeared to him at the time of the evening offering. Now, Daniel was in Babylon at the time of these events and the Temple was destroyed. No sacrificial offerings were being made. However, Daniel was making prayerful supplication in accordance with the evening incense offerings that were required by the Law of Moses and which were later carried out by Zacharias in Luke 1.

Daniel 9:21 Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

So, we have two men, Daniel and Zacharias both offering prayers up before God in connection with the daily incense offering. And the angel Gabriel appears to both of them in a vision to tell them about future events. There is good reason to conclude that Luke is perhaps intending to link events surrounding the birth of Christ to the events and information recorded in Daniel, including Daniel's prophecy of the timetable for the Messiah. Any Jewish reader at the time would have been aware of these very specific parallels.

Moreover, Gabriel's appearance to Zacharias at the end of Daniel 9's first 69 weeks would also parallel the manner in which Gabriel appeared to Daniel at the end of Jeremiah's prophetic timetable of 70 years of desolations and servitude to the Babylonians. Perhaps Luke is showing that just as Gabriel came to inform Daniel of future events when Jeremiah's prophetic timetable concluded, Gabriel likewise appeared to Zacharias for the same reason as the first 69 weeks of Daniel's timetable concluded. Furthermore, we have already seen that there was a great expectation among the Jews of this period who anticipated the coming of the Messiah. This expectation is exemplified by accounts in John 1:19-25, where the religious authorities send representatives inquiring about whether John the Baptist was the Christ.

Additionally, as Luke continues to chronicle these events, he turns immediately to Gabriel's appearance to Mary. Relevant to Daniel 9's timetable are Gabriel's statements that Jesus would be given the throne of David and will be conceived by the Holy Spirit. Both of these facts relate to Daniel 9:25's announcement of an anointed king of Davidic lines and point toward the conclusion that Luke (and Gabriel) may have intended for us to understand the events of Jesus' birth in relation to Daniel's prophecy of Messiah the Prince.

Luke 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, **of the house of David;** and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 **And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.** 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and **the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:** 33 **And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.** 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Additionally, at the birth of his son John, Zacharias is inspired by the Holy Spirit to prophesy. He states that God would raise up a Davidic king to deliver the Jews from the authority of their enemies. The idea of deliverance from political

oppression through a Messianic king in the line of David is a major theme of Daniel's prophetic book. Again, we have good reason to think that both Luke and his audience as well as Zacharias would have made connections to Daniel's prophecy of the anointed Messianic king.

Luke 1:67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, **68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71 That we should be saved from our enemies,** and from the hand of all that hate us; **72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,**

Luke 2 begins the account of Jesus' birth. Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, the city of David, because of the taxation that had been issued. After Jesus' birth, the angel of the Lord appears to shepherds who were watching their flocks that night. The phrase "angel of the Lord" here in Luke 2:9 is identical to that employed in Luke 1:11. The use of the definite article in Luke 2:11 only strengthens the argument that the figure who appears to the shepherds was "the angel of the Lord" which Luke had already mentioned just one chapter earlier and who had appeared to Zacharias. As we know, in Luke 1:19, this angel is specifically identified as Gabriel, the same angel who appeared to Daniel to announce the prophetic timetable detailing the coming of the Messianic king.

Luke 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David;) **5** To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. **6** And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. **7** And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. **8** And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. **10** And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. **11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. **12** And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. **13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, **14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. **15** And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. **16** And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. **17** And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. **18** And

all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

It is also worth noting that here the angel of the Lord announces to the shepherds the birth of a Davidic king in concert with the term “anointed one” (Christ). This language coupled with the likelihood that this is Gabriel the same angel who appeared to Daniel provides good reason to conclude that both the angel and Luke intended a connection to Daniel 9’s prophecy. Furthermore, as verse 17 explains, these events heralding the coming of the Messianic king as announced by Gabriel were broadcast all over Judea by the shepherds. The Greek word translated as “made known abroad” in verse 17 is the verb “diagnorizo” (1232) which means “to publish abroad, make known thoroughly.” There is little doubt that people all over Judea heard the story of how Gabriel had appeared to Zacharias and to these shepherds announcing the birth of the anointed Messianic king. There is also little reason to doubt that they would have connected these announcements to Daniel’s prophecy of highly anticipated Messianic king.

To these observations we can add the events surrounding Jesus’ dedication in the Temple. As Luke 2:22 explains, in accordance with Mosaic Law, Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. At this time there was a man named Simeon. According to verse 25, Simeon had been waiting for the consolation of Israel. Verse 26 states that the Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Christ. There, in front of all the people gathered at the Temple, Simeon, inspired by the Holy Spirit, identifies Jesus as the Christ, the anointed one, the very term so prominently used in Daniel’s prophecy. Significant to our discussion of Daniel 9:25’s endpoint of the 69 weeks is the fact that Simeon and Luke are aware of the imminent arrival of the Messiah and both specifically identify the coming of Christ with Jesus’ birth rather than the onset of his ministry or any later event such as his death.

Luke 2:21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. **22** And **when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;**...**25** And, behold, **there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon;** and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: **and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26** **And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. 27** **And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28** **Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29** **Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30** **For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31** **Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32** **A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33** **And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34** **And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35**

(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

Just after the account of Simeon, Luke provides a similar encounter with the prophetess Anna. It is clear by Luke's mention of her that Anna must have been a known figure of some prominence in Jerusalem at the time. Like Daniel, Anna prayed and fasted to God in accordance with the daily evening and morning offerings. And, like Simeon and the shepherds, Anna tells everyone that Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promise to redeem his people.

Luke 2:36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

If we are looking for whether the New Testament authors may have connected Jesus with Daniel 9's prophetic timetable, we are right to consider these events from Matthew 2 and Luke 1-2. Here at the end of Daniel's first 69 weeks, we have these two authors presenting several significant events which very much relate to the Jewish expectation of the fulfillment of Daniel 9:25.

First, we have Chaldean magi coming to Judea with a specific knowledge of the birth of a Jewish king in a timetable consistent with when their chief predecessor Daniel said the Jewish Messianic prince would arrive. Their arrival and purpose was widely circulated among the people of Jerusalem and Judea including Herod and the religious authorities who all connected these events with the prophesied Christ, which relates to Daniel 9:25's terminology of the "anointed one."

Second, we have the very same angel that appeared to Daniel at the time of Daniel's prayer at the evening incense offering also appear to Zacharias at the time of the daily prayer and incense offering. Gabriel informs both men of events related to the coming of the Messiah. Zacharias' extraordinary encounter certainly circulated among the priests and multitudes of Jerusalem. At the birth of his son, Zacharias himself prophesied that a Davidic king had been raised up by God just as had been promised by the prophets. His language and imagery of deliverance from political oppression of Gentile rulers is heavily reminiscent of the Book of Daniel.

In between John's birth and Zacharias' prophecy of the coming of the promised Davidic king, we are told that Gabriel appears to Mary to announce the birth of Christ who would inherit the throne of David. The visit of the same angel who delivered the prophetic timetable to Daniel about the Messianic king to inform Mary that she would bare a son whom Luke identifies as the Christ and who would inherit David's throne provides good evidence of an intentional connection to Daniel's prophecy.

We also have the appearance of the angel of the Lord, who is most likely Gabriel, to the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth. Gabriel proclaims to them the birth of the Christ which they then tell everyone. Finally, we have the inspired words of Simeon and Anna who identify Jesus' birth as the arrival of the Christ and whose declarations were well publicized in Jerusalem.

These biblical details provide an abundance of potentially strong connections to Daniel 9:25's prophecy and the Jewish people's expectation of a timetable according to which their messiah was about to come. Daniel 9:25 mentions a period of 69 weeks of years which would end with "the Messiah the prince." This is a title referring to the anointed kings of God's people. This information is given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel who at (or near) the end of those 69 weeks begins appearing to various people announcing the birth of the anointed Davidic heir, the Christ. His message is confirmed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit given to Zacharias, Simeon, and Anna. All of these parties (including Gabriel) pointed toward the significance of Christ's birth and connected it to the Davidic messianic king. Added to these, we also have the arrival of Chaldean magi who came to Judea because of the birth of the Jewish king. These men arrive at or near the very end of the timetable foretold by their chief predecessor Daniel. A consideration of these biblical facts gives us good reason to consider the possibility that the biblical authors (and Gabriel as well) intended to connect Daniel 9's timetable with the birth of Jesus.

To these considerations we can add the material provided by Dr. Ernest L. Martin in his book on the star that the wise men saw. Martin's book, entitled "The Star that Astonished the World," discusses the use of astronomical events in ancient timekeeping methodology. The use of the position of the sun, moon, and various star constellations were helpful in the ancient world for marking the various times of the year, just as God intended in Genesis 1:14. Even the Jewish calendar utilized the observation of the new moon for determining the beginning of months and therefore, by extension, for counting years.

In his book, Martin takes a look at a variety of biblical and historical factors presenting information relevant to the birth of Christ. He includes Revelation 12:1-5 which depicts the positions of the sun, moon, stars, and the sign of a woman in the heavens in relation to the birth of Christ. The Greek word translated as "wonder" in verse 1 is "simeion" (4592) which can refer to a miracle in the sense that a miracle can be a sign or token of divine activity. However, "simeion" simply refers to signs in a general sense including astronomical phenomena.

4592 semeion

from a presumed derivative of the base of 4591; TDNT-7:200,1015; n n

AV-sign 50, miracle 23, wonder 3, token 1; 77

1) a sign, mark, token

1a) that by which a person or a thing is distinguished from others and is known

1b) a sign, prodigy, portent, i.e. an unusual occurrence, transcending the common course of nature

1b1) of signs portending remarkable events soon to happen

1b2) of miracles and wonders by which God authenticates the men sent by him, or by which men prove that the cause they are pleading is God's

Here we have John writing about the sun, moon, and stars and the sign of the woman in heaven. While other theological imagery may be intended by John, his description here would, as Martin argues, be very suggestive of the positions of the sun, moon, and star constellations. The positioning of particular constellations in relation to the sun, moon, and stars was an ancient and universal way of keeping time. More importantly, John would be providing these positions in a way that would be identifiable for all peoples at any time and he is doing so as he discusses the birth of Christ.

Revelation 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder (4592) in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3 And there appeared another wonder (4592) in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Martin compares this biblical information with astronomical data regarding the positions of the sun, moon, and stars during the range of years for Christ's birth. This astronomical data is available through modern technology which allows us to reliably track the positions of the sun, moon, and stars thousands of years ago.

Martin's extensive research prompted him to conclude that biblical, historical, and astronomic data all indicate that Jesus' was born on the first day of the Jewish month of Tishri in the year 3 BC. Here is an excerpt providing some of Martin's discussion of the evidence.

Jesus was born in early evening, and Revelation 12 shows it was a New Moon day. What New Moon could this have been? The answer is most amazing. It is almost too amazing! **September 11, 3 B.C.E. was Tishri One on the Jewish calendar.** To Jewish people this would have been a very profound occasion indeed. **Tishri One is none other than the Jewish New Year's day (Rosh ha-Shanah, or as the Bible calls it, The Day of Trumpets — Leviticus 23:23–26).** It was an important annual holy day of the Jews (but not one of the three annual festivals that required all Palestinian Jews to be in Jerusalem). What a significant day for the appearance of the Messiah to arrive on earth from the Jewish point of view! And remarkably, **no other day of the year could astronomically fit Revelation 12:1–3. The apostle John is certainly showing forth an astronomical sign which answers precisely with the Jewish New Year Day. John would have realized the significance of this astronomical scene that he was describing. In the next chapter I will show the symbolic and religious**

meaning of this New Year's day as interpreted by the Jews (and consequently by the apostles and early Christians) as it relates to the Messiah and his kingship. The information may provide a better understanding why the early apostles of the 1st century, and many Jews and Gentiles, so quickly came to accept Jesus as the Messiah. Whatever the case, **the historical evidence supports the nativity of Jesus in 3 B.C.E., at the beginning of a Roman census, and (if we use the astronomical indications of the Book of Revelation) his birth would have occurred just after sundown on September 11th, on Rosh ha-Shanah, the Day of Trumpets — the Jewish New Year Day** for governmental affairs. There could hardly have been a better day in the ecclesiastical calendar of the Jews to introduce the Messiah to the world from a Jewish point of view; and no doubt **this is what the apostle John clearly intended to show by the sign he recorded in Revelation 12...**The historical evidence I have presented in this book shows that Jesus was born in the year 3 B.C.E. It appears most probable that a late summer birth in 3 B.C.E. has the best credentials. I need not rehearse my reasons for this, but they are very strong. Indeed, **the evidence from the priestly courses alone suggests that a September nativity is the most likely.** This gives a pretty close approximation that most scholars would probably accept as reasonable. But now, we come to the nitty-gritty! To propose **an early evening birth on September 11, 3 B.C.E.** appears almost impossible to believe. To get that close to his time of birth might at first seem to be fanciful. The fact is, however, **I can state without a shadow of a doubt, that the celestial scene described by the apostle John in Revelation 12:1–5, if viewed astronomically, would center precisely on a New Moon date within mid-September, and that in 3 B.C.E. that exact celestial phenomenon would have occurred in the early evening of September 11th. I can also state with assurance that sundown on September 11, 3 B.C.E. was also the beginning of the Jewish New Year (Rosh ha-Shanah — The Day of Trumpets)...the Day of Trumpets (the first day of Tishri — the start of the Jewish civil year)** an impressive amount of symbolic features emerge on the biblical and prophetic scenes. **Before the period of the Exodus in the time of Moses, this was the day that began the biblical year. It also looks like this was the day when people were advanced one year of life — no matter at what month of the year they were actually born.** – Ernest L. Martin, *The Star that Astonished the World*

Momentarily we will consider the implication of the year of Jesus' birth. For now it is worth noting that Martin provides a good argument for Jesus' birth being on the first day of Tishri. As we know, the first of Tishri is Rosh Hashanah, New Year's Day. It was also the day that marked the onset of sabbatical and jubilee years.

The research and conclusions Martin presents in his book are worthy of consideration. The possibility that Jesus was born on the day that sabbatical years began is highly relevant to Daniel 9's timetable which uses sabbatical years to mark the period of time before "the Messiah the Prince." Jesus' birth in accordance with Rosh Hashanah would fit well with Daniel's use of the sabbatical cycle to mark the 69 weeks before the Messiah. If valid, Martin's observations would provide further reason to conclude that Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks ended with

the birth of the Messiah. Christ's birth on Rosh Hashanah would also fit well with New Testament accounts of the appearance of Gabriel who first gave Daniel his prophetic timetable and who appeared again to announce the birth of the Christ who would inherit the Davidic kingship.

Lastly, as we consider the endpoint of Daniel 9's first 69 weeks, we may want to be aware of the conventional chronology of the period from Cyrus conquest of Babylon to the birth and death of Christ. While this study is interested in a biblically derived chronology of world history rather than utilizing secular constructs, it is not altogether inappropriate to be aware of how our biblical chronology relates to conventional historical models. In this regard it is worth pointing out that conventional chronologies date Cyrus' conquest of Babylon and his decree (releasing the Jews to return to and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple) to the year 538 BC.

Cyrus the Great - The Chaldaean empire of Babylonia fell to Cyrus in 538 BC. - Columbia Encyclopedia

Babylonian Captivity - 538 - "Decree of Cyrus" allows Judahites to return to Jerusalem. - wikipedia.org

Biblical Literature - In any event, it was from this community that the leadership and the cadres for the resurrection of the Judahite nation and faith were to come when **Cyrus the Great** (labelled "the Lord's anointed" in Deutero-Isaiah) conquered Babylon and **made it possible for them to return (538)**. A contingent of about 50,000 persons, including about 4,000 priests and 7,000 slaves, returned under Sheshbazzar, a prince of Judah. - Encyclopedia Britannica

Babylonian Captivity - also called Babylonian Captivity, the forced detention of Jews in Babylonia following the latter's conquest of the kingdom of Judah in 598/7 and 587/6 BC. **The exile formally ended in 538 BC, when the Persian conqueror of Babylonia, Cyrus the Great, gave the Jews permission to return to Palestine.** - Encyclopedia Britannica

Belshazzar - According to the accounts in the Bible and Xenophon, Belshazzar held a last great feast...**Belshazzar died after Babylon fell to the Persian general Gobyras without resistance on Oct. 12, 539, and probably before the Persian king Cyrus II entered the city 17 days later.** - Encyclopedia Britannica

Conventionally, Jesus' birth is placed between 6 BC and 4 BC.

Jesus Christ – Jesus of Nazareth (c. **5 BC/BCE** – c. **30 AD/CE**) – wikipedia.org

Jesus Christ – born c. **6–4 BC**, Bethlehem; died c. **AD 30**, Jerusalem – Encyclopedia Britannica

As we have seen, in his book “The Star that Astonished the World,” Martin argues for dating Jesus’ birth to the year 3 BC. His conclusions are even being used in presentations at planetariums during Christmas time in exhibits discussing the birth of Christ and the star of Bethlehem.

Planetariums are scientific establishments and are not intended to give opinions on historical or biblical matters. **But they are aware of the fascinating and spectacular astronomical relationships that were occurring in 3 to 2 B.C.E., the period that history reveals Jesus was born.** – *The Star that Astonished the World*, Ernest L. Martin

When the full story is known about these matters and what happened astronomically from May, 3 B.C.E. to December, 2 B.C.E., historians and astronomers may now be able to discover the very “star” that led the Wise Men to the infant Jesus at Bethlehem. Isaac Asimov asked the right question about the conjunction of Jupiter and Venus on June 17, 2 B.C.E. We may share our inquisitiveness with him. Was this the “Star of the Messiah” that the Jews and others were looking for? Was this the “star” mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew and supported by the account in the Gospel of Luke? 28 The word “star” in the 1st century could refer to a planet as well as a fixed star. Could the “star” have been the planet Jupiter? **The historical events recorded in the New Testament about the “Star of the Messiah” chronologically occurred precisely at this time, and this is the period early Christian scholars said Jesus was born.** – *The Star that Astonished the World*, Dr. Ernest L. Martin

There is, however, **a major difficulty with this earlier year of 7/6 B.C.E.** It is very early for the birth of Jesus. **It is almost too early if one relies on the simple New Testament chronological statements as a guide.** Accepting this earlier period also casts aside virtually **all the testimony of the early scholars and historians of the Christian Church who said that Jesus was born in the period of 3 to 1 B.C.E.** – *The Star that Astonished the World*, Dr. Ernest L. Martin

The Birth of Jesus Was After 4 B.C.E – This period of 3 to 1 B.C.E. for the dating of Jesus’ birth for the early Christian historians, however, should not be jettisoned from our thinking. It is unfair and nonprofessional to dismiss as unworthy of consideration **the vast number of these early Christian scholars who testified that Jesus was born in the period we recognize as 3 to 1 B.C.E.** **Properly, modern scholars are now beginning to recognize that the early Christian scholars had far more ancient records to consult than we do today.** – *The Star that Astonished the World*, Dr. Ernest L. Martin

A fuller presentation of Martin’s research is available in his book, *The Star that Astonished the World*. Included in his discussion of the year of Christ’s birth is Luke 3:1 and 23 which indicate that Jesus was in his 30th year of life in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar.

Luke 3:1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,...23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

Martin explains that that Luke's indication that Jesus "began to be about 30 years of age" (Luke 3:23) in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1) provides good support that Jesus was born in the Hebrew year corresponding to 3-2 BC.

Luke was using the ordinary method of dating Tiberius' 15th year as was common among easterners in the Empire. 2 This is an important thing to understand in identifying the Star of Bethlehem. This is because we must know **the year in which Jesus was born to see if the celestial pageantry of 3 to 2 B.C.E.** would fit the chronological indications in the New Testament. Indeed, it fits remarkably well. **The method of reckoning the 15th year of Tiberius** is an interesting one, but very understandable and consistent. It simply means that **in the eastern part of the Empire, the whole of the year in which Tiberius became emperor of Rome (August 19, 14 C.E.) is awarded to Tiberius as his first year. It means that New Year's Day for the beginning of that year begins the first year of Tiberius. This would have been on Tishri One (the first day of Tishri) in the year in which Tiberius came to rulership. Thus, the whole first year was from Tishri One in C.E. 13 to Tishri One in C.E. 14. Consequently, Tiberius' 15th year would have been from Tishri One in C.E. 27 to Tishri One in C.E. 28.** – *The Star that Astonished the World*, Dr. Ernest L. Martin

According to the historical data provided by Martin, Luke is stating that Christ was 29 years old (he had completed 29 years and was in the 30th year of his life) at the beginning of Tiberius' 15th year and that Tiberius' 15th year began in the Fall of 27 AD. Since the gospel authors place Jesus' baptism by John at around this point, it is reasonable to conclude then that Jesus was baptized by John somewhere around these dates. As such, Martin places Christ's baptism near the Hebrew year corresponding to 26-27 AD and his death near 29-30 AD. If Jesus completed 29 years of life in Fall of 27 AD, then his birth would have been in Fall of the year 3 BC. (There is no year zero. Fall of 1 BC was 1 year before Fall of 1 AD. Fall of 1 AD was 26 years before Fall of 27 AD. Therefore, Fall of 1 BC was 27 years before Fall of 27 BC. Two years earlier was the fall of 3 BC.)

These years correspond closely to the conventional dates that are commonly used. The dates provided in the World Encyclopedia place the beginning of Jesus' ministry at around 26-27 AD and his death in 29-30 AD. The baptism of Christ by John is typically dated to 26 AD (approximately 3 1/2 years before the conventional date for Christ's death in 30 AD).

Jesus Christ – In c. ad 26, John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the River Jordan. Thereafter, Jesus began his own ministry, preaching to large numbers as he wandered throughout the country... In c. ad 29, Jesus and his disciples

went to Jerusalem...A few days later, Jesus gathered his disciples to partake in the Last Supper. At this meal, he instituted the Eucharist. **Before dawn the next day, Jesus was arrested** by agents of the Hebrew authorities accompanied by Judas Iscariot, a disaffected disciple, and summarily tried for sedition by the Sanhedrin, who **handed him over to the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate. Roman soldiers crucified Jesus at Golgotha.** After his death, his body was buried in a sealed rock tomb. Two days later, according to the gospel, he rose from the dead. Forty days after his resurrection, he is said to have ascended into heaven. – Columbia Encyclopedia, encyclopedia.com

Jesus Christ – born c. 6–4 BC, Bethlehem; **died c. AD 30, Jerusalem** – Encyclopedia Britannica

Jesus Christ – Jesus of Nazareth (c. **5 BC/BCE** – c. **30 AD/CE**) – wikipedia.org

We can see then that conventionally Cyrus' conquest of Babylon and his all-important decree are dated to 538 BC. Christ's birth is dated to between 6 BC and 3 BC. And Christ's baptism can be dated to 26 or 27 BC with his death occurring about 3 1/2 years later in Spring of 30 AD.

Because it is not our goal to substantiate these conventional dates, we will not strive to be any more precise with these figures. However, we should discuss the spans of time conventionally placed between Cyrus' first year and the year of Christ's birth, the year of Christ's baptism, and Fall of the year before Christ's death. All three events (Christ's birth, baptism, and the Fall before his crucifixion) have been suggested as possible endpoints for Daniel's first 69 weeks of years.

In this study, we are using strictly biblical data to construct our chronology of world history. Doing so involves identifying the decree Cyrus gave in his first year as the decree that Daniel 9:25 uses to mark the beginning point of the 69 weeks of years "unto Messiah the Prince." Daniel's prophetic timetable signifies the use of sabbatical and jubilee cycles. Using only sabbatical cycles without jubilee years would mean that the 69 weeks include 483 years of time. However, including the accompanying jubilee cycles would mean that the 69 weeks include 492 years of time. Whichever event we use from Christ's life to mark the endpoint of Daniel's 69 weeks presents a discrepancy with conventional chronologies of this period.

Since we have familiarized ourselves with the manner in which conventional chronologies based on non-biblical sources are constructed we are comfortable recognizing that conventional chronologies may not be as reliable as the scriptural accounts. Therefore, we have no problem with the discrepancies that exist between the assessment that is derived solely from biblical data and the conventional assessment of the time from Cyrus' first year to Christ's birth, baptism, or the Fall before his death. Nevertheless, we want to be aware of differing amounts of adjustment to conventional chronologies that would be suggested by placing the endpoint of Daniel's first 69 weeks at Christ's birth, baptism, or death.

Conventional chronologies place a total of 532-535 years between Cyrus' first year and Christ's birth. (Cyrus' first year is dated to 538 BC. Christ's birth is placed between 6 BC and 3 BC.) We would have to add another 29 years to arrive at the amount of time between Cyrus' first year and Christ's baptism. The total between these two events would then be 561 years. The Fall before Christ's crucifixion was around 3 years after Christ's baptism which would mean that, using conventional dates, there were 564 years between Cyrus' first year and the Fall before Christ's death.

If we take Daniel 9's 69 weeks to refer to 492 years (69 sabbatical cycles including the accompanying requisite jubilee years), then identifying the Fall before Christ's death as the endpoint of the 69 weeks means that conventional chronologies are off by 72 years. If we count the 69 weeks as only including 483 years, then conventional chronologies would be in error by 81 years. Similarly, identifying the endpoint of the 69 weeks at Christ's baptism would mean that conventional chronologies are off by either 69 years (if the 69 weeks include 492 years) or 78 years (if the 69 weeks include 483 years). By contrast, placing the endpoint of the 69 weeks at Christ's birth would mean conventional chronologies are only off by 43 years (if we date Christ's birth at 3 BC and count the 69 weeks as including 492 years). (Alternately, if we count the 69 weeks as 483 years and mark the birth of Christ at 3 BC, conventional chronologies would be off by 52 years.)

We must be aware that while suggesting that conventional chronologies are in error by 70-80 years is not at all impossible, it is much more reasonable to suggest an error of only 43 years. While less significant than our biblical considerations, alongside the biblical indicators, these chronological factors may provide additional reason to conclude that Daniel's 69 weeks ended with the birth of Christ.

As we conclude this section we should restate the results of our study of this period. Daniel 9:25 indicates that there would be 69 weeks of years from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince. There is a good exegetical and historical basis for identifying the decree of Cyrus' first year releasing the Jewish exiles to return to and rebuild Jerusalem as the decree mentioned in Daniel 9:25. There is also a good exegetical basis for concluding that Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks include not only sabbatical cycles but also the requisite accompanying jubilee years. If that is the case, then there are 492 years between Cyrus' decree and "the Messiah the Prince." The only remaining question is what is the endpoint of these 69 weeks? Daniel 9:25 isn't explicit in that it only identifies the conclusion of the 69 weeks with "the Messiah the Prince."

Three possible events could be used to mark the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks.

In his current chronology study, Warner places Daniel's endpoint of the 69 weeks in the Fall of the Hebrew calendar year before Jesus' crucifixion. The apparent support for this conclusion is that verse 26 of Daniel 9 mentions the messiah's death and placing the endpoint in the Fall before Christ's death would allow Daniel 9:25 to specify a timetable that brings us as close to Christ's death as possible. Since sabbatical cycles begin in Fall and Christ was crucified in Spring, Daniel's timetable which uses sabbatical years could not end at Christ's death. While placing the close of the 69 weeks at the Fall before Christ's death is a viable option, it has very little exegetical basis. Although Daniel 9:26 discusses the death of the Messiah, based on exegetical considerations, it simply cannot be the case that verses 25-26 were meant to require that the first 69 weeks would end at the year of the Messiah's death. In addition, as we have seen there are many biblical details from the New Testament connecting Daniel 9's prophecy to other events in the life of Christ, such as his birth and baptism. Since we do have such presentations in the New Testament we may want to consider the other two options instead as the endpoints of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks.

However, for the purposes of our chronology study, we should note that counting the 69 weeks as a 492-year period that ended in the Fall before Christ's death, would require adding 492 years to our previous count of world history and take us to Fall of the year 29 AD.

A second possible option for identifying the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks is Christ's baptism. The exegetical credentials for taking this event as the fulfillment of Daniel 9:25's "unto Messiah the Prince" are worth considering. Christ's baptism strongly parallels the anointing of Solomon in that it occurs by a river at the hand of a priest and prophet. These details would work well with Daniel 9:25's reference to the anointed one (Messiah) the Prince which are terms that originate with the anointing of Saul and David to be kings over the nation of Israel. Furthermore, Jesus' baptism is accompanied by a voice from heaven declaring Jesus to be the Son of God and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him. These developments coupled with John the Baptist's use of them to identify Jesus as the Christ to the nation of Israel provide good reason to potentially use Jesus' baptism as the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks.

For the purposes of our chronology study, we should note that counting the 69 weeks as a 492-year period that ended with Christ's baptism, would require adding 492 years to our previous count of world history and take us to the year 26 AD.

The third option for identifying the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks is Christ's birth. Again we have excellent biblical reasons to consider this conclusion which we will restate from earlier in this study.

First, we have Chaldean magi coming to Judea with a specific knowledge of the birth of a Jewish king consistent within the timetable when their chief predecessor Daniel said the Jewish Messianic prince would arrive. Their arrival and purpose was widely circulated among the people of Jerusalem and Judea including Herod

and the religious authorities who all connected these events with the prophesied Christ, which relates to Daniel 9:25's terminology of the "anointed one."

Second, we have the very same angel that appeared to Daniel during his prayer at the time of the evening incense offering also appear to Zacharias at the time of the daily prayer and incense offering. Gabriel informs both men of events related to the coming of the Messiah. Zacharias' extraordinary encounter certainly circulated among the priests and multitudes of Jerusalem. At the birth of his son, Zacharias himself prophesied that a Davidic king had been raised up by God just as had been promised by the prophets. His language and imagery of deliverance from the political oppression of Gentile rulers is heavily reminiscent of the Book of Daniel.

In between John's birth and Zacharias' prophecy of the coming of the promised Davidic king, we are told that Gabriel appears to Mary to announce the birth of Christ who would inherit the throne of David. The visit of the same angel who delivered the prophetic timetable to Daniel about the Messianic king to inform Mary that she would bare a son whom Luke identifies as the Christ and who would inherit David's throne provides good evidence of an intentional connection to Daniel's prophecy.

We also have the appearance of the angel of the Lord, who is most likely Gabriel, to the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth. Gabriel proclaims to them the birth of the Christ which they then tell everyone. Finally, we have the inspired words of Simeon and Anna who identify Jesus' birth as the arrival of the Christ and whose declarations were well publicized in Jerusalem.

These biblical details provide an abundance of potentially strong connections to Daniel 9:25's prophecy. Daniel 9:25 mentions a period of 69 weeks of years which would end with "the Messiah the prince." This is a title referring to the anointed kings of God's people. This information is given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel who at or near the conclusion of those 69 weeks begins appearing to various people announcing the birth of the anointed Davidic heir, the Christ. His message is confirmed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit given to Zacharias, Simeon, and Anna. All of these parties (including Gabriel) pointed toward the significance of Christ's birth and connected it to the Davidic messianic king. To these we also have the arrival of Chaldean magi who also came to Judea because of the birth of the Jewish king. These men arrive at or near the end of the timetable foretold by their chief predecessor Daniel. A consideration of these biblical facts gives us good reason to consider the possibility that the biblical authors (and Gabriel as well) intended to connect Daniel 9's timetable with the birth of Jesus.

In addition to these biblical considerations, identifying Christ's birth as the endpoint of Daniel's 69 weeks would also be supported by Dr. Ernest L. Martin's research showing that Christ may, in fact, have been born on Rosh Hashanah. Since sabbatical cycles corresponded to Rosh Hashanah, the birth of Christ at Rosh Hashanah would fit well with Daniel 9's timetable. Likewise, identifying

the birth of Christ as the endpoint of the 69 weeks would only require a reduction of conventional chronologies of 43 years, while placing the endpoint at Christ's baptism or the Fall before his death would require 70 or 80 years.

Incidentally, it may be worth noting that the birth of Christ and the baptism of Christ appear to be separated by the exact interval we would expect if the 69 weeks ended at Christ's birth. The next sabbatical year (when Christ would have been 7 years old) would be followed by a jubilee year (when Christ would have been 8 years old). If we fastforward through the next three sabbatical cycles, we end up with a sabbatical year when Christ would have been 29 years old, the year that he was baptized by John and announced to Israel. (Keep in mind that just after Jesus' baptism Luke records that while in a synagogue at the start of his ministry Jesus' quoted of Isaiah 61 – a passage which may well include a reference to the sabbatical calendar.) By contrast, on this potential timeline, the death of Christ would not occur on a sabbatical or jubilee year. These factors are by no means definitive, but they would seem particularly relevant to any model centered on the notion of sabbatical and jubilee correspondence for major biblical events. In short, the fact that Christ's birth and baptism seem to be separated by the exact amount of time they would need to if they were both aligned to the sabbatical and jubilee calendar itself suggests that Christ's death should not be marked as the end point of Daniel's 69 weeks, especially for models that emphasize correspondence to the sabbatical-jubilee calendar.

All of these reasons provide good grounds for identifying Christ's birth as the endpoint of Daniel 9:25's 69 weeks. For the purposes of our chronology study, we should note that counting the 69 weeks as a 492-year period that ended with Christ's birth, would require adding 492 years to our previous count of world history and take us to the year 3 BC.

These various options for placing the endpoint of Daniel's 69 weeks at Christ's birth, baptism, or the Fall before his death will impact the amount of time that remains in the 6,000-year period of world history because they affect how much time has elapsed since the conclusion of the 69 weeks. The effect will become apparent when calculating the overall chronology of world history using each of these three options for the endpoint of Daniel's first 69 weeks.