

DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 1 - The Biblical, Prophetic and Historical Background
Part 2 - Verses 24 to 27 - Ninth Chapter of Daniel

Part 1 - The Biblical, Prophetic and Historical Background

(1) Introduction

The Late Herbert W. Armstrong wrote about many of the prophecies recorded in the Bible. However, as far as this writer is aware, he did not write about the prophecies recorded in the 9th Chapter of Daniel.

In recent studies trying to trace the origins of the Scots, this led this writer to an examination of the Scots' connection with the Scythians. In turn this led to a review of the Scythian contacts with the Medes and Persians. The close relationship between the Jews of the exile after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC and the Medes and Persians is clearly recorded in the bible. There even appears to be a close relationship between the 10 Lost Tribes of Israel and the Medes and Persians. This hidden relationship will be reviewed in a separate article.

Some of the most intriguing prophecies in the bible are contained in the book of Daniel Chapter 9 verses 24 to 27. Obviously, it is not a simple matter to understand these prophecies just by reading them as they appear in the bible. In fact, even the translations of these four verses appearing in different versions of the bible have substantial variations in terminology. As the writer is not conversant with Aramaic, Hebrew or Greek, this article is submitted in the form of a research article. Comments from other scholars would therefore be appreciated, particularly from those conversant with Aramaic or Hebrew.

The Late Mr Herbert W. Armstrong clearly showed that bible prophecies are interpretable and proved by the bible itself, not by personal opinions. Using this method and relating it to the historical information available, can one obtain an understanding of verses 24 to 27 in this Chapter 9 of Daniel?

The author has chosen to use the Revised Standard Version of the bible for the purpose of this exercise as this appears to be clearer than other versions of the bible, particularly when dealing with verses 24 to 27 of Daniel 9 but the relevant variations appearing in other versions will be dealt with in Part 2. (See Refs. 1 to 4).

(2) Kings of the Persians and Medes

Before looking at the other prophecies given to Daniel, it is necessary to ascertain which Persian or Median kings

are mentioned in the bible, as without an historical reference, it can be confusing. It is still confusing even with an historical reference but there is a pathway through the maze. Hence, brief summaries of the kings of Persia and Media and those that are named in various books of the bible are given in Annexures "A" and "B" .

Annexure "A" shows the two Royal Houses of the Medes, (the House of Arbaces and the House of Deioeces), and the Persian Royal House of the Achaemenes.

The Medes were the dominant partners under the Empire of the Medes until 550 BC but in that year, Cyrus II, the Great, who was descended from the Persian Royal House of Achaemenes and the Median House of Deioeces, took control and the Empire became the Persian Empire.

(3) The Prophecies of Concern to Daniel

The wording in Chapter 9 vs 1 & 2 of Daniel are quite clear. The time sequence is clearly established by Daniel as being in the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, by birth a Mede, who became king under Cyrus the Great, over the realm of the Chaldeans, (Babylonians). This was in the first year of Cyrus the Great as king of Babylon, after his conquest in 539 BC. Daniel was studying the writings of Jeremiah. (See Jeremiah 25 v 11, 29 v 10 and 44 v6). These verses refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, that it would become a waste and a desolation but God would bring back the Jews to Jerusalem and Judah after seventy years.

Daniel had previously been given prophecies, in particular those dealing with the image as recorded in Daniel 2 vs 31 to 45, the four great beasts of Daniel 7 vs 2 to 14 and the ram and the goat in Daniel 8 vs 3 to 26. Then there is the very detailed prophecy given in the first year of Darius the Mede in Daniel 11 vs 2 to 45. All of these the Late Mr Herbert W. Armstrong dealt with.

Here, those parts that apply to the period we are dealing with, are noted below.

The Chaldean Empire, (Babylon), lasted from 625-539 BC. (Ref. 6 p.94/95). This was represented in Daniel 2 vs 32 & 38 and in Daniel 7 v 4; respectively the head of gold of the image and the beast like a lion.

The Persian Empire, (of the Medes & Persians), lasted from 558 to 330 BC. This was represented by the breast and arms of silver of the image. (Daniel 2 vs 32 & 39). In Daniel 7 v 5 it is represented by the bear. In Daniel 8 vs 3, 4 & 20 it is represented by the ram with two horns.

The Alexandrian Empire and its four Successor States started with effect from 333 BC.

In Daniel 2 vs 32 & 39 this group of kingdoms are represented by the belly and thighs of bronze. In Daniel 7 v 6 it is represented by the leopard with 4 heads and in Daniel 8 vs 5 to 8 & vs 21 & 22 it is represented as the goat with a great horn and four notable horns.

The historical period that concerns this review is in fact covered by the dates mentioned above, i.e., from 625 BC to 330 BC.

(3) A Summary of the Prophecies and Historical Events

The prophecies and historical events are conveniently dealt with under the following main heads:-

- (i) The destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by Babylon.
- (ii) The destruction of Babylon by the Persians and Medes and their allies.
- (iii) The rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem.
 - Phase 1
 - Phase 2
- (iv) Under the protection of the Persians and Medes.
- (v) The Persian Empire replaced by Alexander and his successors.

(i) The destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by Babylon

The destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians was prophesied in Jeremiah 25 v 1 and v 9. Jerusalem and Judah were destroyed by the army of Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC. (Ref. 6 p.139). It should be noted that the Babylonians burned down the House of the Lord, the king's house, and the houses of the people and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 39 v 8 and 52 v 13).

(ii) The destruction of Babylon by the Persians and Medes

There are many prophecies concerning the destruction of Babylon, some of the most specific are the following:-

- (a) The stirring of the Medes against Babylon and the perpetual desolation. (Isaiah 13 v 1, v 17 and vs 19/20). Medes and other nations to destroy Babylon. (Jeremiah 51 vs 11, 24, 27, and 28).
- (b) 70 Years after the destruction of Jerusalem, Babylon to be made an everlasting waste. (Jeremiah 25 v12).
- (c) After Babylon will rise another kingdom inferior to it. (Daniel 2 vs 31 to 36 and v39).
- (d) Babylon has been brought to the end and the kingdom divided and given to the Medes and Persians. (Daniel 5 vs 22 to 28).

Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians under the leadership of Cyrus the Great in 539 BC. (Ref. 6 p.139).

What about the perpetual desolation of Babylon after the completion of 70 years? Babylon was destroyed by Xerxes who was viceroy of Babylon for 12 years during the reign of his father Darius. Following the rebellion by Babylon, he razed the walls and fortifications of the city, destroyed its temples, and melted down the golden statue of the god Bel. After this he ceased using the title of "king of Babylon", calling himself "king of the Persians and Medes". (Ref. 7 p.190/191).

This could only have been in the sixth year of the reign of Darius which was in 517 BC when the temple in Jerusalem was completed - 70 years after the desolation of Jerusalem or shortly after that. (See Annexure "A" and section (iii) below).

Herodotus, (Ref. 8 p.203 - Book III - Thalia), confirms that Darius, as king, (no doubt assisted by his son and viceroy Xerxes), retook Babylon, destroyed the walls, tore down all the gates and again set up Persian control over the land.

(iii) The rebuilding of Jerusalem and Judah.

Phase 1

Some of the most remarkable prophecies in the bible concern those about Cyrus the Great. These foretell that Cyrus will be the Lord's anointed and shepherd, that he will be called by his name, that he will fulfill all of God's purpose even though he does not know God. All of this is for the sake of God's servant Jacob and Israel his chosen. (Isaiah 44 v 28 and 45 vs 1, 3 & v 4).

Isaiah also prophesied the destruction of Babylon by the Medes. (Isaiah 13 vs 1, 17 and 19).

Concerning Cyrus, Isaiah also did prophesy that he will set God's exiles free, not for price or reward and he shall build God's City. (Isaiah 45 v 13). Jerusalem shall be built and of the temple, your foundation will be laid. (Isaiah 44 v 28).

These prophecies were made even before Judah had been destroyed, in fact some 140 years before the events actually took place, according to Josephus. (Ref. 9 - The Antiquities of the Jews - Book 11 Chapter 1 2.(6) p.286).

In 539 BC, (Ref. 6 p.139 & p.148), the Persians and Medes and their Allies took Babylon. In that same year, Cyrus the Great, issued a proclamation to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel. (2 Chronicles 36 vs 22 & 23, Ezra 1 v 1/4).

Work on the house of the Lord was started under the direction of Sheshbazzar, a prince of Judah. John Bright, (Ref. 11 p.362), equates Sheshbazzar with Shenazzar who is listed in 1 Chronicles 3 v 17/18 as Shenazzar, a son of Jeconiah.

The foundations of the temple were laid by Sheshbazzar who also returned the temple vessels which had been taken to Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. This return to Jerusalem was during the reign of Cyrus the Great under whom Darius the Mede reigned as viceroy in Babylon. (Ezra 1 vs 8 & 11, 5 vs 14 & 16.)

Once the foundations of the temple had been laid, the Samaritans raised objections to the Persian kings about the rebuilding of the temple and Jerusalem. It was not until the death of Cambyses and the reign of Darius the Persian that the building proceeded under the guidance of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. Both prophets began to receive the word of the Lord in the second year of Darius which was 521 BC. (Haggai 1 v 1 and Zechariah 1 v 1).

Under the guidance of Haggai, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and governor of Judah and Joshua, (Jeshua), the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with the remnant of the people worked on the house of the Lord . (Haggai 1 vs 12 to 14).

It is interesting to note that in Ezra 3 vs 10, 11 and 12, three times in fact, it is recorded that the foundations of the temple were laid by Zerubbabel and Joshua. As the foundations were laid by Sheshbazzar in the time of Cyrus, (see above), it is obvious that the foundations had to be relaid in the time of Darius.

It is also necessary to look at the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the return to Jerusalem. Chapter 25 v 11, referring to Judah and the nations around about, reads as follows in the R.S.V. , (Ref. 4):-

"This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

This verse in the K.J.V. and N.K.J.V. render the words "ruin and waste" as "a desolation and an astonishment".

In Daniel 9 v 2, "..... I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years which, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely seventy years."

The late Herbert Armstrong has previously shown that the "abomination that makes desolate" in Daniel was the idol set up in 167 BC by Antiochus Epiphanes in the temple in Jerusalem.

Clearly, the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 BC, was the cause of this "desolation". The seventy years of desolation for the House of Judah thus could not and was not removed until the temple was rebuilt.

The rebuilding of the temple was only completed in the sixth year of King Darius the Mede. (Ezra 6 v 15). That was in 517 BC, 70 years after the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC.

Zechariah has some remarkable things to say about Zerubbabel. In Chapter 4 v 9, he confirms that Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the House of God and his hands shall also finish it. Chapter 2 v 4 & v 5 states that Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls as the Lord would be to her a wall of fire around her. How was this possible? Chapter 4 v 6 shows that this was possible not because of the might or power of Zerubbabel but because the spirit of the Lord was with him.

A very close relationship was established between Zerubbabel, the Governor and Joshua the High Priest. Chapter 6 v 13 reads as follows:-

"It is he who shall build the temple of the Lord, and shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And there shall be a priest by his throne, and peaceful understanding shall be between them both."

Zechariah Chapter 3 v 8 and Chapter 6 v 12 show that Zerubbabel was called the BRANCH. In Chapter 4 v 2 & 3, the angel who talked with Zechariah showed him the lampstand all of gold with a bowl on the top of it and seven lamps on it with seven lips on each of the lamps. There were two olive trees on each side of the bowl, one on the right side and one on the left side. In Chapter 4 v 11, Zechariah inquires of the angel, "What are these two branches of the olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?"

In v 12 he again inquires "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the oil is poured out?"

In v 14 the angel gives his reply:- "These are the two anointed who stand by the Lord of the whole earth"

Now we know that in biblical prophecies, the term "branch" is often used to denote a royal genealogical line. An example is given in Isaiah Chapter 11 v 1 :- "There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." This is a reference to Jesus who came from the roots of Jesse.

Again in Ezekiel 17 v 22, it has been shown that a tender twig from the lofty top of a cedar tree will be planted in a lofty mountain height of Israel. (Referring to a daughter of Zedekiah who was carried to Ireland by Jeremiah.)

Is there a biblical genealogical connecting link to the "Lord of the whole earth" on both sides?

Zechariah Chapter 12 verse 12 gives the clue - the house of David and the house of Nathan. We find these in Matthew Chapter 1 vs 1 to 16 and Luke Chapter 3 vs 23 to 38! Both houses are in fact the house of David but the House of Nathan (see Luke 3 v 31) was not the ruling house.

What connection did these houses have with Zerubbabel? Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel, son of Jeconiah of the House of David who was deported to Babylon. (See Matthew 1 vs 11 to 13 and I Chronicles 3 vs 16 to 17. The Zerubbabel in I Chronicles 3 v 19 was not the son of Shealtiel but the son of Pedaiah.). In Luke 3 v 27 there is another Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel but this Shealtiel is the son of Neri.

The common link is of course the House of David, on both sides leading to the founder of the Church of God with a new covenant.

To further understand the comments of the angel given to Zechariah, we need to know what the seven lampstands mentioned in Zechariah 4 v 2 represent. The answer is found in Revelations. First let us look at Revelations 1 v 12 & 13. John is shown seven golden lampstands and in the midst of the lampstands is a son of man which Mr Armstrong has shown to be a representation of Christ. In verse 16 of the same chapter, Christ is holding seven stars in his right hand. Verse 20 then explains "As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

The seven churches are recorded in chapter 1 verse 11, and these are in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. The messages to the Churches are given in chapters 2 and 3.

Here again Mr Armstrong has shown how the seven churches of the ancient world are also represented in the modern world. It is not possible to deal with this fascinating subject in this article but before returning to the rebuilding of Jerusalem we have one more item to clarify.

What about Zechariah 4 v 14? Is there any further information about the two anointed ones, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth? The answer is found in Revelations 11 v 3. "And I will grant my two witnesses power to prophesy for 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth." Verse 4 reads "These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth." Thus we find the two witnesses of the House of David with two Churches of God just before the "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Revelations 11 v 15).

(To be Continued)

The Kings of the Medes and Persians Annexure "A"
(All dates are BC)

<u>Medes</u>	<u>Persians</u>
<u>House of Arbaces</u>	<u>House of Deioces</u> <u>House of Achaemenes</u>
Arbaces 816-788	
Mandaucēs 788-768	
Sosarmus 768-738	
Artycas 738-708	
Arbianes 708-686	
Artaeus 686-646	Deioces 699-646
Artynes 646-624	Phraortes 646-624
	Achaemenes (Haxamanish) Teispes
Astibaras 624-584	Cyaxeres I 624-584
Aspadas 584-549	Astyages 584-549
or (584-546)	Cyrus I Ariaramnes
also known as	
Astyigas or	
Astyages	
Darius	Daughter m Cambyses I Arsames
the Mede	
	Cyrus II the Great 558-529 [559-529] Cambyses II [529-522]
	Darius I [522-486] Xerxes [486-465] Artaxerxes [465-425] Xerxes II [425-424] Darius II [424-405] Artaxerxes II [405-359] III [359-338] Arses [338-336] Darius III [336-330]
The Conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great	[330]

- Notes 1. The information on the Houses of Arbaces and Deioces comes from Ref. 5 Vol.1 p.327/332.
2. The information on the House of Achaemenes comes from Ref. 6 p.146/154 but the names of the line from Ariaramnes to Hystaspes comes from Ref. 7 p.120/131.
3. Dates marked in square brackets thus:- [] come from Ref. 6. All other dates come from the work of Dr Hoeh - Ref. 5 Vol.1 p.329/331.

Notes (continued)

4. Dr Hoeh, (Ref. 5 Vol.1 p.330), points out that Darius the Mede is mentioned in Daniel 5 v 31 and 9 v 1. The Greeks called him Cyaxeres II. The Hebrews called his father Aspadas, Ahasuerus. It becomes obvious that Cyrus I appointed Darius as the king over the realm of the Chaldeans and "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian". (Daniel 6.v 28). The reign of Darius the Mede over Chaldea therefore began when Cyrus the II took power from Babylon.[539 BC].

Names of the Kings of the Medes and Persians
Included in the Bible

<u>Kings</u>	<u>Bible Name</u> <u>(RSV)</u>	<u>Bible Reference</u> Annexure "B"
(i) Cyrus II the Great 558-529 BC Conquered Babylon 539 BC	Cyrus Cyrus Cyrus Cyrus	2 Chronicles-36v22/23 Ezra-all references Isaiah-44v28 & 45v1 Daniel-1v21,6v28, & 10v1
(ii) Darius the Mede Son of Ahasuerus Viceroy of Chaldea (Babylon) under Cyrus from 539 - ? BC (Note 4).	Darius Ahasuerus	Daniel -all references to Darius Ezra 4v6
(iii)Darius the Persian -522-486 BC	Darius	Ezra - all references Nehemiah - 12 v 22 Haggai - all references to Darius Zechariah - all references to Darius
(iv)Xerxes 486-465 BC (Notes 2 & 4)	Artaxerxes	Ezra - all references to Artaxerxes Nehemiah - all references to Artaxerxes
Artaxerxes 465-425 BC (Notes 3 & 4)	Ahasuerus	Esther - all references to Ahasuerus

Notes

1. Josephus states it was Cambyses, (Cambyses II), who forbid the Jews to continue the rebuilding of Jerusalem. (Ref. 9 - Antiquities of the Jews - Book 11, Chapter 2.2.(28) - p.288), an action which Ezra 4 v 21/23 assigns to Artaxerxes.

Notes (continued)

1. Cambyses' name does not appear in the bible.
2. Josephus also calls the king associated with Ezra and Nehemiah, "Xerxes" not "Artaxerxes" as translated in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. (Ref. 9 - Antiquities of the Jews - Book 11 Chapter 5.1.(123) - p.294) and Chapter 5.6.(159) -p.296).
3. Josephus relates the king Ahasuerus in the book of Esther, to Cyrus, the son of Xerxes, whom the Greeks call Artaxerxes. Annexure "A" shows this Artaxerxes ruled 465-425 B.C. (Ref.9 - Antiquities of the Jews Book 11 Chapter 6.1. (198 & 199) - p.299).
4. The writer of this article is of the opinion that the names of the kings used by Josephus, (Notes 2 & 3 above), are the logical and correct interpretation and translation. He clearly understood the historical sequence of the kings and who they were. Further, the Book of Ezra, from chapters 4 to 6, only reads logically if the name Xerxes is used instead of Artaxerxes. Only one problem then remains in these chapters and that is the name "Ahasuerus".(Ezra 4 v 6). In the chart above, [see item (ii)], the writer has assigned this name to Darius the Mede. The author of Ezra was faced with the problem of referring to two kings named "Darius", that was Darius the Mede and Darius the king of Persia. Logically he distinguished the Mede from the Persian by using the name of the father of the Mede, i.e, "Ahasuerus".
The chapters 4 to 6 of Ezra now can be summarised as follows:-
 - i. Ezra 4v5 shows that the enemies of Judah attempted to frustrate the rebuilding of the temple all the days of Cyrus the king of Persia until the reign of Darius the king of Persia.
 - ii. They wrote to Darius the Mede, (Ahasuerus), (Ezra 4v5) who was Viceroy to Cyrus. (Ezra 4v6). He understood what they were up to and did not respond.
 - iii. They wrote to Xerxes, (not Artaxerxes), (Ezra 4v7), son of Darius the Persian, who became Viceroy to his father. Xerxes did not know about the command of Cyrus. He responded to the request of the enemies of the Jews by confirming with the records that the Jews had been a "rebellious city " and commanded them to cease building the city. (Ezra 4v21).
 - iv. The leaders of the Jews did not respond to the command of Xerxes and instead wrote to the supreme king, Darius, father of Xerxes. (Ezra 5 v7/8). Darius ordered a search of the records to trace the command of Cyrus. (Ezra 6v1). The records were found and Darius issued his decree that the decree of Cyrus could not be altered. (Ezra 6v11/12).

The NKJV of the Bible, (Ref.2), shows that Ezra 4v8 to 6v18 and 7v12 to 7v26 was written in Aramaic and the rest of the book in Hebrew. This seems to have caused some translation problems.

There are a number of other translations concerning the names of the Persian and Median kings mentioned in the bible which this writer has found were not very helpful. However, these may be of interest to others who may be studying this subject and so are noted below.

1.The NIV of the Bible, (Ref. 3).

- i. Daniel 9v1 - Darius the son of Ahasuerus is equated with Darius the son of Xerxes. Darius the son of Xerxes reigned 424-405 BC. (See Annexure "A" under Xerxes II and Darius II).
- ii. Ezra 4v6 - The name Ahasuerus is equated with Xerxes who ruled 486-465BC.
- iii. Esther - The name Ahasuerus is equated with Xerxes who ruled 486-465 BC.

2.The Oxford Annotated Apocrypha of the Old Testament - Revised Standard Version - (Ref 10)

- i. The Second Book of Esdras -
In the annotations on p.23 of Ref.10 - equates Artaxerxes as Artaxerxes II who reigned 404-358 BC. (Annexure "A" 405-359).
- ii. Editions to the Book of Esther -
p.96 of Ref.10 -
States that Artaxerxes the Great is Xerxes I - 486-465 BC. This agrees with the NIV item 1 iii. above.

3.The NKJV of the Bible (Ref. 2)

In the book of Esther 1v1, it indicates that "Ahasuerus" is generally identified with Xerxes I.

4.A History of Israel", (Ref. 11).
See particularly Chapters 9 & 10.

Bright was aware of the order of the kings of the Persians but is not specifically concerned about identifying them with the bible. He identifies on p.375/376 Darius I Hystaspes (522-486), Xerxes his son (486-465) and Artaxerxes I Longimanus (465-424). On p.392 he specifically states "Artaxerxes who was Nehemiah's patron can only be Artaxerxes I". A date in the reign of Artaxerxes II (404-358) is ruled out by him. In Chapter 11, p.407, he states that shortly after the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah were completed, Artaxerxes died (424 BC).

This writer's conclusion is that Josepus was the only one who got it right ! However, any comments from scholars conversant with Hebrew or Aramaic would be appreciated.

(Medes.per)

Publication References

Annexure "C"

1. Holy Bible - King James Version - (Published by Thomas Nelson Publishers - Nashville, Tennessee - 1976 - Giant Print Reference Edition).
2. Holy Bible - The New King James Version - (Published by Thomas Nelson Publishers - Nashville, Tennessee - 1984).
3. Holy Bible - New International Version - (Published by The Zondervan Corporation, Grand Rapids, Michigan - 1984).
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7. Iran from the earliest Times until the Islamic Conquest by R Ghirshman - (Published by Penguin Books Group, England, U.S.A., Australia, Canada and New Zealand. - 1978).
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9. The Works of Josephus - Complete & Unabridged, translated by William Whiston - (Published by Hendrickson Publishers, Massachusetts - 1991).
10. The Oxford Annotated Apocrypha - Expanded Addition - Revised Standard Version - edited by Bruce M. Metzger - (Published by New York Oxford University Press - 1977).
11. History of Israel by John Bright - Revised Addition. (Published by SCM Press Ltd, London - 1972.)

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DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 1 (Continued)

The Biblical, Prophetic and Historical Background

(1) Reconsiderations

Since the circulation of the first part of this article in November 1994, the writer has carried out further studies concerning the kings of the Persians and Medes mentioned in the bible. Consequently the three annexures attached to the first part of the article dated November 1994 have been amended and are attached.

Annexure "A" only contains two amendments. The first relates to the period of the reign of Darius the Mede. (See note 4 on Annexure "A"). The other is the inclusion of the name of the daughter of Astyages who married Cambyses I and who was the mother of Cyrus II. (See note 5 to Annexure "A"). Annexure "B" shows the revised list of kings that appear in the bible together with explanatory notes. Annexure "C" contains three more publication references, being items numbers 12 to 14.

The first section of part I of this article, (see page 3 - circulated in November 1994), indicated the main heads planned for this article. These heads also needs revision as follows:-

- (i) The destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by Babylon.
- (ii) The destruction of Babylon by the Persians, Medes and their Allies.
- (iii) The rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem.
 - Phase 1 - Under Sheshbazzar.
 - Under Zerubbabel and Joshua. (Jeshua).
 - Under Ezra & Nehemiah.
- (iv) Under the Protection of the Persians and Medes.
- (v) The Persian Empire replaced by Alexander and his successors.
- (vi) The rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem
 - Phase II - The reconstruction of the Temple by Herod.

Items (i) and (ii) above and item (iii) above relating to the reconstruction under Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel and Joshua were dealt with in the article of November 1994. The next article will deal with the rebuilding under Ezra and Nehemiah.

(2) Revised Chronology of Kings of Persia and Media

A brief outline of the biblical chronology of the kings of the Medes and Persians mentioned in the bible, showing important events, is given below to indicate the historical events in perspective.

Names of Kings	Important Events
(i) Cyrus II	539 BC - Babylon conquered - Decree releasing the Jews to rebuild the House of God. (Ezra 1v1&v2)
	c 537 BC - Sheshbazzar arrives in Jerusalem and lays foundation of the Temple. (Ezra 1v11 and Ezra 5v16)
(ii) Darius the Mede	539/537- BC - Viceroy of Cyrus II. (Daniel 5v30, Daniel and the Lions Chapter 6, Daniel 9v1, Daniel 11v1)
(iii) Darius the Persian	521 BC - Haggai (1v1), and Zechariah (1v1) receive the word of God. - Darius confirms decree of Cyrus to build the House of God. (Ezra 6v7). 517 BC - Temple completed under Zerubbabel and Joshua. (Jeshua). (Ezra 6v15). ? - Babylonian rebellion and its destruction by Darius and his son and Viceroy Xerxes.
(iv) Xerxes (Ahasuerus)	486/465- BC - Esther and Mordecai (Book of Esther and see Ezra 4v6).
(v) Artaxerxes	459 BC - Ezra to Jerusalem under decree of Artaxerxes to teach the law in Jerusalem. (Ezra 7v7&v10). 446 BC - Nehemiah to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. (Nehemiah 2v1&v6). 434 BC - Wall of Jerusalem completed. (Nehemiah 5v14 and 7v1).

(3) Daniel

The book of Daniel gives a fair amount of information about the "Beloved Servant of God". This description of Daniel is found in Daniel 9v23. Other information from the Masonic Chronicler, (Ref. 12), states that Daniel was brought to Babylon when he was 12 years old. (Ref. 12 p.169). Daniel was made Ruler of Babylon at the age of 15 by Nebuchadnezzar until the death of that king 40 years later. (p170 & see Daniel 2v48). Then he was appointed "chief bookkeeper, or secretary of state", but on the interpretation of the "writing on the wall", he was appointed third ruler over Babylon. (p.170/171 and see Daniel 5v29). The chronicler states that he continued to hold this position under Darius the Mede. (p.171 and see Daniel 6v2 which states that he was one of three presidents). The chronicler records that Daniel advised Cyrus of the prophecies of Isaiah. After the death of Darius the Mede, he went to live in Susa in Persia. (p.171). At the death bed of Cyrus, Daniel was present. (p.175). Daniel died a year later at the age of 90 years. (p171).

(To be continued)

Notes (continued)

4. called his father Aspadas, Ahasuerus. It becomes obvious that Cyrus II appointed Darius as the king (or viceroy) over the realm of the Chaldeans and "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus he Persian". (Daniel 6.v 28). The reign of Darius the Mede over Chaldea therefore began when Cyrus the II took power from Babylon.[539 BC]. It appears that Darius reigned for two years. (Ref. 12 p.169).
5. The daughter of Astyages who married Cambyses I was named Mandane. (Ref. 12 p.151).

Revised List of the Kings of the Medes and Persians
Included in the Bible

<u>Kings</u>	<u>Bible Name (RSV)</u>	<u>Annexure "B" Bible Reference</u>
(i) Cyrus II the Great 558-529 BC Conquered Babylon 539 BC	Cyrus Cyrus Cyrus Cyrus	2 Chronicles-36v22/23 Ezra-all references Isaiah-44v28 & 45v1 Daniel-1v21,6v28, & 10v1
(ii) Darius the Mede Son of Ahasuerus Viceroy of Chaldea (Babylon) under Cyrus from 539 - 537 BC	Darius	Daniel -all references to Darius
(iii) Darius the Persian - 522-486	Darius	Ezra - all references to Darius Nehemiah - 12 v 22 Haggai - all references to Darius Zechariah - all references to Darius
(iv) Xerxes 486-465 BC	Ahasuerus	Ezra 4v6 Esther all references to Ahasuerus
(v) Artaxerxes 465-425 BC	Artaxerxes	Ezra & Nehemiah - all references to Artaxerxes

Notes

1. Josephus states it was Cambyses, (Cambyses II), who forbid the Jews to continue the rebuilding of Jerusalem. (Ref. 9 - Antiquities of the Jews - Book 11, Chapter 2.2.(28) - p.288). Cambyses' name does not appear in the bible but Ezra 4 v 21/23 assigns this statement to Artaxerxes, "until I make a decree."
2. The writer of this article has carried out further studies of this complex issue, in particular, those about the name "Ahasuerus". It now appears that Josephus was incorrect in identifying both "Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes " as Xerxes.

Notes (continued).

2. The meticulous author, Fred R Coulter, who was not specifically dealing with the identification of Persian kings, (Ref. 13 p.160 para 2), states that shortly before Ezra went to Jerusalem, Mordecai was elevated to the second position in the empire. In the same paragraph he equates Ahasuerus with Artaxerxes. Later in the same book, (Ref.13 p.165 para 4), he summarises Ezra's work which included the compilation of Chronicles, the book of Ezra and possibly the books of Nehemiah and Esther. Ezra 4v6 includes the name of "Ahasuerus" and the next verse, (Ezra 4v7), has the name of "Artaxerxes". It seems unlikely that the two names would be used like this for the same person.
3. A text from Bright's "A History of Israel", which I had previously not paid much attention to, makes the surprising statement that Xerxes was the king mentioned in Ezra 4v6, i.e., "Ahasuerus". (Ref. 11 p.378). Bright does not in any way equate "Ahasuerus" with "Artaxerxes".
4. The NIV of the Bible, (Ref. 3), in Ezra 4v6 and the book of Esther, "Ahasuerus" is recorded as Xerxes.
5. The NKJV of the Bible, (Ref. 2), indicates that in Esther, "Ahasuerus" is generally identified with "Xerxes".
6. The Additions to the Book of Esther, (Ref. 10 p.96), in Section 2 refers to Artaxerxes the Great, which in the footnote is identified as Xerxes I, 486-465. The name Ahasuerus does not appear here in connection with the names of Esther and Mordecai. The Publishers of "The Oxford Annotated Apocrypha" point out that the "Additions" occasionally contradict the canonical book of Esther and have little or no historical value.
7. If one now accepts that "Ahasuerus" is Xerxes I, does the wording of Ezra 4 make sense? The answer is yes! Ezra 4v5 refers to Cyrus II (539-529 BC), and Darius I the Persian, (522-486 BC) in the correct order of their respective reigns. Then in v6 follows "Ahasuerus", that is Xerxes I, (486-465). Then v7, Artaxerxes, (465-425). No mention is made of Cambyses II, (529-522). Neither the bible nor history record any action by Xerxes as a result of the complaints against the Jews in Jerusalem that were sent to him. He was busy with his wars against the Greeks and later married Esther which consolidated the position of the Jews under the Persians.
8. In the end, despite the conflicting evidence, what is at issue is the interpretation of "Ahasuerus". The recorder of the Masonic Chronicle, (Ref 12 p.161), even though he did not fully understand the relationships between the kings of Persia and Media, he knew that "..... Ahasuerus, the husband of Esther, who is called in profane history Xerxes, was a Persian monarch, and related in no way to Darius the Mede, the son of Ahasuerus."
9. Finally, to confirm the answer it becomes necessary to turn to Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary. (Ref. 14 - See Dictionary p.11 item no. 325.). Here it states that Ahasuerus or Artaxerxes of Esther 10v1 is in this case Xerxes, the title, (rather than the name), of a Persian King. The king Ahasuerus throughout the book of Esther and in Ezra 4v6 was the same king, who was recorded in secular history as Xerxes I.

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DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 1 (Continued)

The Biblical, Prophetic and Historical Background

(1) Correction and Apology

On Annexure "C" (1) item Number 21, of this article dated 28 April 1995, the writer, proofreader and publisher, who is one and the same person, incorrectly recorded that the article by Jeffrey H Patton in the "The World Ahead" of February/March 1995 was published by The Worldwide Church of God. This should be recorded as published by the Global Church of God. Please accept my apologies. The Annexure of Publication References attached, (Annexure "C" (1) item 21), has been amended.

(2) The Ribs of Adam

In this article dated 28 April 1995, under the heading "(a) The Symbolism of Daniel", it was noted that the history of the Mitanni is, in fact, the history of the Medes and Midianites in the ninth and tenth centuries before the present era. (Ref. 5 Vol. 1 p.371/372). Craig M White, in his book "The True Origin of the People of Eastern Europe", (Ref. 22 p.20), points out that Dr Cowley suggests that the Mitanni are direct descendants of Midian, son of Abraham and Keturah. (See also Gen. 25v1&2 and "Sargon the Magnificent" by Sydney Bristowe - Ref. 23 p.12fn).

Dr Hoeh, (Ref.5. Vol.2 p.152/161 particularly p.157), restores Persian History back to Kajomaras, (1741-1701 BC), who was a descendant of Aram son of Shem. (Gen.10v22).

The significance of the three ribs in the symbolism of Daniel 7v5, representing the 3 royal houses of the Medes and Persians, thus becomes clearer:-

The Persians, through Aram to Shem son of Noah
(Gen. 10v22 and Gen 10v1)
The Medes, through Abraham & Keturah
(Gen. 25v1&2) and to Shem son of Noah
Shem and Noah lead back to Adam and Eve
(1 Chron. 1v1/4).

(3) Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther

In previous sections of this article, it was concluded that the "Ahasuerus" was Xerxes I. It is apparent that even the editors of "Encyclopaedia Judaica" have had difficulty in ascertaining which of the Persian and Median Kings are recorded in the Bible. However, with the help of this Encyclopaedia, further evidence comes to support the conclusion that "Ahasuerus" was Xerxes I.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally a single

book in the hagiographa and in the talmudic list Esther came before Ezra-Nehemiah. (Ref. 24 Vol.6 p.1111). Thus, the logical historical order was correct, as Xerxes I was King before his son Artaxerxes I.

The original Ezra-Nehemiah book in fact recorded the name Xerxes in what is now Ezra 4v6. The Encyclopaedia Judaica, (Ref.24 Vol 6 p.1114), reads "The situation of the Jews in the reign of Xerxes (485-65 BCE) is a tantalizing historical problem because Xerxes is only mentioned once in Ezra-Nehemiah (Ezra 4v6)." This fact clearly shows that the historical order of the Kings in Ezra 4 was :-

- 1 Cyrus (v5)
- 2 Darius I (v5)
- 3 Xerxes I (v6)
- 4 Artaxerxes I (v7)

It now seems clear that Ezra knew who Xerxes was and quoted him in the correct historical sequence using his historical name. It was no doubt clearly understood in his day that Xerxes was called Ahasuerus by the Jews and therefore it was not necessary for him to edit the book of Esther to change the name recorded therein as Ahasueŕus.

(4) Synagogues, Great Assembly and the Sanhedrin

In this article, - see the report on Ezra and Nehemiah which was dated March 1995, page 4 items (e), (f) and (g) - , the references to "Synagogues, Great Assembly and the Sanhedrin" appear to require amendment and clarification. This will be reviewed when dealing with "Part 1 (v) (f) 434 Troublesome Years (Daniel 9v25 NKJV)".

Part 1 (v) 434 Troublesome Years (Daniel 9v25 NKJV)

(a) Persian Decline - 434-330 BC

It should be noted that the firm of Murashus and Sons which had established itself in Nippur in 587 BC, ceased to exist 150 years later, i.e., 437 BC. (Ref.15 p.313). One cannot but wonder whether this was a result of the work of Nehemiah in stopping the usury practices of this firm with its fellow Jews in Jerusalem!

Artaxerxes I died in 425 BC, approximately nine years after the work of Ezra and Nehemiah was finished. All of the kings of Persia after Artaxerxes I, except Arses, were named Darius, (which means "Worker"), Xerxes, ("Warrior"), or Artaxerxes, (Great Warrior)". (Ref. 8, Book vi Erato p.339).

From the time of Artaxerxes I to the death of Artaxerxes II, (359 BC), Persian gold was used in the Greek civil wars to favour her own interests by helping one side or another. However, by 330 BC, their time was over and Alexander marched into Persia. (Ref.6 p.152)

(b) The Grecian Era - 330-142 BC

The prophecies given to Daniel about the Grecian conquest begin in Daniel 2v39, being third kingdom of bronze after the second Persian kingdom of silver, (Daniel 2v32). This is followed by the vision in Daniel 7v6 where Greece is compared with a leopard with four wings of a bird and with four heads. In Daniel 8v5/8, it is symbolized as a male goat which came from the west across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground. It had a notable horn between the eyes and ran against the Persian ram and broke its two horns and cast it to the ground and trampled it. The male goat grew very strong but then its large horn was broken and in its place four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. In Daniel 10v20 the man, apparently Gabriel the archangel, (See Ref.20 p.2), points out that when he had gone forth, the prince of Greece will come!

Then look at Daniel 11v3/4! In plain language it talks of the mighty king who shall rule with great will and power after the Persians. (v2). Then, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided into the four winds of heaven but not to his posterity nor according to the kingdom that he ruled. For his kingdom shall be plucked up for other people. As Mr Armstrong says, "How marvelously - how accurately that came to pass." (Ref.20 p.2).

Alexander the Great, (336-323 BC), (Ref.6 p.231) moved swiftly against Persia and established his empire from Egypt to India. Then he died suddenly in 323 BC without any heir. By 301 BC his empire was taken over by four of his generals. These were:-

1. Ptolemy (Soter), ruling Egypt, part of Syria and Judea.
2. Seleucus (Nicator), ruling Syria, Babylonia and territories east to India.
3. Lysimachus, ruling Asia Minor.
4. Cassander, ruling Greece and Macedonia.

(Ref.20 p.3)

In the symbolism of Daniel, the speed of the conquest is indicated by the leopard, the four wings of the bird and the pace of the goat across the earth without touching the ground. The four winds of heaven indicate the four points of the compass. As previously shown, the horns indicate the kings or kingdoms; that is, the two kingdoms of Persia and Media, the single kingdom of Alexander and the four kingdoms of the four generals. These four kingdoms of the generals are represented by the leopard with four heads not like the single head of the Persian ram which comprised two nations. The Persians and Medes and their kings worked together under one rule but the four successor kingdoms of Alexander established four separate kingdoms.

Mr Armstrong points out that the prophecy of Daniel 11 is

the most specific, detailed and longest prophecy in the bible. (Ref.20 p.2). In his booklet "The Middle East in Prophecy" he draws attention to "A Manual of Ancient History (Student Series)" by Rawlinson and shows how the prophecy is matched verse by verse with subsequent actual events.

It is not intended to repeat the detailed prophecy in this article but attention is drawn to the "contemptible reprobate" as Mr Armstrong calls Antiochus IV (Epiphanes). In 167 BC Antiochus sent troops to the Holy Land, who desecrated the Temple and sanctuary, abolished the daily sacrifice and placed an abomination - an image- on the altar in the Temple precincts, making it desolate. (Ref.20 p.8/9, Daniel 8v11 & v24, Daniel 11v31).

Quoting Mr Armstrong, (Ref.20 p.9), :- "But-right here, the prophecy cuts off from the continuation in the history of those ancient north and south kingdoms. Up to this point, the prophecy was unfolded, step by step, in actual history of the northern kingdom of Seleucidae, or Syria, and the southern kingdom of Egypt. But, say most commentaries, all accurate details seem suddenly to stop short with this verse." This is referring to verse 31 of Daniel 11. Verse 32 of Daniel 11 reads as follows:- "And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

Mr Armstrong rightly pointed out that Antiochus Epiphanes did corrupt some Jews by flatteries. This even to the point that the office of High Priest was sold to the highest bidder. (Ref.25 p.153).

The outrages of Antiochus Epiphanes IV led to the Maccabean revolt and under Judas in 164 BC his troops recaptured Jerusalem, the pagan altar was torn down and God's altar rebuilt. The Temple was cleansed and on Chislew 25, (December 14), the Temple was rededicated and sacrifices resumed. This event has since been commemorated by Jews as the Feast of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication. (Ref.25 p.154).

The activities of the Maccabeans eventually led to the independence of the Jews in 142 BC (Ref.25 p.156).

(c) The Independent State 142-63 BC

Independence did not free the Jews of "Troublesome Times". Gradually the geographic heartland of Israel was recaptured by the Jews under the Hasmonean dynasty by 76 BC. (Ref.25 p.157/8). However, internal strife between the Pharisees and Sadducees meant that some 50000 Jews were killed in a civil conflict. (Ref.25 p.159).

In 63 BC Pompey marched into Jerusalem. (Ref.25v159)

(To be continued)

(Persians.Me2)

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- 1/4 The biblical references previously included here have now been transferred to Annexure "C (2)". In addition, the New Revised Standard Version publication information has been included on that schedule.
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(Daniel.ref)

DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 1 (Continued)

The Biblical, Prophetic and Historical Background

(iii) The Rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem

Phase 1- Under Sheshbazzar - (Previously dealt with but see also below)

- Under Zerubbabel and Joshua (Jeshua)
(Previously dealt with but see also below)
- Under Ezra and Nehemiah

Sheshbazzar

We do not know how many people came to Jerusalem with Sheshbazzar. Josephus says many people did not go because they did not want to leave their possessions. (Ref. 9 p.286 - Antiquities - Book 11, Cpt.1 para.3)

Zerubbabel and Joshua

The majority of the exiles that returned came with Zerubbabel and Joshua. The people that came at that time numbered forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty besides their servants of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty seven and two hundred, (or two hundred and forty five) singers. (Ezra 2v64 and Nehemiah 7v66).

Both the bible and secular history is strangely silent about Jerusalem after Zerubbabel and Joshua built the Temple which was completed in 517 BC in the sixth year of the reign of Darius. (See Ezra 6v15). We do know that under the guidance of these two leaders, the returned exiles:-

- (a) Built the alter of the God of Israel to offer the burnt offerings as prescribed by the law of Moses the man of God. (Ezra 3v2).
- (b) Celebrated the dedication of the house of God with joy. (Ezra 6v16).
- (c) Kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at which the priests and Levites killed the Passover lamb at a Temple celebration, (Ezra 6v19/20). It was eaten by the returned exiles and those who had separated themselves from the pollutions of the nations of the land. (Ezra 6v21).
- (d) Celebrated with joy the festival of unleavened bread seven days. (Ezra 6v22).
- (e) Kept the festival of booths as prescribed. (Ezra 3v4)
- (f) Kept the offerings at the new moon and all the sacred festivals of the Lord. (Ezra 3v5)

Ezra and Nehemiah

58 years after the completion of the Temple, Ezra arrived in Jerusalem. It should be very carefully noted that "Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, to do it and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel". The decree which Artaxerxes gave Ezra was in accordance with this desire. (See Ezra 7v12 to v14).

Ezra was authorised to appoint judges and magistrates to ensure that the law of the God of heaven was carried out and to glorify the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. (Ezra 7v25). He did not go to physically rebuild Jerusalem as some authors assume!

The exiles that returned with Ezra were a comparatively small party of 1514 men. (Ezra 8v1/14). Presumably their families followed later.

A major problem which confronted Ezra when he arrived in Jerusalem was the inter-marriage of many of the Israelites who had returned earlier with the people of the land and their contamination with the abominations of those people. (Ezra Cpt.9) After the assembly of the people to discuss the problem, most of the offenders put away their foreign wives and children. (Ezra Cpt.10). This was not the end of the problem because later when Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem, (see below) he found that a grandson of the high priest Eliashib had married the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, the Governor of Samaria. (Nehemiah 13v28). Josephus then continues the story. (Ref.9 p.305/306 - The Antiq. Book 11, Cpt.7, para.2 and Cpt.8 para.1 to 4). This grandson's name was Manasseh and he built a rival temple in Samaria.

Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem 13 years after Ezra in 446 BC. He was authorised, in accordance with his desire, by Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 2v5/6). Nehemiah was appointed governor of Judah, (Nehemiah 5v14) and initially concerned himself with the reconstruction of the wall of Jerusalem. This reconstruction consisted of rebuilding the walls and the setting up of the gates or doors. The wall was finished in 52 days but it not clear exactly when it was finished. During the construction, the builders had to contend with interference by Sanballat, Governor of Samaria. Consequently, the builders had to both build and guard the wall under the command of Nehemiah. (See Nehemiah 4v7 to v23).

Nehemiah had also to deal with the oppression of the people. (See Nehemiah 5v1/5). They complained that they had to (a) pledge their fields, vineyards and houses to get grain during the famine and to (b) borrow money on their fields and vineyard to pay the king's tax. They were being forced to have their children put into slavery and some daughters suffered even worse calamities.

Nehemiah brought these charges against the nobles and accused them of taking interest from their own people and selling their own kin. The nobles agreed to stop taking interest from the people and to restore to them, that very day, their fields, vineyards, their olive orchards and their houses and the interest on grain, wine and oil. The ruling rate of interest at that time was 20%. (See Ref.15 p.313/4 re the Jewish firm of Murashu and Sons. This firm had its Head office in Nippur, Mesopotamia with Branches through out the Persian Empire. Established in

587 BC, it lasted 150 years. It was an international bank. Its services included insurance, conveyancing, loans and personal and real estate - the Lloyd's of Mesopotamia! The books of Murashu and Sons are full of detailed information about the life of the exiles, such as their names, their occupations and their property!

At the seven day feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day assembly Ezra taught the people the law. (See Nehemiah 8v1 to v8). Later that month on the 24th day, the people assembled with fasting and sackcloth and with earth on their heads and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors. They read from the book of the law of the Lord and worshiped the Lord their God. (Nehemiah 9v1 to v3). They then signed a Covenant in writing agreeing to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord and his ordinances and statutes. (Nehemiah 9v38 and 10v28 to v39).

As mentioned earlier, we are not sure when the wall was finished but the dedication of the walls, (Nehemiah Chapter 12), is the last recorded act of Nehemiah just prior to his return to Babylon in 434 BC. (After 12 years in Judah - see Nehemiah 5v14). At this ceremony, the priests and Levites purified themselves, the people, the gates and the wall, (Nehemiah 12v30) and gave thanks to God. (Nehemiah 12v40).

Shortly after Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem, he faced the problem created by the building of the rival Temple in Samaria. (See comment above). In addition, the High Priest in Jerusalem, Eliashib had prepared a room for the use of Tobiah, an Ammonite official, in the Courts of the House of God. In anger Nehemiah threw him out of the room. (Nehemiah 13v7/8). Other problems he had to attend to were the re-instatement of the tithes so that the Levites and singers could be returned from the fields, (Nehemiah 13v10/13), Sabbath breaking, (Nehemiah 13v15/22), and mixed marriages. (Nehemiah 13v23/27).

Obviously neither priests nor laymen could be relied on to keep the commandments, statutes and ordinances. This is where Ezra's work came into operation but we have to turn to secular sources for this information. Fred Coulter, (Ref.13), records the important work of Ezra which is not recorded in the bible. Unfortunately his very restricted copyright requirements prevent the free reporting of this information and his hermeneutical, (interpretative), conclusions.

However, he includes a summary of Ezra's work quoting from sources which are not available in Australia. A brief summary of this work of Ezra is given below.

- (a) The compilation of Chronicles, possibly Esther, with the addition of Nehemiah's history and his own.
- (b) The settlement of the canon of Old Testament scripture with the threefold division into Law, Prophets and the Hagiographa - the writings of the Psalms.
- (c) The editing of the book of Deuteronomy.

(d) The substitution of the square Chaldee characters for the Hebrew and Samaritan. This was apparently done not only to facilitate the reading of the bible by the people but to give an official canon of the scriptures which distinguished it from the heretical Samaritan manuscripts.
(e) Thus it was Ezra, (the second Moses), who gave to the Jewish world the official (and final) Old Testament.
(f) Ezra also established the synagogues.
(g) Ezra established the "Great Assembly" or "Sanhedrin" which was effectively the supreme court or council at Jerusalem to control both priests and the people.

Ezra was faced with the problem of trying to ensure that both the priests and the people obeyed God's laws, statutes and ordinances to prevent a second deportation from their homeland and to avoid contamination with the rival Church in Samaria. He had the precedent of King Hezekiah, (2 Chronicles 30v13/21) and King Josiah, (2 Chronicles 35v1/19) and Zerubbabel and Joshua, (Ezra 6v19/21), for keeping the temple-centered Passover. Ezra centralised the Passover in Jerusalem to avoid any contact with the temple in Samaria. However, these ceremonies, though well intentioned, were in accordance with the commands of men, not God.

Scholars concerned with this problem are strongly recommended to read Coulter's book, (Ref.13 particularly chapters 12 to 15). It should be noted that the book of Deuteronomy is a record of the final sermon given by Moses and as these were the commands of Moses, not God, it was considered permissible to edit them. (Ref. 13 p.156). Thus the Passover commands of God in Exodus 12, Numbers 9 and 28 and Leviticus 23 must always take precedence over Deuteronomy 16. Likewise the feast of Unleavened Bread commands of God in Exodus 12, 13, 23 and 34 must take precedence over Deuteronomy 16. Concerning the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths, it follows that Leviticus 23v33/43 must take precedence over Deuteronomy 12, 14 and 16v13/16. In view of the practice of Churches of God in applying some provisions of Deuteronomy 16, in relation to the feast of Tabernacles, the writer plans to write a separate article on this subject.

The rebuilding of Jerusalem, temple, city and wall, ended with the ceremony of the dedication of the wall, (the anointing), which was carried out just prior to Nehemiah's return to King Artaxerxes in 434 BC. Using the terminology of Daniel 9v24, (Holy Bible - Ref.4 - RSV), we also find that at this time under the guidance of Ezra and Nehemiah the people of Jerusalem attempted to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin and atone for their iniquity by entering into a written covenant with God to keep the Law. Ezra also finalised, (sealed up), both Old Testament vision, (perception) and prophets, (prophecy).

See revised Schedules "C" and "D" attached.

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Kings of Persia and Biblical and Related Important Events
In Chronological Order

Annexure "D"

Names of Kings	Important Events
1.Cyrus II	539 BC - Babylon conquered. - Decree releasing the Jews to rebuild the House of God at Jerusalem. (Ezra 1v1&v2).
	c539/538 BC - Sheshbazzar arrives in in Jerusalem and lays the foundation of the Temple. (Ezra 1v11 & 5v16) - 529 BC - Death of Cyrus.
2.Darius the Mede	539/537 - Viceroy of Cyrus II. (Daniel 5v30, Daniel Chapter) (6, Daniel 9v1 & Daniel 11v1)
3.Darius the Persian	522 BC - Succeeds Cambyses as King.
	521 BC - Haggai (1v1) and Zechariah (1v1) receive the word of God to prophesy. - Darius confirms the decree of Cyrus to build the House of God. (Ezra 6v7).
	c520 BC - Erection of the Behistun Rock Inscription.
	517 BC - Temple completed under Zerubbabel and Joshua (Jeshua). (Ezra 6v15).
	c517/516 BC - Babylonian rebellion and its destruction by Darius and his son and viceroy Xerxes.
Xerxes (Ahasuerus)	486 BC - Death of Darius.
	486 BC - Succeeds Darius.
	484 BC - Vashti deposed as Queen. (Esther1v3 & 1v12 & 1v19).
	480 BC - Esther made Queen (Esther 2v16/17).
Artaxerxes	465 BC - Death of Xerxes
	465 BC - Succeeds Xerxes as King
	459 BC - Ezra to Jerusalem to teach the law. (Ezra 7v7/8&v10).
	446 BC - Nehemiah to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. (Nehemiah 2v1&v6)
	? - Walls of Jerusalem completed. (Nehemiah 7v1).
	434 BC - The dedication ceremony re the completion of the walls of Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 12v27/43 & see 13v6).
	c434 BC - The finalisation of the Old Testament by Ezra.

(Daniel.cro)

DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 1 (Continued)

The Biblical, Prophetic and Historical Background

(iv) Under the Protection of the Persians and Medes

(a) The Symbolism of Daniel

"And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh." (KJV - Daniel 7v5).

This beast, like unto a bear, had two sides like any other bear. The one side represented the Medes and the other side the Persians. Earlier, the Medes had been raised up above the Persians but at the time of the arrival of the bear in it's biblical context, the Persian side had risen up above the Medes.

This position is also indicated in Daniel 8v3.

"Then I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns and the two horns were high ; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last."

This symbolism of the rams is specifically explained to Daniel:-

"The ram which you sawest having two horns are the kings, <kingdoms>, of Media and Persia. (Daniel 8v20). <Brackets inserted by this writer>.

There are only two references in the bible to the word "ribs", once in Daniel 7v5 and once in Genesis 2v21.

Genesis 2v21 and v22 read:- "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;" "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man."

It becomes clear then that the three ribs referred to in Daniel 7v5 must relate to the descendants of Adam and Eve, in this case to the three ruling families of the Persians and Medes which are shown on Annexure "A"; the House of Arbaces, the House of Deioeces and the House of Achaemenes.

Daniel 8v4 predicts the expansion of the Persian/Median Empire and that it would become great.

Dr Hoeh points out that the history of the kingdom of the Mitanni is, in fact, the history of the Medes and Midianites in the ninth and tenth centuries before the present era. (Ref.5 Vol. 1 p.371/372).

(b) A Last Look at Cyrus

Before briefly summarising the remarkable way in which God used Cyrus and his family to carry out his plans, a few more facts about this outstanding man Cyrus need to be noted.

Xenophon, the Greek historian who made a study of the life of Cyrus, records a God given key which accounts for his wise statesmanship! (Ref. 16 Vol. 2 p.393).

"Cyrus is not of the sort to make money for himself; he takes more pleasure in giving than in keeping."

What a different world this would be if leaders round the globe followed this golden rule!

Herodotus, another Greek historian, records that Cyrus died in battle against the Massagetae. (Ref.8 - Book 1 Clio - penultimate paragraph of p.79.) Xenophon, however, records the peaceful death of Cyrus. (Ref 16 Vol 2 p.439). The Masonic Chronicler, (Ref. 12 p.175), records the peaceful death of Cyrus in the presence of Daniel.

The Sacia were allies of Cyrus as were a further group called the "Magadidae". It is quite possible that these Magadidae of Xenophon were in fact the Massagetae. Certainly the Sacia and Massagetae were some of the lost tribes of Israel and as such were the allies of Cyrus. There would be no cause for Cyrus to attack them. It does seem that Herodotus had the wrong information for his report.

(c) How God used the Family of Cyrus

The summary below briefly explains how God used the family of Cyrus to free, protect and help the Jews and to carry out His prophecies. As extensive references have been given elsewhere, these are not repeated below but the specific references of new items mentioned below are indicated.

(1) Cyrus the Great

-539 BC Babylon conquered.

-539 BC Decree of Cyrus releasing the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and to lay the foundation of the Temple.

c-539/538 Sheshbazzar arrives in Jerusalem and lays the foundation of the Temple

(2) Darius the Mede (Father-in-law of Cyrus)

-539 BC Daniel made first prince over Babylon.
(Daniel 5v31 and 6v1&2)

- (2) Darius the Mede (Father-in-law of Cyrus) (Continued)
 -539 Daniel delivered from the lions, (Daniel 6v22),
 and Darius' decree that all men in his kingdom to
 tremble and fear the God of Daniel. (Daniel 6v26).
 -539/538 Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius the
 Mede
 -539/529 and Cyrus of Persia. (Daniel 6v28)
- (3) Darius I the Persian (Son-in-law of Cyrus)
 -521BC Haggai and Zechariah receive the word of the
 Lord to prophesy.
 Darius confirms the decree of Cyrus to build the
 House of God.
 c-520 Darius arranges for the erection of the Behistun
 Rock inscription to commemorate his victories. This
 inscription enables modern research workers to
 identify the lost ten tribe Israelites during the
 time of Darius. (Read the full description by Dr
 Raymond McNair in his article in the January 1995
 issue of "The World Ahead". (Ref.19 p.8).
 -517 BC Temple at Jerusalem completed by Zerubbabel
 and Joshua.
 c-517/516 Babylonian rebellion and the destruction of
 Babylon by Darius and his viceroy and son Xerxes.
- (4) Xerxes I (The biblical Ahasuerus - grandson of Cyrus)
 -480 BC Esther made Queen of Persia.
 Invasion of Greece began. Battle of Thermopylae.
 Athens destroyed. Xerxes loses his fleet in the
 battle of Salamis.*
 -479 BC Losses of Xerxes at the battle of Plataea
 and naval battle of Mycale.*
 (* See Ref.6 p.151)

See also Daniel 11v2:-

"And now will I show thee the truth. Behold,
 there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia;
 <after Cyrus>, and the fourth shall be far
 richer than they all: and by his strength
 through his riches he shall stir up all against
 the realm of Grecia"

As Mr Armstrong points out in his book, (Ref.20
 p.2), after Cyrus, there were Cambyses, pseudo
 -Smerdis, Darius and then Xerxes. It was Xerxes
 who stirred up Grecia but it was not until 330
 BC that the Persian Empire fell to Alexander the
 Great.

- 475/474 BC Haman's plot to destroy the Jews
 throughout the Persian Empire is foiled by
 Esther and Mordecai. (Esther 3v7 and 7v10)
 (See also the article by Jeffrey H. Patton in
 "The World Ahead" - Ref.21 p.14/15)
- (5) Artaxerxes (Great grandson of Cyrus)
 Artaxerxes was the son of Xerxes. It is not known
 whether he was the son of Esther.
 -459 BC Artaxerxes issues decree to enable Ezra to
 teach the law in Jerusalem.

(5) Artaxerxes (Great grandson of Cyrus) (Continued).

-446 BC Artaxerxes authorises Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls.

-434 BC Walls of Jerusalem dedicated, (anointed); the people of Judah enter into a written covenant to "finish the transgression, and make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity"; Ezra finalised or arranged to seal up the old testament including vision and prophecy.

Before leaving the Kings of Persia and Media, look back on Annexure "A" to the maternal great grandfather of Cyrus. He was Cyaxeres 1 (Cyaxares), (624-584 BC). It was this king that destroyed Assyria with his allies the Babylonians and Scythians with the destruction of Nineveh in 612 BC. The fleeing Assyrians were chased west into Syria, where their last king, Ashuruballit, disappeared from history. (Ref. 6 p.147).

The Scythians that are referred to in this context had come from the east where Assyria had dumped them in 660 BC being Ethiopians, Egyptians and people from the Hindu-Kush Mountains in Bactria. (Ref. 5 Vol. 1 p.335). For 28 years after the capture of Nineveh, these Scythians made life intolerable for the Medes but Cyaxeres drove them out just before the end of his reign. (Ref. 5 Vol. 1 p.332 & p.342/3 - see also Ref.6 p147/148). These Scythians went east again and their leaders appear in Indian and Japanese history as sons of the "Queen of Heaven". (Ref. 5 Vol. 1 p.342/346).

(v) Reconsiderations

As the prophecies of Daniel 9v24/27 unfold, so it becomes necessary to revise the plan of the work. The headings previously planned as (v) The Persian Empire replaced by Alexander and his successors and (vi) The rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem will now come under one main heading with subsections as follows:-

(v) 434 Troublesome Years (Daniel 9v25 NKJV)

(a) Persian Decline	434 - 330 BC
(b) The Grecian Era	330 - 142 BC
(c) The Independent State	142 - 63 BC
(d) Roman control	63 - 1 AD
(e) Rebuilding of Jerusalem	434 - 1 AD
(f) The Great Apostasy	434 - 1 AD

After this, the prophecy leads on to Daniel 9v26&v27 which will be examined in Part II of this article.

(To be continued)

(Persians.med)

Revised List of Kings of the Medes and Persians

(All dates are BC)

Annexure "A"

<u>Medes</u>		<u>Persians</u>		
<u>House of Arbaces</u>		<u>House of Deioces</u>		<u>House of Achaemenes</u>
Arbaces	816-788			
Mandaucēs	788-768			
Sosarmus	768-738			
Artycas	738-708			
Arbianes	708-686			
Artaeus	686-646	Deioces	699-646	
Artynes	646-624	Phraortes	646-624	Achaemenes (Haxamanish)
Astibaras	624-584	Cyaxeres I	624-584	Teispes
Aspadas	584-549	Astyages	584-549	Cyrus I
or (584-546)				Ariaramnes
also known as				
Astyigas or				
Astyages				
Darius		(Daughter) - m -	Cambyses I	Arsames
the Mede		Mandane		
(Cyaxeres II)				
<549-538>				
or <546-538>				
(Daughter)				
Cassandane - - - - - m - -			Cyrus II	Hystaspes
(2nd wife - Amytis or)			the Great	
(Nitetis)			558-529	
			[559-529]	
			(1) Cambyses II	
<King of Babylon>			<537-530>	
<under Cyrus>				
<King of Persia>			[529-522]	
			(2) Smerdis	
<Pseudo Smerdis 522>				
			(3) Tanoaxares	
			(4) (Daughter)	
			Atossa - m -	Darius I
				[522-486]
				Xerxes I
				[486-465]
				Artaxerxes
				I [465-425]
				Xerxes II
				[425-424]
				Darius II
				[424-405]
				Artaxerxes
				II [405-359]
				III [359-338]
				Arses
				[338-336]
				Darius III
				[336-330]

The Conquest of the Persian Empire
by Alexander the Great [330]

Notes

1. The information on the Houses of Arbaces and Deioces comes from Ref. 5 Vol.1 p.327/332.
2. The information on the House of Achaemenes comes from Ref. 6 p.148/152 but the names of the line from Ariaramnes to Hystaspes comes from Ref. 7 p.119/131.
3. Dates marked in square brackets thus [] come from Ref. 6. Dates in brackets thus < > have been computed by this writer. All other dates on the chart above come from the work of Dr Hoeh Ref.5 Vol.1 p327/332.
4. The daughter of Astyages who married Cambyses I was named Mandane (Ref.12 p.151, Ref. 16 Vol. 2 p.457 and Ref. 8. p.42).
5. The information about Cassandane who married Cyrus II comes from Ref. 16 Vol.2 p.403/409/457. See also Ref. 8 p.81 & p.147.
6. Dr Hoeh, (Ref.5 Vol.1 p.330), points out that Darius the Mede is mentioned in Daniel 5v31/9v1. The Greeks called him Cyaxeres II. The Hebrews called his father Aspadas, Ahasuerus. It becomes obvious that Cyrus appointed Darius as the king or viceroy of the Chaldeans or over Babylon and "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian". (Daniel 6v28). The reign of Darius the Mede in Babylon began when Cyrus the II took Babylon. [539BC]. Here he reigned for two years. (Ref. 12 p.169). After the death of Darius the Mede, Cambyses II the son of Cyrus was made King of Babylon during the last 8 year's of his father's reign. (Ref. 7 p.136).
7. It is ironic but neither Xenophon nor his translator, nor Herodotus and his translator, understood the exact relationship of Cyaxeres II, (Darius the Mede), to Cyrus, nor would this writer understand it except for the comments of Dr Hoeh quoted above. Darius the Mede was in fact the father-in-law of Cyrus II and was the King of Media which kingdom he handed to Cyrus II as a dowry with his daughter in marriage as he had no male heir. (Ref.16 Vol.2 p.403 & p.409). Xenophon also records that Cyrus gave a palace and official headquarters to Darius in Babylon, thus confirming the biblical power of Darius indicated in the book of Daniel! (Ref. 16 Vol. 2 p.403). The details of the children of Cyrus II and Cassandane are included on the genealogical chart of the kings prepared by the translator of Xenophon, (Ref.16 Vol. 2 p.457). This information comes from the statements in the Cyropaedia and from the clay cylinder found in the ruins of his palace. It appears that the second wife of Cyrus, the Egyptian Amytis or Nitetis, did not have any children. (Ref. 16 Vol. 2p. p403). (Ref.8 p.147).

Notes (Continued)

8. Cambyses II and his brother Smerdis died without issue. A pseudo Smerdis, (or Bardiya), stole the throne but Darius I overthrew the impostor and became King. (Ref.7 p.138/9). Darius married Atossa, sister of Cambyses and Xerxes I was their son. (Ref. 16 Vol.2 p457). This marriage explains why Xerxes I was called Ahasuerus by the Jews. He was descended from Darius the Mede whose father's name was Aspadas but who was called Ahasuerus by the Jews. Obviously he also had the name Aspadas, hence he was named Ahasuerus in the Bible. (See The Book of Esther).

Revised List of the Kings of the Medes and Persians
Included in the Bible

<u>Kings</u>	<u>Bible Name (KJV)</u>	<u>Annexure "B" Bible Reference</u>
(i) Cyrus II the Great 558-529 BC Conquered Babylon 539 BC	Cyrus Cyrus Cyrus Cyrus	2 Chronicles-36v22/23 Ezra-all references Isaiah-44v28 & 45v1 Daniel-1v21,6v28, & 10v1
(ii) Darius the Mede Son of Ahasuerus Viceroy of Chaldea (Babylon) under Cyrus from 539 - 538 BC	Darius	Daniel -all references to Darius
(iii) Darius the Persian - 522-486	Darius	Ezra - all references to Darius Nehemiah - 12 v 22 Haggai - all references to Darius Zechariah - all references to Darius
(iv) Xerxes 486-465 BC	Ahasuerus	Ezra 4v6 Esther all references to Ahasuerus
(v) Artaxerxes 465-425 BC	Artaxerxes	Ezra & Nehemiah - all references to Artaxerxes

(Medes.per)

- 1/4 The biblical references previously included here have now been transferred to Annexure "C (2)". In addition, the New Revised Standard Version publication information has been included on that schedule.
5. Compendium of World History by Herman L. Hoeh - 1962.
 6. The Penguin Encyclopedia of Ancient Civilizations - Edited by Arthur Cotterell - (Published in Paperback by the Penguin Books Group, England, U.S.A., Australia, Canada and New Zealand. - 1988).
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28 April 1995

(Daniel.ref)

DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 2 Daniel 9 Verses 24 to 27 (Continued)

(1) The Close Interrelationship of Verses 24 to 27

The close interrelationship of verses 24 to 27 of Daniel 9 becomes more evident as one studies the wording and the revelation God gives us through the bible of the prophecies recorded therein. All four verses are concerned with the restoration of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah, the coming of the Messiah, his new covenant and his death, and the destruction and desolation of Jerusalem once again with the consequent exile of its peoples.

Verses 24 and 25 when related to reliable historical dates both point to the significance of the date 1BC/1AD. Verse 26, like verse 25 refers to a period of 62 weeks and both verses refer to the Messiah. The troublesome times mentioned in verse 25 in fact continue after certain specific events take place, i.e., the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Both verses 26 and 27 refer to the death of the Messiah, in verse 26 to being cut off and in verse 27 to confirm the covenant and the cessation of the sacrifice and the oblation. Verse 26 and verse 27 both refer to another desolation of the city, i.e., Jerusalem.

(2) The Significance of 1BC/1AD

We have seen that Daniel 9 verse 24 and 25 point to the restoration of Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah after 490 jubilee years (539 actual years) giving rise to the significant years of 1BC/1AD? Can we use the bible and reliable historical dates to clarify this position?

Luke 2v1, (KJV), records "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Verses 4 to 7 of Luke 2 record the birth of Jesus in the city of Bethlehem at that time.

Luke 3v1, (KJV), records "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, v2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. v3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;"

The actual recorded dates of the period of the reigns of these two Roman Emperors are well known.

The Roman historian Suetonius even records the exact dates of the birth and death of Augustus. He was born before

sunrise on 23 September 63 BC. (Ref. 26 p.56). He died on 19 August 14 AD about 3p.m.. (Ref. 26 p. 110).

Tiberius was the successor to Augustus and so he reigned from 19 August 14 AD immediately upon the death of Augustus. [Augustus reigned 31 BC to AD 14. Tiberius reigned from AD 14 to AD 37.](Ref. 26 opposite p.328).

Suetonius, records the last "lustrum" of Augustus. (Ref. 26 p.108). The lustrum was the ceremony to effectively finalise the Roman budget, after a census had been taken, for the next five year period. At the lustrum in 14 AD, Augustus was prompted by the action of an eagle and lightning to believe he would not live to carry out the budget vows and so he "..... ordered Tiberius, who was acting as his colleague in the Censorship, to read out the vows for the next five year period; because, though having composed and recorded them on a tablet, he would not make himself responsible for vows payable after his death." (Ref 26 p.108).

Thus we know that a lustrum was carried out in 14 AD, after a census had been taken, by Augustus and Tiberius. If the lustrum was held every 5 years, these would have been held in 14 AD, 9 AD, 4 AD and 2 BC. However, Kepler states that Augustus did not stick to a five year period. (Ref.15 p.358). In "The Annuals of Imperial Rome", by Tacitus, in the "Key to Technical Terms" under "Censors", (Ref.32 p.402), it records that censors were originally appointed every four years, then every five years to list the citizens. If a census was carried out in 1 BC in respect of the next four year period and the census was then changed to five year periods, then this would coincide with the census in 4 AD, 9 AD and 14 AD. This aspect of the problem needs further investigation.

Now it is known that Tiberius became Caesar in 14 AD after the death of Augustus. The fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius would then be in the period between 19 August 29 AD to 18 August 30 AD. In this period John the baptist came into Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. (Luke 3v1 to v3).

Luke 3v23, (KJV), records that immediately after Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist "And Jesus himself began to be about 30 years of age," . The writer believes that this text should read "And Jesus himself was about to begin to be thirty years of age,".

The other versions of the bible that have been used in this article, (Biblical Refs. i to v), have the following interpretations:-

- (ii). Luke 3v23 NKJV - "Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age,"
- (iii). Luke 3v23 NIV - "Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry."
- (iv). Luke 3v23 RSV - "Jesus, when he began his ministry,

was about thirty years of age,"
(v). Luke 3v23 NRSV - "Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work."

John the baptist was six months older than Jesus. (See Luke 1v13 to v36). It would appear therefore that Jesus was baptised about six months after John started his mission. Assuming that John was also about thirty years old when he began his mission and that he started his mission in August 29 AD, in the beginning of the 15th year of Tiberius. Six months after that date would bring us to February 30 AD.

Now if Jesus was born in 1 BC as is indicated above, then he would be 30 years old in the year 30 AD. (His first birthday being in 1 AD and his 30th birthday in 30 AD).

(3). Verses 26 and 27 of Daniel 9

Mr Herbert W Armstrong, in his booklet "The Resurrection was not on a Sunday" shows that the crucifixion was on a Wednesday, the 14th of Ahib, Passover day and the burial was late that afternoon. Three days and three nights later, late on the Saturday afternoon was the resurrection. (Ref. 27 p.10/11).

It was evident that Mr Armstrong accepted the traditional period of Christ's ministry as 3 and 1/2 years. (Ref. 27 p.12). In his booklet "Pagan Holidays - or God's Holy Days - Which?", (Ref. 28 page 31 and Ref. 29 p.22), he computed the day of Pentecost to be June 17 AD 31 based on this assumption.

The writer of this article believes Mr Armstrong in fact correctly computed the first Christian Pentecost as 17 June 31 AD but the period of Christ's ministry was only 434 days, (threescore and two weeks), as indicated in Daniel 9v26.

Daniel 9v26 reads:- (KJV), "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself,...."

Verse 26 in this chapter reads as follows in the other versions of the bible.

(ii). (NKJV) "And after the sixty two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;.."

(iii). (NIV) "After the sixty-two 'sevens' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing."

(iv). (RSV) "And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off, and shall have nothing:..."

(v). (NRSV) "And after sixty-weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing,...."

It was Professor C.A.L. Totten at the turn of the century who first propounded the idea that the Lord's ministry could only be "the acceptable year of the Lord" based on

Isaiah 61v2 and Luke 4v19. (Ref. 30 p.v/vi).

Isaiah 61v1&2 (KJV) reads as follows:-

v1. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; v2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;"

After Jesus was baptised by John the baptist, (Luke 3v21), he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted for forty days. (Luke 4v1 & v2). Then he came to Nazareth and went to the synagogue on the sabbath day and stood up to read. (Luke 4v16). He was given the book of the prophet Esaias, (Isaiah), and he found the place where it was written:-

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4v18&19).

Jesus closed the book, gave it to the minister and sat down. The eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. Then Jesus said "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." (v21).

Some may argue that the 62 weeks of Daniel 9v26 are the same as the 62 weeks of Daniel 9v25. This would only be confusing the rebuilding of Jerusalem by 1BC/1AD with the death of the Messiah immediately after that date! No, Daniel 9v26 can only be referring to the ministry of the Messiah, the Christ Jesus, which lasted 434 days. "This day for a day principle" is the same as the "day for a day principle" in Daniel 9v27. Without the passages of Isaiah 61v1&2 and Luke 4v18/19/21, the 62 weeks of Daniel 9v26 would have no meaning and Daniel 9v26 would be impossible to solve. The bible once again interprets the bible!

The writer does not have available for use the Hebrew calendar for the year 31 AD. This calendar was no doubt available to Mr Armstrong. He records that Pentecost in that year was Sunday June 17, 31 AD. (Ref. 28 p.31).

Working back from this date we find that the crucifixion would have been on Wednesday 25 April 31 AD. Taking this date back 434 days to the date of the baptism of Jesus would mean that it was on 14 February 30 AD. Now we know that the shepherds were in the fields when Jesus was born. (Luke 2v8 to v18). This could only have been after February as the sheep were grazed in the fields for 8 months from March to October. (Ref.15 p.367).

This shows that Jesus was born in the northern hemisphere spring of 1 BC, probably in March. When he was baptized in February 30 AD he was about to begin to be 30 years old.

(4) Period of the Ministry

Professor Totten quotes from the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, (Ref.30 p.viii).

"Setting aside, as too arbitrary, schemes which would, with some of the early fathers, compress the whole ministry into a little over a single year.....there remains the choice between a two-years' and a three-years' ministry. Both have able advocates".

Strange how man keeps trying to tell God and his son Jesus who and what they are and how long the ministry of Jesus should have been instead of seeking the answers in the bible!

Professor Totten concludes, after his work in harmonising the scriptures of the New Testament, that Jesus' ministry recorded in the bible only covered two passovers, the one at the beginning of his work and the second at his death. (Ref.30 p.xvii & p.xviii).

Totten did some remarkable calculations to show what he believed to be the correct interpretation of Daniel's Prophecies in Chapter 9 v 24 to 27 but he did not have the advantage of being able to interpret the bible in accordance with the method revealed to Mr Armstrong. In fact he probably set the pattern which led to a great deal of confusion about the date of the birth of Christ. (See Ref. 30 p.xvi to xviii).

(5) What about Cyrenius?

It is first of all necessary to study what the bible has to say about Cyrenius in Luke 2v2

- (i)(KJV) "(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)
- (ii)(NKJV) " This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria."
- (iii)(NIV) " (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
- (iv)(RSV) "This was the first enrolment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria."
- (v)(NRSV) "This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria."

Again the KJV sets the pattern and quite clearly shows that this method of taxing was first introduced under Cyrenius - it was not the census which took place when Jesus was born.

Originally, Cyrenius, (whose Roman name was senator P. Sulpicius Quirinius), was known for the census he carried out in the area in AD 6 and 7. Later Kepler records that a fragment of a Roman inscription was discovered at Antioch that recorded that he had been in Syria on a mission for Augustus during the period 10 BC to 7 BC! This inscription recorded that he carried out a military operation for Augustus at that time but it does not mention a census. (Ref. 15 p.358). The fact is that it showed that Quirinius was in Syria between 10 BC and 7 BC when he probably carried out the original census that Luke refers to.

(6) What about Herod?

Luke 1v5 shows that Herod was king of Judaea when John the baptist was conceived. Matthew 2v1 records that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king.

This same Herod, (Matthew 2v7), inquired of the wise men about Jesus. He was the Herod who put the children in Bethlehem to death. (Matthew 2v16).

If Herod the king was not around when Jesus was born, then there is something very wrong with the bible! Why then do most of the records give the date of death of Herod as 4 BC?

The answer is because most mainstream authors writing about the bible believe that Jesus' ministry was for a period of 3 and 1/2 years! A typical example can be found in NIV Atlas of the Bible, (Ref. 25 p.166), "When Jesus began to minister at about the age of thirty, (ca. AD 26),...." . From this computation working backwards, you will arrive at a birth date of 4 BC! Herod died not long after the birth of Christ hence his death is calculated as having taken place in 4BC! Another example of the birth of Jesus calculated as 5/4 BC with a harmony of the bible based on this date can be found in the NKJV of the bible, (Ref.ii p.1847/1854).

Tacitus, the Roman historian, took a considerable interest in the Jews and his knowledge of Jewish history and customs is surprising even though he completely misunderstood their religion and culture. In his "The Histories", Book Five, Chapter on "The Jews", (Ref.31 p.271/279), this is what he writes about Herod:-

"At Herod's death, without waiting for the imperial decision, a certain Simon usurped the title of king. He was dealt with by the Governor of Syria, Quintilius Varus, while the Jews were disciplined and divided up into three kingdoms ruled by Herod's sons." (Ref. 31 p.276)

The three sons of Herod are mentioned in the bible in Luke 3v1. (See above on page 1). The translator or editor of "The Histories " in a footnote on page 276 states that

Varus was governor Syria 6-4 BC! This date is also based on the assumption that the ministry of Jesus lasted three and a half years. Daniel 9 v24 & v25, with the date of the command of Cyrus releasing the Jews established at 539 BC, clearly indicate that the birth of Jesus was in 1 BC. The death of Herod could only have taken place shortly after the death of Jesus . Varus was the Governor of Syria at this time as confirmed by Tacitus and that must have been in 1 BC or 1 AD.

(7) Summary

The prophecies of Daniel 9 v24/25 show that the year of the birth,(not the baptism), of the Messiah would be in the 539th year after Cyrus gave the command to release the Jews, (70 weeks or 490 jubilee years = 539 actual years), that is in 1 BC. This date would also coincide with the period of 434 years during which Jerusalem would again be rebuilt. (Daniel 9 v25). Daniel 9 v26 and v27 show that the ministry of the Messiah would be 434 days and that in the last week of that period, the Messiah would establish the new covenant and that he would be cut off, (killed) in the middle of the week, causing the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. Then would follow the desolation of Jerusalem once again.

The combination of the following information gives some startling results:-

The date of the command of Cyrus mentioned above, the provisions of Daniel 9v24/25, the information in Matthew and Luke concerning the conception of John and Jesus resulting in a six month difference at birth, the baptism of Jesus being determined at about thirty years of age, the information given about Augustus, Tiberius, Herod and his sons, the provisions of Isaiah 61v1/2 and Luke 4v18/21 read in conjunction with Daniel 9v26/27, the grazing season of the shepherds, the Harmony of the Gospels by Totten, the establishment of the date of Pentecost, the crucifixion and resurrection by Armstrong from the Jewish calendar of 31 AD.

All of this information enables one to adjust back from the date of Pentecost to determine the year of birth of Jesus, the period of his life, the exact baptism, period of his ministry, death and resurrection as shown below:-

Birth	Spring of Northern Hemisphere 1 BC
Baptism	14 February 30 AD
Ministry	434 days from 14 Feb. 30 AD (365 & 69 days)
Crucifixion	Wed. 25 Apr. 31 AD (69 days from 14.2.31)
Resurrection	Sat. 28 Apr. 31 AD (3 days & nights)
Pentecost	Sun. June 17 AD 31 AD (50 days from Sun. 29)
	(Apr. AD 31)
(To be Continued)	(Daniel.926)

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30 June 1995

(Daniel.926)

DANIEL
The Beloved Servant of God

Part 2 - Daniel 9 Verses 24 to 27

(1) Annexure E

The verses of Daniel Chapter 9 from 24 to 27 are shown on the attached Annexure E. Each verse is shown in five different versions of the bible, that is:-

- i. The King James Version - abbreviated KJV.
- ii. The New King James Version - abbreviate NKJV.
- iii. The New international Version -abbreviate NIV
- iv. The Revised Standard Version - abbreviated RSV.
- v. The New Revised Standard Version -abbreviated NRSV

The Annexure E also gives details of the Publishers of the different versions of the bible.

(2) Messiah or Anointed

It will be noted that only two of the biblical versions in verses 25 and 26 refer to "Messiah", (they are the KJV and the NKJV), whereas the other versions record the "Anointed".

Messiah means the anointed, so what is the problem! The word anointed in the bible is used in the context of kings of Israel who were anointed, i.e. the anointment of David as King.(1 Chronicles 11v3). The word is also used in relation to the anointment of priests, (Numbers 3v3), and the tabernacle. (Leviticus 8v10). Even Cyrus is called the Lord's "anointed". (Isaiah 45v1). Jesus was anointed to preach the gospel to the meek and the poor. (Isaiah 61v1 and Luke 4v18).

However, the word Messiah in the old testament is only recorded twice and it is that found in Daniel 9v25 and 9v26. (KJV and NKJV). In the new testament the equivalent Messias is also only found twice, in John 1v41 and John 4v25. (KJV and NKJV). This word was only given to Daniel, the beloved servant of the Lord and to John the beloved disciple of Jesus.

The new testament meaning is clearly given in the KJV and the NKJV:-

KJV - John 1v41

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

KJV - John 4v25

The woman saith to him, I know the Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things."

NKJV - John 1v41

He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).

NKJV - John 4v25

The woman said to Him, "I know that the Messiah is coming"(who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will tell us all things".

Clearly, the Messiah or Messias can only refer to Christ and not some other anointed prince, ruler or priest.

(3) Choice of Bible

In the introduction of Part 1 of this article, the author indicated that he had chosen to use the Revised Standard Version of the bible because it appeared clearer than other versions of the bible particularly when related to verses 24 to 27 of Daniel 9. However, as indicated above, the terminology of the King James Version now appears to be more consistent when the old testament is related to the new testament and probably it is less influenced by human reason than other versions. These comments also apply to the Revised King James Version. Consequently the KJV and NKJV will be mainly used but clarification of the wording can still be helped by reference to other versions.

(4) Daniel 9v24

As reported in the Part 1 of this article the first rebuilding of the temple, city and wall of Jerusalem, (the most holy city), ended with the dedication or anointing of the wall which was carried out just prior to Nehemiah's return to King Artaxerxes in 434 BC. (In the thirtieth year of King Artaxerxes). (See also Nehemiah 5v14 and Schedule "D" of the earlier March 1995 article).

The words in verse 24 which appear as "most holy" in the KJV, NKJV and NIV versions are rendered as "most holy place" in the RSV and NRSV versions. Clearly this comment is about Jerusalem and the temple not the Messiah.

At this time, under the guidance of Ezra and Nehemiah, the people of Jerusalem attempted to "finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity by entering into a written covenant with God to keep the law.(Nehemiah 9v38 & 10v28/39). About this time Ezra also finalised, closed up or arranged to seal up the old testament including vision and prophecy. The word "vision" here is not so much the word "perception" that I used previously to describe its meaning but the visions or mental pictures given to prophets such as Daniel. (See Daniel 2v19, 4v13, 7v7, 8v1 and so on). The underlines above are the key words in Daniel 9v24 in the KJV.

In verse 24, the phrase "and to bring in everlasting righteousness" has not yet been dealt with.

What does this mean? Let the bible explain:-

"Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
and thy law is the truth". (Psalm 119v142).
"The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting;
give me understanding, and I shall live. (Psalm 119v144)
"And I know his commandment is life everlasting;
whatsoever I speak therefore , even as the father said
unto me, so speak I". (John12v50).
"No man can come to me, except the father which hath sent
me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."
John 6v44).

Only through the birth of Jesus Christ and his subsequent
baptism and crucifixion, can everlasting righteousness be
brought in.

(5) The Context of Daniel 9v24/27

The historical context of the prophecy given to Daniel is
clearly established in Daniel 9v1 - that is the prayer to
God by Daniel was made in the first year of Darius the
Mede. It has previously been shown that this was in 539
BC, the first year of the reign of Cyrus after the
conquest of the Babylonians. At this time Darius the Mede
ruled Babylon as viceroy of Cyrus.

Daniel 9v21 shows that while he was still praying at this
time, Gabriel came to him at the time of the evening
oblation. In verse 23, Gabriel explains that at the
beginning of Daniel's supplications, the commandment came
forth,.... What commandment? If we turn to verse 25, it
explains "that from the going forth of the commandment to
restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince
shall be seven weeks,....." There can be no doubt
about this, the commandment of Cyrus went forth at the
beginning of the supplications by Daniel.

God did not wait to hear his full supplication as He knew
what Daniel was praying and fasting for and He immediately
caused Cyrus to act. Why? Because Daniel was greatly
beloved by the Lord.

This commandment went out on the first year of Cyrus king
of Persia. (2 Chronicles 36v22, Ezra 1v1 and Daniel 9v23).
This was in 539 BC. (Ref.6 p.90, p.139 and p.148).

Should there be any lingering doubt about what command is
referred to, the prophet Isaiah clearly stated Cyrus would
say "Jerusalem, thou shalt be built ", (44v28) and "he
shall build my city", (44v13).

(6) Day for a Year Principle in Biblical Prophecy (Daniel 9v24 & v25)

Mr Herbert Armstrong has shown that each day of a
prophetic year is one year in fulfillment. (See Ref.17
p.123/128 and Ref.18 p.48/50).

This principle is also shown in the RSV of Daniel 9v24 where the "seventy weeks" is translated as "seventy weeks of years", i.e. the seventy weeks multiplied by 7 gives 490 days as 490 years.

Thus for verse 24, 490 years are decreed. What about the seven weeks, (49 years), in verse 25, "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince"?

The first part of verse 25 reads; "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks," If this time period was taken literally, it would mean that the Messiah would have come to earth by 490 BC. ($539 - 49 = 490$).

Should one then add the sixty two weeks mentioned in the second part of verse 25 to the seven weeks? This would mean that the birth of Christ would be in 56 BC. ($539 - [434 + 49 = 483] = 56$).

In verse 25 in the RSV, there is a full-stop after the words "seven weeks" and the period of sixty two weeks will be more clearly seen as relating to a different context.

No, it seems clear that the two time periods of 490 years and 49 years must go together. The total of these two figures is 539 years and deducting 539 years from the time period 539 BC brings one to the beginning of the year 1AD!

In ancient Israel, Leviticus 25v8 established the time period of 49 years and this is followed by the 50th jubilee year of liberty throughout all the land.

By adding the 49 years to the 490 years, this indicates that Christ's return would occur on the 49th jubilee year after the command by Cyrus. It is hard to imagine a more appropriate year for the coming of the Messiah to earth, than on a jubilee year.

The second part of verse 25 (KJV) reads " and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troubled times." There are a number of variations in this part of the verse; The RSV has this as a separate sentence and refers to the rebuilding of "squares and moat"; the NIV refers to the rebuilding of streets with a trench and the NRSV to streets and a moat! All clearly indicate that this period refers to the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

What then is the significance of the sixty two weeks or 434 years? The rebuilding of Jerusalem by the exiles from Babylon was completed by 434 BC. The prophecy in verse 25 of Daniel 9 indicates that it would be rebuilt again during a period of 434 years. This rebuilding period would then end in or by 1AD. ($434\text{BC} - 434\text{ years} = 1\text{AD}$).

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DANIEL
The Ninth Chapter - Verses 24 to 27

Annexure E

Verse 24

(i) KJV

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

(ii) NKJV

Seventy weeks are determined For your people and your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteous, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

(iii) NIV

Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

(iv) RSV

Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

(v) NRSV

Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

Verse 25

(i) KJV

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troubled times.

(ii) NKJV

Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall Even in troublesome times.

(iii) NIV

Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven sevens, and sixty two sevens. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble

(iv) RSV

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of the anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

(v) NRSV

Know therefore and understand; from the time the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of the anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks; and for sixty two weeks it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.

Verse 26

(i) KJV

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come and shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

(ii) NKJV

And after sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

(iii) NIV

After the sixty-two sevens, the Anointed One will be cut off and have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed

(iv) RSV

And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end shall be war; desolations are decreed.

(v) NRSV

After sixty two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing, and the troops of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. desolations are decreed.

Verse 27

(i) KJV

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall pour upon the desolate.

(ii) NKJV

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering, And on the wing of abominations shall one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.

(iii) NIV

He will confirm a covenant with many for one seven. In the middle of the seven he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of a temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

(iv) RSV

And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week; and for half of the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease; and upon the wing of abomination shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.

(v) NRSV

He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of a week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease; and in their place shall be an abomination that desolates, until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator.

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