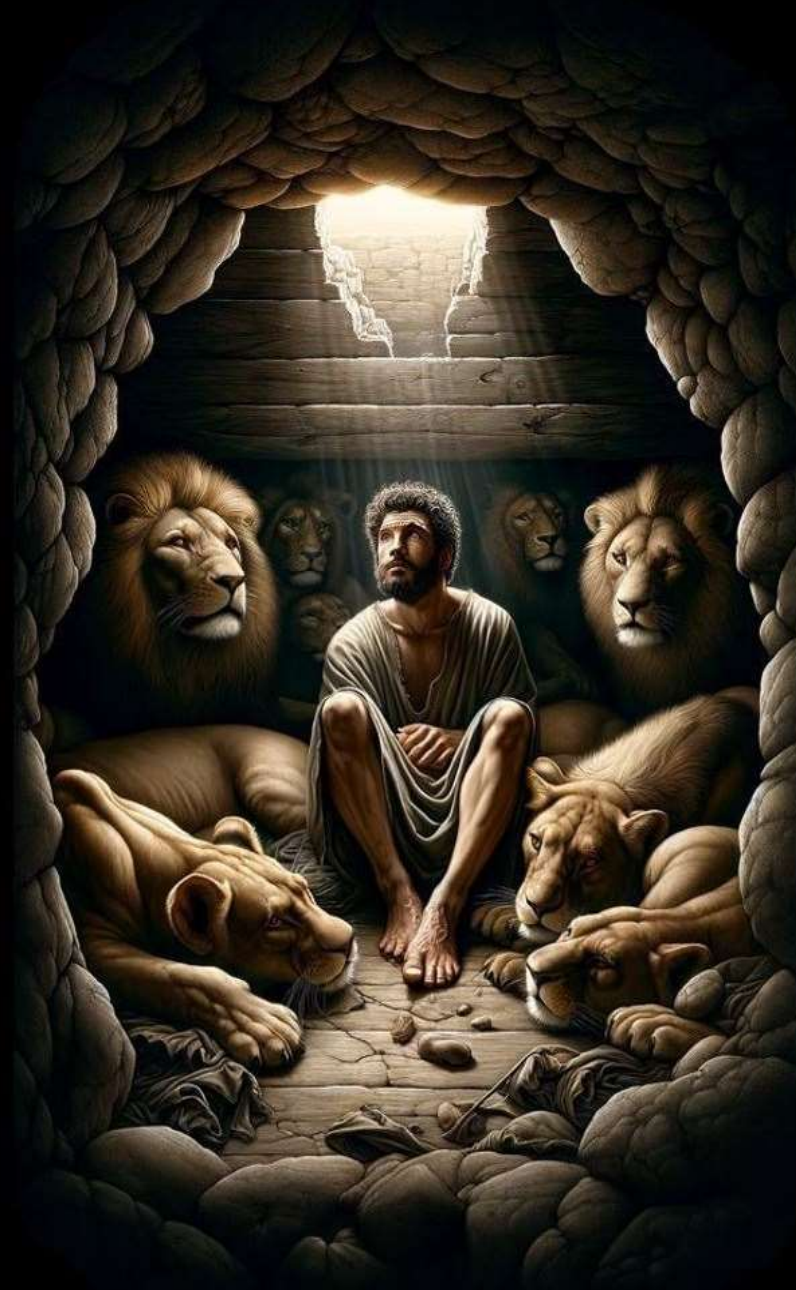


Daniel's 70 Weeks the Fullness of Time

Gary L. Beaty



**But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son,
born of a woman, born under the Law (Galatians 4:4 NASB)**

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Daniel 9:20-27 Introduction

The scriptures tell us in Proverbs 25:2 that *“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter”* and in Daniel 2:22 *“It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him.*

It is with these scriptures in mind that we approach the challenge of searching out the matter of this most important passage. We do so with a keen sense of our need for the Lord to illumine to us His inspired Word. I believe He does this as we, like the Bereans of Acts 17, *“examine the scriptures”*, comparing scripture with scripture allowing scripture to interpret itself. As a part of that process, I believe that as we *“let the word of Christ richly dwell within”* us, God will bring to our minds certain scriptures that are pertinent to the passage in question.

Having said this, I also need to say that this passage is probably one of the most difficult ones in the Bible to interpret. This difficulty stems primarily from there being numerous variables to choose from associated with this passage such as:

- (1) different Bible translations that greatly impact the meaning of the passage, particularly verse 25.
- (2) multiple possibilities for a starting date for the decree.
- (3) the use of multiple calendars and dating systems.
- (4) multiple possibilities for the years, days and dates for Christ's death.
- (5) having to rely on extrabiblical history which is sometimes questionable or subjective.
- (6) understanding when to use either inclusive reckoning or non-inclusive reckoning in determining the passage of time.

Given the extent of these variables, it's no wonder that there have been numerous differing interpretations of this passage by different theological groups and scholars over the years.

As I approached the challenge of interpreting this passage, in addition to studying the scriptures, I of course, sought to learn as much as I could about these differing interpretations made by others. Quite frankly, I believe I have done so with an open mind considering the major and minor points made by others within this voluminous amount of information found in the many books, articles, journals, etc. Having said this however, my objective has been to be true to the Biblical text, despite these inherent difficulties. My approach to do this has been to holistically consider the scriptures and evidence before drawing a concluding interpretation.

Background

At a time when Israel's seventy-year captivity into Babylon was coming to an end, we find this record by Daniel the prophet. In Daniel 9 in verses 1-3 we read, (1) *"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus of Median decent. who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans (2) in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. (3) So, I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes."* In verses 4-10 we find Daniel's heartfelt prayer of confessing Israel's sin, petitioning the Lord for their spiritual restoration and for the restoration of Jerusalem. As Daniel prayed seeking God's mercy and forgiveness in this matter, the Lord sent the angel Gabriel in answer to Daniel's prayer (verses 20-23).

Gabriel's Answer from the Lord Daniel 9:24-27

(24) *"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in*

everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. (25) 'So, you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. (26) 'Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. (27) 'And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.'"

Synopsis of the Passage

In answer to Daniel's prayer, in verse 24, God gives Daniel the thumbnail view of His plan for Israel and Jerusalem. The message of this verse is self-evident. In verses 25-27 God gives Daniel a panoramic view of this answer in more detail. (This pattern of revelation can also be seen in the creation account given in Genesis, chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 1 we see a general overview whereas in chapter 2 is a more detailed account.)

Overview of the Different Bible Translations

The first thing to be considered in this passage is how verse 25 has been translated differently by different translators. (For example, compare the New American Standard Bible with the English Standard Version.) From this we see that some versions combine the seven weeks with the following sixty-two weeks, usually with the word "and", while others place either a period or a semicolon between them. The versions that combine the seven weeks with the sixty-two weeks basically indicate that the Christ (anointed one) will come after sixty-nine weeks from the issuing of the decree (word) to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. On the other hand, the translations with a period or a semicolon after the seven weeks indicate that an anointed one will come after the seven weeks.

After reviewing over sixty different translations, I found that the majority of them (70%) combined the seven weeks with the sixty-two weeks with the conjunction “and”.

The Four Decrees

The next thing to be considered about this passage is addressing the different possibilities for the starting point of this prophecy. According to Daniel 9:25 this was “...*from the issuing of a decree (word) to restore and rebuild Jerusalem...*”. According to numerous Biblical scholars, the different dates for this prospective decree was given by:

- (1) Cyrus the Great in 538/539 B.C., as recorded in II Chronicles 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-4.
- (2) Darius the Great in 520 B.C., as recorded in Ezra 6:1-12
- (3) Artaxerxes King of Kings in 457 B.C., as recorded in Ezra 7:11-18
- (4) Artaxerxes King of Kings in the month of Nisan in 444 B.C., as recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-8

Measuring Time and Calendars

The next aspect to be considered in this study is the measurement of time with the use of ancient and modern calendrical systems. Those considered in this study were:

The Gregorian and Julian Calendars

According to the internet article entitled “Introduction to Calendars”, under the heading, “Astronomical Applications Department” we find the following:

Leap Years

The Rule

“According to the **Gregorian calendar**, which is the civil calendar in use today, years evenly divisible by 4 are leap years, with the exception of centurial years that are not evenly divisible by 400. Therefore, the years 1700, 1800, 1900 and 2100 are not leap years, but 1600, 2000, and 2400 are leap years.

Background

The Gregorian calendar year is intended to be the same length as the cycle of the seasons. However, the cycle of the seasons, technically known as the **tropical** year, is approximately 365.2422 days. Since a calendar year consists of an integral number of whole days, a calendar year cannot exactly match the tropical year...

To synchronize the calendar and tropical years, leap days are periodically added to the calendar, forming leap years. If a leap day is added every fourth year, the average length of the calendar year is 365.25 days. This is the basis of the **Julian calendar**, introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. In this case the calendar year is longer than the tropical year by about 0.0078 days. Over a century this difference accumulates to a little over three quarters of a day. From the time of Julius Caesar to the sixteenth century A.D., the beginning of Spring shifted from March 23 to March 11.” (1)

From the internet article entitled, “Calendars and their History” under the section entitled, **8. The Julian Calendar**, we read the following from the second paragraph, “Today the principles of the Julian calendar continue to be used by chronologists. The Julian proleptic calendar is formed by applying the rules of the Julian calendar to times before Caesar’s reform. This provides a simple chronological system for correlating other calendars and serves as the basis for the Julian day numbers.” (2)

Returning to the article entitled, “**Leap Years**”, from the “Introduction to Calendars” article, continuing under the section “**Background**”, we read the following from the third paragraph found on pages 1 and 2, “When Pope Gregory XIII instituted the Gregorian calendar in 1582, the calendar was shifted to make the beginning of Spring fall on March 21 and a new system of leap days was introduced. Instead of intercalating a leap day every fourth year, 97 leap days would be introduced every 400 years, according to the rule given above. Thus, the average Gregorian calendar year is 365.2425 days in length. This agrees to within a half a minute of the length of the tropical year. It will take about 3300 years before the Gregorian calendar is as much as one day out of step with the seasons.” (3)

From the internet article “Calendars and their History”, under the section **2.3 “History of the Gregorian Calendar”** we read the following from the third paragraph, “The recommendations of Pope Gregory’s calendar commission were instituted by the papal bull “InterGravissimus,” signed on 1582 February 24. ten days were deleted from the calendar, so that 1582 October 4 was followed by 1582,

October 15, thereby causing the vernal equinox of 1583 and subsequent years to occur about March 21. And a new table of New Moons and Full Moons was introduced for determining the date of Easter.” (4)

The Hebrew Lunar/Solar Calendar

From the internet article “Calendars and their History” we read the following about,

3. The Hebrew Calendar

“As it exists today, the Hebrew calendar is a lunarsolar calendar that is based on calculation rather than observation. This calendar is the official calendar of Israel and is the liturgical calendar of the Jewish faith.

In principle the beginning of each month is determined by the tabular New Moon (molad) that is based on an adopted mean value of the lunation cycle. To insure that religious festivals occur in appropriate seasons, months are intercalated according to the **Metonic cycle**, in which 235 lunations occur in nineteen years.

By tradition, days of the week are designated by number, with only the seventh day, Sabbath, having a specific name. Days are reckoned from sunset to sunset, so that 1 begins at sunset on Saturday and ends at sunset on Sunday. The Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday.

3.1 Rules

Years are counted from the Era of Creation, or Era Mundi, which corresponds to -3760 October 7 on the Julian proleptic calendar. Each year consists of twelve or thirteen months, with months consisting of 29 or 30 days. An intercalary month is introduced in years 3,6,8,11,14,17 and 19 in a nineteen-year cycle of 235 lunations. The initial year of the calendar, A.M. (Anno Mundi) 1, is year 1 of the nineteen-year cycle.

The calendar for a given year is established by determining the day of the week of Tishri 1 (first day of Rosh Hashanah) and the number of days in the year. Years are classified according to the number of days in the year (see Table 3.1.1).

Table 3.1.1
Classification of Years in the Hebrew
Calendar

	Deficient	Regular	Complete
Ordinary year	353	354	355
Leap Year	383	384	385

Table 3.1.2
Months of the Hebrew Calendar

1. Tishri	30	7. Nisan	30
2. Heshvan	29*	8. Iyar	29
3. Kislev	30**	9. Sivan	30
4. Tevet	29	10. Tammuz	29
5. Shevat	30	11. Av	30
6. Adar	29***	12. Elul	29

*In a complete year, Heshvan has 30 days.

**In a deficient year, Kislev has 29 days.

***In a leap year, Adar I has 30 days, it is followed by Adar II with 29 days. (5)

3.2 History of the Hebrew Calendar

The Babylonian exile, in the first half of the sixth century B.C., greatly influenced the Hebrew calendar. This is visible today in the names of the months. The Babylonian influence may also have led to the practice of intercalating leap months.

During the period of the Sanhedrin, a committee of the Sanhedrin met to evaluate reports of sightings of the lunar crescent.” (6)

The Metonic Cycle

In the previously mentioned section of the article entitled, “3. The Hebrew Calendar”, the article indicates that the Hebrew calendar is based upon the use of the Metonic Cycle. The following definition of the Metonic Cycle is given by NOAA on the internet article entitled “Tides and Currents Glossary”:

“A period of almost 19 years or 235 lunations, Devised by Meton, an Athenian

astronomer who lived in the fifth century B.C., for the purpose of obtaining a period in which new and full Moon would recur on the same day of the year. Taking the Julian year of 365.25 days and the synodical month as 29.530,588 days, we have the 19-year period of 6939.75 days compared with the 235 lunations of 6939.69 days, a difference of only 0.06 day.” (7) According to the U.S. Naval Observatory, the definition of a month, synodical is “the period between successive new moons (as seen from the geocenter.)” (35)

From this we see that the Julian year consists of an average of 365.25 days whereas the Hebrew lunar/solar year consists of 365.24684 days when averaged over the 19-year Metonic Cycle.

The 360 Day Calendar

This calendar is made up of twelve thirty-day months. The basis for the use of this calendar by some is taken from the flood account recorded in Genesis 7:11,24 and 8:3-4. In this account, the one hundred and fifty days are also equated to being five months. Another passage that is referenced as being the basis for this calendar is taken from Revelation 11:2-3. In this instance the twelve hundred and sixty days are also equated as being forty-two months, hence being derived from a 360 day a year calendar.

When Was Messiah Cut Off ?

In What Year?

Luke 3:1-3,21-23

Scripture tells us in Luke 3:1-3 that it was in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar that John the Baptist began “... *preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins*”. Then later in Luke 3:21-23, we read the following, (21) “*Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, (22) and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, ‘Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.’ (23) And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being supposedly the son of Joseph, ...*”

When determining the year of our Lord's death, in addition to these scriptures, we also need to know:

- (1) the year in which Tiberius began his reign as emperor.
- (2) either how long was Christ's ministry between His baptism and His death or put another way, what was the regnal year of Tiberius at the time of Jesus's death.
- (3) whether the years of Tiberius's reign were reckoned inclusively or non-inclusively.

With respect as to when did Tiberius become emperor, thus marking the beginning of his regnal years, the history books are replete with evidence which shows that it was in the year 14 A.D. Some scholars, however, assert that the beginning of his regnal years is to be reckoned from 12 A.D. when he was co-regent with Augustus. The volume of evidence, as I will reference later in this article, does not support this assertion. "The Early Principate, A History of Rome 31 B.C.-96 A.D." is one such example of one of the many historical books which show that the beginning of Tiberius's reign took place shortly after the death of Augustus on August 19, 14 A.D. **(8)**

In his book entitled, "Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and Apocalypse of St. John", Sir Isaac Newton concluded that his belief was that five Passovers took place during the years of Christ's ministry. His conclusion was that Jesus died in the twentieth year of Tiberius's reign in the year 34 A.D. **(9)** Newton does however acknowledge the writings of Eusebius in which he observes that Eusebius claims that four Passovers occurred during the Christ's ministry, and that Christ's ministry was three and one-half years long. **(10)**

In his book entitled, "The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus, Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine" Eusebius states that Jesus's ministry was less than four years long, He arrives at this conclusion based on the fact that the office of the High Priesthood of the Jews was for one year only and that there were only four High Priests during Christ's ministry. This conclusion is reflected in his "Chronological Table" contained in the book. He shows that Tiberius succeeded Augustus in 14 A.D. and that Christ was crucified in 33 A.D. **(11)**

When I compared the arguments for the number of years for Christ's ministry made by Newton and Eusebuis, I found Eusebius's to be more compelling. (From what I

have read about him, I do not however agree with his theology.)

The “Book of Adam and Eve” agrees with Eusebius’s dating, stating that, “And in the nineteenth year of Tiberius, our Lord was crucified”. (12)

An excellent article written by Andrew E. Steinman, entitled, “Reckoning Tiberius’s Reign and Jesus’s Baptism: First-and Second-Century Evidence Concerning Tiberius’s Fifteenth Year (Luke 3:1)”, addresses the questions surrounding this issue in great detail. A summary of his findings are as follows: Tiberius began his reign on September 20, 14 A.D. (13) There are three types of documentation that document his reign. These are:

- (1) literary-historical (secondary)
- (2) numismatic (primary)
- (3) inscriptions (14)

The coins bearing the image of Tiberius, which were pervasive and widespread throughout the empire, confirm the fact that the years of Tiberius’s reign were reckoned non-inclusively dating back to 14/15 A.D. (15)

Also, there were hundreds of inscriptions located throughout the empire that indicated that Tiberius’s reign was reckoned from 14 A.D. in a non-inclusive manner. Steinman also brings out the fact that no inscriptions were found for the years 24, 25, or 26 A.D., indicating that Tiberius’s regnal years were reckoned from 14 A.D. not 12 A.D. (16)

Steinman gives the following summary statement: “Given the pervasiveness of the early evidence for Tiberius’s reign, it is extremely unlikely that either Luke or his audience would have understood Luke 3:1 to place Jesus’s baptism in any other year than 29 A.D.” (17)

Conclusion

After considering the evidence of the historical record together with the Biblical record of Luke 3:1-3, 21-23, I have concluded the following:

- (1) After the death of Augustus in August of 14 A.D., Tiberius became the emperor of Rome in September 14 A.D.

- (2) When He was around thirty years old, in the latter part of the fifteenth year of Tiberius's reign, Jesus was baptized by John, thus beginning His earthly ministry in the year 29 A.D.
- (3) After three and one-half years of His earthly ministry, our Lord was crucified at the time of the Jewish Passover on Nisan 14, 33 A.D.

Day of the Week for Christ's Death

The Passover (Exodus 12:1-28,42-43)

At the time of their deliverance from Egypt, God instructs Moses and Aaron to tell the people of Israel to take an unblemished, one year old lamb on the tenth day of the first month and hold it until the fourteenth day of the month when they were to kill it at twilight. Then, they were instructed to take the blood of the lamb and place some of the blood on the lintel and doorposts of their houses. They then were instructed to roast the lamb, and then to eat it that night with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They were then told to eat only unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month. They were told that if they placed the blood on the lintel and doorposts of their houses and stayed in their houses, that the destroyer would pass over their house sparing their first-born males from death. We then read the following in verses (26) *“And it will come about when your children will say to you, ‘What does this rite mean to you?’ (27) that you shall say, ‘It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians but spared our homes.’”* And the people bowed low and worshipped.” Then in verses (42) and (43) they were told to celebrate this rite as a memorial throughout their generations. The first month of the Hebrew calendar would come to be known as Nisan. (Nehemiah 2:1)

Fast forward to the New Testament to the words of John the Baptist recorded in John 1:29 which says, *“The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”*

Perfect Timing

In John 7:1-10 we find the following account. On one particular occasion when the “*Feasts of Booths*” was at hand, Jesus’s brothers were urging Him to go into Judea to show Himself by His works to His would-be disciples. In effect, they were chiding Him for not going public. He then tells them in verse (6) “...*My time is not yet at hand. But your time is always opportune*”, and in verse (8) “... *My time has not yet fully come.*” Verse (10) tells us that He did indeed go to the feast, but He went later without His brothers in secret. The point of all this is that Jesus’s timing was perfect. This being the case, He of course, knew perfectly well when He would present Himself publicly as Israel’s Messiah. This He would do later when He came into Jerusalem riding on the back of a donkey. Given Israel’s rejection, He knew perfectly well the hour of His impending, predetermined death. In John 13:1, at the time of the last supper, we read, “*Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father...*”.

To determine which day of the week our Lord was crucified, we need to take into account the following :

In the week of our Lord’s passion, John 12:1-3 tells us that Jesus came into Bethany where He attended a dinner at the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. Verse 3 tells us that Mary anointed Jesus’s feet with a costly perfume, wiping them with her hair. In John 12:7 Jesus indicated that this ointment was for His burial. (According to the Rossetta Calendar website this would have taken place on Nisan 9, which was a Sunday).(20) Then John 12:12-15 tells us that “*On the next day*”, (Nisan 10, Monday), Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, presenting Himself as Israel’s Messiah, as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. It’s significant to note that, as “*the Lamb of God*”, Jesus came into Jerusalem on Nisan 10, the day in which Israel’s sacrificial lamb was to be taken into the people’s homes and kept until Nisan 14 when it was to be slain as a Passover sacrifice. (Exodus 12:3,6)

Jesus was crucified on Nisan 14, the day of preparation for the Passover (John 19:14,16,30-31). The sacrificial lambs were slain at twilight and were prepared for the Passover meal which was to be eaten that night on Nisan 15 (Exodus 12:6-8). Given the fact Nisan 10 was on a Monday, this means that Nisan 14 was on a Friday.

Mary Magdalene found Jesus's empty tomb "*on the first day of the week*" (Sunday) "*while it was still dark*". This indicates that Jesus was resurrected in the evening of Sunday night, which started at sundown on Saturday (John 20:1).

Mathew 16:21,17:23,20:19 and Luke 9:22 and Acts 10:40 tell us that Christ would be raised "*on the third day*", whereas Luke 18:33,24:7,46 tells us that He would rise "*the third day*", whereas Mark 9:31 and 10:34 indicate that His resurrection would be "*three days later*", whereas Matthew 27:63 and Mark 8:31 says that the resurrection was "*after three days*", whereas Matthew 12:40 tells us that "*...so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*". If Jesus died and was buried on a Friday and He rose from the grave on Sunday night, how can this be reconciled to this scriptural account? Moreover, how can the phrases "after three days" and "on the third day", for that matter, be considered to be the same?

The answer to these questions lies in the fact that the Jewish Biblical writers did not use non-inclusive reckoning in counting time as we do, but rather, they used inclusive reckoning. This means that they counted both the first and the last unit of time when reckoning the length of time and that any portion of a unit was counted as a full unit.

Take for example, the account of Cornelius's conversion recorded in Acts 10. The text shows that only three days had passed (by our reckoning). Acts 10:30 however states, "*And Cornelius said, 'Four days ago to this hour I was praying'*". Another example would be that Jewish boys were to be circumcised when they were "*eight days old*" (Genesis 17:12), that being "*on the eighth day*" (Leviticus 12:3). In the New Testament, circumcision is said to be "*on the eighth day*" (Luke 1:59) or "*when eight days were completed*" (Luke 2:21). From this we see that "*when eight days were completed*" does not mean that eight full days have passed from the time of birth. In the Old Testament we find a few examples of inclusive reckoning. One such example would be the siege and capture of Samaria by the Assyrians, as recorded in II Kings 18:9-10. The passage states the siege started in the "*Fourth year of King Hezekiah*" and that they "*captured it in the sixth year of Hezekiah*". But then in verse (10) it states, "*And at end of three years they captured it*". Using non-inclusive reckoning by straight subtraction we would say that it only took two years. The biblical writer however, used inclusive reckoning calling it three years, which included the fourth, fifth, and sixth years of Hezekiah's reign. Another example can

be found in II Kings 14. In this passage II Kings 14:16-17 tells us that at the time of Jehoash's death, Jeroboam, his son became King of Israel. It then says that Amaziah, King of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash. It then states in II Kings 14:23 that it was "*in the fifteenth year of Amaziah*" that Jeroboam II began to reign in Samaria (Israel). In this instance, the fifteenth year of Amaziah's reign has been reckoned inclusively. This means that the death of Jehoash occurred within the fifteenth year and not at the end of a full fifteen years. In the same way, when it says that Amaziah died fifteen years after the death of Jehoash, it means that this occurred within the fifteenth year after the death of Jehoash and not after the completion of that year. This fact is reflected in II Kings 14:1-2 which says that Amaziah reigned for a total of twenty-nine years. Another example of inclusive reckoning is found in Esther 4:15-16,5:1 which says, (15) "*Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai (16) 'Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night and day. I and my maidens will also fast in the same way. And thus, I will go into the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.'* (1) Now it came about on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the kings palace in front of the king's rooms..." Esther went into the king "*on the third day*", not after the three days had ended.

As we consider the three-day interval between the burial and resurrection of our Lord, we need to recognize that the biblical writers are here again using inclusive reckoning. In inclusive reckoning we count both the first and the last unit (in this case a day), with any portion of a unit being counted as a whole unit. Thus, we have a partial Friday, a whole Saturday and a partial Sunday making three days. Another consideration we need to make is the fact that the phrases "*on the third day*" and "*after three days*" are not contradictory but are rather synonymous. But what about the phrase from Matthew 12:40 which says, "*so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth?*" This is not a problem when we realize that the day and a night described in Matthew 12:40 is a single unit (day) as defined in Genesis 1:5 which says, "*And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*"

I do not believe that either Wednesday or Thursday was the day of our Lord's death because:

- (1) they do not fit the timeline to Nisan 10 (Monday), the day when the sacrificial lambs were being taken into the homes of the Jews (Exodus 12:3).
- (2) they do not fit the timeline to Sunday using inclusive reckoning.

(3) For those who argue for Wednesday stating that the women would not have had time to buy spices for Jesus's burial if He died on a Friday. They state that the women would have bought spices on a Friday because if Wednesday was the day of His death, they would have had time to buy spices given the fact that Thursday would have been a Passover Sabbath, and that Saturday would have been a regular Sabbath. This theory however does not consider the fact that the women could have bought spices on early Sunday evening.

(4) Nisan 14 never occurs on a Thursday. (18)

Given the fact that Christ died on a Friday, the only other Friday for our consideration is the one that occurred in 30 A.D. I ruled out 30 A.D. for Jesus's death because it proves to be too early. It does not fit Luke's timeline according to Luke 3:1-3,21-23, as I previously expounded on in the section, "In What Year?" (19)

Conclusion

The most feasible day for Jesus's death was on Friday, April 3, 33 A.D. (Julian) which was April 1, 33 A.D. (Gregorian). Using the online computer programs, Hebcal and Rosetta Calendar, they confirm that the Hebrew calendar date of Nisan 14 for the year 33 A.D. was April 3, (Julian) and April 1, (Gregorian). (20)

The Prophetic Starting Point

By way of reminder, Daniel 9:25 says, *"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress."*

According to the four different decrees given by the Median and Persian kings to Israel, only the one given by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign to Nehemiah in 444 B.C., permits the Jews to explicitly rebuild the city of Jerusalem and not just the rebuilding of the Temple.

There are those, however, who claim that the decree given by Artaxerxes to Ezra in 457 B.C. is the correct starting point for the prophecy. They state that the decree to rebuild the city is implicit, thereby satisfying the requirement of Daniel 9:25. Using 457 B.C. as their starting point with 69 weeks (483 years), they calculate their ending point of the prophecy to be 27 A.D., the supposed year of Jesus's baptism. If this were the case, then this would make the year of our Lord's death to be around 30 A. D.

After considering each of the four decrees, I did not accept the decrees which did not have a specific decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

In addition to this reason, I did not accept the decree given by Artaxerxes to Ezra in 457 B.C. because it places the the time of Christ's death to be around 30 A.D., which is too early according to the Luke 3 timeline as I previously expounded upon.

Accepting the Nisan 1, 444 B.C. as the starting point for the prophecy, I determined that the Julian date for this day was April 2, 444 B.C. I determined this date by counting 561 days from the Hebrew calendar date of Tishri 1 446 B.C. (Hebrew calendar year 3316) which was shown to be September 19, 446 B.C. (Julian) according to the "Journal: Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society Vol. 69, p.12", in Nov. 1908 by Mr. J.K. Fotheringham, "Calendar Dates in the Aramaic Papyri from Asuan." (21) This calculation also took into account the fact that the year 445 B.C. contained an extra twenty-nine days for the the intercalary month of Adar II, which was shown to be in accordance with the "Bible Chronology Timeline Page 6B Tables on page 10 of the "Elephantine Jewish Calendar". (22) I then confirmed this Julian date of April 2, 444 B.C. utilizing the online computer Hebrew calendar website "Hebcal" which shows Nisan 1, 444 B.C. to be the Gregorian date of March 28, 444 B.C. (23) Using the online computer calculator "Rosetta Calendar", I then determined that the Gregorian date for March 28, 444 B.C. converts to being the Julian date of April 2, 444 B.C. (24) I also confirmed the time span of 561 days from the Julian date of September 19, 446 B.C. and the Julian date of April 2, 444 B.C., using the online computer program called "Day Counter" on "Easy Surf". (25)

Even though I accepted the year 444 B.C. as being the twentieth regnal year of Artaxerxes as called for by Harold Hoehner (26) and not 445 B.C. as called for by Sir Robert Anderson, (27) I did not accept Hoehner's early Julian date March 5, 444

B.C. as being Nisan 1, 444 B.C. (28) Even though I did not accept Rodger C. Young's overall interpretation of the Daniel 9:25-27 prophecy in his book entitled, "The Theological Problem Presented by the Exactness of Daniel's 70 Weeks", I do however agree with his assessment of Hoehner's early date of March 5, 444 B.C. for the Hebrew calendar date of Nisan 1, 444 B.C. He states that Hoehner's March 5 date for Nisan 1 is unreasonable given the fact that Nisan 1 is never 21 or 22 days before the Spring equinox. He also brings out the fact that "Parker and Dubberstein give April 3 for Nisan 1 in 444 B.C." (29) I do not know how Harold Hoehner arrived at the early date of March 5, 444 B.C., but it appears that he didn't take into account the fact that the Hebrew calendar in 445 B.C. has an extra twenty-nine days in the intercalary month of Adar II. In his article entitled, "The Prophecy of Prophecies: Correcting Harold Hoehner's Interpretation of Daniel's 70 Weeks" Nathan Jarrett apparently agrees with Harold Hoehner's early date of March 5 for Nisan 1, 444 B.C. He states that he believes Parker and Dubberstein are mistaken in their dating for this day, asserting that they dated the date a month too late. He then makes the following statement, "Hence, both lunar and historical support a start date for Nisan 1 of 444 B.C. to be approximately March 4." (30) Based upon the reasons I have already put forth; I did not find Parker and Dubberstein to be mistaken. I therefore reiterate that, according to the lunar and historical record, Nisan 1, 444 B.C. occurred on April 2, 444 B.C. (Julian).

The Prophetic Timeline

In his book entitled, "The Coming Prince", (31) Sir Robert Anderson, uses an ancient 360 days in a year calendar which was used in a number of cultures around the world. The scriptural basis for his use of this calendar is cited from Genesis 7:11,24 and 8:3-4 and Revelation 11:2-3. He then converts the 69 weeks (483 years) into 173880 three hundred and sixty prophetic day increments which he uses for his Daniel 9-time span. This method for determining a prophetic timeline has since been used by Harold Hoehner, Nathan Jarrett and others. (32)(33) I believe the attractiveness of this method is because it seems to fit the Daniel 69-week timeline very well using non-inclusive reckoning and it has the appearance of being based on the scriptures (when using the incorrect starting date of March 5 444 B.C).

I however, did not accept this method primarily because I believe that the proper method for determining time is set forth in Genesis 1:14, which says, “*Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and **for seasons, and for days and years.**’*” This being the case, I believe the ancient Hebrew lunar/solar calendar described earlier in this article best agrees with this scriptural account. After all, consider the fact that our starting date for this prophecy is Nisan 1, which is the first day of this Hebrew lunar/solar calendar. At first glance, it would seem that the lunar/solar calendar year does not fit the prophetic 69 weeks (483 years) timeline by seven years. This, however, is not the case when we use inclusive reckoning when determining the prophetic timeline.

According to Daniel 9:26, the prophecy says, “...**after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off ...**” (The previously mentioned seven weeks in verse 25 are implied to be combined with the sixty-two weeks thus indicating that the Messiah would be cut off **after** sixty-nine weeks). Using inclusive reckoning, this does not mean that the Messiah would be cut off **after the sixty-nine weeks have ended** but rather that He would be cut off within the sixty-ninth week or put another way, **on the sixty-ninth week**. (See my previous section in this article which deals with the biblical writers use of inclusive reckoning and in particular, how it was used in the account of our Lord’s burial and resurrection which shows that the phrase “**after three days**” means the same as “**on the third day.**”

Given the fact that the starting date for our prophecy is Nisan 1 (April 2 Julian) 444 B.C. and that our ending date for when Messiah would be cut off is Nisan 14 (April 3 Julian) 33 A.D., this means that there are 173861 inclusive Julian days between these dates. (34) Seeing that there are 173860 inclusive Julian days in 68 weeks (476 years), this means that Nisan 14 (April 3 Julian) 33 A.D., the day of our Lord’s death, occurred on the first day of the sixty-ninth week, which is, of course, **on the sixty-ninth week**. This is truly amazing when we see that the starting date for the prophecy was on Nisan 1, 444 B.C. being on the **first day** of the Jewish calendar year that was given by God to Moses and Aaron just prior to exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12:1-2) and that our Lord was crucified on the **first day** of Daniel’s sixty-ninth week! Is this a coincidence? I think not.

In his letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 4:4,

“But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,”

The Prophetic Timeline Summary

- (1) The starting date for the prophecy is Nisan 1, 444 B.C. (April 2, 444 B.C. Julian)
- (2) Jerusalem was rebuilt seven weeks (forty-nine years) later around 396 B.C.
- (3) Messiah was cut off on the first day of the sixty-ninth week on Nisan 14, 33 A.D. (April 3, 33 A.D. Julian)
- (4) Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D.
- (5) Daniel’s seventieth week begins with the advent of the anti-christ when he brokers a covenant with the many for one week at some unknown time in the future.
- (6) In the middle of this seventieth week (three and one-half years later) he will stop the sacrifice and grain offering, setting up the abomination which causes desolation.
- (7) Final destruction will be rendered upon the one making desolate.

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