Theological Research Report

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In Loving Memory of

Dr. Charles V. Dorothy

 Issues will be published periodically as time and resources permit. Donations toward expenses will be welcomed and should be made payable to Carl D. Franklin, P.O. Box 732, Dowagiac, MI 49047. Please address all inquiries, comments or requests to theolresearch@hotmail.com. See end of this Report for e-mail requirements, phone policy and manuscript submission.

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Introductory Notes

June 2008

Dear Reader,

The *Theological Research Report* is directed toward the interests and needs of Christian Sabbatarians and will present in-depth reviews, critiques, exegesis and original research of various theological topics including but not limited to church history, church government, history of church finance, covenant theology, historical prophetic fulfillments, Biblical chronology, Biblical archaeology, Sabbatarian liturgy, the Hebrew Calendar, healing and principles of spiritual growth.

This first issue contains some of the initial findings of my research into the teachings of a formerly Sabbatarian affiliation, the Worldwide Church of God, in regard to the 70-weeks prophecy. While much was preached during the church's history, little was written, and the few publications that were produced on the subject have no real depth of research to support them. No exegetical work is offered in the church's publications. Much of what was taught in regard to the fulfillment of the 70-weeks prophecy was based on the publications of other Sabbatarian organizations. Nevertheless, it is helpful to examine these teachings and to know why they were promoted.

Excerpts of the church's publications are presented in this report as exhibits. Exhibit headings provide quick access to my primary files should you have questions. Obvious typographical errors in citations have been corrected. Blue color coding is used in citations for highlighting passages and terms. Red color coding is used in citations for passages and terms that are questionable or inaccurate. My comments on each section are presented as footnotes or enclosed in brackets within the text and are identified by my initials (CDF).

All Hebrew Calendar dates are taken from the automated calendar developed and programmed by Alan Ruth. This calendar may be accessed on his website at www.**biblestudy**.org/

I hope you will find this material to be informative and helpful to your study of God's Word.

Sincerely,

Carl D. Franklin

Exhibit 1

First Statement by the WCG That the Decree of Ezra 7:8 Was Issued in 457 BC

Published in an Article by Dr. Herman L. Hoeh

"Does Easter Commemorate the Resurrection?"

Good News Magazine
March 1953
www.cog21.org/

Proof One: The Calendar Tells *When*

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh writes as follows:

Now let's examine the Passover dates as Jesus died on the Passover. We have seen in previous articles that Jesus observed the true Passover at the proper time—on the eve of the 14th of God's first month, called Nisan or Abib. It was the Jews in Judaea who were taking their own—the Jewish—Passover a day later than God commanded (John 18:28).

On which day of the week did Jesus' final Passover fall? This simple question has perplexed theologians and historians for centuries, but the answer is so plain a child can understand it.

The Passover is calculated by astronomy as most everyone knows.[1] The following is giving the dates of the various Passovers (Nisan 14) which occurred about the time of the death of Jesus Christ.

You can verify any of these dates by comparing *Hasting's Dictionary* with the *Encyclopedia Biblica* and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article "Bible." [2] None of these references are wholly accurate, however, but by putting all the facts together, these dates are the only possible conclusions.

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[1] The Hebrew Calendar is not based on calculation of the astronomical conjunction but on calculation of the Molad of Tishri. The Molad is the mean or *average* conjunction of the earth, moon and sun. The figure used to calculate the Molad is 29.53059 days, which is the average length of the moon's orbit. The Molad is not the same as the astronomical conjunction. (CDF)

[2] I have copies of the *Biblica* and *Britannica* material. The *Biblica* actually concludes that the crucifixion Passover was in 30 AD. (CDF)

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh gives these dates:

A.D. 29, Saturday, April 16	**[Correct]**
A.D. 30, Friday, April 7	**[Incorrect—Wednesday, April 5]**
A.D. 31, Wednesday, April 25	**[Incorrect—Monday, March 26]**
A.D. 32, Monday, April 14	**[Correct]**
A.D. 33, Friday, April 3	**[Correct]**

Several references give the Passover, Nisan 14, as Monday, March 26 in the year 31 [See my comments above--CDF], but this is far too early. **The year 30 was intercalary**—it had thirteen months—thus placing the Passover thirty days later in 31 A.D.[3] **The *Passover never comes less than four days after the vernal equinox* (March 21, today) and usually always *not less than five days*.**[4]

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[3] This statement is based on a misunderstanding of the intercalary cycle of the Hebrew Calendar. The year 30 AD was a common year of 354 days and therefore was not intercalated; i.e., a second month of Adar was not added, which would have pushed the Passover date of 31 AD forward to Wednesday, April 25. The correct date for the Passover of 31 AD is Monday, March 26. (CDF)

[4] This was an erroneous teaching of Herbert W. Armstrong, who had inherited it from Church of God 7th Day ministers, who had received it from SDA ministers, who had inherited it from William Miller of The Great Disappointment of 1844 fame, who had acquired it from the Karaite Jews. Calendrical history does not support this Karaite teaching. The Passover of 31 AD did occur on March 26, 3 days after the equinox. The Passover of 34 AD occurred on March 22, 1 day before the equinox. The Passover of 37 AD occurred on March 20, 2 days before the equinox. The Passover of 42 AD occurred on March 24, 2 days after the equinox. The Passover of 46 AD occurred on March 20, 2 days before the equinox. The Passover of 50 AD occurred on March 25, 3 days after the equinox. (CDF)

Footnote 4, continued:

The Britannica edition to which Dr. Hoeh makes reference is the 14th edition. The correct intercalary cycle was utilized under the entry "Calendar," as was the correct Rabbinic calculation formula of E.H. Lindo. In 1838 Lindo published *A Jewish Calendar for Sixty-Four Years*. In the late 50's or early 60's Dr. Hoeh wrote a handout for third-year Bible classes at Ambassador College. This handout outlines the mathematical calculations for the Hebrew Calendar. Although he had to have seen references to Lindo's material in the Britannica, Dr. Hoeh mentions only the Jewish Encyclopedia as his source. A copy of this handout is in my files. See End Notes on page 18 of this issue for more information. (CDF)

PDF copy of *A Jewish Calendar for Sixty-Four Years* may be downloaded to your computer. Simply Google the following underlined key words: begin with Internet Archive. When the Internet Archive page appears, enter Lindo Jewish Calendar in the Search Box at the top left of your screen and left click. When the next Archive window appears, left click on the message that appears at the top of your screen. When View the book appears at the top left of your screen click on PDF. Adobe 8.0 and above works well for this type of download. Depending on the speed of your Internet connection, download times will vary from a few minutes to several hours, as the size of this file is 15 million bytes (15MB).

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh continues:

But remember, in Jesus' day the equinox did *not* occur on March 21, but on March 23[5] because the Roman world was using the *Julian* calendar. Since at that time March 26 was only *three* days after the equinox, it could not have been the Passover. Hence in the year 31 A.D. the Passover was on Wednesday—and *this is* THE ONLY POSSIBLE YEAR *in which Christ could have been crucified* as we shall now PROVE.

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[5] In 30, 31 and 34 AD, the spring equinox occurred on March 23. In 37, 44, 46 and 50 AD, the spring equinox occurred on March 22.

Proof Two: the Decree of Artaxerxes

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh continues:

There are seven basic dates from which the exact year of Christ's death may be calculated. **These dates are so precise that there can be no doubt that the Passover upon which Jesus was crucified occurred on Wednesday, April 25, A.D. 31.**[6]

The first proof is the year in which Artaxerxes issued his decree to restore and build Jerusalem (Ezra 7). It is recorded in Daniel 9:25-26 that there would be sixty-nine prophetic weeks (7+62) till the Messiah would come, after which He would be "cut off" –crucified—"not for Himself" but for the sins of the whole world. Sixty-nine prophetic weeks equals 483 years (69 x 7).

When we determine the year in which this decree was issued, we can locate the exact year, 483 years later, when Christ—the Messiah—began His ministry.[7]

By figuring from the date of an undisputed eclipse in the night following the 16th of July 523 [BC], as well as from two other eclipses, it is possible to date correctly the reign of Artaxerxes.[8]

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[6] These dates cannot be used to support a Passover in April of 31 AD as 31 AD was not intercalated. Passover in 31 AD occurred on Monday, March 26. (CDF)

[7] This line of reasoning is backwards. We should determine the date of Christ's crucifixion and the date He began His ministry and then count back to the 7th year of Artaxerxes I. (CDF)

[8] In regard to these eclipses, please notice Exhibit 18 at the end of this report. (CDF)

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh continues:

His father[9] **reigned twenty-one years**, according to the Canon of Ptolemy, and **died in 464 B.C.**

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[9] **Xerxes I was murdered by one of his sons in the month of August, in his 21st year—464 BC.**

Cuneiform tablet BM 32234 establishes several important facts regarding the reign of Xerxes I. (The abbreviation "BM" in the title of the artifact stands for British Museum.) First of all, the tablet is dated to the 21st and last year of Xerxes. The text states that he was murdered by one of his sons in the 5th month of his 21st year. As Persian regnal years are measured from Nisanu to Nisanu, or spring to spring, his 5th month would equate to the month of August. August would roughly equate to the latter part of the Hebrew month Ab and the beginning days of the month Elul.

There are also some astronomical texts dated to the 21st and last year of Xerxes. One of them, **J-17--BM 32234**, which is dated to day 14 or 18 of the 5th month of Xerxes' 21st year, belongs to the group of astronomical texts called "18-year texts" or "Saros texts"….The text includes the following interesting information: **"Month V 14 (+x) *Xerxes was murdered by his son.*" This text alone … shows that Xerxes ruled for 21 years ….**
(see Carl Olof Jonsson--**www.freeminds.org/doctrine/cojonsson.htm**, click on article THE 20TH YEAR OF ARTAXERXES…).

In a publication of Elephantine papyri entitled *Jewish Documents of the Time of Ezra*, Dr. A. E. Cowley includes a papyrus which records that the 1st regnal year of Artaxerxes I began in the 21st year of his father Xerxes I.

C-No-6 (The capital "C" preceding the number of the papyrus is a designation for the Cambridge scholar Dr. Cowley.) "On the 18th Chisleu [Kislev, the 9th Hebrew month--CDF], that is the 7th day of Thoth [the first month of the Egyptian year--CDF], **in year 21, the beginning of the reign when King Artaxerxes [I] sat on his throne.**" (CDF)

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh continues:

In the late summer of 464 B.C. Artaxerxes [I] began to reign. His first year would hence extend from 464 B.C. to 463 B.C.[10]

His seventh year—the year in which he issued his decree (Ezra 7:8) — **would extend from about the late summer of 458 B.C. to the summer of 457 B.C.**[11] From the first month to the fifth month of God's calendar—from the latter part of March to the latter part of July, 457 B.C.—Ezra journeyed to Judaea *in the seventh year of Artaxerxes*. And just 483 years later would bring us to the autumn of A.D. 27—*the year when the Messiah would appear*. Although the date of the issuance of this decree is amply proved from astronomy and the Canon of Ptolemy, historians sometimes

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10 This statement is misleading as the Persian year began in the spring. It was only Artaxerxes' accession that took place in the fall. Astronomical Diaries W. 20030/142 of Babylon and VAT 5047 of Uruk record that Artaxerxes' first month on the throne ran from August 8/9 to September 7/8, 464 BC (Sachs and Hunger, *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts From Babylonia, Volume I*, pp. 54-58, Library of Congress number QB 19. S23 1988 v.1. The date -463 at the top of the reference page is an astronomical designation. To convert this negative designation, one year must be added. The actual date is 464 BC. The accession year of Artaxerxes ran from April 13, 464 BC, to April 2, 463 BC, although he did not begin his reign until the month of August. His first full year ran from April 3, 463 BC, to April 22, 462 BC. As the Persians included the accession year in the regnal count, the 7th year of Artaxerxes I began on April 8, 458 BC, and ended on March 27, 457 BC. (CDF)

11 Dr. Hoeh correctly interprets the period of five months recorded in the Book of Ezra as the spring and summer of the 7th year of Artaxerxes I. However, he does not recognize that this period was the beginning of the 7th year, but counts the year from fall to fall. The first month of Artaxerxes' 7th year began on April 8, 458 BC. Since Ezra could not have departed from Babylon before April 8, 458 BC, the earliest that he could have arrived at Jerusalem would be the month of August, 458 BC, which was the 5th month of the 7th year of Artaxerxes I. (CDF)

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh continues:

misinterpret the facts to suit their pet theories. Then theologians quote from whatever historical sources suit them in order to change the true date for the beginning of Christ's ministry.

But the true date—457 B.C.—is absolutely fixed by astronomical observation and by the Canon of Ptolemy, the most accurate records of history written for that time![12] (Hoeh, Herman, L., "Does Easter Commemorate the Resurrection?" *The Good News*, March 1953, pp. 3-5, 15.)

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[12] This assertion is incorrect. Archaeological and astronomical records from Babylon and Nippur conclusively demonstrate that 464-463 BC was the accession year of Artaxerxes I (see footnotes 9-10). Thus the 7th year of Artaxerxes I was 458-457 BC. That year began on April 8, 458 BC, and ended on March 26, 457 BC. Christ's ministry, which began in the fall of the year, cannot be dated by counting from the fall of 457 BC because the 7th year of Artaxerxes I ended in the spring of that year. The chart below illustrates the chronology of Artaxerxes' reign as published by two authoritative sources which provide the beginning and ending date of each year. As noted in footnote 11, the Persian year began in the spring.

464-463 BC	**1**	Accession year of Artaxerxes I—Sachs and Hunger & Parker and Dubberstein	
		(April 13-April 2)	30th Ab/ 1st Elul Aug 8/9 Sachs (-463 BC=464 BC) 1st or 2nd Tishri Sep 7/8 Sachs (-463 BC=464 BC) 18th Kislev Nov 23 C-No-6
463-462 BC	**2**	(April 3-April 21)	
462-461 BC	**3**	(April 22-April 10)	
461-460 BC	**4**	(April 11-March 30)	
460-459 BC	**5**	(March 31-April 18)	
459-458 BC	**6**	(April 19-April 7)	21st Kislev Dec 1 1st Kislev Dec 1 C-No-8, C no-9
458-457 BC	**7**	**(April 8-March 26)**	

Exhibit 18

Eclipses Listed by Ptolemy

Dr. Grace Amadon lists eleven eclipses as recorded by the ancient astronomer Ptolemaiou (Ptolemy) in his work *Mathematike Suntaxis*. Ten of these eleven are lunar eclipses and one is a solar eclipse. Ptolemy's records of these eleven eclipses have been translated from the Greek by Dr. Amadon and published in her paper *The Jewish Calendar in the Fifth Century B.C.* (pp. 9-10). Gary Staszak was able to obtain a copy of her paper from the **Adventist Heritage Center** at Andrews University. It took over a full year for him to obtain copies of all her work. This center, a museum of Dr. Horn's archaeological work and the works of Dr. Amadon, is only 15 minutes from my home, as is the James White Library.

In *The Jewish Calendar in the Fifth Century B.C.*, Dr. Amadon has included details of the eclipses as translated from Ptolemy's work. I have selected three eclipses that I believe are the ones to which Dr. Hoeh refers in his article. The following citations are numbered as listed in her paper. Headings in blue are mine. I have also added Hebrew Calendar dates.

Lunar Eclipse
Wednesday, July 16, 523 BC
14th of Tammuz

5) "Again in the 7th year of Cambyses, which is the 225th year from Nabonassar, according to the Egyptian 17/18 Phamenoth, one hour before midnight, the moon was eclipsed in Babylon on the northern half of its diameter…in Alexandria it occurred 1 5/6 equinoctial hours before midnight."-- Claudieu Ptolemaiou, *Mathematike Suntaxis*, pp. 341-342. In Halma. Paris, 1813.

Lunar Eclipse
Monday, November 19, 502 BC
14th of Kislev

6) "The second eclipse employed by Hipparchus, occurred in the **20th year of Darius,** the successor to Cambyses, in the 28/29 of the Egyptian Epiphi, the night having advanced 6 1/3 equinoctial hours, in which the moon, in like manner, eclipsed the fourth part of its diameter on the south…in Alexandria the middle of the eclipse occurred 1 ¼ equinoctial hours before midnight."-- Claudieu Ptolemaiou, *Mathematike Suntaxis*, pp. 269-270. In Halma. Paris, 1813.

Lunar Eclipse
Thursday, April 26, 491 BC
15th of Iyar

7) "As the first eclipse, we have named that one which, under **Darius I in Babylon, in the 31st year of his reign**, was observed on the 3/4 Egyptian Tybi, in the midst of the 6th hour of the night. At the same time, as the exact report runs, the moon was eclipsed two inches on the south, that is, 1/6 part of its diameter."-- Claudieu Ptolemaiou, *Mathematike Suntaxis*, p. 267. In Halma. Paris, 1813.

The Next Issue

In the next issue of the *Theological Research Report*, a second article written three years later by Dr. Herman L. Hoeh concerning the 70-weeks prophecy will be discussed. The article is titled "The CRUCIFIXION was not on 'Good Friday'!" and was published in *The Plain Truth* in March, 1956. This article is basically a rewrite of the 1953 *Good News* article that is discussed in this issue. While Dr. Hoeh used much of what was published in his earlier article, he also made some major changes and added new material to the 1956 article.

E-mail Requirements Policy

Please note the following guidelines for e-mail correspondence:

I will not respond to e-mails that are *ad hominem*, propagandistic or diatribes.

The term *ad hominem* includes e-mails that appeal to prejudice and emotion rather than reason. This approach typically attacks the character and motives of a writer rather than logically presenting a view either pro or con.

The term "propagandistic" refers to the promotion of ideas, doctrines or practices without discussing their merits.

The term "diatribe" refers to bitter, abusive criticisms or denunciations of a person's or group's position.

I will accept and respond to e-mails that are asking for clarification or documentation of statements I have written. I will also respond to e-mails that call my attention to additional reference material on a subject I have discussed, as well as requests for back issues of the Report, requests that others be placed on the mailing list, or requests to be taken off the mailing list.

Phone Policy

I do not have an office phone. Phone calls interrupt my research and cause loss of focus. I spend valuable time trying to retrace my steps and pick up where I left off when I am interrupted in the middle of tracking down information. Due to differences in time zones, phone calls also may come too early in the morning, too late in the day or during a meal time. For all these reasons, I cannot accept phone calls.

If you have questions or comments, please e-mail them to me. E-mails do not interrupt my work, meals or sleep time, and I can respond to them at a convenient time during the day.

Policy for Submitting Written Material

If you wish to submit material for my review, first examine the copy for content. Are your statements clearly phrased and of sound logic? Are they relevant to the subject? Is there an objective approach or simply opinions moved by emotional factors? After checking for content, please proofread the copy for spelling, capitalization and punctuation. I cannot afford to spend time reviewing material that does not meet the standards for proper use of the English language.

All written material must be submitted in Word 2003 or later. Type font should be Times New Roman. Type size should be a minimum of 14 points. Please keep bolding, italicizing, underlining, all caps and the use of exclamation points to a minimum. It is far better to make your argument with sound logic, clear writing, coherent organization, lucid expression, and the use of the right word in the right place. Do not send any material immediately after it has been written. Let your material sit for a few days and then give it a thorough review, challenging your own logic and conclusions to the best of your ability. If need be, have others who are competent in grammar, writing, proofreading or editing review your material. Releasing material with misspelled words shows a lack of careful thought and effort. Please also include electronic copy with all material that you send. I will review material that meets the above standards. Allow 6-8 weeks for a response.

End Notes

Sometime during the 50's or early 60's, Dr. Hoeh wrote an eight-page handout for third-year Bible class entitled "Calendar Calculations: Based on the computations organized by Herman L. Hoeh from the Jewish Encyclopaedia," In 1971, John A. Kossey, an Ambassador College student, wrote the first edition of *The Hebrew Calendar: A Mathematical Introduction*. The publication was revised and expanded in 1974. Both printings were edited by Dr. Hoeh. The title page and introductory remarks are reproduced below. Readers who would like to receive electronic copy of this 104-page workbook on the calculation of the Hebrew Calendar may E-mail a request to **theolresearch@hotmail.com.**

THE HEBREW CALENDAR:
A Mathematical Introduction

Prepared by: JOHN A. KOSSEY
Editor: HERMAN L. HOEH

FIRST EDITION
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE PRESS
Pasadena, California
1971, 1974 Edition

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Please note:

Material in red is highlighted because it is in error
[Material in blue is a correction of Kossey's material]

PROGRAM I

USING THE TIME UNITS OF THE HEBREW CALENDAR

INTRODUCTION

Why should YOU study the Hebrew calendar?

One of the major identifying signs of the Church of God is the observance of the Sacred Festivals. As you study the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, you will notice that God employed a calendar to indicate when each holy day must be properly kept during the year. The Jews were given the responsibility of preserving that calendar for the rest of the world.

Since it is the responsibility of the Church to announce the time of each festival to the congregations, detailed understanding of the Hebrew calendar is not even necessary for a lay church member. When a holy day is to be kept is not for the individual Christian to decide.

On the other hand, the education you are privileged to receive as an Ambassador College student equips you with a special depth of biblical understanding. Shallow or sketchy knowledge of basic background areas would lessen one's effectiveness. But working out the calendar principles yourself is going to widen your perspective.

You already know that the holy days portray God's master plan of salvation for mankind. Shouldn't you also have a working knowledge of the very calendar which houses God's Sacred Festivals?

This is why a study of the Hebrew calendar is included in Theological Research I-II.

THE PURPOSE OF THESE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Your study of the Hebrew calendar in this course has two major facets. One is the historical development of the calendar. This is the primary function of the class lectures. The other is for you to achieve needed computational facility with the calendar itself.

Fortunately, the Hebrew calendar requires surprisingly little mathematical sophistication. A fifth grade background in arithmetic will suffice! Nevertheless, a certain number of skills and concepts must be learned for you to become adept at working with the Hebrew calendar. These programs are designed to provide you with that understanding and practice.

Just what will you be able to accomplish when you complete this series of learning programs?

For any year, such as 4 BC, 31 AD, 1520 AD, and 1979 AD, you will correctly determine the dates on a common Roman calendar of the holy days listed in Leviticus 23.

How long will this operation require? With nothing but a pencil and a blank sheet of paper, you might need anywhere from thirty to forty-five minutes. If you use a table of reduced numbers (which is included in one of the programs), it might take you only ten to fifteen minutes.

That skill is the OVERALL GOAL of this series of programs. Another less tangible aim is to give you the confidence that you can actually SUCCEED in working a calendar problem!

To that end, each learning program takes a necessary part of the main goal, and gives you the practice needed to become adept at it. Success will breed success as you progress!

The first page of each learning program has a clear statement of what you must be doing by the time you complete the program. You might think of each program as a "checkpoint" on route to your destination. Be sure you can accomplish each program goal before going on to the next one.

One word of caution. Have you ever learned mathematics simply by glancing over the textbook or watching someone else work through a problem? No, you can't! The exercises in each program are entirely for your benefit. In most cases, these exercises will be worked out in detail later in the program. This is for you to have a model with which to compare your own procedures and to check your work immediately for errors.

But WORK you must! Proverbs 4:13 says to "take fast hold of instruction; let her not go." Learning the mathematical operations of the Hebrew calendar will take ACTIVE EFFORT. With this diligence, you will achieve the exhilaration only success can bring.

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