

JUST HOW LATE IN THE EVENING IS IT?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT OUR GENERATION AND WHEN JESUS IS COMING BACK

PART 1. A KINGDOM WHICH WILL NEVER BE DESTROYED

In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy. (Daniel 2:44-45)

Understanding the prophetic words of the Bible is a matter of faith, and faith is a matter of having the proper perspective. For example, Peter says that “with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.” From the perspective of human science the world is seen as having come into being over a period of millions of years. The sceptic says that the Biblical account of the world having been created over a single week is impossible because all we know could not have been made in just seven short days. However, in so doing, he actually unwittingly confirms the words of Genesis, since “with the Lord” it is possible that 7 days equals 7000 years or even 70,000 years, 700,000 years, or even 7000 times 700,000 years! Many believers read the Bible from with a simple faith perspective – a point of view that sees the history of creation literally as seven days of one miraculous week. The believer studies to understand Scripture with the help of the Holy Spirit from the perspective of the Author. God’s view is not obstructed by human paradoxes, because all that the Creator has done and is doing is accomplished by the singular Glory of His Son revealed in His first recorded speech: “Let there be light.” The Genesis account “with the Lord” tells of all God made in seven milliseconds, revealed to man in the framework of seven days, and constructed in nature within the multi-layered framework of seven great epochs. Is this not possible *to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord? To Him be all glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever (Jude 25).*

As the artist mixes and layers the colors of the rainbow on his canvas, so God fills every creature with the full spectrum of His light. There is only one glory, but it manifests in an unlimited variation of beauty. The Creator’s footprints are found all across the Universe’s ways, His fingerprints can be lifted from every living creature. Darwin and Freud study this evidence without faith and write that man is nothing more than a civilized primate who created a god in his own image. Pascal and Newton, having made careful examination of the same nature, came to a completely different conclusion concerning God and man. Their records speak as that of King David: *When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars,*

which You have ordained; what is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? (Psalm 8:3-4)

The Bible is full of prophecies related to the first and second comings of Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven to earth. In principle these prophecies have been fulfilled and are being fulfilled in a progressive, multi-layered way. In other words, before prophecy reaches a level of complete fulfillment in time (all prophecy is fulfilled in eternity in Christ Jesus) one can recognize cycles of partial manifestation historically in the deeds of people and nations who are forerunners, types, or shadows of the prophecy's promised word: *things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ (Colossians 2:17)*. For example, Sunday School teachers use the stories of Sampson and Jonah to teach their young pupils lessons of obedience to God's call, and rightfully so; but digging deeper both of these great men of God are portrayed as types of Christ in fulfillment of the Genesis 3:15 promise of a Savior born to die and (in the case of Jonah) rise again for the sins of the world.

These shadows could be compared to an artist's sketches, while the ultimate fulfillment is his finished masterpiece. But whether an artist is scribbling his first sketches, outlining his preliminary drawings, layering his background with colors, perfecting the visage of his subject, or putting on his finishing touches; each layer and every step proceed from the original picture conceived in the thought of his mind. This image of his heart is his word, his *logos*. If one reads the Word with the Holy Spirit's perspective, he may perceive an absolute fulfillment of prophecy in the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth. He declares Jesus to be the Son of God, the Son of Man, *sitting at the right hand of Power and coming with the clouds of heaven*. (Mark 14:62) If we are to receive *the mind of Christ* to understand prophecy concerning His second coming and to make ourselves ready for His advent, then we must hear what Jesus Himself proclaims as recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. In these chapters we have a volume of teaching from Jesus Himself on the last days and the coming of His Kingdom. Traditionally readers shy away from all that is said of the times by quoting Jesus' words: *But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone* (Mark 13:32). The typical attitude is one of: "No one can know when Jesus is coming, *que sara sara*, whatever will be, will be, etc." Or as they were saying it in the first century: *Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation* (2 Peter 3:4). Such a position is not only naïve but as stupid and dangerous today as it was *in the days of Noah* (Luke 17:26).

It's true that we cannot understand everything, and it's always a mistake to speak with assumed authority or confidence about the exact day or hour of the coming of the Lord. One of the chief purposes, however, of Biblical prophecy is that believers be made ready to receive the promise and unbelievers be justly condemned for rejecting the promise (Matthew 24:42-51). To

be *faithful and wise* means to stay *on the alert*, to understand the *proper time*, and to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

THE THREE QUESTIONS

The disciples came to Jesus and asked Him three very specific questions to which Jesus gave three very good answers. The Master answered their last question first: "What will be the sign of the end of the age?" His answer is recorded in Matthew 24:5-14. He answered their second question next: "What will be the sign of Your coming?" This answer can be found in Matthew 24:15-31. The third question is the one that we want to turn our attention to here: "When will these things happen?" Jesus answers this question with more detail than many readers realize. To begin with He makes a joyous proclamation concerning the return of sovereignty and spiritual life to the nation of Israel: *Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near* (Matthew 24:32). The fig tree is an ancient sign of the covenant people of Israel (see, for example, Hosea 9:10), and the withering of its leaf and cursing of its fruit is a sign of the apostasy, failure, and destruction of the nation's sovereignty (Jeremiah 8:13; Amos 4:9; Matthew 21:19-22). This prophetic parable spoken by Jesus was fulfilled nearly two millennia later when, in 1948 after World War II and the Holocaust, Israel was established as a sovereign Jewish state in the Land of Promise. The Lord began to return the Jewish people from all the nations where He had dispersed them, and each of these nations took up positions either for or against Israel. Then, in 1967, Israel took control of Jerusalem in its entirety, including the Temple Mount, proclaiming the city its eternal capital. In the parallel passage of Luke 21:24 Jesus makes quite clear the answer to the disciples question of when would be the end of the age and when would be His coming by saying: *and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*. There is no parallel to this in all of history. Israel as a sovereign, united nation with its seat of authority in Jerusalem is a situation that had not existed since the days of King David and King Solomon! The time that God has allotted to the Gentiles to trample Jerusalem under their feet came to an abrupt end in 1967. It is nothing short of a miracle to live in an age when the prophetic words of Jesus are being fulfilled right before our eyes! But this end to the Gentiles' time over Jerusalem, as we discussed above, is not quite a finished masterpiece. There are a few, dramatic touches left to be added and these shall come in the final 42 months before Jesus' coming (Revelation 11:2), when He Himself will conquer and cleanse the Holy City to rule and reign from there over the earth for 1000 years.

All this means that we certainly seem to be living in the generation that *will not pass away until all things take place* (Matthew 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32). We who were born together with the rebirth of Jerusalem, who live now approaching Jerusalem's Year of Jubilee (beginning in 2016), shall we not witness in our lifetime, by God's grace, the rebuilding and consecrating of

the Temple? And shall we not hear the testimony of the two witnesses on the streets of the city against the final manifestation of the antichrist (there have been many antichrists and are even now in the world) who will accomplish the abomination of desolation (the final holocaust) in this Holy Place?

Tucked away in the folds of prophecy the careful listener can discern very specific indications of exactly when Jesus will be coming back. Of course, these signs should not be taken as establishing an exact day or hour of His coming, but there is no reason that we should not be able to establish an approximate year! Whatever one's personal understanding of the whole pre-trib / mid-trib / post-trib issue may be, every believer agrees that there will be a Church on the earth during the final seven-year period before the coming of the Lord. For those believers, then, living in a specifically determined time period, there will be clear understanding of the year and perhaps the month of Christ's coming. A much foggier vision of these years is available to us now, and I assure you it is much, much clearer than it has ever been to any previous generation! Before we can move on to our conclusion and look at the calendars of Scripture revealing the time of Jesus' coming, we must first take a very brief skim across the surface of Daniel's prophecies and those of Revelation 17 to understand the nations to whom these calendars are designated. In His answers to the disciples, Jesus tells us where we should look in the Bible to begin to understand the days in which our generation lives – the Book of Daniel (Matthew 24:15). *As scribes who have become disciples of the kingdom of heaven we must study to bring out of the treasures both old and new – the Old Testament prophecies and those of the New Testament (Matthew 13:52) in order to adorn our hearts and minds with the fullness of Jesus' revelation.*

PART 2 – WHO'S WHO? (Daniel 2, 7, 8; Revelation 17:7-13)

Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it. (Zechariah 12:2-3)

THE SEVEN HEADS

God's Word determines six world kingdoms in historical orbit like moons around Jerusalem. In the order of their ascendancy over the horizon they are Egypt, Assyria (Nineveh), Babylon, Persia, Greece (Macedonia), and Rome. The latter of these stands on two legs, one western and the other eastern, thus represented in many of its offspring by the two-headed eagle. After biblical history but still within the confines of its prophetic history this sixth kingdom transforms into a seventh – a new Roman Empire composed of ten kings. Each of these great empires has taken up a position, at once both historical and prophetic, as determined by God more the

salvation of His people as well as for their punishment. This paradox riddles the mind of the twenty-first century reader perhaps because the fine art is lost to us today of a father's loving discipline of his son via the rod of a tree whose roots sprung from the ground a century earlier. How can God punish and save at the same time? How can He choose an instrument of punishment and at the same time despise and reject the instrument for punishing so harshly, all the while never despising His beloved son or rejecting His fatherly care? These things are a mysterious part of God's love and providence to lead all people to a saving knowledge of the Truth (see Romans 9:13-33).

SOUTH, NORTH, EAST, THEN WEST

Genesis 10 and 1 Chronicles 1 tell of three of these civilizations that arose from the children of Ham, the son of Noah: Egypt – understood in the Bible as the south, Babylon and Nineveh (Assyria) – understood as two parts of the north. It is likely that a fourth also arose from Ham inasmuch as the Philistines were his descendants and the Macedonians (Greeks) were considered by the ancients to be the descendants of the Philistines. Greece is the eastern half of what the Bible calls the west; Rome is the western half. Both are the west. Babylon, the first city, is understood in Scripture as the city of the world whose languages and cities were scattered from her plains; prophetically it symbolizes the whole world system and its enmity with God. Babylon is the golden head of civilization. (Both the Hebrew word and the Greek word translated as *head* in the Bible have the primary meaning of *a beginning*.) The Word of God through its multilayered prophecies reveals each world kingdom as flowing out from the spring of Babylon. The statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream could be compared to a Russian *matryoshka* doll. Though the Babylonian Empire may be the smallest in territory of all that followed, it is the most beautiful, finest and most expensive of them all. It takes the bare, rude, hard strength of the Assyrian and paints it with the glory of Egypt. Next comes the Medo-Persian Empire encompassing all the territory of the Babylonian and Assyrian. It is followed by the Empire of Alexander arising from Macedonia to engulf in his wake all the former lands including Greece and Egypt. Next, the vastness of Rome is impregnated with all the kingdoms and cultures that went before it. Finally, the new Rome, the largest of the dolls, reincarnated as having ten horns and ten toes on its many heads and two legs, composed of metal mixed with the clay pigments of all nations, clumsily striding over the continents and ages.

THE SEVENTH KINGDOM

In the sixth century A.D. this seventh kingdom made its entrance in a magnificent way on to the already dark stage of Western Europe in the person of Charlemagne. His was the new image of the ancient beast, a sprout rooted in the diseased western leg of the Roman Empire, a rising tide of humanity rushing over the Rubicon to raise Rome's Latin leg again to the heights achieved by that of its Greek in Constantinople. There are exactly 10 kingdoms which

compromise the new Rome; they are the ten horns of the seventh kingdom. We list them here together with the modern name of the territories of their origin and of where they settled approximately:

1. The Vandal Kingdom (from Germany) in Northern Africa and Spain
2. The Alans (from the Russian Caucuses and territories around the Black Sea) together with the Vandals in Northern Africa, Spain, and France
3. The Kingdom of the Suebi (from Germany) in Spain
4. The Visigoth Kingdom (from Germany) in France and Spain
5. The Kingdom of Burgundy (from Scandinavia) in France and Italy
6. The Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms (from Germany) in England
7. The Huns (from southern Russia around the Caspian Sea and Kazakhstan) in Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Russia, and Kazakhstan
8. The Kingdom of the Franks (from Germany) in Western Continental Europe to the north of Spain
9. The Kingdom of the Lombards (from Germany) in Italy
10. The Kingdom of the Ostrogoths (from Germany and Scandinavia) in Italy

The last three of these were very intricately intertwined with the workings of the remaining bastions of the old Rome, the Byzantine Emperor in Constantinople and the Pope in Rome. The history is long leading all the way up to the end of the twentieth-century and the founding of the European Union, but what must be understood is the break between the old Rome (the sixth kingdom) and the new Rome (the seventh kingdom) that came when Charlemagne, a type of the *little horn* arose and conquered all three. In so doing he drove the power of the old Rome out of Italy (it having defeated the Ostrogoths) and back to Constantinople where, as we shall see, it would survive for another 650 years. Charlemagne ruled the Franks by 768 and, having been invited by Pope Leo III with the Senate and people of Rome, took the mastery of Italy in 774. This Senate, people and Pope combination crowned him the new Roman Emperor on Christmas Day in 800 AD. A new ruling-order of church and state working in tandem is established in the West as the Pope finds his man to rule in Rome. This new, semi-barbarian Rome together with its new Emperor is represented as an eleventh horn, a different horn, arising from the ten and taken authority over three of them. It immediately begins *to speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One... to make alterations in times and in law*. Many antichrists have appeared in this seventh kingdom over the centuries according to the pattern of Charlemagne, paradoxically there have also been found a good number of friends of Israel and builders of Jerusalem. These opposing spiritual positions began to especially manifest in the twentieth century.

Today we see the ruling tandem of church and state all but divorced from one another in the western lands of "Rome." It seems quite unlikely that there will ever come a time when the Roman Catholic Church or Lutheranism or any other Protestant movement will ever exercise

the kind of influence they had over Europe and America before the Second World War. With the rise of Putin in the new Russia of the 21 century the world watches in amazement as the sun of Orthodoxy rises again to its place of governing influence in the eastern lands of the “empire.”

The Book of Daniel gives special attention in the vision recorded in the seventh chapter to the fourth beast. We see this monster had *teeth of iron and claws of bronze*. Rome is this fourth beast arising out of the head of Babylon. Though it walks with claws of bronze – that is to say it is built on the greatness and glory of Alexander’s empire (Greece), its jaws bite with iron grinding the bones of nations to feed itself. It is not possible to fully divorce Rome and Greece; they together comprise the Biblical understanding of the West, which from the rise of Alexander has broken the strength of the East, conquered that of the North, and subjugated that of the South. Though Europe may destroy its house with fighting over and over again from the Urals to the Atlantic and from the Arctic to the Mediterranean, the creative tension of Rome is bound to the Prince of Greece by laws of Divine making and always finds a way to rebuild and march on. The eighth chapter of Daniel underscores the importance of the third beast, described here as a shaggy male goat. This goat is the power and authority of the Prince of Greece which through the great horn of Alexander put an end to the world-dominion of the Prince of Persia. The Prince of Persia, though as yet he refuses to humble himself under the dictate of God, has never been able to rise again. One thing is clear; all the antichrists who have worked desolation in Jerusalem have arisen from this Greek root of the West and have done so by the power of the Prince of Greece.

AN EIGHTH KINGDOM – THE RETURN OF THE SHAGGY GOAT

The Revelation of Jesus Christ given to John tells of five kings who had at that time (toward the end of the first century) already fallen. These are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. One kingdom was said to be in power; this, of course, was the Rome of John’s day. One was still to come. This speaks of the new Rome that arose with Charlemagne and existed side by side with the residual of the old Rome in Constantinople until the old Rome sowed its seed into the frozen grounds of the Third Rome, Moscow. It is written that this seventh king *must remain a little while* (Revelation 17:10). As the dream of Nebuchadnezzar shows us, none of these kings ever ceased to exist, nor did any of them exist outside the power of their true prince, the devil, who said to Jesus in the temptation: “All the kingdoms of the world... have been handed over to me...” (Luke 4:5-6). This seventh kingdom must remain until the beginning of the seventieth week revealed to Daniel as the time of great tribulation is ushered in before the coming of the Lord. The ten kings receive their authority for with the beast and yield their authority to the beast for *one hour* (Revelation 17:12-13). When that hour is finished, the hour of the final antichrist will begin. He will wrest the authority of three of these kings, as Charlemagne so long

before had done and many antichrists since have done, and establish a new world order – an eighth kingdom. This manifestation of the beast that is coming *was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction* (Revelation 17:8). He *is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven* (Revelation 17:11). This means that the reincarnation of the prince of Rome (see Daniel 9:26 – the prince of the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD) as an eighth king will arise according to the spiritual authority of either Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece or Rome. The major spiritual powers at work in the world are named for Daniel, and there are only three (Daniel 10:20, 12:1): the Prince of Persia (the East), the Prince of Greece (the West), and the Prince of Israel, Michael (the Heavenly). Which of these two, Persia or Greece, might rise again as Michael wars against the dragon and his angels in heaven (Revelation 12:7-9), casting them down to the earth in the last days? Which of these two might rise again from the bottomless pit to reestablish the glories of Rome and work the evil plan of the dragon in Jerusalem? It cannot be Persia, for Greece, the shaggy goat, already shattered the power of the great ram. It cannot be Persia for it was said to Daniel that *the prince of Greece is about to come*. And which of the two after all gave rise to Rome in the first place? Rome, by the way, is not the only city said to be built on seven hills; the same is true of Constantinople, Moscow and even Washington D.C.!

So Rome rises again, but it seems it may rise higher on its eastern leg than on its western. This is the eighth kingdom which will come. While Charlemagne was spreading his authority over Western Europe, the Byzantine Empire (ancient Rome) was continuing on to old age and feebleness under a Macedonian dynasty in Constantinople (known as the Second Rome) until the city was finally taken by the Turks in 1453. The Great Prince of Moscow, Ivan III, united the lands of Russia, subjugated Novgorod, released Russia from under the yoke of the Golden Horde, rebuilt and established the Kremlin, and laid the foundation of the modern Russian state under the authority of Moscow. In 1472 by invitation of Pope Paul II who dreamed of reuniting the western parts and the eastern parts of the Church under his own authority, Ivan III married the last heir of the Byzantine Empire, Sophia, the niece of Constantine XI. Moscow adopted the Empire with its symbol of the two-headed eagle, began to call itself (as it has become popular again to refer to the city) “Third Rome,” and conceived a dream that has never died of conquering Constantinople (Istanbul) and subjugating Jerusalem to the authority of the Czar (Caesar) and the Russian Orthodox Church.

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION – THE WORK OF THE PRINCE OF GREECE

Jesus said to his disciples in Matthew 24:15: “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)...” He expects us to be able to read Biblical prophecy and understand the time in which we live. These prophecies bore a heavy weight for the disciples living in the era of

the Second Temple, having seen this Temple rebuilt by Herod the Great in Jerusalem under the totalitarian rule of Rome. They knew well that the prophecy of Daniel had already been fulfilled 200 years earlier when in 167 BC Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Macedonian (Greek) king of the Syrian empire of the Seleucids (one of the four kingdoms left in the wake of Alexander's death), had desecrated Jerusalem, turned the Temple into an altar to Zeus and offered a pig to his god in the Holy Place. Now, imagine how the disciples felt hearing from Jesus that this atrocity and its accompanying horrors were only the first layer of a multilayered prophetic fulfillment – that the worst was yet to come! Some of these disciples lived to see the overthrow of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple as Jesus foretold in 70 AD by Rome. They saw the deaths of nearly one million Jews! This was a holocaust in every sense of the word, but it would be difficult to say that Titus stood as an *abomination of desolation* in the Holy Place as Antiochus had before. This abomination was only begun at that time; it was completed only after 60 years when Emperor Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem, dedicated the city to Jupiter (Zeus), renamed it Aelia Capitolina (His family name + the name of the hill where the temple of Jupiter was located in Rome), built a temple to Venus over the empty grave of Jesus, and established a temple to Jupiter over the ruins on the Temple Mount. He further forbid the Jews to circumcise their sons, i.e. forbid them to be Jews! After five years of living under this rule the Jews rebelled and Hadrian killed 580,000 of them, razed 50 of their cities and 985 towns, forbade them to read the Torah, burned the Torah on the Temple Mount, exiled the remaining Jews forever from the Holy Land, and renamed the land Palestine (meaning “the land of the Philistines”) in honor of the Greek gods! Though Hadrian was a Roman born in Spain, he wore a beard like a Greek, spoke only in Greek, considered himself the Hellenistic Renaissance man, revitalized the temple of Zeus in Athens, and referred to Athens as the capital city of the entire world. Hadrian was the full manifestation of the Prince of Greece!

Jerusalem's history was visited by a third *abomination of desolation in the Holy Place* when in 692 AD the Dome of the Rock was erected and in 707 AD the Al-Aqsa Mosque was established on the Temple Mount. In as much as these structures themselves constitute the abomination and desolate the Mount preventing a new Temple from being built, the Greek print can be seen first of all in their Byzantine architecture. The great dome at the time was completely foreign to Muslim architecture and was built to compete with the glories of Constantinople which was, of course, eventually conquered by the Islamic Caliphate together with all the modern territory of Turkey. Islam considers the entire Temple Mount to be the third most holy place in its religious hierarchy. This is the place considered as the place of the Isra, Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and the Mir'aj, his journey to heaven. The Bible prophecies plainly indicate that in the last days these structures must be removed to make way for the rebuilding of the Temple. Then shall come the final layer of fulfillment of Daniel's prophetic vision when the final antichrist works the final abomination of desolation during the time of great tribulation. Today we have the opportunity to read and understand in a much more exact manner than ever did

the disciples of Jesus or any other believers living at any time in history before our generation. Today we no longer look forward to a time when rule of Jerusalem will pass from Gentile to Jew; we look in hindsight at the landmark of June 1967 when Israeli soldiers recaptured the Temple Mount.

Let us move on now that we have drawn a Biblical map to a survey of God's calendar revealed in Scripture and how the days are counted according to prophecies given about Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. This fascinating look will reveal the unparalleled moment in history in which we live today and the importance of us preparing ourselves for the soon coming of the Lord. When Daniel saw these things he fell into a state of physical shock. Dear reader, do you remember that he was told: "But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age" (Daniel 12:13)? We cannot allow ourselves such luxury for the end of the age is already upon us!

PART 3 – GOD'S CALENDAR (DANIEL 9:22-27)

Bible prophecy basically reveals time within the framework of days and weeks; this relates to the seven days of creation and God's Sabbath (SHABAT). A prophetic year is understood as a cycle of 360 days. Thus, in the Old Testament 2520 days = 2520 years or 7 x 360 years, that is to say 1 epochal week comprised of 7 epochal days, each of which is made of 360 years. There is a simple axiom of prophetic math. It goes like this: 1 day = 1 year. This axiom is in effect throughout all the visions of the Book of Daniel. After Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem and into the Temple where He set His teaching concerning the end of the age (Matthew 24), this axiom adjusts to fit the seventieth and final week of Daniel's vision. Thus, in the New Testament and especially in the Book of Revelation 1 day is equal to 1 year, therefore 1260 days = 3 ½ years (360 x 3.5 days).

Here we have God's Calendar – a simple and clear calculation of historical time from point "A," *the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*, to point "B," *the entrance of Messiah the Prince into Jerusalem and His cutting off*. The purpose of these seventy weeks (SHABUA years, i.e. 490 years) is determined by God in Daniel 9:24. This purpose was initially accomplished in its entirety by Jesus Christ at His first coming. There, yet, remains a final perfection of this purpose at His second coming in His Kingdom and with the resurrection of the dead in Him. Point "A" of this calendar is set out in the Book of Ezra 7:11-28. Here we read of the Persian King Artaxerxes who gave a decree to Ezra for the restoration of the city (this is not a reference to the restoration of the Temple by decree of Cyrus; of this we will speak later) and the state system of Israel. Ezra writes that he entered the city of Jerusalem under authority from this decree of God through Artaxerxes on the first day of the fifth month (SHEVAT) of the seventh year of the king. Isaac Newton in his extensive theological works sets the beginning of the reign of Artaxerxes as mid-summer of the 4250 year of the Julian Period (further "JP"). That

would be approximately 15 July 463 BC or 20 Tammuz 3298 of the Hebrew Calendar (further "HC"). Thus, Ezra entered Jerusalem in 4257 JP, 1 Shevat 3306 HC, or 31 December 456 BC.

Now we divide the period of seventy sevens (weeks) as it was divided to Daniel: 62 sevens + 7 sevens + 1 seven. To begin with we count 434 years (62 sevens) from this date and get 1 Shevat 3740 HC or 5 January 21 BC. This is exactly the time that a different king, ruling now under the authority of Rome and not Persia, Herod the Great issued another decree for the restoration of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem.

Next we turn to John 2:19-20 and read that during the time of the first Passover in the ministry of Jesus the Temple was 46 years old (counting from the beginning of Herod's rebuilding). We add to 1 Shevat 3740 HC (62 sevens since Ezra entered the city) and get 1 Shevat 3786 HC or 7 January 26 AD (there is no zero year, so 21 BC + 46 years = 26 AD). That year Passover (14 Nisan) falls on 20 March as we count time. Now, Jesus was baptized by John just a few weeks before that, which means he was likely baptized around the traditional date of His baptism of 6 January. We see from Luke 3:1, 23 that it was around His 30th birthday when He was baptized, and that this was *in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*. If we count from 12 AD when Tiberius became Caesar de-facto, being rewarded with equal status to Augustus who was already incapacitated with sickness, we find the 15th year of his reign to be in 26 or 27 AD (it being any time for one year after the 14th anniversary). This falls in line also with the first year of Pontius Pilate in Judea. All this means that Jesus was born sometime toward the end of 6 BC or the beginning of 5 BC. It is likely that He really was born around the day we celebrate as Christmas. This agrees perfectly with the date of Herod the Great's death around Passover 4 AD, when Jesus would have been a about 16 months old. Further, we deduce that Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem was three years later on 8 Nisan 3789 HC or 9 April 29 AD, He was crucified on 14 April, and rose again on 16 April of that year. This is 49 years after the decree of Herod and 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes. Thus, there are exactly 62 sevens (434 years) from the decree of Artaxerxes for the restoration of Jerusalem and the entrance of Ezra into the city in 455 BC until the decree of Herod to rebuild Jerusalem in 21 BC, and there are 7 sevens (49 years) from the decree of Herod to the Triumphant Entry of Christ, His death, and His resurrection! Sixty-nine of the seventy sevens have been fulfilled, but one final seven-year period remains to be fulfilled. This "week" commences when the final antichrist confirms a pact of peace with Israel for a period of seven years. After 3 ½ years (Daniel's "middle of the week" and the Revelation's "1260 days") he breaks this peace and stands as the final abomination of desolation in the Holy Place.

THE WARP AND WOOF OF DANIEL'S PROPHETIC VISIONS

Each kingdom in the visions of Daniel has its own timeframe allotted by God to reveal in wonderful detail the time of the end of the age and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. As

has already been noted, Jesus gave us the key to understand our times and open these mysteries: *until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled* (Luke 21:24). Again, this occurred in June 1967 when Israeli troops entered the Old City through the Lion's Gate and recaptured the Temple Mount. Here we see a re-layering of the 62 sevens and the 7 sevens to inaugurate these last days. On 2 November 1917 the Balfour Declaration was issued to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine. On 11 December 1917 British General Allenby captured Jerusalem from the Ottoman Empire (again this is Constantinople or Istanbul) who had held it for exactly 400 years, entering the city on foot at noon and allegedly stating: "Today the Crusades have ended." This was 26 Kislev 5678 on the Hebrew Calendar at the beginning of Hanukkah, the Jewish holiday celebrating the cleansing of the Temple after the first *abomination of desolation* worked by Antiochus. The Maccabees in 165 BC defeated his Greco-Syrian troops and drove them from the Temple Mount. The most interesting part of this event is that 49 years later (seven sevens) on 28 Iyyar 5727 HC the Temple Mount was liberated by Israeli soldiers again! By the way, Arab forces weren't the ones in control of the Temple Mount and the Old City, it was the Greek-Roman authority of the UN that held it and still tries to hold it today.

Another fascinating layer of Daniel's prophetic visions is revealed in the gate through which these Israeli soldiers entered the Old City on that day. If one counts back 434 years to 28 Iyyar 5293 HC (2 June 1533 AD), he arrives at a date closely related to the building of the walls that currently stand in Jerusalem. No one knows the exact date but sometime before 1535 AD, as he pushed his armies across Persia in 1533, Suleiman the Magnificent, the great Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, had a dream. In his dream it is said that he saw two lions which were ready to devour him. Upon awakening he received the interpretation that he must use his wealth to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, the streets, the fountains, etc. If he did not, he was told, he would be destroyed. So he gave a command that all be done, and it was completed in 1541 AD, with the Lion Gate, the very one the soldiers would enter, being named in honor of his dream. That 434-year period is 62 sevens. Seven sevens (49 years after the 62 sevens) will be accomplished on 5 June 2016. This will begin the Year of Jubilee for the Temple Mount after the return of the city to Israel. We have seen that 62 sevens and 7 sevens were literally fulfilled from the decree of the Persian ruler, Artaxerxes, to the first coming of Christ. Here we can discern the same period of time occurring from the decree of the Greek ruler of the eastern leg of the Roman Empire to Jerusalem's Jubilee. (Remember the Ottoman Empire is ruled from Istanbul, the Roman capital of Constantinople.) What wonders may occur in 2015 and the first half of 2016 as the cycle of prophetic fulfillment draws to a close and the final seven, the seventieth, is soon to dawn? (The reader may wish to peruse another of the author's articles, *The Peace of Jerusalem*, for some possible answers.)

THE BABYLONIAN AND PERSIAN ACCOUNTING (DANIEL 4:12-27; 5:13-31)

Though the dream of Nebuchadnezzar was literally fulfilled in his lifetime, prophetically it speaks not only of seven regular years of his rule being cut off, but also of seven epochal years (7 x 360 years) or 2520 years of the Israeli rule being cut off on the Temple Mount by Nebuchadnezzar. Chapter 4, verse 19 makes it clear that Daniel understood the dream as relating not only to the king but also to his friends. This is why Daniel is *appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him*. He was in a state of emotional shock. This word *appalled* (SHAMAM) is the same that is translated *desolation* in the *abomination of desolation* in Jerusalem (see Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

Nebuchadnezzar was told by the angelic watcher: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches... Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze around it in the new grass of the field... and let seven periods of time pass over him." The king is also told of his final repentance and acknowledgement of God, and that because of this turning to the Lord his kingdom would remain with him. This occurred historically in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, and he remains the golden head of all those kingdoms that followed his. In a wider sense this is a type of the cutting off of the Temple Mount from the rule of the house of David and Solomon by the Babylonian ruler and the eventual return of Zion to Israel. We can see in this prophetic dream all of the kingdoms that followed Babylon: the *stump with its roots in the ground* is the decree of the Persian King Cyrus to rebuild the Temple (see Ezra 1), the band of bronze is Greece, and the band of iron is Rome.

The very night when the city of Babylon was taken by the forces of Cyrus and Belshazzar was slain (that is to say, at the very moment in history when ruling authority of Nebuchadnezzar was transferred to Cyrus the Persian) this very same accounting of years was revealed to Belshazzar, the usurper on the throne of Babylon. With His own finger God wrote on the wall: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN" in order to say, "I have numbered your kingdom and put an end to it." Each of these four words indicates a particular unit of measurement: "mene" is 1000 *gerahs*, the basic unit of measurement given in Leviticus 27:25; "tekel", the Aramaic version of the Hebrew shekel, is equal to 20 *gerahs*; and "upharsin", Aramaic for *and peris*, means literally *and a half-mina*, equal to 500 *gerahs*. With this mystical decree through these prophetic numbers God established the number of years left for the rule of the Gentiles proceeding from the golden head of Babylon in Jerusalem: $1000 + 1000 + 20 + 500 = 2520$ years (7 x 360 years).

Now, we take the year 554 BC when Belshazzar began to reign in place of his father, Nabonidus, who closed himself off for ten year to worship the moon. This same year is when Cyrus rebelled against the Medians leading to the eventual establishment of his reign over the Medo-Persian Empire. If we add 2520 years to 554 BC, we get 1967, the year Israel received again from God the Temple Mount and ruling authority over all Jerusalem. Further, if we take 1260 years as half

of this period (*peris* indicates a cutting in half) we get 707 AD. This is the very year when the third abomination of desolation, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, was completed on the Temple Mount!

THE GREEK ACCOUNTING (DANIEL 8:9-27)

In answer to the question heard by Daniel concerning the time *to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled*, he was told that it would be *for 2300 evenings and mornings until the holy place will be properly restored*. As we have already seen, the first layering of prophetic fulfillment was accomplished literally in 2300 days during the time of the Maccabees' overthrow of the Greco-Syrian rule of Antiochus from 167 – 160 BC. Ultimately, however the picture based on this sketch has been being drawn for 2300 years. All Greece's authority is hidden in the spiritual bosom of the Prince of Greece and manifested in its founder, Alexander the Great. Daniel's prophetic vision concerns him directly. The shaggy goat is the kingdom of Greece and the large horn is the first king, Alexander, who in a rage hurls the ram, the Medo-Persian Empire, to the ground and tramples it under foot. The war between Alexander and Darius III of Persia began in May 334 BC with the Battle of the Granicus River in Asia Minor. This date would be Sivan 3427 on the Hebrew calendar. This is around the time of Pentecost (*SHAVUOT* – the Feast of the Weeks or the Feast of the Sevens). If we add the 2300 years decreed for Greece and those who would rule over Jerusalem arising from Alexander to the date Sivan 3427 HC, we will get Sivan 5727 (June 1967)!

THE ROMAN ACCOUNTING (DANIEL 7:24-25; 12:7-13)

Rome has been given its own unique count that begins after the arising of a different king from amongst the ten kings who subdues three of the ten. From where we sit today nothing better can be done than to gaze on the "sketch" of this prophetic fulfillment and consider prayerfully what may be its final form. This accounting, unlike the ones previously that were finished in 1967, will not come to completion until the appearance of the final antichrist in the last half of the seventieth seven, that period known as the time of great tribulation. This final seven-year period's final half will occur according to New Testament accounting as *1260 days (a time, times, and half a time, i.e. 1 year + 2 years + ½ year, or 3 ½ years)*. But that time has yet to come; today we still sojourn in the Old Testament prophetic epoch of 1260 years.

This Roman count begins approximately (from our incomplete point of view we can only approximate) in 774 or 775 AD when Charlemagne together with the Pope conquered Italy. Adding to this year 1260 years we arrive at the year 2034 or 2035. This should be then the time of the passing of the ruling authority of the seventh kingdom (the new Roman Empire and its current manifestations) to the eighth kingdom (the revitalized Greek or Byzantine Roman Empire). We'll see in about 20 more years! If this does prove to be accurate, we would need to add 7 more years for the 70th seven to arrive at a date sometime in 2041 or 2042 for the

coming of our Lord Jesus in the clouds. I, personally, will be at that time 77 years old (*this generation will not pass away...* Matthew 24:34-35).

Just for the sake of an experiment, then, let us subtract 75 years from that date inasmuch as Daniel was told of 1260 days, 1290 days (1260 + 30), and 1335 days (1290 + 45). These 75 days may well have their ultimate fulfillment as literal 24-hour days in the last of the last days. It is likely that the 30 days relates to the short period of the seven bowl judgments and the 45 to the time of Christ's dividing of the nations between sheep and goats. However, the first layer of fulfillment, God's prophetic sketch is being completed now in a multi-layered rendition of 1260, 1290, and 1335 years. So, taking 45 years from the year 2042, we get 1997. Subtract another 30 years and, yes, again we get 1967! In this way, when we take the end amount told to Daniel of 1335 days and add it to the date when the last *abomination of desolation* was set on the Temple Mount before the coming of the final one (this, as seen above, was accomplished in 707 AD at the completion of the Al-Aqsa Mosque) we arrive again at the year 2042 for the coming of the Lord!

- Babylonian accounting: 554 BC + 1260 = 707 AD; 707 AD + 1260 = 1967; 1967 + 75 = 2042.
- Greek accounting: 334 BC + 2300 = 1967; 1967 + 75 = 2042.
- Roman accounting and God's calendar of 70 sevens: 775 AD + 1260 = 2035; 2035 + 7 = 2042.

By the way, the year 1997 is an interesting one in this context for a number of reasons. Time will tell the true significance of its events. One reason is the inauguration of Bill Clinton's second term as President of the United States, he being the driving force behind the 1993 Oslo Accords and the so-called Clinton Parameters agreed to tentatively by Israel and the PLO during his second term.

Of course, it's too early to determine exactly what year Jesus will come back, but it's not too early and, in fact, may be already getting late to make ourselves ready for this coming. We must decide if we are to be counted amongst the five wise virgins or the five foolish (Matthew 25:1-13). Will we prepare today enough oil for our lamps to last until the Bridegroom comes, or will we just hope that everything will work out nicely and we'll all get "raptured" out before we have to suffer? It may be that all the virgins, both wise and foolish, shall fall asleep, but when the shout sounds at midnight, only those who prepared to last until the end will go to meet Him.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near. (Revelation 1:3)