

# Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy



R. J. M. I.

By

The Precious Blood of Jesus Christ,  
The Grace of the God of the Holy Catholic Church,  
The Mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
Our Lady of Good Counsel and Crusher of Heretics,  
The Protection of Saint Joseph, Patriarch of the Holy Family,  
The Intercession of Saint Michael the Archangel  
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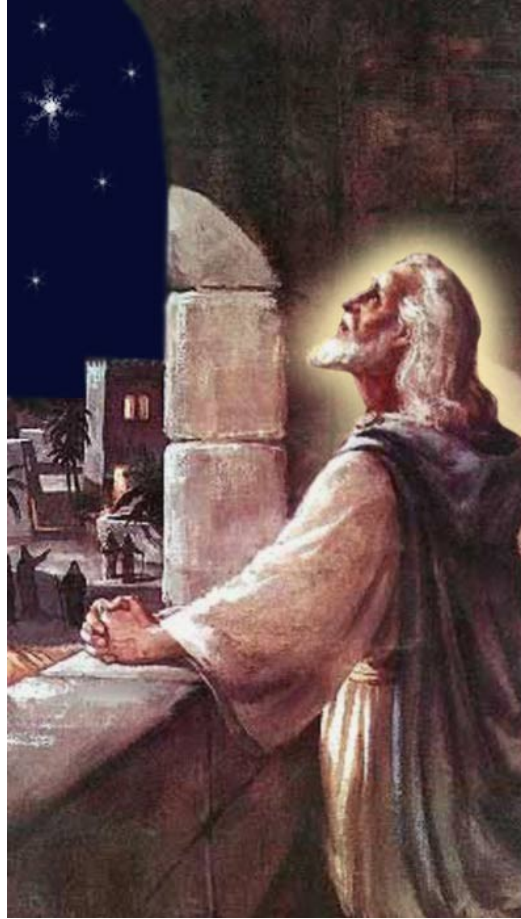
Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

To Jesus through Mary

*Júdica me, Deus, et discérne causam meam de gente non sancta:  
ab hómine iníquo, et dolóso érue me*

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam





“As I was yet speaking in prayer, behold the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, flying swiftly touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice. And he instructed me, and spoke to me, and said: O Daniel, I am now come forth to teach thee, and that thou mightest understand. From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: and I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision.”

(Daniel 9:21-23)

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# Part 1 - The Person of the Prophecy

## The Person of the Prophecy Is Jesus Christ, Who Is God, Man, and Messiah

Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is recorded in the *Book of Daniel*, chapter 9, Verses 21 to 27:

“As I was yet speaking in prayer, behold the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, flying swiftly touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice. And he instructed me, and spoke to me, and said: O Daniel, I am now come forth to teach thee, and that thou mightest understand. From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: and I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the Holy of holies may be anointed. Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny him shall not be his. And a people with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste, and after the end of the war the appointed desolation. And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end.” (Dan. 9:21-27)

These six power-packed verses tell us that the Person of the prophecy is God, Man, and Messiah. It says that

1. He will finish transgressions;
2. He will end sin;
3. He will abolish iniquity;
4. He will bring everlasting justice;
5. He will fulfill vision and prophecy;
6. He will be called the Holy of holies and thus is God;
7. He will get anointed and thus is a man under the law;
8. He will be called “Christ the prince” and hence is the King of kings;
9. He will be slain;
10. He will be denied by unfaithful Jews;

11. His death by evil Jews causes the destruction of the Second Temple;
12. He will be slain three and one half years into His public ministry;
13. He will end the Old Covenant sacrifices.

All of these things can only be literally applied to the one and only Messiah, who is Jesus Christ. Jesus has already fulfilled most of these prophecies. The rest He will fulfill during His second coming, such as putting an end to *all* transgressions, *all* sins, and *all* iniquities upon the whole face of the earth and thus bring everlasting justice upon the whole face of the new earth. Hence the Person of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is Jesus Christ, who is God, Man, and Messiah. (See my book *Jesus Christ Is God, Man, and Messiah*.)

These six power-packed verses also give the exact time that the Messiah will be anointed and thus begin His public ministry to the exact time of His death 3½ years later. It tells us that from the beginning of the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy to Jesus Christ's baptism by St. John the Baptist is 483 years. And it tells us that from the time of Christ's baptism to His death on the holy Cross is 3½ years.

## Part 2 - The History of the Prophecy

### Daniel Got the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy after Praying for the End of the Seventy-Year Babylonian Exile

#### The prophesied seventy-year Babylonian captivity

After the Northern Kingdom of Israel had been taken into captivity and destroyed by the Assyrians in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Southern Kingdom of Judah was likewise taken into Babylonian captivity in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC and destroyed by the Babylonians in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. The seventy-year Babylonian captivity of Jews from the Southern Kingdom of Judah was prophesied by Jeremiah:

“And all this land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment: and all these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And when the seventy years shall be expired, I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans: and I will make it perpetual desolations.”  
(Jer. 25:11-12)

“For thus saith the Lord: When the seventy years shall begin to be accomplished in Babylon, I will visit you: and I will perform my good word in your favour, to bring you again to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of affliction, to give you an end and patience. And you shall call upon me, and you shall go: and you shall pray to me, and I will hear

you. You shall seek me, and shall find me: when you shall seek me with all your heart. And I will be found by you, saith the Lord: and I will bring back your captivity, and I will gather you out of all nations, and from all the places to which I have driven you out, saith the Lord: and I will bring you back from the place to which I caused you to be carried away captive.” (Jer. 29:10-14)

## **Seventy-year Babylonian captivity began in 606 BC with first deportation of Jews**

The seventy-year Babylonian captivity began in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of King Joakim in 606 BC with the first deportation of Jews into Babylon. And the child Daniel was among these first deportees:

“In the third year of the reign of Joakim king of Juda, Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord delivered into his hands Joakim the king of Juda, and part of the vessels of the house of God: and he carried them away into the land of Sennaar, to the house of his god, and the vessels he brought into the treasure house of his god. And the king spoke to Asphenez the master of the eunuchs, that he should bring in some of the children of Israel, and of the king’s seed and of the princes, children in whom there was no blemish, well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, acute in knowledge, and instructed in science, and such as might stand in the king’s palace, that he might teach them the learning, and tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision, of his own meat, and of the wine of which he drank himself, that being nourished three years, afterwards they might stand before the king. Now there was among them of the children of Juda, Daniel, Ananias, Misael, and Azarias. And the master of the eunuchs gave them names: to Daniel, Baltassar; to Ananias, Sidrach; to Misael, Misach; and to Azarias, Abdenago.” (Dan. 1:1-7)

Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the seventy-year Babylonian exile began when Daniel was taken into captivity in 606 BC.

## **In 538 BC Daniel prays for the end of the seventy-year Babylonian exile**

Two years before the end of the seventy-year exile and in 538 BC and in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Darius the Mede, the holy Prophet Daniel, who was now about 80 years old, prayed for the end of the exile and the rebuilding of the Temple and the rest of Jerusalem:

“In the first year of Darius the son of Assuerus of the seed of the Medes, who reigned over the kingdom of the Chaldeans: The first year of his reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, concerning which the word of the Lord came to Jeremias the prophet, that seventy years should be accomplished of the desolation of Jerusalem. And I set my face to the Lord my God, to pray and make supplication with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the Lord my God, and I made my confession, and said: I beseech thee, O Lord God, great and terrible, who keepest the covenant, and mercy to them that love thee, and keep thy commandments... O Lord, against all thy justice: let thy wrath and thy indignation be turned away, I beseech thee, from thy city Jerusalem, and from thy holy mountain. For by reason of our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem, and thy people are a reproach to all that are round about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the supplication of thy servant, and his prayers: and shew thy face upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for thy own sake.” (Dan. 9:1-4, 16-17)

According to Jeremiah's prophecy Daniel knew that the end of the seventy-year Babylonian exile was two years away; and hence he confessed his sins, the sins of the other Jews, and prayed that God would indeed end the exile.

### **After Daniel's prayer to end the exile, he got the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy**

While the holy Prophet Daniel was praying for the end of the seventy-year Babylonian exile, he got another prophecy about seventy—the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, which was infinitely greater and more important than the end of the seventy-year Babylonian exile:

“From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: and I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the holy of holies may be anointed. Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny him shall not be his. And a people with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste, and after the end of the war the appointed desolation. And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end.” (Dan. 9:23-27)

While the end of the seventy-year Babylonian exile gave the Jews temporary freedom from physical bondage, the end of the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy would give good-willed Jews and Gentiles eternal freedom from the spiritual bondage of sin and Satan:

Catholic Commentary on Daniel 9: “Ver. 24. Seventy weeks... Daniel was solicitous to know when the seventy years of Jeremiah would terminate. But something of far greater consequence is revealed to him, even the coming and death of the Messias, four hundred and ninety years after the order for rebuilding the walls should be given, at which period Christ would redeem the world...”

### **The Persian Kings That Relate to the Rebuilding of Jerusalem**

In fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy and in answer to Daniel's prayer, God used the Persian kings to defeat the Babylonians and thus end the seventy-year Babylonian exile and to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild it:

“Whosoever escaped the sword, was led into Babylon, and there served the king and his sons till the reign of the king of Persia.” (2 Par. 36:20)

After Daniel prayed in 538 BC for the end of the exile, two years later the Persian King Cyrus defeated the Babylonians in 536 BC and ended the seventy-year Babylonian exile by allowing Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple:

“In the first year of Cyrus king of the Persians, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of the Persians: and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and in writing also, saying: Thus saith Cyrus king of the Persians: The Lord the God of heaven

hath given to me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea. Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him. Let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judea, and build the house of the Lord the God of Israel: he is the God that is in Jerusalem. And let all the rest in all places wheresoever they dwell, help him every man from his place, with silver and gold, and goods, and cattle, besides that which they offer freely to the temple of God, which is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Juda and Benjamin, and the priests, and Levites, and every one whose spirit God had raised up, to go up to build the temple of the Lord, which was in Jerusalem.” (1 Esd. 1:1-5)

Even though King Cyrus’ decree to rebuild the Temple ended the seventy-year Babylonian exile, it was not the Decree that began Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy because the rest of Jerusalem was desolate for sixty years after the Temple was completed. Among these liberator kings one was to give the Decree that began Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. Before we see which Persian king and Decree began the prophecy, a brief history of the Persian and other kings that relate to the rebuilding of Jerusalem is in order. The Persian Empire, also known as the Achæmenian Dynasty, began in 560 BC when Cyrus the Great became sole ruler over Persia:

Catholic Imprimatured Book, “Persia”: The history, religion, and civilization of Persia are offshoots from those of Media. Both Medes and Persians are Aryans; the Aryans who settled in the southern part of the Iranian plateau became known as Persians, while those of the mountain regions of the north-west were called Medes. The Medes were at first the leading nation, but towards the middle of the sixth century, B.C. the Persians became the dominant power, not only in Iran, but also in Western Asia. Persia (in the Sept. *persis*, in the Achæmenian inscriptions *Parsa*, in Elamitic *Parsin*, in modern Persian *Fars*, and in Arabic *Fars*, or *Fâris*) was originally the name of a province in Media, but afterwards — i.e., towards the beginning of the fifth century B.C. — it became the general name of the whole country formerly comprising Media, Susiana, Elam, and even Mesopotamia. What we now call Persia is not identical with the ancient empire designated by that name. That empire covered, from the sixth century B.C. to the seventh of our era, such vast regions as Persia proper, Media, Elam, Chaldea, Babylonia, Assyria, the highlands of Armenia and Bactriana, North-Eastern Arabia, and even Egypt. Persia proper is bounded on the north by Transcaucasia, the Caspian Sea, and Russian Turkestan; on the south by the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf; it is over one-fifth as large as the United States (excluding Alaska) and twice as large as Germany, having an area of about 642,000 square miles. The whole country occupies a plateau varying in height from 3000 to 5000 feet, and subject to wide extremes of climate, its northern edge bordering on the Caspian Sea and the plain of Turkestan, its southern and south-western on the Persian Gulf and the plains of Mesopotamia. The ancient Persians were vigorous and hardy, simple in manners, occupied in raising cattle and horses in the mountainous regions, and agriculture in the valleys and plains. The four great cities were Ecbatana, in the north, Persepolis in the east, Susa in the west, and Seleucia-Ctesiphon in the south-west... Historians generally assign the beginnings of Persian history to the reign of Cyrus the Great.”

### **Assuerus and Artaxerxes were common names for Mede and Persian kings**

The kings of Mede and Persia were known by several names. One name given to the kings of Mede was Assuerus, which means “Great Prince”:

Catholic Commentary on Dan. 9: “Ver. 1. ...Assuerus, or Achasuerus, is not a proper name, but means ‘a great prince’...”

And one name given to the kings of Persia was Artaxerxes, which means “Great Warrior”:

Catholic Commentary on Esther 1: “Ver. 1. Assuerus or Artaxerxes; as (Est. 16:1). The former is the title of the Median, the latter of the Persian monarchs.”

Assuerus and Artaxerxes, then, were not proper names for kings and thus the kings of the Medes and Persians were called by other names, such as by their proper names. And some were called Artaxerxes I to distinguish from Artaxerxes II, etc. For example, in 1 Esdras, chapter 4, King Cambyses II is called Assuerus and Artaxerxes:

“And in the reign of Assuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Juda and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes, Beselam, Mithridates, and Thabeel, and the rest that were in the council wrote to Artaxerxes king of the Persians: and the letter of accusation was written in Syriac, and was read in the Syrian tongue.” (1 Esd. 4:6-7)

Catholic Commentary on 1 Esd. 4: “Ver. 6. Assuerus; otherwise called Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus. He is also, in the following verse, named Artaxerxes, by a name common to almost all the kings of Persia... Arta signifies ‘great,’ and xerxes, ‘warrior.’”

The Persian king that Esther married is called Assuerus and Artaxerxes. In the first ten chapters of the Book of Esther, the king is called Assuerus:

“In the days of Assuerus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces...” (Est. 1:1)

“Esther...was brought to the chamber of king Assuerus the tenth month, which is called Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.” (Est. 2:15-16)

“Mardochai of the race of the Jews, was next after king Assuerus...” (Est. 10:3)

But in chapters twelve to sixteen the same king is called Artaxerxes:

“And when he [Mardochai] understood their designs, and had diligently searched into their projects, he learned that they went about to lay violent hands on king Artaxerxes, and he told the king thereof.” (Est. 12:2)

“And this was the copy of the letter: Artaxerxes the great king who reigneth from India to Ethiopia...” (Est. 13:1)

Hence when one reads the Bible, he must keep in mind that Assuerus and Artaxerxes are common names given to the Mede and Persian kings. Thus one must know more about the king in order to precisely identify him. Below is a list of Persian and other kings that relate to the rebuilding of the Second Temple and the rest of Jerusalem:



Table: Persian and Other Kings That Relate to the Rebuilding of Jerusalem

	<b>King</b>		<b>Reign</b>	<b>Bible Verses</b>
1	Cyrus the Great (Kourosh Kabir)	Sole ruler over Persia	560-536 BC	
2	Baltasar or Nabonides	Last Babylonian king of Babylon; grandson of Nabuchodonosor	538 BC	Dan. 5:1
3	Darius the Mede or Cyaxares	Cyrus' uncle; at age 62 he slew Baltasar and reigned over Babylon	538-536 BC	Dan. 5:31; 9:1
4	Cyrus the Great as Emperor of the East <sup>1</sup>	Sole ruler over Persia, Mede, and Babylon	536-529 BC	1 Esd. c 1
5	Cambyeses II <sup>2</sup> (Kambujieh II)	Son of Cyrus	529-521 BC	1 Esd. 4:6-7
6	Smerdis Magnus the imposter	Usurped throne for 7 months	521 BC	
7	Darius the Great (Dariush I)	Son of Hystaspes	521-486 BC	1 Esd. c 5; c 6
8	Xerxes the Great (Khashyar Shah)	Son of Darius the Great	486-475 BC (or 465 BC if co-reign with Artaxerxes)	
9	Artaxerxes I or Longimanus (Ardeshir I)	Son of Xerxes	475-424 BC	2 Esd. c 1; c 2
10	Xerxes II	Son of Artaxerxes I	424-423 BC (45-day reign)	
11	Darius II Nothus	Half-brother of Xerxes II	423-404 BC	
12	Artaxerxes II Mnemom	Son of Darius II	404-358 BC	

Beware of the error which places the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus in 465 BC instead of 475 BC, which in turn places the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 445 BC instead of 455 BC. This error contradicts Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy which places the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 455 BC and thus the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his reign in 475 BC. (See in this book "[Artaxerxes Longimanus began his reign in 475 BC and not 465 BC](#)," p. 92.)

## The Decree That Began the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

### Several decrees from the Persian kings regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem

There were several decrees from the Persian kings that favored the Jews' return to Jerusalem; their rebuilding of the Temple; and then their rebuilding of the walls, streets, and the rest of Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> Catholic Commentary on 2 Par. 36: "Ver. 22. First. Cyrus had ruled over Persia. He was now emperor of the East."

<sup>2</sup> Catholic Commentary on 1 Esd. 4: "Ver. 6. Assuerus; otherwise called Cambyeses, the son and successor of Cyrus. He is also, in the following verse, named Artaxerxes, by a name common to almost all the kings of Persia... Arta signifies 'great,' and xerxes, 'warrior.' "

### *538 BC – Under Darius the Mede, Daniel gets the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy*

In the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Darius the Mede in 538 BC, Daniel got the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy:

“In the first year of Darius the son of Assuerus of the seed of the Medes, who reigned over the kingdom of the Chaldeans: The first year of his reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, concerning which the word of the Lord came to Jeremias the prophet, that seventy years should be accomplished of the desolation of Jerusalem... As I was yet speaking in prayer, behold the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, flying swiftly touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice. And he instructed me, and spoke to me, and said: O Daniel, I am now come forth to teach thee, and that thou mightest understand. From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: and I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision.” (Dan. 9:1-2, 21-23)

Daniel was in his 80's when he was given the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy.

### *536 BC – Cyrus the Great's decree to rebuild the Temple*



In the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Cyrus as Emperor of the East in 536 BC, Cyrus decreed that the Jews could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple:

“In the first year of Cyrus king of the Persians, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremias might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of the Persians: and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and in writing also, saying: Thus saith Cyrus king of the Persians: The Lord the God of heaven hath given to me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea.” (1 Esd. 1:1-2)

Catholic Commentary on 2 Par. 36: “Ver. 22. First Cyrus had ruled over Persia from 560 BC. He was now emperor of the East in 536 BC.”

### *529 BC – Cambyses II's decree to stop building the Temple*

In 529 BC Cambyses II, successor to Cyrus, decreed that the building of the Temple must be stopped. Cambyses II is referred to as King Artaxerxes in 1 Esdras, chapter 4:

“The king sent word to Reum Beelteem and Samsai the scribe, and to the rest that were in their council, inhabitants of Samaria, and to the rest beyond the river, sending greeting and peace... Now therefore hear the sentence: Hinder those men, that this city be not built, till further orders be given by me... Now the copy of the edict of king Artaxerxes was read before Reum Beelteem, and Samsai the scribe, and their counsellors: and they went up in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews, and hindered them with arm and power. Then the work of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem was interrupted, and ceased till the second year of the reign of Darius king of the Persians.” (1 Esd. 4:17, 21, 23-24)

Catholic Commentary on 1 Esd. 4: “Ver. 6. Assuerus; otherwise called Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus. He is also, in the following verse, named Artaxerxes, by a name common to almost all the kings of Persia, after Memnon. Diod. xv. Arthasastha: Arta signifies ‘great,’ and xerxes, ‘warrior.’ Herodotus, i. 98.”

### *519 BC – Darius the Great’s decree to resume building the Temple*

In 519 BC in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of his reign, Darius the Great decreed that the building of the Second Temple could resume:

“Then the work of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem was interrupted, and ceased till the second year of the reign of Darius king of the Persians.” (1 Esd. 4:24)

“King Darius gave orders... let that temple of God be built by the governor of the Jews, and by their ancients, that they may build that house of God in its place. I also have commanded what must be done by those ancients of the Jews, that the house of God may be built, to wit, that of the king’s chest, that is, of the tribute that is paid out of the country beyond the river, the charges be diligently given to those men, lest the work be hindered. And if it shall be necessary, let calves also, and lambs, and kids, for holocausts to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the custom of the priests that are in Jerusalem, be given them day by day, that there be no complaint in any thing. And let them offer oblations to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his children. And I have made a decree: That if any whosoever, shall alter this commandment, a beam be taken from his house, and set up, and he be nailed upon it, and his house be confiscated. And may the God, that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy all kingdoms, and the people that shall put out their hand to resist, and to destroy the house of God, that is in Jerusalem. I Darius have made the decree, which I will have diligently complied with.” (1 Esd. 6:1, 7-12)

### *515 BC – The Temple is finished in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Darius the Great*

In 515 BC in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Darius the Great, the Temple was completed:

“And they were finishing this house of God, until the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of king Darius.” (1 Esd. 6:15)

Hence it took 21 years to complete the Second Temple, from 536 BC to 515 BC.

### *467 BC – Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree to Esdras to return to Jerusalem*

In 467 BC King Artaxerxes Longimanus decreed that Esdras and other Jews could return to Jerusalem and that Esdras should teach and guide them:

“And this is the copy of the letter of the edict, which king Artaxerxes gave to Esdras the priest, the scribe instructed in the words and commandments of the Lord, and his ceremonies in Israel. Artaxerxes king of kings to Esdras the priest, the most learned scribe of the law of the God of heaven, greeting. It is decreed by me, that all they of the people of Israel, and of the priests and of the Levites in my realm, that are minded to go into Jerusalem, should go with thee. For thou art sent from before the king, and his seven counsellors, to visit Judea and Jerusalem according to the law of thy God, which is in thy hand. And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and

his counsellors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose tabernacle is in Jerusalem. And all the silver and gold that thou shalt find in all the province of Babylon, and that the people is willing to offer, and that the priests shall offer of their own accord to the house of their God, which is in Jerusalem..." (1 Esd. 7:11-16)

#### *455 BC – Artaxerxes Longimanus' Decree to Nehemias to rebuild the walls and rest of Jerusalem*

In 455 BC in the month of Nisan and in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, King Artaxerxes Longimanus decreed that the walls, streets, and rest of Jerusalem must be rebuilt:

"And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king: that wine was before him, and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king: and I was as one languishing away before his face. And the king said to me: Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou dost not appear to be sick? this is not without cause, but some evil, I know not what, is in thy heart. And I was seized with an exceeding great fear: And I said to the king: O king, live for ever: why should not my countenance be sorrowful, seeing the city of the place of the sepulchres of my fathers is desolate, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire? Then the king said to me: For what dost thou make request? And I prayed to the God of heaven, and I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, and if thy servant hath found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me into Judea to the city of the sepulchre of my father, and I will build it. And the king said to me, and the queen that sat by him: For how long shall thy journey be, and when wilt thou return? And it pleased the king, and he sent me: and I fixed him a time. And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, let him give me letters to the governors of the country beyond the river, that they convey me over, till I come into Judea: and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, to give me timber that I may cover the gates of the tower of the house, and the walls of the city, and the house that I shall enter into. And the king gave me according to the good hand of my God with me. And I came to the governors of the country beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of soldiers, and horsemen." (2 Esd. 2:1-9)

#### *455 BC – Nehemias gives Artaxerxes' Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem*

In 455 BC, several months after he got the decree from King Artaxerxes, Nehemias entered Jerusalem and gave the decree to the Jews. And the building of the walls, streets, and rest of Jerusalem began:

"And I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me, and I told not any man what God had put in my heart to do in Jerusalem, and there was no beast with me, but the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, and before the dragon fountain, and to the dung gate, and I viewed the wall of Jerusalem which was broken down, and the gates thereof which were consumed with fire. And I passed to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's aqueduct, and there was no place for the beast on which I rode to pass. And I went up in the night by the torrent, and viewed the wall, and going back I came to the gate of the valley, and returned. But the magistrates knew not whither I went, or what I did: neither had I as yet told any thing to the Jews, or to the priests, or to the nobles, or to the magistrates, or to the rest that did the work. Then I said to them: You know the affliction wherein we are, because Jerusalem is desolate, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and let us build up the

walls of Jerusalem, and let us be no longer a reproach. And I shewed them how the hand of my God was good with me, and the king's words, which he had spoken to me, and I said: Let us rise up, and build. And their hands were strengthened in good." (2 Esd. 2:11-18)

*406 BC – Under Darius II the building of the walls and rest of Jerusalem is completed*

In 406 BC under the reign of the Persian King Darius II, the building of the walls, streets, palaces, houses, and the rest of Jerusalem was completed.

### **Seventy-Weeks Prophecy began in 455 BC when Nehemias gave the king's Decree to the Jews**

Only one of these decrees is the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. The Prophet Daniel tells us that Artaxerxes' Decree to rebuild the walls, streets, and the rest of Jerusalem is the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy:

"Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times." (Dan. 9:25)

Hence the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy was not Cyrus the Great's decree to rebuild the Temple nor was it Artaxerxes I's decree to Esdras to return to Jerusalem to teach the Jews about the God of Israel. Sixty years after the Second Temple was completed in 515 BC and twelve years after Esdras returned to Jerusalem in 467 BC, the rest of Jerusalem (the walls, gates, streets, and homes) were desolate until 455 BC when Nehemias oversaw the rebuilding of the walls, streets, and rest of Jerusalem. When Nehemias gave the king's Decree to the Jews to rebuild the walls and rest of Jerusalem, he said that Jerusalem was desolate:

"And I came to Jerusalem... Then I said to them: You know the affliction wherein we are, because **Jerusalem is desolate**, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and **let us build up the walls of Jerusalem...**" (2 Esd. 2:17)

Hence sixty years after the Second Temple was built, Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy had not yet begun because the walls, streets, and rest of Jerusalem were desolate. No decree had gone out from a king to rebuild these things until 455 BC.

*Nehemias prayed for the Decree*

### **Daniel's and Nehemias' same prayer for the rebuilding of the walls and rest of Jerusalem**

Before Nehemias got the Decree from King Artaxerxes and gave it to the Jews in Jerusalem, he prayed to God in the Hebrew month of Casleu in 456 BC, in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, 59 years after the Temple was completed. Nehemias lamented the desolate condition of Jerusalem and prayed to God for the rebuilding of the walls, streets, and rest of Jerusalem, just as the Prophet Daniel had done before he got the

Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. And Daniel's prayer and answer to his prayer and Nehemias' prayer and answer to his prayer are almost identical, the former regarding the getting of the Prophecy and the latter the fulfilling of it:

Daniel's prayer in 538 BC:

"And I set my face to the Lord my God, to pray and make supplication with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the Lord my God, and I made my confession, and said: I beseech thee, O Lord God, great and terrible, who keepest the covenant, and mercy to them that love thee, and keep thy commandments. We have sinned, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly, and have revolted: and we have gone aside from thy commandments, and thy judgments." (Dan. 9:3-5)

Nehemias' prayer in 456 BC:

"The words of Nehemias the son of Helchias. And it came to pass in the month of Casleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in the castle of Susa, that Hanani one of my brethren came, he and some men of Juda; and I asked them concerning the Jews, that remained and were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me: They that have remained, and are left of the captivity there in the province, are in great affliction, and reproach: and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire. And when I had heard these words, I sat down, and wept, and mourned for many days: and I fasted, and prayed before the face of the God of heaven. And I said: I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, strong, great, and terrible, who keepest covenant and mercy with those that love thee, and keep thy commandments: Let thy ears be attentive, and thy eyes open, to hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, night and day, for the children of Israel thy servants: and I confess the sins of the children of Israel, by which they have sinned against thee: I and my father's house have sinned. We have been seduced by vanity, and have not kept thy commandments, and ceremonies and judgments..." (2 Esd. 1:4-7)

Answer to Daniel's prayer was the getting of the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy in 538 BC:

"That from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be **built again**, and the **walls** in straitness of times." (Dan. 9:25)

Answer to Nehemias' prayer was the beginning of the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy in 455 BC:

"Then I said to them [the Jews in Jerusalem]: You know the affliction wherein we are, because Jerusalem is desolate, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and let us **build up the walls** of Jerusalem, and let us be no longer a reproach. And I shewed them how the hand of my God was good with me, and the king's words, which he had spoken to me, and I said: Let us rise up, and build." (2 Esd. 2:17-18)

So we see that Nehemias fulfilled the beginning of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. He prayed for the same thing that Daniel prayed for and got the same thing that was prophetically promised to Daniel—the rebuilding of the walls and the rest of Jerusalem.

### *Nehemias got the Decree*

About four months after Nehemias prayed to God in the Hebrew month of Casleu in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 456 BC, he got the Decree from the king in the Hebrew month of Nisan in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the king in 455 BC:

“In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king... I said to the king: O king, live for ever: why should not my countenance be sorrowful, seeing the city of the place of the sepulchres of my fathers is desolate, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire? Then the king said to me: For what dost thou make request? And I prayed to the God of heaven, and I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, and if thy servant hath found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me into Judea to the city of the sepulchre of my father, and I will build it. And the king said to me, and the queen that sat by him: For how long shall thy journey be, and when wilt thou return? And it pleased the king, and he sent me: and I fixed him a time. And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, let him give me letters to the governors of the country beyond the river, that they convey me over, till I come into Judea: And a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, to give me timber that I may cover the gates of the tower of the house, and the **walls** of the city, and the house that I shall enter into. And the king gave me according to the good hand of my God with me. And I came to the governors of the country beyond the river, and gave them the king’s letters. And the king had sent with me captains of soldiers, and horsemen.” (2 Esd. 2:1-9)

### *Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem and began the Prophecy*

And about five to six months after Nehemias got the Decree from the king, he gave it to the Jews in Jerusalem and they began rebuilding the walls, streets, and the rest of Jerusalem:

“And I came to Jerusalem... Then I said to them: You know the affliction wherein we are, because Jerusalem is desolate, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and **let us build up the walls of Jerusalem**, and let us be no longer a reproach. And I shewed them how the hand of my God was good with me, and the king’s words, which he had spoken to me, and I said: Let us rise up, and build. And their hands were strengthened in good.” (2 Esd. 2:11-18)

Julius Africanus (c. 160 – c. 240), *The Extant Fragments of The Five Books Of The Chronography*: “XVI. On the Seventy Weeks of Daniel. This passage, therefore, as it stands thus, touches on many marvelous things. At present, however, I shall speak only of those things in it which bear upon chronology, and matters connected therewith. That the passage speaks then of the advent of Christ, who was to manifest Himself after seventy weeks, is evident. For in the Saviour’s time, or from Him, are transgressions abrogated, and sins brought to an end. And through remission, moreover, are iniquities, along with offences, blotted out by expiation; and an everlasting righteousness is preached, different from that which is by the law, and visions and prophecies (are) until John, and the Most Holy is anointed. For before the advent of the Saviour these things were not yet, and were therefore only looked for. And the beginning of the numbers, that is, of the seventy weeks which make up 490 years, the angel instructs us to take from the going forth of the commandment to answer and to build Jerusalem. And this happened in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia. For Nehemiah his cup-bearer besought him, and received the answer that Jerusalem should be built. And the word went forth commanding these things; for up to that time the city was desolate.”

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy did not begin when Nehemias got the Decree from King Artaxerxes Longimanus but when Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem and the building began. It began when the Decree was promulgated by Nehemias to the Jews in Jerusalem in 455 BC, several months after he got the Decree from the king. That is when “*the going forth of the word to build up Jerusalem*” went forth to the Jews in Jerusalem and the building began:

“Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times.” (Dan. 9:25)

Hence Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy began in 455 BC, five or six months after Nehemias got the Decree from the king in Nisan 455 BC. Below is a table of decrees from Mede and Persian kings and other events that relate to the rebuilding of the Temple and the walls and the rest of Jerusalem:

Table: Decrees and Other Events That Relate to Jerusalem

Year	Event
538 BC	Baltassar, the last Babylonian king of Babylon, is conquered and slain by Darius the Mede (Dan. 5); Daniel is given the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy under Darius the Mede at Babylon; Daniel is around 80 years old. (Dan. 9)
536 BC	Cyrus the Great’s decree to rebuild the Temple; the 70-Year Exile ends. (1 Esd. 1:1-2)
529 BC	Cambyeses II’s decree to stop building the Temple. (1 Esd. 4)
519 BC	Darius the Great’s decree to resume building the Temple. (1 Esd. 4:24; c 5; c 6)
515 BC	The Temple is completed under the reign of Darius the Great. (1 Esd. 6:15)
467 BC	Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree permitting Esdras to go to Jerusalem. (1 Esd. 7:11-16)
456 BC	Nehemias prays to God in the month of Casleu for rebuilding of Jerusalem. (2 Esd. 1)
455 BC	King Artaxerxes Longimanus, in the Hebrew month of Nisan (March/April) and in the 20 <sup>th</sup> year of his reign, gives Nehemias the Decree to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem. (2 Esd. 2:1-9)
<b>455 BC</b>	The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy begins when Nehemias gives the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem on September 25 in the Hebrew month of Tishri in the 21 <sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes, which was about 5 or 6 months after the king gave the Decree to Nehemias and 83 years after Daniel got the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. (2 Esd. 2:17-18)
454 BC (at least), 443 BC (probable)	The walls are finished on the 25 <sup>th</sup> day of Elul. They are finished 52 days after the last persecution and not 52 days after Nehemias gives the Decree to the Jews to rebuild the walls. (2 Esd. 6:15)
406 BC	Under Darius II the completion of not only the walls and gates but also the streets and the rest of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25), which ends the first Seven weeks or 49 years from 455 BC.

Event	Year (y)	From Vision
Daniel gets the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy	538 BC	0 y
Cyrus’ decree to rebuild the Temple	536 BC (2 y)	2 y
The Temple is finished under Darius the Great	515 BC (21 y)	23 y
Artaxerxes’ decree for Esdras and other Jews to return to Jerusalem	467 BC (48 y)	71 y
Artaxerxes’ Decree to rebuild the walls and rest of Jerusalem	455 BC (12 y)	83 y
Nehemias gives the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem; Prophecy begins	<b>455 BC</b>	83 y
The rebuilding of Jerusalem is completed	406 BC (49 y)	132 y



## **The erroneous opinion that it took 46 years to build the Second Temple**

Beware of those who take the Pharisees' following statement, as recorded in John 2:20, out of context to erroneously conclude that it took 46 years to build the Second Temple:

“The Jews then said: Six and forty years was this temple in building; and wilt thou raise it up in three days?” (Jn. 2:20)

There are two possible interpretations. The first is the most probable:

1. The Jews did not say it took 46 years to build the Temple but that the Temple was “in building” for 46 years; meaning, the current condition of the Temple is the result of the time it took to expand and perfect it, which together was 46 years to the day Jesus confronted the Pharisees. The Pharisees, then, were referring to the restoring and beautifying of the Second Temple under Herod the Great and by his successors until the time the Pharisees confronted Christ in 30 AD during the first Passover of Jesus' public ministry:

Catholic Commentary on John 2: “Ver. 20. Six and forty years, &c. Many understand of ...the enlarging and beautifying the temple, which was begun by Herod the great, forty-six years before the Jews spoke this to our Saviour. ...Herod renewed the temple from the foundations, and spent in that work only nine years and a half. It was begun 46 years before the first Pasch at which our Saviour appeared. But this prince, according to Josephus, continued to make new building and embellishments to the very time in which the Jews uttered these words: it is now 46 years, &c.”

2. Or the Pharisees were referring to the 21 years it took to complete the Second Temple added to the years it took to restore and beautify it under Judas Machabeus and Herod the Great:

Catholic Commentary on John 2:20: “Some think that the Jews spoke of both Temples, viz., Zorobabel's and Herod's. For Herod did not so much build a new Temple as adorn the old Temple of Zorobabel, so as to make it loftier and grander. This some clearly prove from Hegesippus and other authors. The Temple then of Zorobabel occupied fifteen years in building [minus the six years interruption]. It was afterwards for several more years enlarged and adorned by the Maccabees, by Simon the son of Onias the High Priest (Ecclus. 1:1), and by Herod. If you reckon up all these years you will easily make them come to forty-six years. Similarly the Basilica of S. Peter at Rome, the ancient one of Constantine the Great having been destroyed, has occupied a hundred years in building, and even at the present time we see continually in process of erection turrets, altars, pillars, chapels, &c.”

## **Part 3 - The Chronology of the Prophecy**

To learn how time and events are chronologically recorded, see my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns*.

## A Week of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Is Seven Years

Daniel prophesied that from the time Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem, which began the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, to the time Jesus Christ was baptized is 7 weeks plus 62 weeks, which equals 69 weeks:

“Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times.” (Dan. 9:25)

From the time of the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy in 455 BC to the time that Christ was baptized in 29 AD is obviously not a literal 69 weeks. Hence the weeks of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy are prophetic weeks in which each week consists of several years. Mathematics, the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, and other biblical passages tell us that each week of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks is seven years:

Douay Commentary on Daniel 9:24: “... (g) *Hebdomas* or *Septenarius* signifying seven, understood of days importeth a week: of years (as *Levi. 25*) seven years so seventy *weeks* 490 years. Saint Bede *li. de rat. temp. c. 6. 7. 8.*”

### Math dictates that Daniel's week equals seven years

The number of years from 455 BC to 29 AD is 483 years. The following formula calculates the span of time in years from a BC year to an AD year:

Formula for Span of Time between Two Calendar Years		
1Y	1 <sup>st</sup> calendar year in time	455 BC
2Y	2 <sup>nd</sup> calendar year in time	29 AD
Ys	Span of years from 1 <sup>st</sup> calendar year to 2 <sup>nd</sup> calendar year	483 yrs
$2Y - 1Y = Ys$		
$29 \text{ AD} - -455 \text{ BC} = 484 - 1 = 483 \text{ years}$		
If using the Gregorian calendar and 2Y is an AD year and 1Y is a BC year, then subtract 1 from the result to get the Ys. Note that BC numbers are negative (-).		

Hence Daniel's 69 weeks equals 483 years. And 483 years divided by 69 weeks equals 7 years per week.

### The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy dictates that Daniel's week is seven years

*Half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week is 3½ years and thus the whole week is 7 years*

Daniel tells us that Jesus Christ is baptized and thus begins His public ministry at the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> week and is then slain halfway through the 70<sup>th</sup> week:

“Seventy weeks are shortened... [after] seven weeks and sixty-two weeks... Christ shall be slain... And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail...” (Dan. 9:24-27)

Hence the 70<sup>th</sup> week consists of 7 years because one half of that week is 3½ years (3½ + 3½ = 7 years). Indeed, the common consensus of the Church Fathers teaches that the length of Christ’s public ministry from the time He was baptised to the time He died was 3½ years. The Challoner commentary on Daniel 9:27 says,

Challoner Commentary on Daniel 9:27: “*In the half of the week...* or, in the middle of the week, etc. Because Christ preached three years and a half: and then by his sacrifice upon the cross abolished all the sacrifices of the law...”

Therefore, each week of Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is seven years. (See in this book “[3. Jesus’ Public Ministry Lasted Exactly 3½ Years](#),” p. 45.)

## **Other biblical passages dictate that Daniel’s week is seven years**

### *Leviticus 25:8’s one week equals seven years*

Leviticus 25:8 also equates one week with seven years. A Catholic commentary on Daniel 9:24 says,

Catholic Commentary on Dan. 9:24: “A week of years denotes seven years, as (Lev. 25) and thus seventy of these weeks would make four hundred and ninety years. (Venerable Bede. Rat. temp. 6.)”

Leviticus 25:8’s prophetic “seven weeks of years” consists of 49 years or seven years per week:

“Thou shalt also number to thee seven weeks of years, that is to say, seven times seven, which together make forty-nine years...” (Lev. 25:8)

Therefore 69 weeks of years according to Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is 483 years (69 weeks x 7 years = 483 years). Hence 483 years or 69 weeks after the prophecy began, Christ was baptized by John in the Jordan. The Challoner commentary on Daniel 9:25 says,

Challoner Commentary on Dan. 9: “Ver. 25. Word, &c. That is, from the twentieth year of king Artaxerxes, when, by his commandment, Nehemias rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, (2 Esd. 2). From which time, according to the best chronology, there were just sixty-nine weeks of years, that is 483 years, to the baptism of Christ, when he first began to preach and execute the office of Messiah.”

“Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times.” (Dan. 9:25)

## **Years Are Counted by the Tropical Year**

In the strict sense of the word “year,” a biblical year is counted not by a lunar year but by a tropical year, which is from season to season. The beginning of spring to the

beginning of the next spring is one tropical year (a true year). The Jews used a lunisolar calendar in which they measured months by the lunar phases but measured years by the solar or tropical phases, from spring to spring. Because the lunar year or twelve lunar months falls short of the tropical year by 11 days per tropical year, the Hebrew calendar falls out of sync with the tropical year by 33 days every 3 years. To solve this problem, the Hebrew calendar adds or intercalates an extra or 13<sup>th</sup> month, Adar II, about every 3 years to bring it back in sync with the tropical year. (See my book *The Stationary Earth and the Measuring of Time*: A year in the Bible is a tropical year.)

## **The Prophecy Is Exactly 483 Years from the Decree to Christ's Baptism and 486½ to His Death**

From the day Christ was baptized to the day Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem was *exactly* 483 years. And 3½ years after Christ was baptized, or halfway through the 70<sup>th</sup> week, Christ died on the cross and redeemed men, which was *exactly* 486½ years to the day from the beginning of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy.

### **Daniel's Prophecy is an exact-to-the-day prophecy**

Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is an exact-to-the-day prophecy. The prophecy begins on an exact day "from the going forth of the word to rebuild Jerusalem." And Christ was baptized exactly 483 years later or exactly 69 weeks of 7 years per week later:

"Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times." (Dan. 9:24-25)

Hence from the beginning day of the prophecy, when the word went out from Nehemias to the Jews in Jerusalem to rebuild the walls, to the day Christ was baptized is exactly 483 years and exactly 486½ years to Christ's death on the holy Cross. Therefore Christ was baptized on the same day and in the same month that Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews—but 483 years later.

### *Nehemias' three-day delay is one proof the prophecy is exact to the day*

When Nehemias entered Jerusalem to give the Decree to the Jews, God delayed Nehemias for three days to make sure that Nehemias would give the Decree to the Jews on the exact day that God had pre-ordained, which is one proof that Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is an exact-to-the-day prophecy:

"And I [Nehemias] came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me, and I told not any man what God had put in my heart to do in Jerusalem, and there was no beast with me, but the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, and before the dragon fountain, and to the dung gate, and I viewed the wall of Jerusalem which was broken down, and the gates thereof which were consumed with fire. And I passed to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's aqueduct, and there was no place for the

beast on which I rode to pass. And I went up in the night by the torrent, and viewed the wall, and going back I came to the gate of the valley, and returned. But the magistrates knew not whither I went, or what I did: neither had I as yet told any thing to the Jews, or to the priests, or to the nobles, or to the magistrates, or to the rest that did the work. Then I said to them: You know the affliction wherein we are, because Jerusalem is desolate, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and let us build up the walls of Jerusalem, and let us be no longer a reproach. And I shewed them how the hand of my God was good with me, and the king's words, which he had spoken to me, and I said: Let us rise up, and build. And their hands were strengthened in good." (2 Esd. 2:11-18)

The Bible mentions Nehemias' three-day delay so that we would know two things:

1. The importance of the event in which Nehemias was to give the Decree to the Jews to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem because it marked the beginning of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy;
2. The prophecy is an exact-to-the-day prophecy.

### **Things happen exactly when God ordains them to happen**

Because God is all powerful and all knowing, which includes knowing all things before they come to pass, all things happen exactly when God wants them to happen and not an instant sooner or later:

"With God all things are possible." (Mt. 19:26) "For all things were known to the Lord God before they were created: so also after they were perfected he beholdeth all things." (Eccus. 23:29) "To the Lord was his own work known from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18)

Hence when God, speaking through a prophet, says that something will occur at a particular hour, day, month, or year, that thing will happen exactly at that hour, day, month, or year.

- Some of God's prophecies are exact to the hour, some to the day, some to the month, and some to the year. A prophecy that is exact to an hour gives the hour, day, month, and year a thing will happen. A prophecy that is exact to the month gives the month and year that a thing will happen. A prophecy that is exact to the year gives the year that a thing will happen.
- And some prophecies only give the day or the month or the year a thing will happen. For example, a prophecy about the death of a certain man can say that he will die at 3:00 pm or on a Friday or in March.
- And some prophecies are exact to an event in which one event will occur when another event occurs, such as a prophecy that a man will die during the full moon. For example, Jesus prophesied that when the apostles entered Jerusalem they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Hence the event of the apostles entering the town coincided with the event of the man carrying the pitcher of water.

### *The Prophet Samuel told Saul things that would happen to him*

God told the Prophet Samuel the exact day and hour that Saul would visit him seeking his lost asses and that Samuel was to anoint Saul as the first king of Israel:

“Now the Lord had revealed to the ear of Samuel the day before Saul came, saying: Tomorrow about this same hour I will send thee a man of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be ruler over my people Israel: and he shall save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked down upon my people, because their cry is come to me.” (1 Ki. 9:15-16)

When Saul was leaving Samuel to return home to rule as king, Samuel, speaking for God, told Saul three things that would happen on his way home and where they would happen.

1. Two men at Rachel’s sepulchre would tell Saul that his asses had been found.
2. Three men carrying three kids, three loaves of bread, and a bottle of wine would meet Saul at the Oak of Thabor and give him two loaves of bread.
3. Singing prophets would meet Saul on the Hill of God where the garrison of the Philistines was, and Saul would prophesy with the prophets and be given a new heart.

“When thou [Saul] shalt depart from me this day, thou shalt find two men by the sepulchre of Rachel in the borders of Benjamin to the south, and they shall say to thee: The asses are found which thou wentest to seek: and thy father thinking no more of the asses is concerned for you, and saith: What shall I do for my son? And when thou shalt depart from thence, and go farther on, and shalt come to the oak of Thabor, there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Bethel, one carrying three kids, and another three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine. And they will salute thee, and will give thee two loaves, and thou shalt take them at their hand. After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where the garrison of the Philistines is: and when thou shalt be come there into the city, thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a harp before them, and they shall be prophesying. And the spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be changed into another man. When therefore these signs shall happen to thee, do whatsoever thy hand shall find, for the Lord is with thee. ...So when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave unto him another heart, and all these things came to pass that day.” (1 Ki. 10: 2-7, 9)

### *Jesus told the apostles they would meet a man with a pitcher in Jerusalem*

Jesus told the apostles that when they enter the city of Jerusalem, they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water who would take them to the house where the Pasch and Last Supper would be celebrated:

“Now on the first day of the unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the pasch, the disciples say to him: Whither wilt thou that we go, and prepare for thee to eat the pasch? And he sendeth two of his disciples, and saith to them: Go ye into the city; and there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water, follow him; and whithersoever he shall go in, say to the master of the house, The master saith, Where is my refectory, where I may eat the pasch with my disciples? And he will

shew you a large dining room furnished; and there prepare ye for us. And his disciples went their way, and came into the city; and they found as he had told them, and they prepared the pasch.” (Mk. 14:12-16)

No matter what that man was doing that day in Jerusalem or what the apostles were doing that day on the way to Jerusalem, Jesus said that the apostles would meet that man on that day in Jerusalem when he was carrying a pitcher of water. Hence things happen exactly when and where and how God wants them to happen because God is all powerful and all knowing.<sup>3</sup>

### *God has Abraham's servant and Rebecca meet at a well*

And we have another true story recorded in the Book of Genesis, chapter 24, about water, a pitcher, and how things happen exactly when God wants them to happen. Abraham sent his servant to Abraham's relatives in Mesopotamia of Syria to seek a wife for Isaac. When the servant was by a watering well in Mesopotamia, he prayed that God would send Isaac's future wife to the well with a pitcher and have her give him to drink and then water his camels. By this sign he would know that this is the woman God wants Isaac to marry. As soon as he finished the prayer, Rebecca came to the well with pitcher in hand and gave him to drink and watered his camels:

“[Abraham said to his servant] Thou go to my own country and kindred, and take a wife from thence for my son Isaac. ...And he took ten camels of his master's herd, and departed, carrying some thing of all his goods with him, and he set forward and went on to Mesopotamia to the city of Nachor. And when he had made the camels lie down without the town near a well of water in the evening, at the time when women are wont to come out to draw water, he said: O Lord the God of my master Abraham, meet me to day, I beseech thee, and shew kindness to my master Abraham. Behold I stand nigh the spring of water, and the daughters of the inhabitants of this city will come out to draw water. Now, therefore, the maid to whom I shall say: Let down thy pitcher that I may drink: and she shall answer, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let it be the same whom thou hast provided for thy servant Isaac: and by this I shall understand, that thou hast shewn kindness to my master. He had not yet ended these words within himself, and behold Rebecca came out, the daughter of Bathuel, son of Melcha, wife to Nachor the brother of Abraham, having a pitcher on her shoulder: An exceeding comely maid, and a most beautiful virgin, and not known to man: and she went down to the spring, and filled her pitcher and was coming back. And the servant ran to meet her, and said: Give me a little water to drink of thy pitcher. And she answered: Drink, my lord. And quickly she let down the pitcher upon her arm, and gave him drink. And when he had drunk, she said: I will draw water for thy camels also, till they all drink. And pouring out the pitcher into the troughs, she ran back to the well to draw water: and having drawn she gave to all the camels. But he musing beheld her with silence, desirous to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. And after that the camels had drunk, the man took out golden earrings, weighing two sicles: and as many bracelets of ten sicles weight. And he said to her: Whose daughter art thou? tell me: is there any place in thy father's house to lodge? And she answered: I am the daughter of Bathuel, the son of Melcha, whom she bore to Nachor. And she said moreover to him: We have good store of both straw and hay, and a large place to lodge in. The man bowed himself down, and adored the Lord,

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<sup>3</sup> As an operation of error to deceive those who are worthy of being deceived, God gives the Devil the power to predict events and make them happen; but the permission and power to do so comes from God.

saying: Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not taken away his mercy and truth from my master, and hath brought me the straight way into the house of my master's brother." (Gen. 24:4, 10-27)

Hence the all-powerful God makes things happen exactly when He wants them to happen and thus not an instant before or after.

## **Start with Christ's birth and death and work backward to get the prophecy's chronology**

The best way to arrive at the exact day and year that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, when Nehemias gave the king's Decree to the Jews to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem, is to start with the exact day and year when Christ died and then go back 3½ years from that day and year to get the day and year Christ was baptized. And then go back exactly 483 years from the day and year Christ was baptized to get the day and year that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. To get the day and year Christ died, we will begin with the day and year Christ was born.

### **1. Jesus Was Born on December 25, 2 BC**

**Jesus was born 8 days before the Kalends of January, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, in the 752<sup>nd</sup> year from the founding of Rome, in the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Caesar Augustus, in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 65<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel's Prophecy, and 28 years after the death of Antony and Cleopatra**

Most probably, Jesus Christ was born on December 25, 2 BC, baptized on September 25, 29 AD, and died on March 25, 33 AD. And an imprimatured book says,

"In the sixteenth century the Pope, Gregory XIII, charged Cesare Cardinal Baronius (1538-1607), by the aid of study and research, to fix the true historical chronology of the life of Christ. This highly celebrated historian, Baronius, on an historical ground fixed BC 2 as being the date of Christ's birth and AD 33 as being the date of His death. The Pope knew that he had appointed the most learned and most prudent historian of the time, and he had a right to accept the above said conclusions as being wise and prudent."

I will relate Christ's 2 BC birth, 29 AD baptism, and 33 AD death to Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. Near the end of the book, I present the other possible opinions of Jesus being born in 3 BC or 1 BC or 1 AD. (See in this book "[Adjustments Must Preserve Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy](#)," p. 63.) However, it is contrary to the Catholic Bible and the Catholic Church's ordinary magisterium to teach that Jesus was born before 3 BC or after 1 AD. (See in this book [Jesus Could Not Have Been Born before 3 BC or after 1 AD](#), p. 65.)

The Roman Martyrology, Saint Jerome, Paulus Orosius, Julius Africanus, Saint Hippolytus of Rome, Saint Epiphanius of Salamis, Venerable Bede, and Cesare Cardinal



Baronius teach that Christ was born in what we now call the year 2 BC.<sup>4</sup> In the time of the Church Fathers, years were not recorded as BC or AD years. Years began to be recorded as AD years in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and as BC years in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Hence the Church Fathers measured time in relation to the years of the Olympiads (OL) or to the years from the founding of the city of Rome (AUC) or to the years in the reign of prominent rulers, such as Caesar Augustus who was the Roman Emperor when Christ was born. They recorded Christ’s birth as occurring in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, in the 752<sup>nd</sup> year from the founding of Rome, in the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the reign of Caesar Augustus, 28 years after the death of Antony and Cleopatra in 30 BC, and in the 65<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy—all of which occurred in what we now call 2 BC:

*Roman Martyrology*, December 25: “...In the 65<sup>th</sup> week, according to the prophecy of Daniel; in the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad; in the year 752 from the founding of the city of Rome; in the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the empire of Octavian Augustus, when the whole world was at peace, in the 6<sup>th</sup> age of the world, Jesus Christ, eternal God, and Son of the eternal Father, desirous to sanctify the world by His most merciful coming, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit, and 9 months having elapsed since His conception, is born in Bethlehem of Juda, having become Man of the Virgin Mary.”

Below are the calculations that convert these dates into Gregorian (BC/AD) dates. For a more in-depth study on how these calculations work, see my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns: Epochs, Eras, and Dating Methods*.

Formula: The Calendar Date That Began the Year of an Era or a Reign	
E	Era or Reign
Ep	Epoch
DM	Dating Method
CdEp	Calendar date for the epoch of the era or reign
CdE1	Calendar date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of the era or reign
Ey	The year in question of the era or reign
CdEy	Calendar date that began that year of the era or reign

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 = CdEy$$

If using the Gregorian calendar and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Era (CdE1) is a BC (negative) date and the result (CdEy) is zero or greater (positive), then add 1 to the result to get the AD date.

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 \text{ (BC/negative)} = 0 \text{ or greater} + 1 = CdEy \text{ (AD/positive date)}$$

<sup>4</sup> To learn why we must refer to Christ as being born “before Christ” or in a BC year, see my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns: The Christian Era began when Christ was born (BC/AD)*.

*The 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad began on 2 BC, July 17*

**Gregorian Date That Began the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad**

E	The Olympic Era (OE)	
Ep	First day of the first Olympic games in Greece	
DM	Anniversary-dating method	
CdEp	Gregorian date for the epoch	776 BC, July 17
CdE1	Gregorian date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of the Olympic Era	776 BC, July 17
Ey	The year in question of the Olympic Era	775 <sup>th</sup> year of OE
CdEy	Gregorian date that began that year of the era	2 BC, July 17

$(\text{Olympiad} - 1) \times 4 + \text{the year of the Olympiad} = \text{Year of the Olympic Era (Ey)}$

$(194 - 1) \times 4 + 3 = 775^{\text{th}}$  year of the Olympic Era

$(\text{Ey} - 1) + \text{CdE1} = \text{CdEy}$

$(775 - 1) + -776 \text{ BC, July 17} = -2 \text{ BC, July 17 to } 1 \text{ BC, July 16}$

If using the Gregorian calendar and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Era (CdE1) is a BC (negative) date and the result (CdEy) is zero or greater (positive), then add 1 to the result to get the AD date.

$(\text{Ey} - 1) + \text{CdE1 (BC/negative)} = 0 \text{ or greater} + 1 = \text{CdEy (AD/positive date)}$

\*The (Olympiad - 1) is multiplied by 4 because there are 4 years per Olympiad

*The 752<sup>nd</sup> year from the founding of Rome began on 2 BC, January 1*

**Gregorian Date That Began the 752<sup>nd</sup> Year of the Roman Era**

E	Roman Era	
Ep	Founding of the city of Rome	
DM	Anniversary-dating method	
CdEp	Gregorian date for the epoch	753 BC, April 21 (Jan. 1 from 45 BC onward)
CdE1	Gregorian date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of the Roman Era	753 BC
Ey	The year in question of the Roman Era	752 AUC
CdEy	Gregorian date that began that year of the era	2 BC, January 1

$(\text{Ey} - 1) + \text{CdE1} = \text{CdEy}$

$(752 - 1) + -753 \text{ BC, Jan.} = -2 \text{ BC, January 1 to } 2 \text{ BC, December 31}$

If using the Gregorian calendar and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Era (CdE1) is a BC (negative) date and the result (CdEy) is zero or greater (positive), then add 1 to the result to get the AD date.

$(\text{Ey} - 1) + \text{CdE1 (BC/negative)} = 0 \text{ or greater} + 1 = \text{CdEy (AD/positive date)}$

*The 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Caesar Augustus began on 2 BC, November 27*

**Gregorian Date That Began the 42<sup>nd</sup> Year of the Reign of Caesar Augustus**

E	Reign of Caesar Octavius Augustus	
Ep	Octavius given authority by the Senate to rule as one of three rulers	
DM	Anniversary-dating method	
CdEp	Gregorian date for the epoch	43 BC, November 27
CdE1	Gregorian date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of his reign	43 BC, November 27
Ey	The year in question of Augustus' reign	42 <sup>nd</sup> year of his reign
CdEy	The Gregorian date that began that year of the reign	2 BC, November 27

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 = CdEy$$

$$(42 - 1) + -43 \text{ BC, November 27} = -2\text{BC, November 27 to 1 BC, November 26}$$

If using the Gregorian calendar and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Era (CdE1) is a BC (negative) date and the result (CdEy) is zero or greater (positive), then add 1 to the result to get the AD date.

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 \text{ (BC/negative)} = 0 \text{ or greater} + 1 = CdEy \text{ (AD/positive date)}$$

*The Ecclesiastical Review*, volume 60, page 94, Recent Bible Study, "The Date of our Lord's Birth," by Walter Drum, S.J., says,

"The Date of our Lord's Birth," by Walter Drum, S.J.: "Hippolytus, c. A.D. 212-236, tells us: For the first coming of our Lord in the flesh, in which He was born at Bethlehem, happened eight days before the Kalends of January, on a Wednesday, during... the 42d year of Augustus, counting from his consulship, A. U. C. 711 [43 BC], is A. U. C. 752 or B. C. 2."

*28 years after the death of Antony and Cleopatra in 30 BC is 2 BC.*

The heretic Eusebius in his *Church History* and other writers record the birth of Christ 28 years after the death of Antony and Cleopatra:

The heretic Eusebius, *Church History*, 4<sup>th</sup> century: "It was the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the rule of Augustus, and the 28<sup>th</sup> from the death of Antony and Cleopatra, with which latter event ended the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt, that at the time of the first census, while Quirinius was legate of Syria, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, according to the prophecies in His regard, was born at Bethlehem of Juda."<sup>5</sup>

Antony and Cleopatra died in 30 BC:

*Wikipedia*, "Mark Anthony": "Marcus Antonius (c. January 14, 83 BC–August 1, 30 BC), known in English as Marc Antony, was a Roman politician and general. ...Octavian, now close to absolute power, did not intend to give them rest. In August 30 BC, assisted by Agrippa, he invaded Egypt. With no other refuge to escape to, Antony committed suicide by stabbing himself with his sword in the mistaken belief that Cleopatra had already done so (30 BC)..."

If we take 28 years from 30 BC, we get 2 BC. Hence according to this evidence from several authors, Jesus was born in 2 BC because they say He was born 28 years after the

<sup>5</sup> Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Bk. i, ch. 5 ; P. G. 20, col. 81.

death of Antony and Cleopatra, who died in 30 BC. And the 2 BC year for the birth of Jesus coincides with the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, the 752<sup>nd</sup> year from the founding of the city of Rome, and the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the reign of Caesar Octavius Augustus.

*The 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 65<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel's 70 weeks began on 2 BC, September 25*

From the day of the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy on September 25, 455 BC to the day that Christ was born on December 25, 2 BC is 453 years and 3 months, which places Christ's birth in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the 65<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy.

**Gregorian Date That Began the 6<sup>th</sup> Year of the 65<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy**

E	Seventy-Weeks Era (SW)	
Ep	Nehemias gave the king's Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and rest of Jerusalem	
DM	Anniversary-dating method	
CdEp	Gregorian date for the epoch	455 BC, September 25
CdE1	Gregorian date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of the era	455 BC, September 25
Ey	The year in question of the Seventy-Weeks Era	454 <sup>th</sup> year of SW
CdEy	Gregorian date that began that year of the era	2 BC, September 25

$((\text{week of the era} - 1) \times 7^*) + \text{the year of the week} = \text{Year of the Seventy-Weeks Era (Ey)}$

$(65 - 1) \times 7 + 6 = 454^{\text{th}}$  year of the Seventy-Weeks Era

$(\text{Ey} - 1) + \text{CdE1} = \text{CdEy}$

$(454 - 1) + -455 \text{ BC, September 25} = -2 \text{ BC, September 25 to } 1 \text{ BC, September 24}$

If using the Gregorian calendar and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Era (CdE1) is a BC (negative) date and the result (CdEy) is zero or greater (positive), then add 1 to the result to get the AD date.

\*The (week of the era - 1) is multiplied by 7 because there are 7 years per week

In most cases I will not give the calculations in the rest of the book. You can calculate them yourself by the formulas given here and in my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns*.

## Evidence

*Roman Martyrology*, December 25: "...In the 65<sup>th</sup> week, according to the prophecy of Daniel; in the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad; in the year 752 from the founding of the city of Rome; in the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the empire of Octavian Augustus, when the whole world was at peace, in the 6<sup>th</sup> age of the world, Jesus Christ, eternal God, and Son of the eternal Father, desirous to sanctify the world by His most merciful coming, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit, and 9 months having elapsed since His conception, is born in Bethlehem of Juda, having become Man of the Virgin Mary."

*Catholic Bible*: "And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled." (Lk. 2:1)

Catholic Commentary on Lk. 2: “Ver. 1...This decree was promulgated in the 752d year of Rome...and the 42d year of the reign of Augustus, when there was universal peace...”

Paulus Orosius (d. 5<sup>th</sup> century), *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*, Book Seven: “(3) Thus, in the seven hundred and fifty-second year after the founding of the city [752 AUC], Christ was born, bringing the saving faith to the world...”<sup>6</sup>

One proof that Orosius starts the Roman Era in 753 BC and hence his birth date for Christ in 752 AUC is 2 BC is that he records the beginning of the reign of Tiberius Caesar in 767 AUC:

Paulus Orosius (d. 5<sup>th</sup> century), *Seven Books against the Pagans*, Book Seven: “(4) In the seven hundred and sixty-seventh year after the founding of the city, after the death of Augustus Caesar, Tiberius Caesar assumed the power and remained in it for twenty-three years.”

According to 753 BC as the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Roman Era, the 767<sup>th</sup> year of the Roman Era is 14 AD.

#### Gregorian Date That Began the 767<sup>th</sup> Year of the Roman Era

E	Roman Era	
Ep	Founding of the city of Rome	
DM	Anniversary-dating method	
CdEp	Gregorian date for the epoch	753 BC, April 21 (Jan. 1 from 45 BC onward)
CdE1	Gregorian date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of the Roman Era	753 BC
Ey	The year in question of the Roman era	767 AUC
CdEy	Gregorian date that began that year of the era	14 AD, January 1

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 = CdEy$$

$$(767 - 1) + -753 \text{ BC, Jan.} = +13 + 1 = 14 \text{ AD, January 1 to 14 AD, December 31}$$

If using the Gregorian calendar and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Era (CdE1) is a BC (negative) date and the result (CdEy) is zero or greater (positive), then add 1 to the result to get the AD date.

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 \text{ (BC/negative)} = 0 \text{ or greater} + 1 = CdEy \text{ (AD/positive date)}$$

All the credible sources record 14 AD as the indisputable year in which Caesar Augustus died and Tiberius Caesar assumed power. For example, the Roman historian Cassius Dio records the death of Caesar Augustus and thus the beginning of the reign of Tiberius Caesar on August 19 under the Roman consuls Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius, which is 14 AD:

Cassius Dio, book 56: “29. ...In the following year, when Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius were consuls, Augustus set out for Campania, and after superintending the games at Neapolis, passed away shortly afterward at Nola... 30. So Augustus fell sick and died. ...Thus on the nineteenth day of August, the day on which he had first become consul, he passed away, having lived seventy-five years, ten months, and twenty-six days (he had been born on the twenty-third of

<sup>6</sup> P.L. XXXI, 663-1174; ed. Zangemeister, in “Corpus script. eccl. lat.”, V, Vienna, 1882.

September), and having been sole ruler, from the time of his victory at Actium forty-four years lacking thirteen days.”

*Wikipedia*, “List of Roman Consuls”: “14 AD: Sex. Pompeius – Sex. Appuleius.”

Hence Orosius’ 767 AUC for the death of Caesar Augustus and the beginning of the reign of Tiberius Caesar is 14 AD, and thus his 752 AUC birth date for Jesus is 2 BC—both based upon 753 BC as the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Roman era. This refutes some who say that Orosius records the birth of Jesus in 1 BC or 3 BC.<sup>7</sup>

Saint Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 325-314 AD), *Panarion* [aka *The Medicine Chest*], book 2, section 4, number 51: “22, 3. For the Savior was born during the forty-second year of the Roman emperor Augustus—in the thirteenth consulship of the same Octavian Augustus and the consulship of Silanus, as the Roman consul lists indicate. (4) For these say as follows: ‘During their consulships,’ I mean Octavian’s thirteenth and the consulship of Silanus, Christ was born... 29, 1. For somewhere in these works I have also found a notation that the Word of God was born about the fortieth year of Augustus. Either this was a mistake on the writer’s part, or else he wrote only ‘forty (μ) years’ because the figure ‘beta’ had been erased and only the ‘mu’ was left on the page. For Christ was born in the forty-second year of Augustus.”

*Wikipedia*, “Roman Consuls”: “2 BC: Imp. Caesar Divi f. Augustus XIII – M. Plautius Silvanus.”

Venerable Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*: “The Sixth and the sixth age: In the forty-second year of Augustus Caesar... Christ is born, when Egypt became a Roman province... in the 752<sup>nd</sup> from the building of the city, in the year when all commotions of nations were stilled throughout the whole world, and, by the appointment of God, Caesar had established real and durable tranquility, Jesus Christ consecrated by his advent the sixth age of the world.”

Saint Hippolytus (c. 212-236 AD), *Commentary on Daniel*: “For the first coming of our Lord in the flesh, in which He was born at Bethlehem, happened eight days before the Kalends of January, on a Wednesday, during the 42<sup>d</sup> year of the reign of Augustus...”<sup>8</sup>

John Malalas (d. 578), *Chronographia*: “In the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Augustus, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of the Calends of January at the seventh hour of the day, our Lord Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem.”<sup>9</sup>

Kalends is the first day of the month. Days were recorded in relationship to how far they were to the beginning or the Kalends of the next month, counting the first day of the month inclusive. Hence eight days before the Kalends of January is December 25. And eight days before the Kalends of April is March 25:

25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1 (Kalends)
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

<sup>7</sup> See my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns*: The Reign of Tiberius Caesar Augustus (14 AD – 37 AD).

<sup>8</sup> *Commentary on Daniel*, iv, 23; Berlin Patrology, ed. G. Nath. Bonweteck and Hans Achelis, vol. I (Leipzig: Hinrich, 1897), p. 242.

<sup>9</sup> PG xcvi, col. 351 in sequence.

## **Jesus' birth in different years of Augustus but all in 2 BC because of different 1<sup>st</sup> regnal year**

It is important to know when an author begins the reign of Augustus in order to know when a specific year of his reign occurred according to that author. For example, one author says that Jesus Christ was born in the 43<sup>rd</sup> year of Augustus, another in the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Augustus, another in the 29<sup>th</sup> year of Augustus, and another in the 26<sup>th</sup> year of Augustus and all mean that Jesus was born on December 25, 2 BC because they begin the reign of Augustus in different years with different events:

- The author who says that Jesus was born in the 43<sup>rd</sup> year of Augustus and begins the reign of Augustus in 44 BC when Julius Caesar was murdered has Jesus being born in 2 BC.
- The author who says that Jesus was born in the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Augustus and begins the reign of Augustus in 43 BC when the Senate declared him a ruler of a Triumvirate also has Jesus being born in 2 BC.
- The author who says that Jesus was born in the 29<sup>th</sup> year of Augustus and begins the reign of Augustus in 30 BC when Marc Antony committed suicide also has Jesus being born in 2 BC.
- The author who says that Jesus was born in the 26<sup>th</sup> year of Augustus and begins the reign of Augustus in 27 BC when the Senate gave him the name Augustus also has Jesus being born in 2 BC.

See my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns: The Reign of Caius Julius Caesar Augustus (43 BC to 14 AD)*.

*The heretic Tertullian has Christ being born in 41<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus, which according to him is 2 BC because his 1<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus is 42 BC instead of 43 BC*

For example, the heretic Tertullian (d. 222 AD) says that Christ was born in the 41<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus and means 2 BC because he records the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus in 42 BC instead of 43 BC. This is proved because he says Christ was born 28 years after the death of Cleopatra and 15 years before the death of Caesar Augustus:

The heretic Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews*: "Let us see, moreover, how in the forty-first year of the empire of Augustus, when he has been reigning for xx [20] and viii [8] years after the death of Cleopatra, the Christ is born. And the same Augustus survived, after Christ is born, xv [15] years." (Chapter 8, "Of the Times of Christ's Birth and Passion, and of Jerusalem's Destruction")

We know that Tertullian's 41<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus is 2 BC because he says that Jesus was born 28 years after the death of Cleopatra, who died in 30 BC, which places the birth of Jesus in 2 BC (30 BC - 28 years = 2 BC). And he says that Jesus was born 15 years before the death of Augustus, who died in 14 AD, which places the birth of Jesus in 2 BC.

Formula for Span of Time between 2 BC and 14 AD		
1Y	1 <sup>st</sup> calendar year in time	2 BC
2Y	2 <sup>nd</sup> calendar year in time	14 AD
Ys	Span of years from 1 <sup>st</sup> calendar year to 2 <sup>nd</sup> calendar year	15 years
$2Y - 1Y = Ys$		
$14 \text{ AD} - -2 \text{ BC} = 16 - 1 = 15 \text{ years}$		
<p>If using the Gregorian calendar and 2Y is an AD year and 1Y is a BC year, then subtract 1 from the result to get the Ys. Note that BC numbers are negative (-).</p>		

Hence when the heretic Tertullian says that Jesus was born in the 41<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus, we know he means 2 BC because he records the birth of Jesus 28 years after the death of Cleopatra, who died in 30 BC, and records the birth of Jesus 15 years before the death of Caesar Augustus, who died in 14 AD.

It is most probable that the heretic Tertullian used the post-dating method, which places the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus in 42 BC—in either January according to the Julian calendar or March/April according to the Hebrew sacred calendar or September/October according to the Hebrew civil calendar. And according to the post-dating method, the 41<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus began in 2 BC ((41 – 1) + -42 = 2 BC). However, according to the anniversary-dating method, the 41<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus began in 3 BC because the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Augustus, according to this method, began on November 27, 43 BC when Augustus assumed his rule.

Therefore, in order to know an author’s date for an event within an era or reign, one must know the author’s date for the beginning of the era or reign and how he counts the years of that era or reign. The two most common ways of counting years in an era or reign are the anniversary-dating method and the post-dating method. (See RJMI book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns: Epochs, Eras, and Dating Methods*.)

## 2. Jesus Died at 33 Years Old on March 25, 33 AD

**Jesus died on the 8<sup>th</sup> day before the Kalends of April, after a 3-hour supernatural eclipse, in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad, in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, and in the 786<sup>th</sup> year from the founding of Rome**

Most of the Church Fathers teach that Jesus died when He was 33 years old and eight days before the Kalends of April, which is March 25.

Challoner Commentary on John 13:1: “*Before the festival day of the pasch...* This was the fourth and last pasch of the ministry of Christ, and according to the common computation, was in the thirty-third year of our Lord.”



## Venerable Bede

Venerable Bede (c. 672-735 AD), *De Tempore Ratione*, chapter 47: “Jesus died after reaching age 33 but before age 34 based on Luke 3:23 and on account of his years of preaching.”

## Paul the Deacon

Paul the Deacon (720-799 AD), *Miscellaneous History*: “In the twelfth year of the reign of Tiberius, at Fidenae, an amphitheater collapsed burying 20,000 people. Seven years later [19<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius], at the time when Our Lord was suffering his Passion, there was an immense earthquake. Rocks were split in the mountains. On the same day, the sun was darkened from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> hour [12:00 noon to 3:00 pm]. Darkness covered the whole of the earth and the stars appeared.”<sup>10</sup>

## Theophilus and the Gospel of Nicodemus (Acts of Pilate)

The following evidence is from two apocryphal books that have *not* been condemned by the Catholic Church. They both correctly teach that Christ died in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, and one correctly teaches that Jesus died in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad:

Theophilus: *The Martyrdom of Barsamya*, the Bishop of the Blessed City Edessa: “...The day of the ascension of our Lord to His glorious Father, which was the fourth day of Heziran, which was in the nineteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar ...”

*The Gospel of Nicodemus* (Acts of Pilate): “Now it came to pass, in the nineteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, emperor of the Romans, and of Herod, son of Herod king of Galilee, in the nineteenth year of his rule, on the eighth day before the kalends of April, which is the twenty-fifth day of the month of March...in the fourth year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad, under the rule of Joseph and Caiaphas, priests of the Jews: the things done by the chief priests and the rest of the Jews, which Nicodemus recorded after the cross and passion of the Lord, Nicodemus himself committed to Hebrew letters.”

The Gospel of Nicodemus is also known as the Christian Acts of Pilate, as opposed to the fraudulent pagan Acts of Pilate that was created to deny the true Acts of Pilate. In the second century Saint Justin Martyr referred to the true Acts of Pilate as a document worthy of credit:

Saint Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, Chap. 35, second century: “OTHER FULFILLED PROPHECIES. ...Jesus Christ stretched forth His hands, being crucified by the Jews speaking against Him and denying that He was the Christ. And as the prophet spoke, they tormented Him and set Him on the judgment-seat and said, Judge us. And the expression, ‘They pierced my hands and my feet,’ was used in reference to the nails of the cross which were fixed in His hands and feet. And after He was crucified they cast lots upon His vesture, and they that crucified Him parted it among them. And that these things did happen, you can ascertain from the Acts of Pontius Pilate...”

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<sup>10</sup> PL xcv, col. 858-864.

The pagan Acts of Pilate was a forgery dated about 311 AD that blasphemes Christ and attacks Christians. This forgery, which attempted to discredit the true Acts of Pilate, was suppressed by the Emperor Constantine. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century the heretic Eusebius speaks of the forged pagan Acts of Pilate:

The heretic Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4<sup>th</sup> century: “The Forged Acts: Having therefore forged Acts of Pilate and our Saviour full of every kind of blasphemy against Christ, they sent them with the emperor’s approval to the whole of the empire subject to him, with written commands that they should be openly posted to the view of all in every place, both in country and city, and that the schoolmasters should give them to their scholars, instead of their customary lessons, to be studied and learned by heart.” (Book 9, chapter 5)

### *Cesare Cardinal Baronius*

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Cesare Cardinal Baronius taught that Christ was born in 2 BC and died in 33 AD and thus that Christ died when He was 33 years old:

An Imprimatured Book: “In the sixteenth century the Pope, Gregory XIII, charged Cesare Cardinal Baronius (1538-1607), by the aid of study and research, to fix the true historical chronology of the life of Christ. This highly celebrated historian, Baronius, on an historical ground fixed BC 2 as being the date of Christ’s birth and AD 33 as being the date of His death. The Pope knew that he had appointed the most learned and most prudent historian of the time, and he had a right to accept the above said conclusions as being wise and prudent.”

Jesus was born on December 25, 2 BC and thus turned 33 years old on December 25, 32 BC. And thus Jesus was 33 years old when He died on March 25, 33 AD. He would have been 34 years old on December 25, 33 AD.

Beware of the error that says Jesus’ public ministry lasted a year or less and hence He was both baptized and died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. (See in this book “[The illogical and dangerous error that Jesus died in the 15th year of Tiberius](#),” p. 87.)

### **Supernatural eclipse before death, earthquake after death, Old Testament elect resurrect**

There was a three-hour supernatural worldwide eclipse during the three hours that Jesus suffered upon the cross—from the 6<sup>th</sup> hour to the 9<sup>th</sup> hour, which is from noon to 3:00 pm. And when Jesus died at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour, at 3:00 pm, there was a very great earthquake that was felt far away. And after Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after His death, He resurrected the Old Testament elect and put their bodies on them long enough to baptize them and feed them the Holy Eucharist (Jesus’ most precious Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine):

“Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole earth, until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani? that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some that stood there and heard, said: This man calleth Elias. And immediately one of them running took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar; and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. And the others said: Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to deliver him. And Jesus again crying with a loud voice, yielded up the spirit. And

behold the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent. And the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose. And coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many. Now the centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus, having seen the earthquake, and the things that were done, were sore afraid, saying: Indeed this was the Son of God.” (Mt. 27:45-54)

Beware of those who use astronomical calculations to find a natural eclipse to arrive at the day and year that Christ died. They are extremely bad willed or extremely stupid because the eclipse that occurred when Jesus hung upon the cross, as described in the Bible and by other sources, was obviously a supernatural eclipse and not a natural eclipse.<sup>11</sup> Natural solar eclipses happen only at the time of the new moon (the beginning of the Hebrew month) and hence do not occur at the time of the full moon (in the middle of the Hebrew month). And Christ died during the full moon on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan when natural eclipses do not occur. And natural solar eclipses do not last for more than 7 or 8 minutes—the longest solar eclipse was 7 minutes and 31.1 seconds:

*Wikipedia*, “Crucifixion darkness and eclipse”: “Solar eclipses only occur during the new moon phase... Solar eclipses are also too brief to account for the crucifixion darkness. The length of the crucifixion darkness described by biblical and extra-biblical sources was more than a full order of magnitude for the totality of solar eclipses. Seven minutes and 31.1 seconds has been the established maximum limit of solar eclipse totality. [Footnote: Meeus, J. (2003, December). The maximum possible duration of a total solar eclipse. *Journal of the British Astronomical Association*, 113(6), 343-348.]”

When Christ was suffering upon the holy Cross, there was a three-hour solar eclipse even though the moon was full. Hence it was a supernatural eclipse because natural solar eclipses do not happen at full moon nor last for more than 7 or 8 minutes. Paul the Deacon records this three-hour worldwide supernatural eclipse that occurred when Christ suffered upon the cross and the great earthquake that occurred when Christ died:

Paul the Deacon, *Miscellaneous History*: “In the twelfth year of the reign of Tiberius, at Fidenae, an amphitheater collapsed burying 20,000 people. Seven years later [19<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius], at the time when Our Lord was suffering his Passion, there was an immense earthquake. Rocks were split in the mountains. On the same day, the sun was darkened from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> hour [12:00 noon to 3:00 pm]. Darkness covered the whole of the earth and the stars appeared.” (PL xcv, col. 858-864)

The Catholic historian and chronologist Julius Africanus records that during Jesus’ Passion, death, and resurrection there was a full moon, a supernatural eclipse, a great earthquake, and the resurrection of the Old Testament Elect:

*The Chronography of Julius Africanus*: “XVIII. On the Circumstances connected with our Saviour’s Passion and His Life-giving Resurrection: Phlegon records that, in the time of Tiberius Caesar, at full moon, there was a full eclipse of the sun from the sixth hour to the ninth—manifestly that one of which we speak. But what has an eclipse in common with an earthquake, the rending rocks, and the resurrection of the dead, and so great a perturbation throughout the universe? Surely no such event

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<sup>11</sup> However, astronomy can be used to determine in what year and day the full moon occurred when Christ was crucified on Passover, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan. One must be careful, however, not to trust every astronomer and their methods and conclusions.

as this is recorded for a long period. But it was a darkness induced by God, because the Lord happened then to suffer.”

The heretic Eusebius also records the supernatural eclipse and the earthquake that occurred in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “*d Jesus Christ*, according to the prophecies, which had been spoken about him beforehand, came to the Passion...at which time also we find these things written verbatim in other commentaries of the gentiles: an eclipse of the sun happened, Bithynia shaken by earthquake, and in the city of Nicaea many buildings collapsed: all of which agree with what occurred in the Passion of the Saviour. Indeed Phlegon, who is an excellent calculator of olympiads, also writes about this, in his 13<sup>th</sup> book writing thus: ‘However, in the fourth year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> olympiad, an eclipse of the sun happened, greater and more excellent than any that had happened before it; at the sixth hour, day turned into dark night, so that the stars were seen in the sky, and an earthquake in Bithynia toppled many buildings of the city of Nicaea.’ These things the aforementioned man (says). The proof however of this matter, that in this year the Saviour suffered, the gospel of John presents, in which it is written that after the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar, the Lord preached for three years.”

Hence the supernatural eclipse, death of Christ, and earthquake occurred in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad. The 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad began on July 17, 32 AD and ended on July 16, 33 AD and thus the 33 AD Passover on March 25 when Christ died fell within the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad.

Phlegon, whom Julius Africanus and the heretic Eusebius quote, was a secular historian and a freed slave of Emperor Hadrian. Hadrian ruled from 117-138 AD. Phlegon describes the supernatural eclipse and earthquake and correctly says they occurred in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad, which is when Christ died:

### *Phlegon of Tralles*

Phlegon of Tralles, 2<sup>nd</sup> century: “In the fourth year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad there was a great eclipse of the sun which occurred at the sixth hour [noon] that excelled every other before it, turning the day into such darkness of night that the stars could be seen in heaven, and the earth moved in Bithynia, toppling many buildings in the city of Nicaea.” (*Fragmenta Historicum Graecorum*, Didot. Paris 1849, vol. iii, Phlegon, Bk 13, ch. 14.)

### *Pilate's Report to Tiberius Caesar*

Pontius Pilate, “The Report of Pilate the Procurator concerning our Lord Jesus Christ sent to Tiberius Caesar in Rome,” Second Greek Form: “...Him [Jesus] then Herod and Archelaus and Philip, and Annas and Caiaphas, with all the people, delivered to me to try him. And as many were exciting an insurrection against me, I ordered him to be crucified. And when he had been crucified, there was darkness over the whole earth, the sun having been completely hidden, and the heaven appearing dark though it was day, so that the stars appeared, but had at the same time their brightness darkened, as I suppose your reverence is not ignorant of, because in all the world they lighted lamps from the sixth hour until evening.”

(For the full report and explanation see my article “Pilate’s Report to Tiberius Exalts Christ.”)

### 3. Jesus' Public Ministry Lasted Exactly 3½ Years

Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy is an exact-to-the-day prophecy. Hence Jesus was baptized exactly at the end of Daniel's 69<sup>th</sup> week, which was exactly 483 years from the day that Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews to the day Christ was baptized. And exactly 3½ years after Jesus was baptized, He died, which was exactly halfway through the seven years of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. Therefore Jesus' public ministry lasted exactly 3½ years from the day He was baptized to the day He died, as taught by the common consensus of the Church Fathers:

Catholic Commentary on Dan. 9: "Ver. 25. ...Three years and a half, during which Christ preached. In the middle of this last week, the ancient sacrifices became useless, as the true Lamb of God had been immolated. ...Ver. 27. ...Of the week, or in the middle of the week, &c. Because Christ preached three years and a half: and then, by his sacrifice upon the cross, abolished all the sacrifices of the [old] law."

Catholic Commentary on John 5:3: "Because Christ after His baptism preached for three years and a half, according to the common consent of divines. It follows from this that there ought to be notices in the Gospels of four Passovers, which is the case. The *first* is mentioned by John in ii. 13; the *second* in this place; the *third* in vi. 4; the *fourth*, just before His death, xix. 14..."

#### The four Passovers of Jesus' 3½-year ministry

Because Jesus' public ministry lasted for 3½ years, there had to be four Passovers during His public ministry, the last in which He was crucified and died. By counting backward from the Passover Jesus died on, we will arrive at four Passovers:

1. One Passover at 3½ years into Jesus' ministry when He was crucified;
2. Another Passover a year earlier at 2½ years into His ministry;
3. Another Passover a year earlier at 1½ years into His ministry;
4. And another Passover a year earlier at ½ year into His ministry.

The Gospel of Saint John records these four Passovers and records Jesus' deeds not only in Galilee but also in Judea. The other three Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke only record the last Passover and concentrate mostly on Jesus' deeds in Galilee. However by implication the Gospel of Saint Luke records another Passover of Jesus' ministry other than the one He died on. (See in this book "[The Condemned Error That Jesus' Ministry Lasted Less Than One Year](#)," p. 83.)

The Passover was also known as the Pasch, for the sacrifice of the paschal lamb; or the Azymes (Mt. 26:17), for the feast of unleavened bread; or the Phase, for the Jews' passage from Egyptian bondage to freedom:

"Now the feast of unleavened bread, which is called the pasch, was at hand." (Lk. 22:1)

"And on the first day of the Azymes, the disciples came to Jesus, saying: Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the pasch?" (Mt. 26:17)

Challoner Commentary on Matthew 26:17: "*Azymes*: Feast of the unleavened bread. *Pasch*: The paschal lamb."

“And thus you shall eat it [paschal lamb]: you shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat in haste: for it is the Phase (that is the Passage) of the Lord.” (Ex. 12:11)

### *First Passover (30 AD)*

The first Passover during Jesus’ public ministry is mentioned in John 2:13: “*And the pasch of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*” Jesus was in the sixth month of His public ministry when He attended His first Passover in 30 AD. Saint John also tells us that during this first Passover Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the Temple, just as He did during the last and fourth Passover of His public ministry:

“And he found in the temple them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made, as it were, a scourge of little cords, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen, and the money of the changers he poured out, and the tables he overthrew. And to them that sold doves he said: Take these things hence, and make not the house of my Father a house of traffic.” (Jn. 2:14-16)

Saint Augustine correctly teaches that Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the Temple twice:

Saint Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, chapter 67, Of the expulsion of the sellers and buyers from the temple, and of the question as to the harmony between the first three evangelists and John, who relates the same incident in a widely different connection: “Matthew goes on with his narrative in the following terms: ‘And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple,’ and so on, down to where we read, ‘But ye have made it a den of thieves.’ This account of the multitude of sellers who were cast out of the temple is given by all the evangelists; but John introduces it in a remarkably different order. For, after recording the testimony borne by John the Baptist to Jesus, and mentioning that He went into Galilee at the time when He turned the water into wine, and after he has also noticed the sojourn of a few days in Capharnaum, John proceeds to tell us that He went up to Jerusalem at the season of the Jews’ Passover, and when He had made a scourge of small cords, drove out of the temple those who were selling in it. **This makes it evident that this act was performed by the Lord not on a single occasion, but twice over**; but that only the first instance is put on record by John, and the last by the other three.”

The first time Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the Temple was a warning to the religious leaders and other evil Jews in Jerusalem to change their evil ways. And the last time Jesus drove out the moneychangers from the Temple was a sign of impending doom for Jerusalem and the Temple because the religious leaders and other evil Jews had not changed their evil ways.

### *Second Passover (31 AD)*

The second Passover during Jesus’ public ministry is mentioned in John 5:1: “*After these things was a festival day of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*” As you will learn, this festival day could have only been either Purim or Passover. If the festival day

mentioned in John 5:1 is Purim, then it is certain that Jesus would have stayed in Jerusalem for the major festival of Passover, which was only one month away from Purim or two months if the extra month of Adar II was added or intercalated to the year. The feast of Purim falls on Adar 14 and 15 and Passover in the following month of Nisan on the 15<sup>th</sup> day. Whether Jesus only attended the festival of Purim and not the festival of Passover, this Passover was nevertheless the second Passover of Jesus' public ministry.

Just because this verse does not say that the festival day was Passover does not mean it was not the festival day of Passover. Mark 15:5-7 refers to the solemnity day of Passover simply as the festival day:

“But Jesus still answered nothing; so that Pilate wondered. Now on the festival day he was wont to release unto them one of the prisoners, whomsoever they demanded. And there was one called Barabbas, who was put in prison with some seditious men, who in the sedition had committed murder.” (Mk. 15:5-7)

Indeed, the common consensus of the Church Fathers teaches that the festival day mentioned in John 5:1 was the festival day of Passover:

Catholic Commentary on John 5: “Ver. 1. ...By the festival, mentioned in v. 1, is generally understood the Passover; and this was the second from the commencement of Christ's ministry. For the first Passover, see (Jn. 2:13); for the third (Jn. 6:4); for the fourth and last (Jn. 13:1; 19:14). The first three are only mentioned by S. John, the fourth by all the evangelists.”

Catholic Commentary on John 5: “Ver. 1. *A feast.* ...S. Irenæus (*lib. 2, c. 39*) and others think it was the Passover. They show this because in chap. 4, ver. 35, Jesus said there were still four months unto harvest. That therefore must have been before the Passover: thus the Passover must have been the first great subsequent feast.”

Before Jesus went up to this festival mentioned in John 5:1, we read in John, chapter 4, that Jesus was in Samaria and on His way to Galilee when He told the apostles that the harvest was four months away: “*Do not you say, there are yet four months, and then the harvest cometh? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and see the countries; for they are white already to harvest.*” (Jn. 4:35) Hence there was no harvest when Jesus said the harvest is four months away. There is no harvest in Israel in the months of October, November, December, January, and February. See the below Table for Israel's harvest seasons.

Table: Israel's Harvest Seasons

Month	Name of Months	Farm Season	Feast
1	Nisan (Mar-Apr)	Barley Harvest	Passover
2	Iyyar (Apr-May)	Barley Harvest	
3	Sivan (May-Jun)	Wheat Harvest	Pentecost
4	Tammuz (Jun-Jul)	Grape Harvest	
5	Av (Jul-Aug)	Olive Harvest	
6	Elul (Aug-Sep)	Date and Fig Harvest	
7	Tishri (Sep-Oct)	No Harvest - Early rains	Tabernacles
8	Heshvan (Oct-Nov)	No Harvest - Plowing	
9	Casleu (Nov-Dec)	No Harvest - Wheat-barley sowing	
10	Tevet (Dec-Jan)	No Harvest - Winter rains	
11	Shevat (Jan-Feb)	No Harvest - Almonds bloom, not ripe till fall	
12	Adar (Feb-Mar)	No Harvest - Latter rains	

The harvest, then, that Jesus said was four months away was the Passover harvest of barley which is totally ripe any day from March 21 to the middle of April. The barley could not be harvested and eaten by the people until it was offered as firstfruits to God on the Sunday that fell within the seven-day Passover celebration, which began in the evening of Nisan 14 (March/April). Therefore to get the earliest possible day when Jesus said the harvest is four months away, go back four months from March 21 to get November 21. Hence Jesus was in Samaria and on His way to Galilee on or within a couple of weeks of November 21 when He said the harvest is four months away. To learn, then, which possible festival Jesus went to in Jerusalem, as mentioned in John 5:1, we will see which Hebrew festivals occurred from November 21 to Passover. Below is a table of Jewish Old Covenant Festivals.

Table: Jewish Old Covenant Festivals

Hebrew Date	Greg. Month	Feast
Tishri 1	Sept/Oct	Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)
Tishri 10	Sept/Oct	Feast of Expiation or Atonement (Yom Kippur)
Tishri 15	Sept/Oct	Feast of Tabernacles* (Sukkot)
Tishri 22/23	Sept/Oct	Feast of Assembly or Collection (Simhat Torah)
Casleu 25	Nov/Dec	Feast of Dedication of the Temple (Hanukkah)
Adar 14/15	Feb/March	Feast of Purim
Nisan 15	March/April	Feast of Passover* or of unleavened bread
Sivan	May/June	Feast of Pentecost* or of weeks or of harvest (Shavuot)^
<p>*One of the three major feasts: <i>“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose: in the feast of unleavened bread, in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles. No one shall appear with his hands empty before the Lord.”</i> (Deut. 16:16)</p> <p>^Fifty days after the firstfruits (barley offerings) during the seven-day Passover celebration, which was on the day after the Sabbath Day that fell within this celebration, which always falls on a Sunday. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai on Pentecost Sunday. And the New Law, the New Covenant, was also promulgated to the world on Pentecost Sunday by the apostles.</p>		

From the above table we see that three festivals occurred from November 21 to Passover:

1. The feast of the Dedication of the Temple (Nov/Dec)
2. The feast of Purim (Feb/March)
3. The feast of Passover (March/April)

The feast of the Dedication of the Temple is ruled out because it occurs in the last week of November when Jesus was either in Samaria or on His way to Galilee. After Jesus stayed with the Samaritans for two days, He left for Galilee and not for Jerusalem: *“Now after two days, he departed thence, and went into Galilee.”* (Jn. 4:43) To show that Jesus was either in Samaria or on the way to Galilee during the feast of the Dedication of the Temple, we will trace Jesus’ events before and after He made the statement that there were four months to the harvest. After Jesus went to the first Passover of His public ministry (as recorded in John 2:14), He stayed in Judea for seven or eight months, depending on when the Passover occurred in March or April. We read in John 3:22 that

“After these things [the events that took place when Jesus was in Jerusalem for the first Passover of His public ministry] Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judea: and there he abode with them, and baptized.” (Jn. 3:22)



Hence Jesus did not go to Galilee when He left Jerusalem but went into Judea to preach for seven or eight months. When Jesus left Judea for Galilee, He had to pass through Samaria and this is when He met the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well and made the statement that there were four months to the harvest. We read of this in John, chapter 4:

“When Jesus therefore understood that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus maketh more disciples, and baptizeth more than John, (though Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples,) he left Judea, and went again into Galilee. And he was of necessity to pass through Samaria. He cometh therefore to a city of Samaria, which is called Sichar, near the land which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria, to draw water. Jesus saith to her: Give me to drink.” (Jn. 4:1-7)

“The woman therefore left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men there: Come, and see a man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done. Is not he the Christ? They went therefore out of the city, and came unto him. In the mean time the disciples prayed him, saying: Rabbi, eat. But he said to them: I have meat to eat, which you know not. The disciples therefore said one to another: Hath any man brought him to eat? Jesus saith to them: My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, that I may perfect his work. Do not you say, There are yet four months, and then the harvest cometh? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and see the countries; for they are white already to harvest.” (Jn. 4:28-35)

Jesus, then, passed through Samaria on His way to Galilee near the end of November when He told the apostles that there were four months to the harvest. Hence the festival that Jesus went up to in Jerusalem, as mentioned in John 5:1, could not have been the feast of the Dedication of the Temple, which occurs in the last week of November, because Jesus was on the way to Galilee. That leaves the feast of Purim and the feast of Passover as the only possible festivals that Jesus went up to, as mentioned in John 5:1. The feast of Purim occurs on the fourteenth and fifteenth day of Adar, which can fall any day from the middle of February to the middle of March. And Passover begins in the evening of Nisan 14, one month from the feast of Purim—except in years in which an additional month of Adar (known as Adar II) is added, in which case Passover would then begin two months after the feast of Purim. Both of these festivals give Jesus enough time to enter Galilee in December and to preach and do miracles for several months before returning to Jerusalem to attend one or both of these festivals. If the festival mentioned in John 5:1 is Purim, then it is certain that Jesus also attended the feast of Passover, one of the three major festivals of the year, which was only one or two months after the feast of Purim. It is not probable that Jesus would attend the minor festival of Purim and not attend the major festival of Passover that was one or two months away. Hence if the festival mentioned in John 5:1 is Purim, it is certain that Jesus also attended the Passover. And this was the second Passover of Jesus' public ministry. The Challoner version of the Douay Rheims Bible with a chronological index correctly lists this second Passover of Jesus' public ministry as occurring in 31 AD:

Challoner Catholic Bible with Chronological Index, John 5:1: “Now the pasch, the festival day [footnote *h*] of the Jews, was near at hand.”

Footnote: “*h* A.D. 31.”

### *Third Passover (32 AD)*

The rest of John chapter 5 speaks of Jesus when He was in Jerusalem for the second Passover of His public ministry:

“After these things was a festival day of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem a pond, called Probatika, which in Hebrew is named Bethesda, having five porches...” (Jn. 5:1-2)

We then read in John 6:1 that Jesus is back in Galilee for an unspecified period of time. And in John 6:4 the third Passover of Jesus’ public ministry is mentioned as being near at hand:

“After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand.” (Jn. 6:1-4)

John does not say that Jesus went up to Jerusalem for this third Passover of His public ministry. Jesus may not have gone up to this Passover because we read in John chapter 5 that when Jesus was in Jerusalem for the second Passover the Pharisees sought to kill Him after He healed a man on the Sabbath Day: *“Hereupon therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he did not only break the sabbath, but also said God was his Father, making himself equal to God.”* (Jn. 5:18) Therefore it is possible that Jesus did not attend the third Passover of His public ministry, which is why John 6:4 says *“the Pasch...was near at hand”* without saying that Jesus went up to this Passover.

One may argue that Jesus did attend the third Passover because it was one of the three major Jewish feasts that all males were required to attend:

“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose: **in the feast of unleavened bread, in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.** No one shall appear with his hands empty before the Lord.” (Deut. 16:16)

Yet we read in John chapter 7 that Jesus was not going to attend the major feast of Tabernacles that all males were required to attend, which fell in the September or October after the third Passover of Jesus’ public ministry, because the Jews sought to kill Him:

“After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for he would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand. And his brethren said to him: Pass from hence, and go into Judea; that thy disciples also may see thy works which thou dost... Then Jesus said to them: My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth: because I give testimony of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go you up to this festival day, but I go not up to this festival day: because my time is not accomplished.” (Jn. 7:1-3, 6-8)

Even though Jesus told the apostles He would not attend the feast of Tabernacles, He did attend, but secretly at first and without the apostles: *“But after his brethren were gone up, then he also went up to the feast, not openly, but, as it were, in secret.”* (Jn. 7:10) Whether Jesus did or did not attend this Passover, this Passover was the third Passover of His public ministry, which occurred in 32 AD. The Challoner version of the Douay

Rheims Bible with a chronological index correctly lists this third Passover of Jesus' public ministry as occurring in 32 AD:

John 6:4: "Now the pasch, the festival day [footnote *q*] of the Jews, was near at hand."

Footnote: "*q* A.D. 32."

#### *Fourth Passover (33 AD)*

The fourth Passover was when Christ was crucified, as mentioned in John 19:14-16:

"And it was the parasceve of the pasch, about the sixth hour, and he saith to the Jews: Behold your king. But they cried out: Away with him; away with him; crucify him. Pilate saith to them: Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered: We have no king but Caesar. Then therefore he delivered him to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him forth." (Jn. 19:14-16)

And this fourth Passover was in 33 AD when Christ was crucified and died:

Challoner Commentary on John 13:1: "*Before the festival day of the pasch...* This was the fourth and last pasch of the ministry of Christ, and according to the common computation, was in the thirty-third year of our Lord."

Challoner Catholic Bible, An Historical and Chronological Index to the New Testament, back of Bible: "33 AD – He dies on the cross and is buried."

## **4. Jesus Was Baptized on September 25, 29 AD**

### **Jesus was baptized exactly 3½ years before His death on March 25, 33 AD**

Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy teaches that from the time Christ was anointed, baptized by Saint John the Baptist, to the time of His death on the holy Cross is exactly 3½ years, which is exactly one half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week:

"Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the Holy of holies may be anointed. Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks [69 weeks to Christ's baptism] ...And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain [62 weeks plus the previous 7 weeks equals 69 weeks. Thus Christ is slain after the 69<sup>th</sup> week and in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week]. ...And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week [the 70<sup>th</sup> week]: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail [Christ will be slain 3½ years into or in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week and thus the 70<sup>th</sup> week is shortened or cut short]..." (Dan. 9:24-27)

Challoner Commentary on Daniel 9:27: "*In the half of the week...* or, in the middle of the week, etc. Because Christ preached three years and a half: and then by his sacrifice upon the cross abolished all the sacrifices of the [old] law..."

Hence to get the year and day that Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan, we start with the year and day that Christ died on, March 25, 33 AD, and go back exactly 3½

years and get September 25, 29 AD. Thus Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist on September 25, 29 AD, which was 782 years from the founding of Rome, in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, and in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad. (782 AUC, 16 Rtc, 202/1 OL).

Therefore according to the anniversary-dating method Jesus was baptized on September 25, 29 AD in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius and died in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. The Romans used the anniversary-dating method even if some authors may not have used this method.

### **Jesus was almost 30 years old when He was baptized**

Jesus was born on December 25, 2 BC and baptized on September 25, 29 AD. Therefore Jesus was 29 years and 9 months old when He was baptized and thus only three months away from being 30 years old. Luke 3:21-23 teaches that Christ was almost 30 years old when He was baptized by John the Baptist:

“Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, heaven was opened; and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape, as a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven: Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus was beginning his ministry at about thirty years of age; being (as it was supposed) the son of Joseph, who was of Heli, who was of Mathat...” (Lk. 3:21-23)

“Jesus was beginning His ministry at about thirty years of age” could mean that Jesus had just turned 30 when He was baptized. However, it favors the interpretation that Jesus was 29 years old and *almost* 30 when He was baptized. Beware, then, of the Rheims’ and Challoner’s incorrect translation of this passage which favors the opinion that Jesus was baptized when He had just turned 30 years old and not when He was 29 years old. They mistranslate the authentic and approved Clementine Vulgate. *The Ecclesiastical Review*, volume 60, page 94, Recent Bible Study, “The Date of our Lord’s Birth,” by Walter Drum, S.J., says,

“The Vulgate, ‘Jesus erat incipiens quasi annorum triginta,’ means that Jesus was *beginning His ministry* at about thirty years of age. Rheims wrongly conjectures ‘incipiens esse’: ‘And Jesus himself was beginning *to be* about thirty years old.’<sup>12</sup> Challoner arbitrarily reads ‘incipiens *quasi aetatem* annorum triginta’, ‘And Jesus himself was beginning about *the age* of thirty years’.<sup>13</sup> Both of these interpretations gerrymander the sacred text into a forced meaning.”

The Clementine Vulgate, Luke 3:23: “Et ipse Jesus erat incipiens quasi annorum triginta...”

Hence the true translation of the Clementine Vulgate favors Jesus’ being baptized when He was 29 years old and almost 30:

Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion*: “28, 1. He does not realize that the Savior did not live for only thirty years. (2) He was baptized in his thirtieth year at the age of twenty-nine years and ten months...” (Book 2, section 4, number 51)

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<sup>12</sup> Footnote 16: First edition, Rhemes: John Fogny, 1582.

<sup>13</sup> Footnote 17: Edition of John Murphy: Baltimore, 1899.

## January 6 as the day of Jesus' baptism is less probable

*Not all dates in the Catholic liturgical year are infallible or meant to be accurate*

The Catholic liturgical year celebrates the baptism of Jesus on January 6. However, no pope has infallibly defined that Jesus was indeed baptized on January 6. Not all of the dates of the liturgical calendar in which certain events are commemorated are meant to be accurate but are accommodations to fit the whole life of Jesus and preaching of the apostles into one year's time. For example, the liturgical calendar places the murder of the Holy Innocents on December 28, three days after Christ's birth, and the visit of the three wise men on January 6, twelve days after Christ's birth. But both of these events could not have happened until at least forty days after the birth of Christ and up to two years after His birth. Hence the common representation of the manger scene in which the three wise men and the shepherds adore Christ is for convenience because the wise men were not present when the shepherds adored Christ. (See my book *The Manger, House, Shepherds, and Wise Men*).

And some dates of events on the liturgical calendar have not been infallibly defined as the true dates on which the events occurred. Hence legitimate opposition is allowed regarding the dates on which these events occurred. Thus my opinion that Jesus was baptized on September 25 is an allowable opinion because no pope has infallibly defined that Jesus was baptized on January 6 or on any other date. The opinion that Jesus was baptized on September 25 fits Daniel's Prophecy that Christ died exactly on the halfway mark of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, which is exactly 3½ years from Christ's baptism to His death, from September 25, 29 AD to March 25, 33 AD. (See in this book "[Half of the 70th week is 3½ years and thus the whole week is 7 years](#)," p. 26.)

*The weather and time from Jesus' baptism to first Passover are against the January 6 opinion*

September 25 as the day that Jesus was baptized instead of January 6 fits more accurately with the weather and time span between Jesus' baptism and His attendance at the first Passover of His public ministry.

### The weather

December and January are two of the coldest months in the desert. Hence one may presume that during those months John did not baptize in the Jordan, or at least not often. And we know that there were many people present when Christ was baptized. And it is probable that Jesus did not go to the mountain for forty days in January because it was even colder on the mountain in the coldest month of January.

### The time from Jesus' baptism to Passover

If Jesus were baptized on January 6, He would probably not have had enough time to attend the following Passover, which fell in March or April. After Jesus was baptized, He

went to the mountain for forty days. If He were baptized on January 6, He would have come down from the mountain on February 16. Jesus then went through Galilee preaching and gathering the apostles, which took some time—at least 21 days. That places the day on March 9. Jesus then went to the synagogue in Nazareth, read from Isaiah proclaiming that He had fulfilled the prophecy regarding the Messiah, and was rejected by evil Jews—which took at least a day to travel there and then a day for the Sabbath day, which is 2 days in the least. That places the day on March 11. Jesus then attended the wedding feast at Cana where He did His first public miracle. Between His traveling to Cana and the wedding festivities which lasted several days, one can presume this took at least 2 weeks. That places the day on March 25. After Jesus left Cana, He went to Capharnaum and stayed there not many days, which means probably not more than 3 weeks. That places the day on April 15. Jesus then left Capharnaum to attend the first Passover of His public ministry. The trip from Capharnaum to Jerusalem takes at least 2 weeks or probably more due to rough and hilly country. That means Jesus would have arrived at Jerusalem on April 29, which is outside the range of possible Passover dates. One can make a case that Jesus took less time to do some of the things mentioned here to make it possible for Him to attend the Passover, provided the Passover that year fell late in April. But Jesus certainly would have had plenty of time to do all of these things if He were baptized on September 25.

### **John the Baptist began his ministry in 29 AD, in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, and probably six months before he baptized Christ**

Saint John the Baptist began his public ministry of preparing the way for Christ in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea:

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea, and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina; under the high priests Annas and Caiphas; the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins; as it was written in the book of the sayings of Isaiah the prophet: A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” (Lk. 3:1-4)

Caesar Augustus died on August 19, 14 AD and Tiberius Caesar succeeded him on the same day:

Cassius Dio, book 56: “29. ...In the following year, when Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius were consuls, Augustus set out for Campania, and after superintending the games at Neapolis, passed away shortly afterward at Nola... 30. So Augustus fell sick and died. ...Thus on the nineteenth day of August, the day on which he had first become consul, he passed away, having lived seventy-five years, ten months, and twenty-six days (he had been born on the twenty-third of September), and having been sole ruler, from the time of his victory at Actium forty-four years lacking thirteen days.”

*Wikipedia*, “List of Roman Consuls”: “14 AD: Sex. Pompeius – Sex. Appuleius.”

Paulus Orosius, *Seven Books against the Pagans*, book 7: “(4) In the seven hundred and sixty-seventh year after the founding of the city, after the death of Augustus Caesar, Tiberius Caesar assumed the power and remained in it for twenty-three years.”

The 767<sup>th</sup> year from the founding of Rome (767 AUC) was 14 AD. And the Romans used the anniversary-dating method to count regnal years. (See my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns*: Marking time by regnal years of Roman rulers.) Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar began on August 19, 14 AD and ended on August 18, 15 AD. And the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar began on August 19, 28 AD and ended on August 18, 29 AD. Therefore John the Baptist's public ministry had to begin within this one-year span of time. It is most probable that Saint John the Baptist began his public ministry six months before he baptized Jesus because John was conceived six months before Christ. This is recorded in Luke chapter 1:

“And after those days, Elizabeth his wife conceived [John the Baptist], and hid herself five months, saying: Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he hath had regard to take away my reproach among men. And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus.” (Lk. 1:24-31)

Hence if John the Baptist began his public ministry six months before he baptized Christ, then he began it on March 25, 29 AD because he baptized Christ on September 25, 29 AD. Therefore John the Baptist began his public ministry in the 782<sup>nd</sup> year from the founding of Rome, in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar, in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 201<sup>st</sup> Olympiad, and when he was 29 years old (782 AUC, 15 Rtc, 201/4 OL).

### **Tiberius Caesar's 15<sup>th</sup> year in Luke 3:1 refers to John the Baptist and not to Christ**

Some of the Church Fathers misinterpreted Luke 3:1 to definitively mean that Jesus was baptized in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. But the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar mentioned in Luke 3:1 refers to when John the Baptist began his public ministry and not to when Jesus was baptized:

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea, and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina; under the high priests Annas and Caiphas; the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins...” (Lk. 3:1-3)

Verses 3 to 20 speak of John's preparing the way for Jesus before baptizing Him. This had to take some time, at least six months. And then verses 21 to 23 say that John baptized Jesus:

“Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, heaven was opened; and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape, as a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven: Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus was beginning his ministry at about thirty years of age; being (as it was supposed) the son of Joseph, who was of Heli, who was of Mathath...” (Lk. 3:21-23)

Therefore we read in Luke 3:1 that John the Baptist began his public ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar, that he spent some time (at least six months) preparing the way for Jesus, and only then did he baptize Jesus. Hence Jesus may very well have been baptized in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar, depending on how many months John spent preparing the way for Jesus. For example, if John began his public ministry on March 25, 29 AD and spent six months preparing the way for Jesus, then Jesus would have been baptized on September 25, 29 AD, which was a little over one month into the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. And this is the opinion that I believe is most probable.

### **Within the limits of the law, Jesus and John began their ministries at 29 years old**

#### *The minimum age for the priesthood changed from 30 to 25 to 20 years old*

The original disciplinary law decreed that a Levite could not become a priest until he was 30 years old. This law is recorded in Numbers 4:3:

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, and Aaron, saying: Take the sum of the sons of Caath from the midst of the Levites, by their houses and families. From thirty years old and upward, to fifty years old, of all that go in to stand and to minister in the tabernacle of the covenant. This is the service of the sons of Caath...” (Num. 4:1-4)

Because this age-of-eligibility-for-the-priesthood law was a disciplinary law, it could and did change. In Numbers 8:23 we read that the age of eligibility was reduced to 25 years old:

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: This is the law of the Levites: From twenty-five years old and upwards, they shall go in to minister in the tabernacle of the covenant. And when they shall have accomplished the fiftieth year of their age, they shall cease to serve...” (Num. 8:23-25)

And from the time of King David forward, the age of eligibility was reduced to 20 years old:

“These are the sons of Levi in their kindreds and families, princes by their courses, and the number of every head that did the works of the ministry of the house of the Lord from twenty years old and upward.” (1 Par. 23:24)

“...Besides the males from three years old and upward, to all that went into the temple of the Lord, and whatsoever there was need of in the ministry, and their offices according to their courses, day by day. To the priests by their families, and to the Levites from the twentieth year and upward, by their classes and companies.” (2 Par. 31:16-17)

Catholic Commentary on 2 Par. 31: “Ver. 17. Upward. Ezechias followed the regulation of David, rather than that of Moses, who deferred the service till the 25<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> year (Num. 4:3), (Num. 8:24), (1 Par. 23:24).”

Hence, beware of the erroneous opinion that 30 years of age was the minimum age to begin public ministry during the days of Jesus and John and thus they had to be 30 years old to begin their public ministries. From the time of King David forward, the eligible age for the priesthood was 20 years old and not 30. Therefore, the opinion that Jesus and



John began their ministries at the age of 29 falls within the limits of the disciplinary law at that time.

## 5. Nehemias Gave the Jews the Decree on September 25, 455 BC

The number of years from the beginning of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy to the baptism of Christ is 483 years, which is 69 weeks of 7 years per week. (See in this book "[A Week of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Is Seven Years](#)," p. 24.) Therefore, to get the year and day that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy when Nehemias gave the Jews in Jerusalem the Decree to rebuild the walls and the rest of the city, go back 483 years from the year and day that Christ was baptized, which was September 25, 29 AD, to get September 25, 455 BC.

Formula for Span of Time between Two Calendar Years		
1Y	1 <sup>st</sup> calendar year in time	455 BC, Sept. 25
2Y	2 <sup>nd</sup> calendar year in time	29 AD, Sept. 25
Ys	Span of years from 1 <sup>st</sup> calendar year to 2 <sup>nd</sup> calendar year	483 yrs

$$2Y - 1Y = Ys$$

$$29 \text{ AD, Sept. 25} - -455 \text{ BC, Sept. 25} = 484 - 1 = 483 \text{ years}$$

If using the Gregorian calendar and 2Y is an AD year and 1Y is a BC year, then subtract 1 from the result to get the Ys. Note that BC numbers are negative (-).

Hence Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy began on September 25, 455 BC when Nehemias gave the Jews in Jerusalem the Decree to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem, which is exactly 483 years before Jesus Christ was baptized on September 25, 29 AD. "An Historical and Chronological Index to the Old Testament" from Haydock's Catholic Bible, 1859, correctly records 455 BC as the year that Nehemias got the Decree from King Artaxerxes to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem:



## CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX, &c.

B.C.	BIBLE HISTORY.
455	Nehemias obtains the king's edict for repairing the walls of Jerusalem. 2 Esd. ii.

**WARNING:** Rev. George Haydock was a notorious heretic and his biblical commentary contains many heresies.

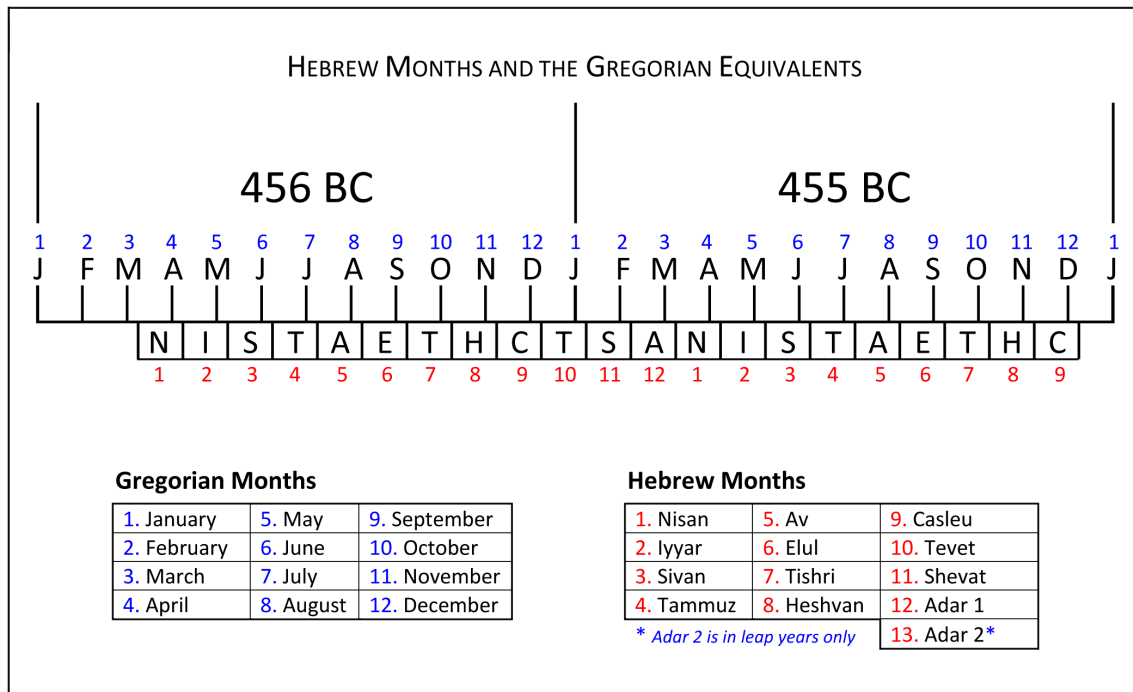
Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in 455 BC and on September 25, which falls in the Hebrew month of Tishri. Hence beware of the erroneous opinion that says Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in 445 or 444 BC, which contradicts Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy by moving Christ's baptism 11 years forward to 40 AD instead of 29 AD. This erroneous opinion incorrectly dates the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus as 464 BC instead of 475 BC. Hence it incorrectly has the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes beginning in 445 BC instead of 456 BC. (See in this book "[The Error That the 1st Year of Artaxerxes Longimanus Was 465 BC](#)," p. 92.)

### Nehemias prayed in 456 BC and got the Decree in 455 BC

Even though Nehemias' prayer and then his getting the Decree both occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes, both did not occur in the same BC year. Nehemias prayed in 456

BC but got the Decree in 455 BC because between the Hebrew month of Casleu (when he prayed) and the Hebrew month of Nisan (when he got the Decree) the New Year according to the Gregorian calendar occurred in the Hebrew month of Tevet, in which January 1 falls. Below is a chart that shows the relationship of the Hebrew months with Julian and Gregorian months.

Chart: Relationship between Hebrew and Gregorian Months



Each Hebrew month begins its first day on different days within the two Gregorian months from year to year because the Hebrew lunisolar calendar loses eleven days every Gregorian solar year until a month is added (intercalated) to the Hebrew calendar about every three years. For most of the Gregorian years, the whole Hebrew month falls within the range of the two Gregorian months; but for some of the Gregorian years, it falls outside that range by ending in the third or following Gregorian month. For example, for most of the Gregorian years, the whole Hebrew month of Nisan falls within the Gregorian months of March and April; but for some Gregorian years Nisan ends in early May.

## Nehemias prayed for and got the Decree in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes

*Persians used the post-dating method with Tishri 1 as New Year's Day for counting regnal years*

### In the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes, Nehemias prays and gets Decree

The Bible says that in the Hebrew month of Casleu in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of King Artaxerxes Longimanus, Nehemias prayed to God for the rebuilding of the walls and the rest of Jerusalem:

“The words of Nehemias the son of Helchias. And it came to pass in the month of Casleu, in the twentieth year [of Artaxerxes Longimanus], as I was in the castle of Susa, that Hanani one of my brethren came, he and some men of Juda; and I asked them concerning the Jews, that remained and were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me: They that have remained, and are left of the captivity there in the province, are in great affliction, and reproach: and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire. And when I had heard these words, I sat down, and wept, and mourned for many days: and I fasted, and prayed before the face of the God of heaven.” (2 Esd. 1:1-4)

And the Bible says that Nehemias got the Decree from King Artaxerxes in the Hebrew month of Nisan in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign:

“And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king: that wine was before him, and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king: and I was as one languishing away before his face. And the king said to me: Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou dost not appear to be sick? this is not without cause, but some evil, I know not what, is in thy heart. And I was seized with an exceeding great fear: And I said to the king: O king, live for ever: why should not my countenance be sorrowful, seeing the city of the place of the sepulchres of my fathers is desolate, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire? Then the king said to me: For what dost thou make request? And I prayed to the God of heaven, and I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, and if thy servant hath found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me into Judea to the city of the sepulchre of my father, and I will build it. And the king said to me, and the queen that sat by him: For how long shall thy journey be, and when wilt thou return? And it pleased the king, and he sent me: and I fixed him a time. And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, let him give me letters to the governors of the country beyond the river, that they convey me over, till I come into Judea...” (2 Esd. 2:1-7)

Thus King Artaxerxes was in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign in the Hebrew month of Casleu when Nehemias prayed and in the following Hebrew month of Nisan when Nehemias got the Decree from the king. Hence the king's reign did not increment in Nisan because he was still in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. Instead, the year of the king's reign incremented in autumn on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Tishri instead of in spring on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Nisan. If Persian regnal years incremented on Nisan 1, then King Artaxerxes would have been in the 21<sup>st</sup> year of his reign when he gave the Decree to Nehemias. This is one proof that the Persian calendar began the New Year in autumn on Tishri 1 and that they used the post-dating method to count regnal years. The Jews under the Persian captivity used the Hebrew civil calendar to count regnal years to conform to the method used by their Persian rulers. This biblical evidence is infallible and hence any evidence that contradicts it is false or

misinterpreted. And even if there were no other evidence to confirm it, the biblical evidence is nevertheless infallibly true.

### Elephantine Papyri from Jews in Egypt

Other evidence shows that Jews in 5 BC conformed to the Persian method of counting regnal years beginning in autumn on Tishri 1. In 5 BC Egypt was ruled by the Persians, and there was a Jewish colony living on Elephantine Island in Egypt at that time. During the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup>, papyrus scrolls were discovered on Elephantine Island. The first group of papyri was bought from natives and published in 1906. Many more documents were discovered in a systematic excavation from 1906 to 1908, carried out on behalf of the Berlin Museum. They were published in 1911. Another group of papyri from the same place had been bought at Elephantine by Mr. Charles Wilbour in 1893 and are in the Brooklyn Museum. All these documents, dated and undated, now totaling more than one hundred in number, are written in Aramaic, the language of the Persian Empire. The dated documents are from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, and from internal evidence it can be gathered that the undated papyri also date from the same period. These documents reveal that the Jews of Elephantine formed a garrison in this fortress at Egypt's southern border and that they had been there for some time when Cambyses II conquered the country and made it a Persian possession. As contemporary source materials from the time of Esdras and Nehemias, these documents are thus of the utmost value in informing us concerning the economic, religious, and secular history of the 5<sup>th</sup> century Jewish colony in southern Egypt.

Of the dated documents two prove that the Jews at Elephantine under Persian rule used Tishri 1 as New Year's Day to count regnal years. One papyrus says that Darius II was in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the month of Tammuz and the other that he was in his 4<sup>th</sup> year in the month of Tishri, proving that the year of his reign increased by 1 on Tishri 1.

- The papyrus called Kraeling 6 says, "On the 8<sup>th</sup> of Pharmuthil which is the 8<sup>th</sup> day of Tammuz, year 3 of Darius, the king."

Hence Darius was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of his reign in the Hebrew month of Tammuz (June/July).

- The papyrus called Kraeling 7 says, "In the month of Tishri, this is Epiphi, year 4 of Darius."

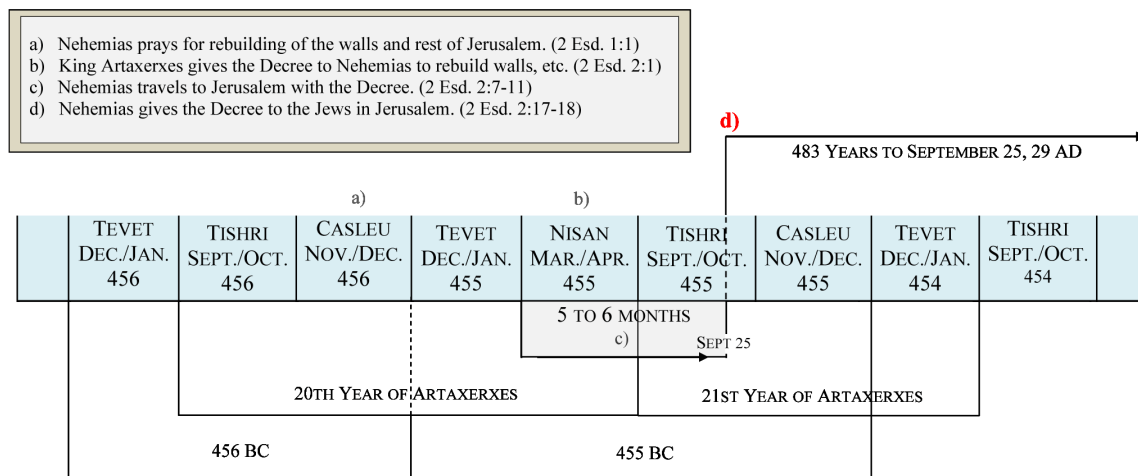
Hence Darius was in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of his reign in the Hebrew month of Tishri (Sept/Oct). The year of Darius II's reign could not have increased from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> in the intervening months of Av and Elul, which fall between Tammuz and Tishri, because the Jews and other nations used only Nisan 1 or Tishri 1 as New Year's Day. Hence this evidence corroborates the infallible biblical evidence from 2 Esdras that Jews under the Persian rule used the Hebrew civil calendar with Tishri 1 as New Year's Day to count regnal years.

## Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in the 21<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 455 BC

Not until five or six months after Nehemias got the Decree from King Artaxerxes in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign in the Hebrew month of Nisan (March/April) in 455 BC did Nehemias give the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem on September 25, which fell within the Hebrew month of Tishri and in the same year of 455 BC. Even though Nehemias got the Decree from Artaxerxes in 455 BC and gave it to the Jews in Jerusalem in 455 BC, he got the Decree in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes but gave it to the Jews in the 21<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes because the year of Artaxerxes' reign went from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> on Tishri 1, according to the Hebrew civil calendar used by the Jews under Persian rule. To count regnal years, the Persians used the post-dating method with the 1<sup>st</sup> day of autumn as the New Year's Day.

Chart: Months and Year of the Decree

### Months and Year of the Decree



Hence Nehemias prayed in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the king in 456 BC, got the Decree in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the king in 455 BC, and gave it to the Jews in the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the king in 455 BC on September 25. And 483 years or 69 weeks of seven years per week from September 25, 455 BC is September 25, 29 AD when Jesus was baptized by John.

## 6. The Rest of Jerusalem Was Completed in 406 BC

The rest of Jerusalem was completed in 406 BC, which was 49 years after the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. The prophecy sets out the first 7 weeks or 49 years of the 70 weeks and then adds 62 weeks to the 7 weeks to make 69 weeks to Christ's baptism and the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> week in which Christ will die halfway through that 70<sup>th</sup> week:

“Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of

times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain... And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week..." (Dan. 9:25-27)

The first 7 weeks or 49 years was spent completing and perfecting the walls, streets, palaces, homes, and the rest of the city of Jerusalem. After the walls and gates were completed, Esdras says the houses were not yet built:

"And I said to them: Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened till the sun be hot. And while they were yet standing by, the gates were shut, and barred: and I set watchmen of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one by their courses, and every man over against his house. And the city was very wide and great, and the people few in the midst thereof, and the houses were not built." (2 Esd. 7:3-4)

Commenting on 2 Esdras 11:1, the Venerable Bede says that "after the walls and gates were built, the rest of the city was a heap of ruins so that only a few Jews could live in Jerusalem":

"And the princes of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: but the rest of the people cast lots, to take one part in ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts in the other cities." (2 Esd. 11:1)

One can presume that in rebuilding and perfecting the rest of the city of Jerusalem the Jews met with the same opposition from their surrounding enemies as they had when building the walls and gates. Hence the work was greatly delayed and thus it could have easily taken 49 years to complete and perfect the city of Jerusalem. The first 12 years were spent completing the walls and gates. And the next 37 years were spent completing the rest of the city of Jerusalem. Thus it took 49 years or 7 weeks of years to complete and perfect the city of Jerusalem. Therefore the city was completed and perfected on September 25, 406 BC, which is exactly 49 years from September 25, 455 BC when the prophecy began. And 62 weeks of years or 434 years from the end of the first 7 weeks of years or 49 years is September 25, 29 AD when Christ was baptized, which was a total of 483 years or 69 weeks of years from the beginning of the prophecy on September 25, 455 BC. The Persian King Darius II (423-404 BC) was ruling the Jews in 406 BC when the city of Jerusalem was completed and perfected.

## **Part 4 - Adjustments to the Prophecy**

### **Adjustments Must Preserve Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy**

To maintain Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, any adjustment to a day or a year that relates to the prophecy must include an adjustment to *all* the days and years that relate to the prophecy. The three things that must be maintained to preserve the prophecy are as follows:

1. The day of the Decree and Christ's baptism must be the same;
2. From the day of the Decree to the day of Christ's baptism must be exactly 483 years, which is 69 weeks of years (each week consisting of 7 years);

3. The year and day of Christ's death must be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years from the year and day of His baptism, which is exactly halfway through the 70<sup>th</sup> week, which is  $486\frac{1}{2}$  years from the day of the Decree.

## **Adjustments to the Julian Calendar If Needed**

Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy began on September 25, 455 BC when Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem. September 25 falls in the Hebrew month of Tishri. Hence the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy went out on the day of Tishri that corresponded with September 25 according to the tropical year, as reflected in a Julian or Gregorian calendar that is in sync with the tropical year. Even though the Julian and Gregorian calendars and their months of January to December did not exist in the time of the Decree in 455 BC, the tropical year and four seasons did; and the Jews kept their twelve Hebrew lunar months in sync with the tropical year by adding an extra month during leap years. Hence when the Bible refers to years in the literal sense, such as the years of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, the years are measured according to the *tropical* year (which is an absolutely precise year) and not according to a lunar calendar that is out of sync with the tropical year. (See my book *The Stationary Earth and the Measuring of Time: A year in the Bible is a tropical year.*)

### **Julian calendar probably in sync with tropical year when Christ was born, baptized, and died**

During the time of Jesus Christ's first coming, the Julian solar calendar with its months of January to December was in effect in the Roman world. Hence the date of Christ's birth on December 25 (or eight days before the Kalends of January) and His death on March 25 (or eight days before the Kalends of April), as recorded by the Church Fathers and others, was according to the Julian calendar. It is most probable that God would have made sure that the Julian calendar was in sync with the tropical year during these most important events so that the December 25 and March 25 of the Julian calendar in the years Christ was born and died were in sync with the true December 25 and true March 25 of the tropical year.

### **If Julian calendar was out of sync with tropical year**

But if the Julian calendar was not in sync with the tropical year during the years of Christ's birth or death, then the dates of His birth and death would have to be adjusted to get the precise day of Christ's birth and death according to the tropical year. And then any other pertinent dates that relate to Christ's birth and death would also have to be adjusted. For example,

1. If the Julian calendar was out of sync with the tropical year by two days too many when Christ was born, then Christ would have actually been



born on December 23 according to the tropical year and not on December 25 according to the out-of-sync Julian calendar.<sup>14</sup>

2. And if the Julian calendar was out of sync with the tropical year by two days too many when Christ died, then Christ would have actually died on March 23, 33 AD according to the tropical year and not on March 25, 33 AD according to the out-of-sync Julian calendar. And hence the date of Christ's baptism would have to be adjusted from September 25, 29 AD according to the out-of-sync Julian calendar to September 23, 29 AD according to the tropical year to preserve the fact that Christ was baptized exactly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years before He died. And the Decree date would also have to be adjusted from September 25, 455 BC to September 23, 455 BC to preserve the fact that Christ was baptized exactly 483 years after the Decree which began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. These adjustments preserve Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy which demands that the day and month of the Decree and the day and month of Christ's baptism must be the same and that Christ was baptized exactly 483 years after the Decree and that Christ died exactly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years after He was baptized. All these dates are linked to one another by Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy.

## **Jesus Could Not Have Been Born before 3 BC or after 1 AD**

### **No Church Father taught that Jesus was born before 3 BC or after 1 AD**

Not one Church Father teaches that Jesus was born before 3 BC or after 1 AD. Hence it is a doctrine of the ordinary magisterium that Jesus could not have been born before 3 BC or after 1 AD. Beware, then, of those who attempt to discredit the Church Fathers, the ordinary magisterium, and the Catholic Bible by teaching that Jesus was born before 3 BC or after 1 AD.

### **Luke chapter 3 places birth of Jesus from February 19, 3 BC to February 18, 1 AD**

Jesus could not have been born before February 19, 3 BC or after February 18, 1 AD because of the following facts taken from the Gospel of Saint Luke, chapter 3:

“Now **in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar**, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother

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<sup>14</sup> The Gregorian calendar loses only one day every 3200 years and hence after 3200 years would have one day less than the tropical year. However, a Julian calendar gains a day in relation to the tropical year every 100 years that are not divisible by 400 because it adds a leap day on those years whereas the Gregorian calendar does not. And at times the Julian calendar added a leap day every three years instead of the proscribed four years. Hence an out-of-sync Julian calendar has more days than the tropical year. That is why in 1582 Pope Gregory XIII deleted 10 days from the calendar so October 4 was followed by October 15 when he promulgated the more accurate Gregorian calendar. (See my book *The Stationary Earth and the Measuring of Time*: Gregorian calendar comes closest to the tropical year.)

tetrarch of Iturea, and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina; under the high priests Annas and Caiphas; the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins... Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, heaven was opened; and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape, as a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven: Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And **Jesus was beginning his ministry at about thirty years of age...**" (Lk. 3:1-3, 21-23)

From this Bible passage the following facts are revealed:

- Jesus was baptized when He was almost 30 years old or had just turned 30, plus or minus six months. Hence Jesus was between 29½ to 30½ years old when He was baptized.
- Jesus could not have been baptized before the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar.
- Tiberius Caesar began his reign on August 19, 14 AD when Caesar Augustus died.<sup>15</sup>

All the credible sources record the death of Caesar Augustus on August 19, 14 AD:

Cassius Dio, book 56: "29. ...In the following year, when Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Pompeius were consuls, Augustus set out for Campania, and after superintending the games at Neapolis, passed away shortly afterward at Nola... 30. So Augustus fell sick and died. ...Thus on the nineteenth day of August, the day on which he had first become consul, he passed away, having lived seventy-five years, ten months, and twenty-six days (he had been born on the twenty-third of September), and having been sole ruler, from the time of his victory at Actium forty-four years lacking thirteen days."

*Wikipedia*, "List of Roman Consuls": "14 AD: Sex. Pompeius – Sex. Appuleius."

- The 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, according to the anniversary-dating method used by the Romans, began when he ascended the throne on August 19, 14 AD. Thus the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius began on August 19, 28 AD and ended on August 18, 29 AD.

From the above facts in Luke chapter 3, Jesus could have been born on any day from February 19, 3 BC to February 18, 1 AD.

*Most probable opinion that 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius means when John began his ministry*

According to the common and most probable opinion that the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius mentioned in Luke chapter 3 means when John the Baptist began his ministry, Jesus could only have been born on any day from March 19, 3 BC to February 18, 1 AD. The Bible does not say when Saint John the Baptist began his public ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year

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<sup>15</sup> See my book *Dating Events by Eras and Reigns: The Reign of Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus (43 BC to 14 AD)*.

of Tiberius. Hence John could have begun his public ministry on any day from August 19, 28 AD to August 18, 29 AD, all of which fall within the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. And Jesus was not baptized by Saint John until John had been preaching, baptizing, and preparing the way for Jesus for at least one month to one year.

**February 18, 1 AD:** If we take the latest time for all this to happen, then we will get the latest year in which Christ could have been born. The latest date that John could have begun his public ministry was August 18, 29 AD, the last day of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. And the longest time for John to prepare the way for Jesus is one year, which places the baptism of Jesus on August 18, 30 AD. And the earliest age in which Jesus could have been baptized is 29½ years old, which places the birth of Jesus on February 18, 1 AD. Hence any birth date for Jesus later than February, 1 AD is impossible because it contradicts the Word of God as recorded in Luke chapter 3.

**March 19, 3 BC:** If we take the earliest time for all this to happen according to John's beginning his public ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, then we will get the earliest year in which Christ could have been born. The earliest date that John could have begun his public ministry was August 19, 28 AD, the first day of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. And the least time for John to prepare the way for Jesus is one month, which places the baptism of Jesus on September 19, 28 AD. And the latest age in which Jesus could have been baptized is 30½ years old, which places the birth of Jesus on March 19, 3 BC.

*Least probable opinion that 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius means when Jesus was baptized*

According to the least probable opinion that the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius mentioned in Luke chapter 3 means when Jesus was baptized and not when John began his ministry, Jesus could only have been born on any day from February 19, 3 BC to February 18, 1 BC. According to this opinion, John could have begun his public ministry in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius.

**February 19, 3 BC:** To get the earliest date on which Jesus could have been born according to this opinion, we must get the earliest date on which Jesus could have been baptized, which is the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, and the oldest age that Jesus could have been when baptized, which is 30½ years old. The 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius was August 19, 28 AD and 30½ years from that date is February 19, 3 BC, which hence is the earliest date on which Jesus could have been born according to this opinion.

**February 18, 1 BC:** To get the latest date on which Jesus could have been born according to this opinion, we must get the latest date on which Jesus could have been baptized, which is the last day of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, and the youngest age that Jesus could have been when baptized, which is 29½ years old. The last day of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius was August 18, 29 AD and 29½ years

from that date is February 18, 1 BC, which is the latest date on which Jesus could have been born according to this opinion.

Hence according to the only two possible opinions that the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius was either when John began his ministry or when Jesus was baptized, Jesus could only have been born on any day from February 19, 3 BC to February 18, 1 AD. The former opinion gives us the latest date and the latter the earliest.

### **If Jesus Were Born on 12/25/1 BC, Baptized on 9/25/30 AD, and Crucified on 3/25/34 AD**

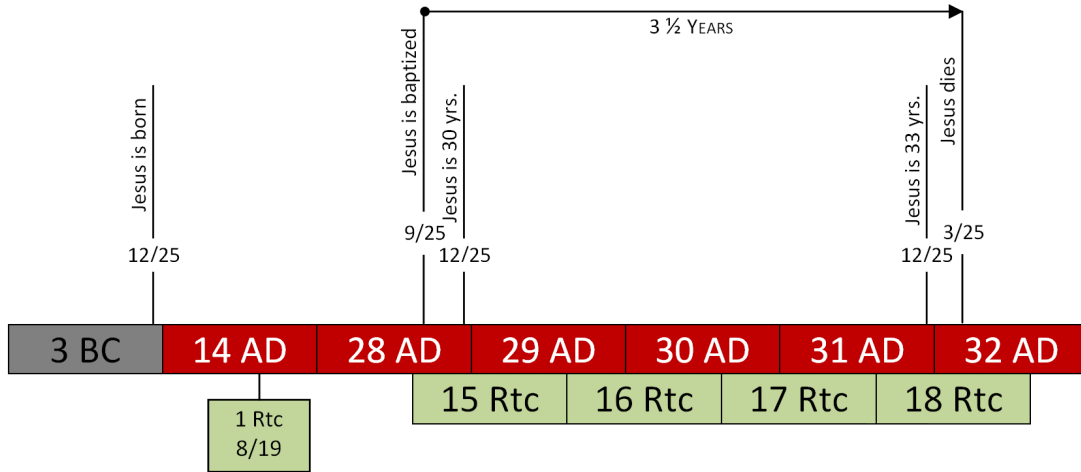
Adjustments must also be made if a year is wrong because of erroneous calculation, interpretation, or translation. For example, if Christ did not die in 33 AD but instead died in 34 AD, then

- The year of Christ's birth must be adjusted from December 25, 2 BC to December 25, 1 BC to preserve the fact that Christ died when He was 33 years old.
- And then the year Christ was baptized would have to be adjusted from September 25, 29 AD to September 25, 30 AD to preserve the fact that Christ was almost 30 years old when He was baptized and He died exactly 3½ years after He was baptized.
- And then the year of the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy must also be adjusted from September 25, 455 BC to September 25, 454 BC to preserve the fact that Christ was baptized exactly 483 years after the Decree.
- And to preserve Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes would have to be adjusted from beginning on Tishri 1, 456 BC to beginning on Tishri 1, 455 BC. Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his reign must also be adjusted from beginning on Tishri 1, 475 BC to beginning on Tishri 1, 474 BC. According to this opinion, Artaxerxes still could have ascended the throne in 475 BC but it would have to have been after Tishri 1.

### **If Jesus Were Born on 12/25/3 BC, Baptized on 9/25/28 AD, and Crucified on 3/25/32 AD**

If Jesus were born on December 25, 3 BC, baptized on September 25, 28 AD, and crucified on March 25, 32 AD, then the year of the Decree that began Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy must be adjusted from September 25, 455 BC to September 25, 456 BC to preserve the fact that Christ was baptized exactly 483 years after the Decree. According to this opinion Jesus died at 33 years old exactly 3½ years after He was baptized. It places the baptism of Jesus in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar and His death in the 18<sup>th</sup> year.

Chart: Jesus' 3 BC Birth/32 AD Death Opinion



This opinion gives John the Baptist only about one month of preaching before he baptized Jesus, according to the interpretation of Luke 3:1 that John began preaching in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar which began on August 19, 28 AD. John would have been preaching for a little over one month if he began to preach on August 19, 28 AD and baptized Jesus on September 25, 28 AD. However, if Luke 3:1 is interpreted to mean that Jesus was baptized in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius but not that John began his preaching in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, then John could have begun preaching in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, which would have given John plenty of time to prepare the way for Jesus.

## If in the Half of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week Means Anytime within the 4<sup>th</sup> Year

The 70<sup>th</sup> week consists of seven years. The common opinion, which I hold, is that halfway through the 70<sup>th</sup> week means *exactly* halfway through, which is 3½ years into the seven years of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. However, there is only one other possible interpretation of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy regarding the half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. Halfway through the seven years of the 70<sup>th</sup> week is according to *years* and not *days*. Thus the halfway mark according to years is anytime within the fourth year of the seven-year period of the 70<sup>th</sup> week.

Table: Years of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week

1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year	5 <sup>th</sup> year	6 <sup>th</sup> year	7 <sup>th</sup> year
			Half week			

Therefore, if halfway through the 70<sup>th</sup> week is according to years and not days, then the "Seventy weeks...shortened" and Christ dying "in the half of the week" means Christ died on any day within the fourth year of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. Christ, then, could have died anytime after three years from His baptism but before four years after His baptism, which is within the 4<sup>th</sup> year after His baptism. His public ministry would have lasted for more than three years but less than four years but did not have to last an exact 3½ years.

**If Jesus were baptized on January 6, then in the half of the week means between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 70<sup>th</sup> week**

If Jesus were baptized on January 6, then in the half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week has to mean anytime within the 4<sup>th</sup> year but not exactly 3½ years because 3½ years from that date does not fall within the possible Passover days that fall within March or April.

## **Part 5 - The Undermining of the Prophecy**

### **Chronologists, Historians, and Archeologists Are Fallible**

#### **Conflicting chronologists prove that all the evidence must be considered**

Chronologists, historians, and archaeologists often disagree with one another regarding events or times in which the events occur. Hence men are faced with rejecting or accepting the evidence of one over the other. However, men do not have the right from God to contradict or reject infallible sources. The only infallible sources of history, chronology, and archeology are the Catholic Bible and other documents that have been declared infallible by popes. Hence any history, chronology, or archeology that contradicts the Catholic Bible or other infallible documents is erroneous.

The conflicting evidence of chronologists demands that one consider all the credible evidences in order to arrive at a credible chronology. A famous scientist said, "Give me any science but the science of chronology." There are so many factors to consider regarding starting dates of epochs and how years are counted by various societies and authors. One must also consider lying men who willfully distort history, archeology, and chronology to fit their lies. However, it must be noted that some chronologists who err are not bad willed. They do not purposely lie or distort evidence and thus can be considered credible chronologists. Credible chronologists look for anchor dates for events so that they can work backward and forward from those dated events. The surest and infallible way to arrive at anchor dates for events is the inerrant Catholic Bible and the Catholic Church's solemn and ordinary magisterium when they set dates for events exactly or within certain parameters.

Also, many authors who mention dates of events are not chronologists and do not have the time to deeply study chronology. Hence they do not see the consequences of their erroneous dates. But this does not mean they are bad willed or purposely lying. However, no Catholic, whether he is a chronologist or not, has the right from God to contradict the Catholic Bible and the Catholic Church's solemn or ordinary magisterium when they set dates for events exactly or within certain parameters. For example, the Catholic Church's ordinary magisterium teaches that Christ could not have been born before 3 BC or after 1 AD.

## The Error That Herod the Great Died in 4 BC or Before

We know for certain that Herod could not have died in 4 BC because the Catholic Church's ordinary magisterium and Luke chapter 3 teach that Jesus could not have been born before 3 BC and that Herod was alive when Jesus was born. *Chandler's Encyclopedia*, An Epitome of Universal Knowledge, 1898, says that Herod was made king of the Jews in 37 BC and died in 1 AD, which falls within the probable range for Herod's death:

**Herod, THE GREAT, 62 B.C.–A.D. 1. Son of Antipater, an Edomite. By Roman influence he set aside the Maccabean family and was made King of Judea 37 B.C. His rule was vigorous, politic, jealous, and cruel.—His sons, ARCHELAUS and HEROD ANTIPAS, succeeded to portions of his power; the latter executed John Baptist, mocked Christ, and was exiled 39.—HEROD AGRIPPA I. reigned 37–44; his son and namesake, King of Chalcis 50, encountered St. Paul 60. See AGRIPPA.**

Beware, then, of the modern error that Herod the Great died in 4 BC or before, which places the birth of Jesus in 4 BC or 5 BC or 6 BC. This is one of the most common errors held by many as dogma, which denies the Catholic Church's ordinary magisterium and Luke chapter 3 and undermines Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy.

### Based upon misinterpretation of the works of Josephus

The error that Herod died in 4 BC finds its origin in a diabolical misinterpretation of the fallible works of Josephus, the apostate Jewish historian.

*Josephus teaches that Herod died in January or February 2 BC*

In most of his works, Josephus records the death of Herod the Great as 37 years after 40 BC when Herod was made king by the Romans at Rome:

(40 BC – 37 years = 3 BC to 2 BC)

And he records the death of Herod as 34 years after June 37 BC when Herod took Jerusalem and procured the death of Antigonus, who was the ruler of Israel:

(June 37 BC – 34 years = June 3 BC to June 2 BC)

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 17, chapter 8, section 1: "When he had done those things, he died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain; having reigned, since he procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven."

And he places Herod's death about one or two months before Passover:

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 17: "8:1. Herod...died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain... 8:3. After this was over, they prepared his funeral... 8:4. Now Archelaus paid so much respect, as to continue his mourning till

the seventh day... 9:3. Now, upon the approach of that feast of unleavened bread, which the law of their fathers had appointed for the Jews at this time, which feast is called the Passover, ...the seditious lamented Judas and Matthias.”

The first Passover after June 3 BC was March/April 2 BC. And two months before that was January or February 2 BC. Hence Josephus places the death of Herod in January or February 2 BC and not in 4 BC. And Josephus records Herod’s death as 2 BC, 8 years before Archelaus was banished in 7 AD. (See my book *Errors of Josephus: Josephus Commonly Places the Death of Herod in January or February 2 BC.*)

### *Josephus erred by three or four years regarding the death of Herod*

But even Josephus’ date of 2 BC for the death of Herod is not correct according to the best opinion that Jesus was born on December 25, 2 BC and that Herod died in January or February 2 AD. Hence Josephus erred by three or four years regarding the death of Herod, just as he erred by five or six years regarding the reign and death of Judas Machabeus. (See my book *Errors of Josephus: Erred by Five or Six Years Regarding the Death and Reign of Judas Machabeus.*)

Beware, then, of those who misinterpret Josephus’ works or idolize Josephus by presenting his works as infallible. Much of Josephus’ history is indeed very good, but like any other fallible historian his works are fallible and contain errors. Hence, even if Josephus had taught that Herod the Great died in 4 BC, this would be just one more error added to his other errors.

### *Lunar eclipse evidence*

Another piece of evidence from Josephus that is deliberately misinterpreted to defend the error that Herod died in 4 BC is a lunar eclipse recorded by Josephus that occurred before Herod died. Josephus records the occurrence of a lunar eclipse the night after Herod killed some zealots, after which Herod’s pains from his fatal disease increased:

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 17:6: “4. ...Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon. 5. But now Herod’s distemper greatly increased upon him after a severe manner, and this by God’s judgment upon him for his sins.”

Those who hold the error that Herod died in 4 BC point to a lunar eclipse that occurred in Jerusalem on March 13, 4 BC. But they deliberately ignore or omit two other eclipses that occurred in Jerusalem on January 10, 1 BC and on December 29, 1 BC.

Even if the March 13, 4 BC lunar eclipse were the one mentioned by Josephus, Herod still could not have died until January or February 3 BC because of all the events that occurred in Herod’s life after the eclipse, which had to take at least 6 months, and the fact that he died one or two months before Passover, which would have been the Passover of 3 BC.

However, according to the best opinion that Christ was born on December 25, 2 BC and Herod died in January or February 2 AD, the lunar eclipse on December 29, 1 BC is the one recorded by Josephus, which places the death of Herod about 13 months after the



lunar eclipse. The December 29, 1 BC lunar eclipse is also most probably the one recorded by Josephus because it was the only one of the three that occurred early enough after sunset for most in Jerusalem to see. The other two occurred when most people were sleeping:

*Yet Another Eclipse for Herod*, by John P. Pratt: “So why did Josephus include Herod’s eclipse but no others? An obvious answer is that *the eclipse was widely observed* and then associated with the executions. If so, then *the eclipse occurred in the early evening*. Using this criterion, the eclipses of March 13, 4 B.C. and January 10, 1 B.C. are extremely unlikely because they both began the umbral phase more than six hours after sunset and hence would have only been seen by at most a few people. The eclipse of Sept. 15, 5 B.C. began three hours after sunset, but that is also late. On the other hand, the eclipse of December 29, 1 B.C. fits this criterion very well. The full moon was nearly half eclipsed when it could first be seen rising in the east above the distant mountains about twenty minutes after sunset.”

(See my book *Errors of Josephus*: “Josephus Commonly Places the Death of Herod in January or February 2 BC” and “Josephus records a lunar eclipse about 6 to 24 months before Herod the Great died.”)

### **Authors who have Herod die in 2 BC but in different years of his reign**

Be aware of the fact that certain authors teach that Jesus was born in 2 BC but in different years of Herod’s reign because they begin the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Herod’s reign at different times with different events or with different dating methods, such as the post-dating method or the anniversary-dating method. Hence one author may say that Jesus was born in the 39<sup>th</sup> year of Herod, another in the 36<sup>th</sup>, another in the 35<sup>th</sup>, and another in the 33<sup>rd</sup>, while all of them place the birth of Jesus in 2 BC.

- 40 BC: The authors who teach that Jesus was born in 2 BC and in the 39<sup>th</sup> year of Herod’s reign begin Herod’s 1<sup>st</sup> year in 40 BC when he was made king by the Romans at Rome.
- 37 BC: The authors who teach that Jesus was born in 2 BC and in the 36<sup>th</sup> year of Herod’s reign begin Herod’s 1<sup>st</sup> year in June 37 BC when Herod took Jerusalem, procured the death of Antigonus (the current ruler), and ruled over the Jews.
- 36 BC: The authors who teach that Jesus was born in 2 BC and in the 35<sup>th</sup> year of Herod’s reign begin Herod’s 1<sup>st</sup> year on Nisan 1 (March/April) 36 BC, which according to the Hebrew sacred calendar is the first New Year’s Day after Herod took Jerusalem and ruled over the Jews in June 37 BC. To count regnal years, these authors use the post-dating method and the Hebrew sacred calendar that begins the New Year on Nisan 1.
- 34 BC: The authors who teach that Jesus was born in 2 BC and in the 33<sup>rd</sup> year of Herod’s reign begin Herod’s 1<sup>st</sup> year in 34 BC when they believe the last Machabean or Hasmonean ruler Aristobolus III died.

Hence beware of a deceiver who says that because an author teaches that Jesus was born in the 33<sup>rd</sup> year of Herod, the author means that Jesus was born in 4 BC and that the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Herod began in 36 BC, when in fact the author really begins the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Herod's reign in 34 BC and thus places the birth of Jesus in 2 BC.

- $(33-1) + -36 = 4 \text{ BC}$  (What the deceiver wants you to believe the author teaches)
- $(33-1) + -34 = 2 \text{ BC}$  (What the author really teaches)

## **The Error That There Was No Roman Census in 2 BC**

### **Enrollment of the Roman Empire when Jesus was born in 2 BC**

Previous to the birth of Jesus Christ, God inspired the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus to enroll the whole world that was under Roman control, which included the Jews in Israel, so that there would be a record of the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem of Judea:

“And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This first enrolling was made by the President of Syria Cyrenus. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife who was with child. And it came to pass that when they were there, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.” (Lk. 2:1-7)

Catholic Commentary on Luke 2: “Ver. 1. Again, S. Gregory, Homily 8. in Evang., says, ‘Why is it that a census of all the world is taken when the Lord is about to be born, except that it is by this means clearly shown that He was appearing in the flesh who should enroll His elect in eternity? For, on the other hand, it is said of the reprobate by the Prophet, Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the Just.’ Hence it appears that Christ was enrolled not immediately after His birth, but eight days after His circumcision; for at His circumcision the name of Jesus was given Him, and, in the presence of the inhabitants of Bethlehem, who were of the house of David, entered on the public tablets which Cyrenius forwarded to Augustus, to wit that Jesus the Son of Mary was born in Bethlehem, of the lineage of David. So Saint Justin Martyr, Apol. 2., ad Antoninum Pium.”

### **Cyrenus oversaw the enrollment in Judea in 2 BC when Christ was born**

*Cyrenus was either the governor or secondary ruler or acting governor of Syria*

The overseer of the enrollment in Judea was Cyrenus, also known as Cyrenius or Cyrenius or Publius Sulpicius Quirinius. Josephus tells us that previous to this enrollment that took place at the time of Jesus' birth Cyrenus held many offices in Rome, including

Roman Senator and then consul in 12 BC. Consul was the second highest position in Rome:

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:1: “1. NOW Cyrenius, a Roman senator, and one who had gone through other magistracies, and had passed through them till he had been consul, and one who, on other accounts, was of great dignity...”

*Wikipedia*, “List of Roman Consuls”: “12 BC: M. Valerius Messalla Appianus – P. Sulpicius Quirinius.”

In 2 BC Cyrinus was placed in charge of the enrollment in Judea when Christ was born. Whether Cyrinus was the governor and thus ultimate ruler in Syria or a secondary ruler is disputed. But it is certain that he oversaw this enrollment because the Bible says so. Cyrinus was either the governor or a secondary ruler or a legate. The Clementine Vulgate for Luke 2:2 is “*Hæc descriptio prima facta est a præside Syriæ Cyrino.*” The Latin word *præside* does not mean governor. It means either president or ruler:

**praesidēns, entis, m. [*P. of praesideo*], a *praesident*, ruler: *superbia praesidentium*, Ta.**

Hence Luke 2:2 should be translated as either “Cyrinus the president of Syria” or “Cyrinus the ruler of Syria” or “Cyrinus a ruler of Syria.” Therefore Cyrinus may not have been the governor of Syria but could have been a secondary ruler in Syria, such as a president or procurator or legate to the governor. Saint Justin Martyr says that Cyrinus was a “procurator in Syria” during the enrollment:

Saint Justin Martyr, *Apology* 1, chapter 34: “PLACE OF CHRIST’S BIRTH FORETOLD. And hear what part of earth He was to be born in, as another prophet, Micah, foretold. He spoke thus: ‘And thou, Bethlehem, the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come forth a Governor, who shall feed My people.’ Now there is a village in the land of the Jews, thirty-five stadia from Jerusalem, in which Jesus Christ was born, as you can ascertain also from the registers of the taxing made under Cyrenius, your first procurator in Judaea.”

Dictionary: “Procurator, n., 1. In the Roman Empire, an official who managed the financial affairs of a province or acted as governor of a territory... 2. A person employed to manage the affairs of another.”

*The Cambridge Ancient History*: “Each province had its equestrian procurator who in the eyes of the provincials was almost as important as the governor himself.” (vol. 10, 216).

And some offer good proof that Cyrinus was the governor of Syria:

Samuel James Andrews, *The Life of Our Lord Upon the Earth*, 1863: “Date of Our Lord’s Birth: 4. Chronological Essays: We learn from Josephus that after Archelaus was deposed, and Judea annexed to Syria, Cyrenius was sent by the Roman emperor as governor of this province, and then instituted a census. But this was not earlier than 758 or 760, and of course cannot be the taxing mentioned by Luke... If, however, the right interpretation of the Evangelist’s words is that which makes this taxing to have been the first as distinguished from a second..., the question arises, was Cyrenius at any period earlier than 758, governor of Syria? That he was twice governor was asserted by Baronius... Recently, however, the matter has been more thoroughly discussed by Zumpt in his essay *de Syria Romanorum provincial*.

“...It is at this point that the researches of Zumpt have for us special importance. In his list of Syrian governors, (ii. 149,) extending from B.C. 30 to A.D. 6, we find the interval from 748-758 thus filled: P. Q. Varus, 748-750 or 6-4 B.C.; P. S. Quirinius (Cyrenius) 750-753 or 4-1 B.C.; M. Lollius, 753-757 or 1 B.C. to 3 A. D.; C. M. Censorinus, 757-758 or 3-4 A.D. After Censorinus follows L. V. Saturninus, already mentioned, from 758-760 or 4-6 A.D.

“...If Zumpt be right in this order, Cyrenius was...governor of Syria...from 750-753 [4 -1 BC]. Upon what ground does this statement rest? Our chief knowledge of Cyrenius is derived from Tacitus. He was of low origin, a bold soldier, and attained a consulship under Augustus in 742, and was afterward proconsul in the province of Africa. After this he conquered the Homonadenses, a rude people living in Cilicia, and obtained a triumph. He was subsequently made rector to Caius Caesar when the latter was appointed governor of Armenia. At what time and in what capacity did he carry on the war against the Homonadenses? The time is thus determined: He was consul in 742. As it was a rule with Augustus to send no one sooner than five years after his consulship as legate to a province, he could not have been in Africa earlier than 747. But he was made rector to C. Caesar in 753, after the war against the Homonadenses, so that this war was between 747 and 753. In what capacity did he carry it on? Probably as governor of Syria. It is important to bear in mind that at this time there were two classes of provinces, the one under the immediate control of the Emperor, the other under the control of the Senate. The governors of the imperial provinces were called Legates or Proprætors, and continued in office during the pleasure of the Emperor; those of the Senatorial provinces, Proconsuls, whose authority lasted only for one year. Syria and Cilicia were both provinces of the former kind, and administered by proprætors. The Homonadenses were a people living in Cilicia, but Cilicia belonged from 25 b. c. down to the time of Vespasian to the province of Syria. As Cyrenius had been proconsul in Africa, and as it was a rule that the same person should not be ruler over more than one of the consular or prætorian provinces under the care of the Senate, he could not have been governor of any of the provinces immediately adjacent — Asia, Pontus, Bithynia, Galatia; he must then have been acting as governor of the province of Syria and as legate of the Emperor. ‘We cannot here enter into an investigation of the many intricate questions which belong to this point, and which are fully discussed by Zumpt. The result of all is that Cyrenius became governor of Syria as the successor of Varus toward the end of 750, and continued in office till 753...’

Therefore,

- Either Cyrinus was a secondary ruler in Syria (such as a procurator) while someone else was the governor;
- Or Cyrinus was the governor in Syria;
- Or Cyrinus was the acting governor of Syria as a legate to the current governor who was in Rome or elsewhere on business.

Whichever one of these is true, it is certain that Cyrinus oversaw the enrollment of the Jews in Judea when Christ was born because the Bible says so.

## The enrollment was not necessarily a taxation

The enrollment or census at the time of Jesus' birth in 2 BC was not a regular or local enrollment but a special, worldwide enrollment. Hence it is a mistake to date this enrollment by regular and local enrollments or taxations that took place at regular intervals. Another mistake is to refer to this enrollment as if it were certainly a collecting of taxes. The Latin Vulgate for Luke 2:1-2 is as follows:

“Factum est autem in diebus illis, exiit edictum a Cæsare Augusto ut describeretur universus orbis. Hæc descriptio prima facta est a præside Syriæ Cyrino.” (Luke 2:1-8)

The Latin words *describeretur* and *descriptio* mean a “marking out” or “delineation”:

**dēscriptiō, ōnis** (often confounded with *descriptio*), *f.* [*describo*], *a marking out, delineation, copy, transcript, draft*: *caeli, circuit*: *tabularum*: *alqd descriptionibus explicare*.—*Fig., a representation, delineation, description*: *aedificandi, plan*: *servorum*: *regionum, topography*: *nominis, definition*. — *A proper disposition, order, arrangement*: *via descriptionis atque ordinis* (in oratione): *centuriarum classiumque, L.*: *temporum*. — In the *sense distribution, division*, the proper form is *descriptio*.

Hence the Latin word *descriptio* as used in Luke 2:1-2 could mean just a counting or marking out of the people or in a broader sense include the collecting of taxes. Thus it is not certain that the enrollment mentioned in Luke 2:1-2 means a collecting of taxes:

- An enrollment can be made with a future taxation in mind after all the people are counted and taxes they owe are assessed. Hence the collecting of taxes would not happen until several years after the enrollment or census, depending on how long it takes to count the people, gather the numbers, and assess the taxes.
- An enrollment can also be made simply to count the number of people under the Roman yoke. For example, the United States of America conducted a nation-wide census or enrollment in 2010 that was not a taxation or collecting of taxes.
- An enrollment can also serve as an oath of allegiance to the Roman Empire. Josephus speaks of an oath of allegiance to the Roman Empire that Jews were required to take, and Jews who did not take it were punished.

A Catholic commentary says that the purpose of this enrollment was to serve as an oath of allegiance to the Roman Empire and to see how many loyal citizens were under its yoke:

Catholic Commentary on Luke 2: “Ver. 1. *enrolled*.—The Greek ἀπογρᾶφῆθαι means both *to be enrolled* and *to make a declaration*. Each one was enrolled, and made a declaration of allegiance to him who enrolled him, namely to Cyrenius, as

the viceregent of Augustus. For at Rome all as to whose loyalty towards Augustus and the Senate there was no doubt, were enrolled as citizens and subjects, but elsewhere they were said to make a declaration of allegiance, as being foreigners subdued by the Roman arms. Orosius, book 6, last chapter, infers from this enrollment that Christ was a Roman citizen, that He might, as it were, tacitly signify that all Christians must be subjects to the Roman Pontiff and Church.”

Josephus records one such oath of allegiance by which the Jews showed their good or bad will toward Caesar and Rome:

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 17:2: “4. Accordingly, when all the people of the Jews gave assurance of their good-will to Caesar, and to the king’s government, these very men did not swear, being above six thousand; and...the king imposed a fine upon them...”

Even though this oath mentioned by Josephus did not occur in 2 BC, it proves that such oaths were required from time to time by the Roman rulers. Hence the enrollment at the time of Jesus’ birth could have been only an oath of allegiance to Caesar Augustus and Rome, which also could have served as a counting of the people.

*The 2 BC enrollment was probably a counting of people for a future taxation that was concluded after Archelaus was banished in 7 AD*

If the enrollment in 2 BC were also a collection of taxes, then another collection of taxes occurred several years later and was concluded after Archelaus was banished in 7 AD. However, it is more likely that the purpose of the enrollment at the time of Jesus’ birth in 2 BC was to count the citizens and assess their lands for a future taxation based upon the information given during this first enrollment. That is why Luke 2:2 refers to the enrollment when Christ was born as the “first enrolling”: “*This first enrolling was made by the President of Syria Cyrinus.*” This first enrolling prepared for the second enrolling by which the taxes were collected. Indeed, the Bible in Acts 5:37 and Josephus speak of this second enrollment or collecting of taxes that either began or was in progress several years after the birth of Christ, after the death of Herod the Great, and after Herod’s son Archelaus was banished to Vienna of Gaul. After Archelaus was banished, Judea was made a province of Syria in which the governor of Syria ruled Judea. Caesar made Coponius the governor of Syria and Cyrinus second in charge. This second enrolling, which was a collecting of taxes, was conducted by the same Cyrinus who conducted the first enrolling in 2 BC. Cyrinus was a secondary ruler whose job in Judea was to judge the Jews, oversee the collection of taxes, and dispose of Archelaus’ possessions. In Josephus’ book *The Wars of the Jews*, book 7, section 3, he says that Archelaus was banished in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of his reign:

Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 2:7: “3. And now Archelaus took possession of his ethnarchy, and used not the Jews only, but the Samaritans also, barbarously; and this out of his resentment of their old quarrels with him. Whereupon the both of them sent ambassadors against him to Caesar; and in the ninth year of his government he was banished to Vienna, a city of Gaul.”

The 9<sup>th</sup> year of Archelaus, according to Josephus, began on Nisan 1, 7 AD and ended on Adar 29, 8 AD. In book 18, chapter 1, section 1, Josephus says that after Archelaus was banished, Cyrinus was sent by Caesar to Judea to judge the Jews, to complete the

collection of taxes, and to dispose of Archelaus' possessions. Josephus also says that Israel was made a province of Syria and that Caesar made Coponius the governor of Syria. Hence Coponius and not Cyrenius had supreme power in Judea. Cyrenius was second in charge and placed over the collecting of taxes, just as may have been the case during the enrollment several years before when Jesus was born in 2 BC. Josephus says that most of the Jews accepted Cyrenius' collection of taxes when Coponius was governor of Judea, with a few exceptions led by the rebel Judas of Galilee who revolted, as also mentioned in Acts 5:37:

“After this man, rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the enrolling, and drew away the people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as consented to him, were dispersed.” (Acts 5:37)

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:1: “1. NOW Cyrenius, a Roman senator, and one who had gone through other magistracies, and had passed through them till he had been consul, and one who, on other accounts, was of great dignity, came at this time into Syria, with a few others, being sent by Caesar to be a judge of that nation, and to take an account of their substance. Coponius also, a man of the equestrian order, was sent together with him, to have the supreme power over the Jews. Moreover, Cyrenius came himself into Judea, which was now added to the province of Syria, to take an account of their substance, and to dispose of Archelaus' money; but the Jews, although at the beginning they took the report of a taxation heinously, yet did they leave off any further opposition to it, by the persuasion of Joazar, who was the son of Beethus, and high priest; so they, being over-persuaded by Joazar's words, gave an account of their estates, without any dispute about it. Yet was there one Judas, a Gaulonite, of a city whose name was Gamala, who, taking with him Sadduc, a Pharisee, became zealous to draw them to a revolt, who both said that this taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty; as if they could procure them happiness and security for what they possessed, and an assured enjoyment of a still greater good, which was that of the honor and glory they would thereby acquire for magnanimity. They also said that God would not otherwise be assisting to them, than upon their joining with one another in such councils as might be successful, and for their own advantage; and this especially, if they would set about great exploits, and not grow weary in executing the same; so men received what they said with pleasure, and this bold attempt proceeded to a great height. All sorts of misfortunes also sprang from these men, and the nation was infected with this doctrine to an incredible degree; one violent war came upon us after another, and we lost our friends which used to alleviate our pains; there were also very great robberies and murder of our principal men. This was done in pretense indeed for the public welfare, but in reality for the hopes of gain to themselves; whence arose seditions, and from them murders of men, which sometimes fell on those of their own people, (by the madness of these men towards one another, while their desire was that none of the adverse party might be left,) and sometimes on their enemies; a famine also coming upon us, reduced us to the last degree of despair, as did also the taking and demolishing of cities; nay, the sedition at last increased so high, that the very temple of God was burnt down by their enemies' fire. Such were the consequences of this, that the customs of our fathers were altered, and such a change was made, as added a mighty weight toward bringing all to destruction, which these men occasioned by their thus conspiring together; for Judas and Sadduc, who excited a fourth philosophic sect among us, and had a great many followers therein, filled our civil government with tumults at present, and laid the foundations of our future miseries, by this system of philosophy, which we were before unacquainted withal, concerning which I will discourse a little, and this the rather because the infection

which spread thence among the younger sort, who were zealous for it, brought the public to destruction.”

In book 18, chapter 2, section 1, Josephus says the disposing of Archelaus’ money and the collection of taxes were completed in the 37<sup>th</sup> year of Caesar’s victory over Antony at the Battle of Actium:

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:2: “1. WHEN Cyrenius had now disposed of Archelaus’s money, and when the taxings were come to a conclusion, which were made in the thirty-seventh year of Caesar’s victory over Antony at Actium, he deprived Joazar of the high priesthood, which dignity had been conferred on him by the multitude, and he appointed Ananus, the son of Seth, to be high priest...”

The 37<sup>th</sup> year of the victory of the Battle of Actium, according to Josephus, began on Nisan 1, 8 AD and ended on Adar 29, 9 AD. It had to take Cyrenius a year, more or less, to dispose of Archelaus’ possessions. Hence Archelaus was banished about a year, more or less, before the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the Battle of Actium.

The Roman historian Cassius Dio records that Archelaus was banished in 7 AD. Hence this second enrolling, which consisted of collecting taxes, was completed by Cyrenius after Archelaus was banished in 7 AD. The second taxation could have begun before 7 AD when Archelaus was banished and been completed by Cyrenius after 7 AD, such as 8 AD, because it would have taken some time for Cyrenius to complete the collecting of taxes after the banishment of Archelaus. Josephus says that this second taxation did not come to a conclusion until after Cyrenius disposed of Archelaus’ money. To see how Josephus dates the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the Battle of Actium, see my book *Errors of Josephus*: Josephus records the Battle of Actium in 30 BC in Herod’s 7<sup>th</sup> year.

### *Josephus erred by three years regarding the date and length of Archelaus’ reign*

Both Josephus and Cassius Dio correctly date the banishment of Archelaus in 7 AD. But Cassius Dio does not say how long Archelaus had reigned before he was banished and hence gives us no information as to when Archelaus began his reign. However, Josephus says that Archelaus was banished in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of his reign and thus places the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Archelaus on Nisan 1, 2 BC. This date for Archelaus’ 1<sup>st</sup> year corresponds with Josephus’ common teaching that Herod the Great died in January or February 2 BC. (See in this book “[Josephus teaches that Herod died in January or February 2 BC](#),” p. 71.) But this date is incorrect according to the best opinion that Christ was born in 2 BC and that Herod the Great died in January or February 2 AD, which places the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Archelaus on Nisan 1, 2 AD. Hence the best opinion places the banishment of Archelaus in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of his reign in 7 AD. Consequently, Josephus was off by three years regarding the date and length of Archelaus’ reign. The time between Josephus’ 1<sup>st</sup> year of Archelaus on Nisan 1, 2 BC to the best opinion’s 1<sup>st</sup> year of Archelaus on Nisan 1, 2 AD is three years. And Josephus places the banishment of Archelaus in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of his reign while the best opinion places it in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. Josephus likewise erred by five or six years regarding the length of the reign of Judas Machabeus. (See in my book *Errors of Josephus*: Erred by Five or Six Years Regarding the Death and Reign of Judas Machabeus.)



## **Jews had to return to their tribal homes**

The enrollment of Jews mentioned in Luke chapter 2 required the Jews to return to their tribal homes to be enrolled: “*And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city.*” (Lk. 2:3) An Egyptian papyrus from 104 AD contains a record of a similar enrollment or census by Rome in which those who were to be enrolled were required to return to their homeland:

*In the Footsteps of Jesus*, Wolfgang E. Pax: “An Egyptian papyrus from A.D. 104 contains an ordinance for such a census, which might apply equally well to the one we are concerned with [Luke 2:3]:

‘Gaius Vibius Maximus, governor of Egypt, proclaims: As we are about to take a census it is necessary to order all those who are for any reasons away from home to return to their own districts so that the census can be taken in the usual way.’

“Married women also had to obey this ruling; their presence was required in order that the number of people in each family could be ascertained. The land owned had to be declared in their respective community so it could be evaluated and the taxes assessed accordingly. And therefore Joseph had to make this journey to Bethlehem, where he had come from and owned some property; it was the native place of the house of David.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *In the Footsteps of Jesus*, Wolfgang E. Pax; Published by Leon Amiel, 11<sup>th</sup> Printing, 1977; The Birth, p. 30.

DESCRIPTION	
<i>Language:</i>	Greek
<i>Medium:</i>	papyrus
<i>Size:</i>	21.3cm high, 15.2cm wide
<i>Length:</i>	21 lines of writing
<i>Genre:</i>	Official Census Edict
<i>Date:</i>	104 AD
<i>Place of Discovery:</i>	Egypt
<i>Date of Discovery:</i>	c. 1905
<i>Current Location:</i>	British Museum, London
<i>Inventory Number:</i>	P.London 904
<i>Photo:</i>	Deissman, <i>Light</i> , after 270

Table: Egyptian Papyrus Text	
<p><i>GREEK TEXT</i> (from <a href="#">Hunt &amp; Edgar</a> 1934:108) (This is readable as Greek if "Symbol" font is installed)</p>	<p><i>TRANSLATION</i> by K. C. Hanson (Adapted from Hunt &amp; Edgar)</p>
<p>Γαιος Ουιβιος Μαξιμος <u>επαρχος Αιγυπτου</u> λεγει της κατ οικιαν απογραφης ενεστωσης αναγκαιον εστιν πασιν τοις καθ ηντινα δηποτε αιτιαν αποδημουςιν απο των <u>νομων</u> προσαγγελλεσθαι επανελθειν εις τα εαυτων εφεστια ινα και την συνηθη οικονομιαν της απογραφης πληρωσωσιν και τη προσηκουση αυτοις γεωργiai προσκαρτερησωσιν ειδως μεντοι οτι ενιων των απο της χωρας η πολις ημων εχει χρειαν βουλομαι παντας τους ευλογον δοκουντας εχειν το υ ενθαδε επιμενιν αιτιαν απογραφεσθαι παρα Βουλ . . . Φηστω <u>επαρχωι ειλης</u> ον επι τουτω εταξου και τας υπογραφας οι αποδειξαντες αναγκαιαν αυτων την παρουσιαν λημψονται κατα τουτο το παραγγελμα εντος της τριακαδος του ενεστωτος μηνος Ε...</p>	<p>Gaius Vibius Maximus, the Prefect of Egypt,<sup>^</sup> declares: The census by household having begun, it is essential that all those who are away from their nomes* be summoned to return to their own hearths so that they may perform the customary business of registration and apply themselves to the cultivation which concerns them. Knowing, however, that some of the people from the countryside are required by our city, I desire all those who think they have a satisfactory reason for remaining here to register themselves before . . . Festus, the Cavalry Commander,<sup>†</sup> whom I have appointed for this purpose, from whom those who have shown their presence to be necessary shall receive signed permits in accordance with this edict up to the 30<sup>th</sup> of the present month Ε...</p>
<p><sup>^</sup>The "Prefect of Egypt" (Latin: <i>Prefectus</i>) was the Roman governor over all Egypt.  <sup>*</sup>A "nome" was an Egyptian administrative district.  <sup>†</sup>A "Cavalry Commander" (Latin: <i>Prefectus Alae</i>) was a commander of a Roman auxiliary cavalry unit.</p>	

Beware, then, of the lie hatched by the Devil and evil men to discredit Luke 2:3. They lie by saying that there is no proof or precedence that citizens of Rome had to return to their homelands to be enrolled:

Catholic Commentary on Luke 2: "Ver. 3. *And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.* To the cities from which their respective families took their origin; as the house of David, of which Joseph and Christ were born, took theirs from Bethlehem; David having been born and brought up in Bethlehem. The Jews had divided their nation into twelve tribes and these again into different families, and so the Romans, in taking the census among them, followed this division. Indeed all this was taking place under the direction of God that it might be clear to the whole world that Christ, then newly born in Bethlehem, was of the tribe of Judah and the house of David, and that He was the Messiah, as the Prophets had foretold."

## The Condemned Error That Jesus' Ministry Lasted a Year or Less

### This error is contrary to the ordinary magisterium

While most of the Church Fathers teach that Jesus' public ministry lasted exactly 3½ years, not one Church Father taught that Jesus' ministry lasted for less than two years. Hence it is a doctrine of the ordinary magisterium that Jesus' public ministry could not have lasted for one year or less. The condemned error that Jesus' public ministry lasted for one year or less contradicts the Gospel of John and Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, both of which teach that Jesus' public ministry lasted for over three years and under four. And this error is not only condemned but also illogical.

### This error places the death of Jesus in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius

In defiance of the Gospel of Saint John, some early writers, none of them Church Fathers and most of them heretics, taught that Jesus' public ministry lasted for less than one year. They teach that Jesus died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar. This limits Jesus' ministry to less than one year because the Gospel of Luke, chapter 3, teaches that Jesus could not have been baptized and thus begun His ministry until the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. If Jesus were baptized and died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, then His public ministry lasted less than one year.

#### *The heretic Tertullian (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries)*

The heretic Tertullian, *Against the Jews*, chapter 8: "Let us see, moreover, how in the forty-first year of the empire of Augustus, when he has been reigning for 20 and 8 years after the death of Cleopatra, the Christ is born. And the same Augustus survived, after Christ is born... To whom succeeded Tiberius Caesar, and held the empire 20 years, 7 months, 28 days. In the fifteenth year of his empire Christ suffered... in the consulate of Rubellius Geminus and Fufius Geminus, in the month of March, at the times of Passover, on the eighth day before the calends of April."

#### *The heretic Clement of Alexandria (d. 215 AD)*

The heretic Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, book 1: "It is written in the Gospel of Saint Luke as follows: 'And in the fifteenth year, in the reign of Tiberius Caesar, the word of the Lord came to John, the son of Zacharias.' And again in the same book: 'And Jesus was coming to His baptism, being about thirty years old,' and so on. And that it was necessary for Him to preach only a year, this also is written: 'He hath sent Me to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.' This both the prophet spake, and the Gospel. Accordingly, in fifteen years of Tiberius and fifteen years of Augustus; so were completed the thirty years till the time He suffered."

#### *The heretic Origen (185-232 AD)*

The heretic Origen: "For forty and two years, I think, after the date of the crucifixion of Jesus, did the destruction of Jerusalem take place... From the 15<sup>th</sup>

year of Tiberius to the destruction of the Temple, forty-two years were fulfilled.”  
(*Against Celsus*, bk. 4, chap. 2; Commentary on Jeremias, 14)

### *Lactantius (4<sup>th</sup> century)*

Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, book 4, chapter 10: “Afterwards they had tetrarchs until the time of Herod, who was in the reign of Tiberius Caesar; in whose fifteenth year, in the consulship of the two Gemini, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, the Jews crucified Christ.”

Lactantius, *Of the Manner in which the Persecutors Died*, addressed to Donatus, chapter 2: “In the latter days of the Emperor Tiberius, in the consulship of Ruberius Geminus and Fufius Geminus, and on the tenth of the kalends of April, as I find it written, Jesus Christ was crucified by the Jews.”

The 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar began on August 19, 28 AD and ended on August 18, 29 AD. And the two Gemini were consuls in 29 AD from January to June.

*Wikipedia*, “List of Roman Consuls”: “29 AD: C. Fufius Gemminus (*Jan-June*) – L. Rubellius Geminus (*Jan-June*).”

Hence these writers place the death of Jesus on Nisan 15 (March), 29 AD in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius under the consulship of the two Gemini. The Gospel of Saint Luke, chapter 3, teaches that Jesus could not have begun His ministry until the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius when John the Baptist began to prepare the way for Jesus:

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar... the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins...” (Lk. 3:1-3)

Hence Jesus could not have been baptized until the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, which began on August 19, 28 AD. And if Jesus also died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius on Nisan 15 (March 25), 29 AD, then His public ministry lasted for less than one year and for only one Passover, the one He died on.

To forward their error, some, such as the heretic Clement of Alexandria, misinterpret Jesus when Jesus was reading from the Book of Isaias:

“And the book of Isaias the prophet was delivered unto him. And as he unfolded the book, he found the place where it was written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward.” (Lk. 4:17-19 from Isa. 61:1-2)

They misinterpret the words “to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” to mean that Jesus’ ministry was only one year:

The heretic Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, book 1: “...And that it was necessary for Him to preach only a year, this also is written: ‘He hath sent me to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’ This both the prophet spake, and the Gospel. Accordingly, in fifteen years of Tiberius and fifteen years of Augustus; so were completed the thirty years till the time He suffered.”

In context the words “acceptable year” mean the year in which God began to show mercy upon men, which is the year in which Jesus began His ministry. And it also means

a time span of several years just as when one says “all these things happened in Jesus’ day.” The word “day” in this context means 33 years, the whole life of Jesus on earth. To be consistent with the rest of Jesus’ statement, they would have to say that Jesus’ ministry was only one day according to the last part of the sentence that says “the day of reward.” If they take the word “year” to literally mean one year, then they must also take the word “day” to literally mean one day. Hence they are faced with a contradiction because of their bad-willed interpretation of “the acceptable year of the Lord” that they use to forward their condemned error that Jesus’ public ministry lasted less than one year. But even in this they contradict themselves by saying that Jesus’ ministry lasted one year because His ministry could not have lasted longer than six months and six days if Jesus were baptized and died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. (See in this book [“This condemned error is illogical,”](#) p. 89.) But most importantly, their bad-willed and false interpretation of “the acceptable year of the Lord” contradicts the Gospel of Saint John which records four Passovers during Jesus’ ministry.

### **This error and its defenders were condemned by Saint Irenaeus in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century**

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Saint Irenaeus condemned the opinion that Jesus’ public ministry lasted for one year or less. He rightly saw this as an attack against the Gospel of Saint John and thus against all the Gospels. He also denounced those who held this error as heretics for distorting the Word of God:

Saint Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 1, chapter 3, Texts of Holy Scripture used by these heretics to support their opinions: “3. They further maintain that... [Christ] continued to preach for one year only after His baptism... 6. Such, then, is the account which they all give...striving, as they do, to adapt the good words of revelation to their own wicked inventions. And it is not only from the writings of the evangelists and the apostles that they endeavour to derive proofs for their opinions by means of perverse interpretations and deceitful expositions: they deal in the same way with the law and the prophets, which contain many parables and allegories that can frequently be drawn into various senses, according to the kind of exegesis to which they are subjected. And others of them, with great craftiness, adapted such parts of Scripture to their own figments, lead away captive from the truth those who do not retain a steadfast faith in one God, the Father Almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

Book 2, chapter 22: “1. ...Moreover, they affirm that He suffered in the twelfth month so that He continued to preach for one year after His baptism; and they endeavour to establish this point out of the prophet (for it is written, ‘To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of retribution’), being truly blind, inasmuch as they affirm they have found out the mysteries of Bythus yet not understanding that which is called by Isaiah the acceptable year of the Lord, nor the day of retribution. For the prophet neither speaks concerning a day which includes the space of twelve hours, nor of a year the length of which is twelve months. For even they themselves acknowledge that the prophets have very often expressed themselves in parables and allegories, and not according to the mere sound of the words.

“2. That, then, was called the day of retribution on which the Lord will render to every one according to his works—that is, the judgment. The acceptable year of the Lord, again, is this present time in which those who believe Him are called by Him, and become acceptable to God—that is, the whole time from His advent onwards to

the consummation [of all things] during which He acquires to Himself as fruits [of the scheme of mercy] those who are saved. For according to the phraseology of the prophet, the day of retribution follows the [acceptable] year; and the prophet will be proved guilty of falsehood if the Lord preached only for a year, and if he speaks of it. For where is the day of retribution? For the year has passed, and the day of retribution has not yet come; but He still ‘makes His sun to rise upon the good and upon the evil and sends rain upon the just and unjust.’ And the righteous suffer persecution, are afflicted, and are slain while sinners are possessed of abundance and ‘drink with the sound of the harp and psaltery, but do not regard the works of the Lord.’ But, according to the language [used by the prophet] they ought to be combined and the day of retribution to follow the [acceptable] year. For the words are, ‘to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of retribution.’ This present time, therefore, in which men are called and saved by the Lord, is properly understood to be denoted by ‘the acceptable year of the Lord’; and there follows on this ‘the day of retribution,’ that is, the judgment. And the time thus referred to is not called ‘a year’ only but is also named ‘a day’ both by the prophet and by Paul, of whom the apostle, calling to mind the Scripture, says in the Epistle addressed to the Romans, ‘As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.’ But here the expression ‘all the day long’ is put for all this time during which we suffer persecution and are killed as sheep. As then this day does not signify one which consists of twelve hours, but the whole time during which believers in Christ suffer and are put to death for His sake, so also the year there mentioned does not denote one which consists of twelve months, but the whole time of faith during which men hear and believe the preaching of the Gospel, and those become acceptable to God who unite themselves to Him.

“3. But it is greatly to be wondered at, how it has come to pass that while affirming that they have found out the mysteries of God they have not examined the Gospels to ascertain how often after His baptism the Lord went up, at the time of the Passover, to Jerusalem, in accordance with what was the practice of the Jews from every land, and every year, that they should assemble at this period in Jerusalem, and there celebrate the feast of the Passover. First of all, after He had made the water wine at Cana of Galilee, He went up to the festival day of the Passover, on which occasion it is written, ‘For many believed in Him, when they saw the signs which He did,’ as John the disciple of the Lord records. Then, again, withdrawing Himself [from Judaea], He is found in Samaria; on which occasion, too, He convened with the Samaritan woman, and while at a distance, cured the son of the centurion by a word, saying, ‘Go thy way, thy son liveth.’ Afterwards He went up, the second time, to observe the festival day of the Passover in Jerusalem; on which occasion He cured the paralytic man, who had lain beside the pool thirty-eight years, bidding him rise, take up his couch, and depart. Again, withdrawing from thence to the other side of the sea of Tiberias, He there seeing a great crowd had followed Him, fed all that multitude with five loaves of bread, and twelve baskets of fragments remained over and above. Then, when He had raised Lazarus from the dead, and plots were formed against Him by the Pharisees, He withdrew to a city called Ephraim; and from that place, as it is written ‘He came to Bethany six days before the Passover,’ and going up from Bethany to Jerusalem, He there ate the Passover, and suffered on the day following. Now, that these three occasions of the Passover are not included within one year, every person whatever must acknowledge. And that the special month in which the Passover was celebrated, and in which also the Lord suffered, was not the twelfth, but the first, those men who boast that they know all things, if they know not this, may learn it from Moses. Their explanation, therefore, both of the year and of the twelfth month has been proved false, and they ought to reject either their explanation or the Gospel; otherwise [this unanswerable question forces itself upon them], How is it possible that the Lord preached for one year only?”

## **This error misinterprets the first three Gospels and contradicts the Gospel of John**

The condemned error that limits Jesus' public ministry to less than one year misinterprets the first three Gospels and contradicts the Gospel of Saint John that explicitly mentions three Passovers during Jesus' public ministry and one implicitly for a total of four Passovers during Jesus' public ministry. (See in this book "[The four Passovers of Jesus' 3½-year ministry](#)," p. 4545.) Hence these authors show a great disrespect for and even a hidden hatred of the Gospel of Saint John, as many of them were Arian heretics who denied the divinity of Christ, which is so well documented in the Gospel of Saint John. These writers either deny the authenticity of the Gospel of Saint John or misinterpret it.

These writers point to the fact that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke only mention one Passover during Jesus' public ministry—the one He died on—and hence falsely conclude that there was only one Passover during Jesus' public ministry. By default, then, they contradict the Gospel of Saint John which mentions four Passovers during His ministry.

Just because the first three Gospels only mention one Passover during Jesus' ministry does not mean there were no other Passovers during His ministry. Like any other historian, Matthew, Mark, and Luke concentrated on certain things while omitting other things in their Gospels. For the sake of brevity and to stay to a specific topic, no historian includes absolutely everything in a history. For example, the Gospel of Saint Luke skips from the infant Jesus' Presentation in the Temple to the Holy Family living in Nazareth of Galilee and hence omits the three wise men, the murder of the Holy Innocents, and the Holy Family's exile to Egypt:

“And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord... And after they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their city Nazareth.” (Lk. 2:22, 39)

Just because Saint Luke does not mention the visit of the wise men, the murder of the Holy Innocents, and the exile of the Holy Family to Egypt does not mean these things did not happen. Indeed they did, as mentioned in the other Gospels. However, there is no error in what Saint Luke says. The Holy Family did go to Nazareth of Galilee after the infant Jesus was presented in the Temple. But they did not go to Nazareth right after the Presentation but only after several years had passed. In the same way I could say that in 1998 I traveled by car from New Jersey to New Mexico while omitting the fact that I stopped off in Fredrick, Oklahoma, to visit the heretic Fr. John Martinez. I could have included this historical event as well as every stop I made to get gasoline, to eat, and to sleep. But for the sake of brevity and to stay to the topic at hand, I simply say that I traveled by car from New Jersey to New Mexico.

The first three Gospels concentrate mostly on Jesus' acts in Galilee and thus omit many of His acts in Judea, such as the three other Passovers Jesus attended in Judea in Jerusalem. However, the Gospel of Saint John concentrates more on Jesus' acts in Judea and thus mentions the four Passovers of Jesus' ministry which happened in Jerusalem.

## The Gospel of Saint Luke records a second Passover by implication

Even though the Gospel of Saint Luke does not explicitly record a second Passover during Jesus' ministry, it does so by implication. Luke 6:1 tells us that the apostles were picking corn on the Sabbath Day that fell within the feast of Pentecost:

“And it came to pass on the second first sabbath, that as he went through the corn fields, his disciples plucked the ears, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.” (Lk. 6:1)

The “second first sabbath” is the Sabbath Day that falls within the second festival of the three major Jewish festivals, which is the feast of Pentecost:

Catholic Commentary on Lk. 6: “Ver. 1. ...By the second-first sabbath may be understood the feast of Pentecost (which also happened when corn was ripe in Palestine). To understand this we must take notice, that the Jews had three great and solemn feasts: 1. That of the Pasch, or the great paschal feast, with the seven days of unleavened bread; the 2d. was the great feast of Pentecost; and the 3d. was the feast, called of tabernacles. It is supposed then that the paschal feast was called the first-first sabbath, that Pentecost was called the second-first sabbath, and that of tabernacles the third-first, or great sabbath.”

All three major festivals were celebrated for seven days. The first Sabbath Day that fell within the seven-day celebration of each of the three major Jewish festivals was a special Sabbath Day. Hence the second first sabbath was the *first* Sabbath Day that fell within the seven-day celebration of the *second* major Jewish festival of Pentecost.

The feast of Pentecost began fifty days from the day the firstfruits of barley were offered during the seven-day Passover celebration, which was on Sunday, the day after the Sabbath Day that fell within the Passover celebration.

It is certain that Jesus' ministry had already begun during the Passover previous to this feast of Pentecost mentioned in Luke 6:1 because all the things Jesus did during His ministry, as recorded by Luke previous to Luke 6:1, could not have taken less than fifty days to accomplish. Before the feast of Pentecost recorded in Luke 6:1, Saint Luke says that Jesus did the following things:

1. Jesus is baptized and begins His public ministry. (Lk. 3:21)
2. Jesus goes to the mountain for forty days. (Lk. 4:1)
3. Jesus goes through Galilee and chooses the apostles. (Lk. 4:14)
4. Jesus goes to Nazareth and reads from Isaiah. (Lk. 4:16)
5. Jesus casts out a devil from a man in Capharnaum. (Lk. 4:30)
6. Jesus heals Saint Peter's mother-in-law. (Lk. 4:38)
7. Jesus preaches from Saint Peter's boat. (Lk. 5:1)
8. Jesus heals a leper and a man with the palsy. (Lk. 5:12, 17-18)
9. Jesus chooses the apostle Matthew. (Lk. 5:27)
10. Apostles pick corn on the Sabbath Day within the feast of Pentecost. (Lk. 6:1)



The feast of Pentecost mentioned in Luke 6:1 was fifty days from the Sunday that fell within the previous Passover celebration. If we take away the forty days that Jesus was on the mountain, we are left with ten days. And we must take away another day to not fall on the Passover, which leaves nine days. That means Jesus had to do all the things listed above from points 3 to 10 in nine days (from after He came down from the mountain till the feast of Pentecost), which is impossible. Hence this proves that Saint Luke by implication records another Passover during Jesus' ministry other than the one he explicitly mentions on which Christ died, as recorded in Luke 22:1.

### **This condemned error is illogical**

The condemned error that Jesus' public ministry lasted for less than one year not only contradicts the ordinary magisterium, the Gospel of Saint John, and Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy but is also illogical. It is illogical to fit all of the things Jesus did from His baptism to His death within one year. If Saint John the Baptist began his public ministry on August 19, 28 AD, the first day in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, and he took at least one month to prepare the way for Jesus, then Jesus would have been baptized on September 19, 28 AD. And if Jesus died on March 25, 29 AD, as these writers say, then Jesus' public ministry lasted only six months and six days. And if we take away forty days from this number for the time Jesus fasted and was tempted by the Devil on the mountain, then we are left with only four months and twenty-five days for Jesus to do all the things He did during His public ministry as mentioned in all the Gospels.

### **This condemned error was resurrected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century**

The condemned error that Jesus' public ministry lasted for less than one year, which contradicts the Gospel of Saint John, was resurrected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These writers, just like the earlier ones, pointed to the fact that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke only mention one Passover during Jesus' public ministry—the one He died on—and hence falsely conclude that there was only one Passover during Jesus' public ministry. To forward their condemned error, they grouped together the first three Gospels and called them the Synoptic Gospels and contrasted them to the Gospel of Saint John, as if one or the other contained irreconcilable contradictions and thus contained errors:

*Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Synoptics," by Francis E. Gigot, 1912: "[Synoptics is] the name given since Griesbach's time (about 1790) to the first three canonical Gospels. It is derived from the fact that these Gospels admit, — differently from the evangelical narrative of Saint John, of being arranged and harmonized section by section, so as to allow the eye to realize at a glance (*synopsis*) the numerous passages which are common to them, and also the portions which are peculiar either to only two, or even to only one, of them... II. *The Synoptic Problem* - These resemblances and differences, the extent and complexity of which grow upon the student who compares carefully the Synoptic Gospels and contrasts them with Saint John's narrative, constitute a unique phenomenon in ancient and modern literature. ... They form together a literary problem, — the Synoptic Problem, as it is called, — the existence of which was practically unknown to the ancient ecclesiastical writers. ... Subsequent leading scholars, such as Grotius, Rich, Simon, Le Clerc, had little more than a suspicion of the problem, and it is only in the course of the eighteenth century that the scientific examination of the question was actually started. Ever

since the last quarter of that century, the discussion of the origin of the mutual relationship between the first three Gospels has been carried on with great ardour and ingenuity especially in Germany. ...As fresh investigations brought new facts to light, new forms of hypothesis sought to satisfy the facts, with the gradual result that the domain of possibility well-nigh appears to have been measured out. Numerous and conflicting as the successive attempts at solution have been, their history shows that a certain progress has been made in the discussion of the Synoptic Problem.”

The mere fact that these writers called the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke the “Synoptic Problem” and dared to contrast them with the Gospel of Saint John indicates that they believed there was a problem with the Gospels, when in fact there can never be any problem with the Gospels. The problem lies with a lack of faith by those who attempt to discredit the Gospels. Any so-called contradictions are only apparent ones that have already been solved by the Church Fathers and infallible papal decrees. And if there are any new apparent contradictions, then they are to be solved without casting doubt or blame on the Gospels. The true purpose of all these investigations into the Gospels by these modernist heretics is to discredit the Gospels either by questioning their authenticity or truthfulness or by doubting or denying the true interpretation of them as infallibly defined by popes.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the resurrection of the condemned error that Jesus’ public ministry lasted for less than one year paved the road for the denial of the authenticity and inerrancy of the Gospel of Saint John in order to make it easier for modern-day apostates to deny the divinity of Jesus Christ and to allow them to prosper and flourish, as has happened with the Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons who have prospered and flourished from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward. And the undermining of the Gospel of Saint John in turn undermined the whole Catholic Bible.

Infallible decrees from the 4<sup>th</sup> century onward infallibly included the Gospel of Saint John in the Bible and declared it the inerrant Word of God. Popes infallibly defined which books belong to the Bible in the Council of Hippo in 393 AD and re-confirmed it in the Councils of Carthage in 397 AD, Florence in 1442 AD, and Trent in 1546 AD, all of which include the Gospel of Saint John.

Because of the great and successful attack against the Catholic Bible in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by non-Catholics and many so-called Catholics, Pope Pius X re-infallibly condemned anyone who doubts or denies that the Gospel of Saint John is part of the Bible or that it is the inerrant Word of God or that it is historical and thus interprets the historical teachings only spiritually—such as by saying that the multiple Passovers of Jesus’ public ministry, as mentioned in the Gospel of Saint John, are only spiritual and only the last one is historical:

Pope Pius X, *Lamentabili Sane*, 1907, The Errors of Modernists, on the Church, Revelation, Christ, the Sacraments: “Condemned Error 16. The narrations of John are not properly history, but the mystical contemplation of the Gospel; the discourses contained in his Gospel are theological meditations on the mystery of salvation, devoid of historical truth.” (D. 2016)

(From the Decree of the Holy Office *Lamentabili*, July 3, 1907, that was infallibly confirmed by Pope Pius X in his *Motu proprio Praestantia Scripturae*, November 18, 1907; D. 2114)

## The Error That Christ Died in the Consulship of the Two Gemini but Not the Error That He Died in the 15<sup>th</sup> Year of Tiberius

Some writers teach that Jesus died under the consulship of the two Gemini but do not teach that Jesus died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, which leaves them the excuse of misplacing the year of the consulship of the two Gemini. It cannot be said that they believe Jesus' public ministry lasted less than one year unless they teach that Jesus died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. In many cases, such as with Saint Augustine, those who teach that Jesus died under the two Gemini also teach that Jesus' public ministry lasted for 3½ years, which means they misplace the year in which the two Gemini were consuls but do not limit Jesus' public ministry to less than one year.

### Saint Augustine

In his book *City of God*, Saint Augustine teaches that Christ died when the two Gemini were consuls:

Saint Augustine, *City of God*: "Christ died when the two Gemini were consuls."  
(Book 18, chapter 54)

Saint Augustine only says that Christ died when the two Gemini were consuls but not that Christ died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. He also teaches that Jesus' public ministry lasted between three and four years. For example, in his commentary on the Gospel of Saint John, Saint Augustine correctly teaches that Jesus cast out the thieves from the Temple during two Passovers, the first and the last of His public ministry:

Saint Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*: "Chapter 67, Of the expulsion of the sellers and buyers from the temple, and of the question as to the harmony between the first three evangelists and John, who relates the same incident in a widely different connection: Matthew goes on with his narrative in the following terms: 'And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple' and so on, down to where we read, 'But ye have made it a den of thieves.' This account of the multitude of sellers who were cast out of the temple is given by all the evangelists; but John introduces it in a remarkably different order. For, after recording the testimony borne by John the Baptist to Jesus, and mentioning that He went into Galilee at the time when He turned the water into wine, and after he has also noticed the sojourn of a few days in Capharnaum, John proceeds to tell us that He went up to Jerusalem at the season of the Jews' Passover, and when He had made a scourge of small cords, drove out of the temple those who were selling in it. **This makes it evident that this act was performed by the Lord not on a single occasion, but twice over**; but that only the first instance is put on record by John, and the last by the other three."

Saint Augustine realizes that if he said that Jesus died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius that Jesus' public ministry could only have lasted for less than one year and thus for one Passover, the one He died on. In order to not contradict himself and deny the Gospels of Saint Luke and Saint John which say that Saint John the Baptist began his public ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius and his ministry lasted for four Passovers, Saint Augustine only says that Jesus died under the two Gemini. His error, then, was the wrong year that

the two Gemini were consuls. He places their consulship in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius instead of his 15<sup>th</sup> year.

This mistake was made in two apocryphal works that have *not* been condemned by the Catholic Church. They both correctly record the death of Jesus in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius and one correctly records His death in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad, but both incorrectly record His death during the consulship of the Two Gemini:

Theophilus: *The Martyrdom of Barsamya*, the Bishop of the Blessed City Edessa: “...The day of the ascension of our Lord to His glorious Father, which was the fourth day of Heziran, which was in the nineteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, in the consulship of Rufus and Rubelinus...”

*The Gospel of Nicodemus* (Acts of Pilate): “Now it came to pass, in the nineteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, emperor of the Romans, and of Herod, son of Herod king of Galilee, in the nineteenth year of his rule, on the eighth day before the kalends of April, which is the twenty-fifth day of the month of March, in the consulship of Rufinus and Rubellio, in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad, under the rule of Joseph and Caiaphas, priests of the Jews: the things done by the chief priests and the rest of the Jews, which Nicodemus recorded after the cross and passion of the Lord, Nicodemus himself committed to Hebrew letters.”

Rufus and Rubelinus, the Two Gemini, were consuls in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius in 29 AD and not in his 19<sup>th</sup> year in 33 AD. However, both of these works correctly teach that Jesus died in the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. And the Gospel of Nicodemus correctly teaches that Jesus died in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad. Hence both of these works place the death of Jesus in 33 AD. The error, then, is the wrong year that the Two Gemini were consuls but not the error that Jesus died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius. This error preserves the four Passovers of Jesus’ ministry while misplacing the year that the Two Gemini were consuls. This is the same mistake that Saint Augustine made when he incorrectly taught that Christ died when the Two Gemini were consuls but correctly taught that Jesus’ ministry lasted between three and four years. Hence Saint Augustine did not teach that Jesus died in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius nor that Jesus’ public ministry lasted for one year or less.

## The Error That the 1<sup>st</sup> Year of Artaxerxes Longimanus Was 465 BC

### Artaxerxes Longimanus began the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his reign in 475 BC

E	Reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus (Rarl)	(475 to 424 BC)
Ep	Ascended the throne as sole ruler or co-ruler with Xerxes the Great	
DM	Post-dating method with Tishri 1 as the New Year’s Day	
CdEp	Ascended the throne	After Tishri 1, 476 BC but before Tishri 1, 475 BC
CdE1	Date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of his reign	Tishri 1, 475 BC

The Persians used the post-dating method with Tishri 1 as New Year’s Day to count regnal years. (See in this book “[Persians used the post-dating method with Tishri 1 as New Year’s Day for counting regnal years](#),” p. 60.) According to Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, the 1<sup>st</sup> year of King Artaxerxes Longimanus had to begin on Tishri 1,

475 BC because the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign had to fall within Nisan 455 BC, the month and year that King Artaxerxes gave the Decree to Nehemias to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem.

**Date That Began the 20<sup>th</sup> Year of Artaxerxes Longimanus**

CdE1	Gregorian date that began the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of his reign	475 BC, Tishri 1
Ey	The year in question of his reign	20 <sup>th</sup> Rarl
CdEy	Date that began that year of his reign	456 BC, Tishri 1
	Date that ended that year of his reign	455 BC, Tishri 1

$$(Ey - 1) + CdE1 = CdEy$$

$$(20 - 1) + -475 \text{ BC} = -456 \text{ BC, Tishri 1 to 455 BC, Elul 29}$$

Hence the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of King Artaxerxes Longimanus began on Tishri 1 (Sept/Oct), 456 BC and ended on Elul 29 (Aug/Sept), 455 BC.

BC Year	Year of Artaxerxes
475	0/1 (Tishri 1 - Sept/Oct)
474	1/2
473	2/3
472	3/4
471	4/5
470	5/6
469	6/7
468	7/8
467	8/9
466	9/10
465	10/11
464	11/12
463	12/13
462	13/14
461	14/15
460	15/16
459	16/17
458	17/18
457	18/19
456	19/20
455	20/21

Some erroneously teach that the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes Longimanus began on Tishri 1, 465 BC, which contradicts Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy that begins the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes on Tishri 1, 475 BC. If the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes began on Tishri 1, 465 BC, then the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign began on Tishri 1, 446 BC and ended on Elul 29, 445 BC instead of his 20<sup>th</sup> year beginning on Tishri 1, 456 BC and ending on Elul 29, 455 BC. The erroneous opinion would place the baptism of Christ in 39 AD (69 weeks of years or 483 years from 445 BC) and thus contradicts Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. The correct opinion places the baptism of Christ in 29 AD (69 weeks of years or 483 years from 455 BC).

Therefore, the opinion that Artaxerxes began his reign in 465 BC is false because it contradicts Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy by placing the baptism year of Christ out of any possible range. Hence any science that attempts to prove that the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes Longimanus' reign was in 464 or 465 BC is false because the evidence is either erroneous, misinterpreted, mistranslated, or fraudulent. A credible science must prove that the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes' reign began on Tishri 1, 475 BC according to the Persian calendar that used the post-dating method with Tishri 1 as New Year's Day to count regnal years. That means that King Artaxerxes Longimanus could have ascended to the throne on any day from Tishri 2, 476 BC to Elul 29, 475 BC in order for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his reign to begin on Tishri 1, 475 BC.

### **Thucydides has Artaxerxes reigning in 473 BC**

Thucydides has been called one of the first and best of impartial and scientific historians. Thucydides was a most credible Greek historian. He was born in Athens and was a member of the aristocratic family that included the great general and statesman Miltiades and was connected with the royal family of Thrace. Thucydides stood alone amongst the historians of his day for historical integrity. Most of the classical historians were often careless and inaccurate in their histories, but Thucydides was remarkable for his meticulous critical historical research. Thucydides complained that his predecessor Herodotus included too many "mythical" elements and that his primary reason for writing was to please his audience. He also complained that other historians were unclear in their chronologies. Herodotus (484-424 BC), Xenophon (c. 430-437 BC), and Ctesias (5th century BC) all lacked the accuracy and integrity of Thucydides in their histories, as Thucydides said of these chroniclers, "They cared only for popularity and took no pains to make their narrative trustworthy." This contrasted greatly with his own searching scrutiny of historical materials and strict adherence to the facts. Thucydides writes,

"As to the deeds done in the war, I have not thought myself at liberty to record them on hearsay from the first informant or on arbitrary conjecture. My account rests either on personal knowledge or on the closest possible scrutiny of each statement made by others. The process of research was laborious, because conflicting accounts were given by those who had witnessed the several events, as partiality swayed or as memory served them." (*Speeches of Thucydides*, 1, 22)

Historians and chronologers who give the erroneous year of 465 BC as the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes did not live in the days of the Persian kings. However, Thucydides was a first-hand witness to the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes because he lived in their days. Contradicting the opinion that the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus was 465 BC, Thucydides presents evidence that Artaxerxes was already reigning in 472 or 471 BC. Thucydides mentions the flight of the Greek Themistocles and his meeting with King Artaxerxes Longimanus, which according to historians and chronologers took place in 472 BC or 471 BC:

Thucydides, book 1, chapter 137: "Themistocles had been ostracised and was living at Argos. Lacedaemonians and Athenians sent officers to arrest him. He fled to the Corcyreans. They conveyed him to the neighbouring continent. The officers constantly enquired in which direction he had gone, and pursued him everywhere. He stopped at the house of Admetus the King of the Molossians, who protected him and would not give him up to his pursuers, though they pressed him

to do so. And as Themistocles wanted to go to the King (of Persia), Admetus sent him on foot across the country to the sea at Pydna (which was in the Kingdom of Alexander). There he found a merchant vessel sailing to Ionia, in which he embarked. It was driven by a storm to Naxos, but at length he arrived at Ephesus. Themistocles then went up the country with one of the Persians who dwelt in the coast, and sent a letter to Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes, who had just succeeded to the throne.”

In his *Chronicon* the heretic Eusebius puts the arrival of Themistocles in the first year of the 77<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, which began on July 17, 472 BC and ended in July 16, 471 BC. Thus we know that Themistocles fled to King Artaxerxes, as mentioned by Thucydides, in 472 or 471 BC, as mentioned by Eusebius and other chronologists. Therefore Artaxerxes was already king in 472 or 471 BC, which was six or seven years before 465 BC when Artaxerxes supposedly began his reign according to others. Therefore King Artaxerxes could not have begun his reign anytime after 472 BC. Thucydides says that the flight of Themistocles took place when King Artaxerxes had just succeeded to the throne, which places the year 475 BC in the possible range of years for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes. Again, Thucydides was in the best position to record this history because he lived at the same time and in the same place as Themistocles.

Beware, then, of those who refer to less credible sources to defend their erroneous opinion that Artaxerxes did not ascend to the throne until 465 BC. They have Themistocles appearing before Xerxes the Great instead of before Artaxerxes Longimanus. Thucydides' evidence is the most credible because he lived in the days of Themistocles, as did Charon of Lampsacus and other historians. And they say that Themistocles appeared before Artaxerxes.

- Charon of Lampsacus was born in 554 BC and was still writing history in 464 BC. Charon said that the flight of Themistocles was to the court of Artaxerxes Longimanus and took place in 471 BC.
- Plutarch (46-120 AD), the Greek historian and philosopher, is famous for his parallel biographies of great Greeks and Romans in which he matches one against the other. Plutarch writes, “Thucydides and Charon of Lampsacus say that Xerxes was dead and that Themistocles had an interview with his son, Artaxerxes; but Ephorus, Dinon, Clitarchus, Heraclides, and many others write that he came to Xerxes. The chronological tables better agree with the account of Thucydides.” (Themistocles, chapter 27)
- Cornelius Nepos was a Roman historian who lived about 100 AD. He was a friend of Cicero and Catullus. Twenty-five of his short lives of statesmen and warriors have survived in his *De Viris Illustribus*. He deals mainly with Greeks. Supporting Thucydides, Nepos wrote, “I know that most historians have related that Themistocles went over into Asia in the reign of Xerxes, but I give credence to Thucydides in preference to others, because he, of all those who have left records of that period, was nearest in point of time to Themistocles, and was of the same city. Thucydides says that he went to Artaxerxes.” (Nepos, Themistocles, chapter 9)

- Diodorus the Sicilian (1<sup>st</sup> century AD), a Greek historian, places the death of Themistocles in 471 BC. It is reported that after his arrival in Persia, Themistocles asked for his audience with Artaxerxes to be postponed for a year in order to learn the Persian language so that he could communicate with Artaxerxes in the Persian language.
- Fr. Dionysius Petavius, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit and chronologist, in his *De Doctrina Temporum*, Volume 2, 1627, uses the evidence from Thucydides and other sources to place the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes Longimanus in 475 or 474 BC and places him as sole ruler of Persia in 465 BC and hence has Artaxerxes co-reigning with Xerxes his father. Hence he correctly places the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 455 or 454 BC instead of the erroneous 445 or 444 BC.
- James Ussher (1581-1656), Vitranga (1659-1722), Ernst Wm. Hengstenberg (1802-1869), and other historians and chronologists begin the reign of Artaxerxes in 475 or 474 BC and thus the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign was either 455 BC or 454 BC.
- *Haydock's Catholic Family Bible and Commentary*, 1859, follows Dionysius Petavius and places the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 455 BC. Beware, this book contains many heresies.

### **Ptolemy's Canon is either misinterpreted or incorrect**

The main piece of evidence for the erroneous opinion that Artaxerxes Longimanus began his reign in 465 BC and that his reign lasted for 41 years is Ptolemy's Canon. But Ptolemy's Canon does not necessarily place the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 465 BC nor give him a 41-year reign as some suppose.

Ptolemy's Canon has the two Persian kings, Xerxes the Great and Artaxerxes Longimanus, reigning for a total of 62 years. And he says that the first king, Xerxes, reigned for 21 years. But he does not say how long Artaxerxes reigned, leaving the possibility of Artaxerxes co-reigning with his father Xerxes. That is also beside the fact that Ptolemy's *Canon of Kings* never records co-reigns. The one thing certain is that Artaxerxes was sole ruler from 465 BC to 424 BC, for 41 years, to make up the 62 years from the year Xerxes began his reign in 486 BC to the year Artaxerxes ended his reign in 424 BC. But it does not necessarily follow that Artaxerxes' reign lasted for 41 years because he could have co-reigned with his father Xerxes, which would give him a longer reign than 41 years.

Most historians and chronologers agree that Xerxes the Great began his reign in 486 BC and that Artaxerxes Longimanus ended his reign in 424 BC, which gives the combined 62 years that both reigned as mentioned by Ptolemy (486 BC – 424 BC = 62 years). But Ptolemy does not say how long Artaxerxes reigned but only how long Xerxes reigned, 21 years. Others assume that Artaxerxes' reign lasted for 41 years excluding the possibility of a co-reign with his father Xerxes. Hence they have Xerxes as sole ruler from 486 BC to 465 BC (21 years) and Artaxerxes as sole ruler from 465 BC to 424 BC (41 years) with no co-reign. But we know that Artaxerxes could not have begun his reign in 465 BC because it contradicts Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy which demands that



the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes began on Tishri 1, 475 BC. And it also contradicts evidence from Thucydides and others. Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes was in 475 BC because either Xerxes died or Xerxes appointed him co-ruler, a common practice among kings and especially among kings and their sons. A Catholic commentary on 2 Esdras 1:1 mentions both possibilities:

“The words of Nehemias the son of Helchias. And it came to pass in the month of Casleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in the castle of Susa... ” (2 Esd. 1:1)

Catholic Commentary on 2 Esd. 1: “Ver. 1. ...Year of Artaxerxes after he was associated with his father on the throne or after the death of Xerxes...”

### *Xerxes-Artaxerxes co-reign confirms Ptolemy's Canon*

If Artaxerxes was co-ruler with his father Xerxes the Great, then the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Artaxerxes had to begin on Tishri 1, 475 BC, which fell within the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Xerxes. The 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of Xerxes the Great began on Tishri 1, 486 BC. Hence the 12<sup>th</sup> year of his reign began on Tishri 1, 475 BC.

$$(12 - 1) + -486 \text{ BC} = -475 \text{ BC}$$

Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes began on Tishri 1, 475 BC in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Xerxes, and he co-ruled with Xerxes for 10 years until Xerxes died in 465 BC in the 22<sup>nd</sup> year of his reign after ruling for 21 years.

Table: Xerxes and Artaxerxes Co-Reign

Xerxes			Artaxerxes	
Total Yrs	Yr of Reign	BC Yr	Yr of Reign	Total Yrs
0	1	486		
1	2	485		
2	3	484		
3	4	483		
4	5	482		
5	6	481		
6	7	480		
7	8	479		
8	9	478		
9	10	477		
10	11	476		
11	12	475	1	0
12	13	474	2	1
13	14	473	3	2
14	15	472	4	3
15	16	471	5	4
16	17	470	6	5
17	18	469	7	6
18	19	468	8	7
19	20	467	9	8
20	21	466	10	9
21	22	465	11	10

Artaxerxes, then, would have been sole ruler over Persia from 465 BC and for the next 41 years, ending his reign in 424 BC. This co-reign opinion preserves Ptolemy's 62-year time span for both kings from 486 BC to 424 BC and his 21-year time span for the reign of Xerxes. And it preserves Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy by placing the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes' reign in 475 BC. According to this co-reign opinion, Artaxerxes Longimanus' reign lasted 51 years instead of 41 years, from 475 BC to 424 BC. Archeological evidence shows that Artaxerxes ended his rule in the 51<sup>st</sup> year of his reign. And there is evidence, if genuine, that he co-reigned with his father Xerxes beginning in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Xerxes:

Catholic Commentary on Daniel 9:24: "...Artaxerxes...had reigned ten years already with his father. Petavius."

*The Old and New Testament Connected in the History of the Jews*, volume 1, by Humphrey Prideaux, 1833, p. 241: "For Petavius supposeth [footnote 1], that Xerxes, nine years before his death, admitted his son Artaxerxes to reign in co-partnership with him, and that from this admission is to be computed the twentieth year of his reign, in which he issued the decree from whence the first year of this prophecy did commence. And he builds this supposition chiefly upon the author of Thucydides, [footnote 2], who tells us, that Themistocles, in his flight into Persia, addressed himself to Artaxerxes, then newly reigning. Petavius infers that Artaxerxes must have been admitted to reign with his father several years before his death, and these years he determines to be nine... He insists on the usage anciently in practice among the Persian kings, of naming their successors before they went to an dangerous war, and will have it, that when Xerxes [footnote 4] again renewed the war against the Greeks, after the death of Pausanias, he then named Artaxerxes according to this usage, in the same manner as his father had named him on the like

occasion, and took him into co-partnership with him in the government of the empire.”

Footnote 1: “Rationar. Temp. part 2, lib. 3, c. 10, p. 154; Et de Doctrina Temporum, lib. 12, c. 32.”

Footnote 2: “Lib. 1.”

Footnote 3: “Lib. 2.”

Footnote 4: “Justin, lib. 2, c. 15. Thuc. Lib. 1. Diodorus Siculus lib ii.”

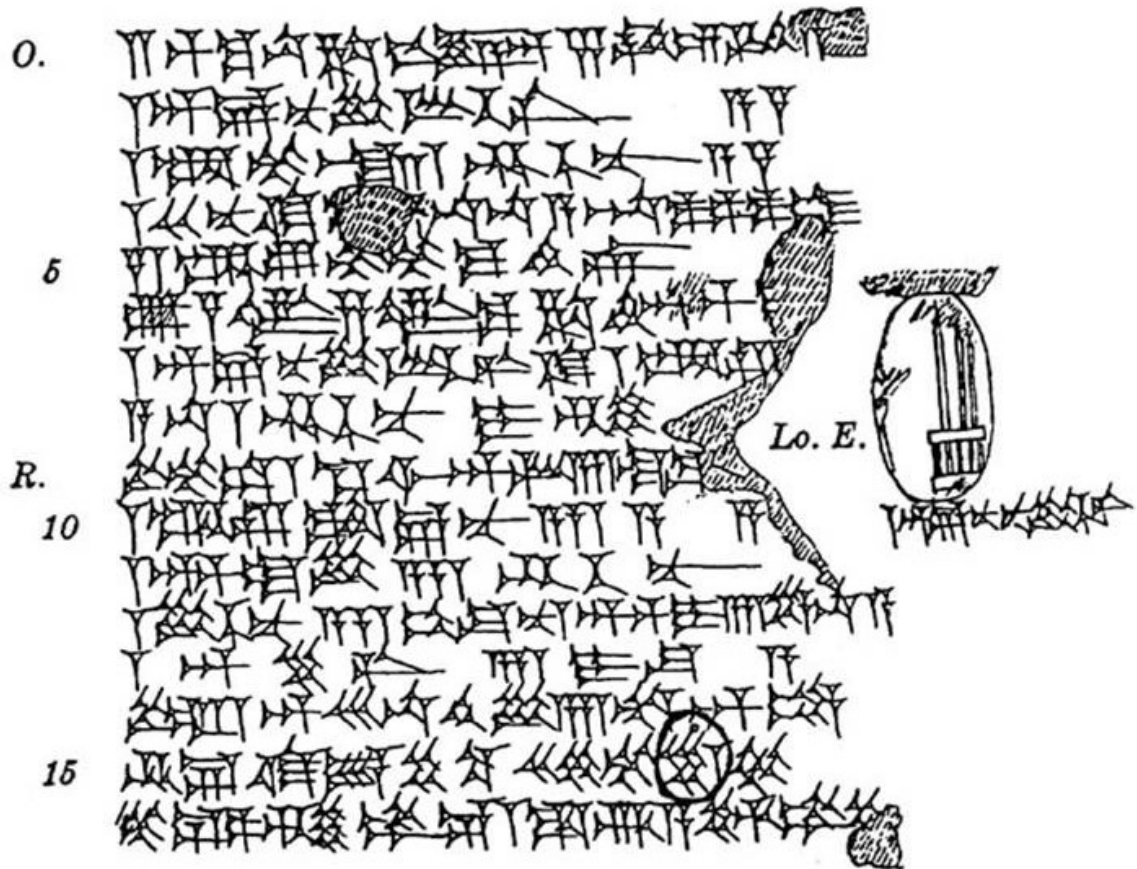
### Cuneiform tablet records business document dated in the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes

Evidence that Artaxerxes Longimanus ruled beyond his 41<sup>st</sup> year is found in a business document from Borsippa that is dated to the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes I (Longimanus). This evidence is located in the *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum*, vol. vii: tablets from Sippar 2, by E. Leichty and A. K. Grayson, 1987, p. 153; tablet designated BM65494.

### Cuneiform tablet records 51<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes as his last

The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania found a tablet, designed CBM 12803, connecting the last regnal year of Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) with the accession year of Darius II (Nothus). It says Artaxerxes ended his rule in the 51<sup>st</sup> year of his reign when Darius II ascended the throne. It says,

“51<sup>st</sup> year, accession year, 12<sup>th</sup> month, day 20, Darius, king of lands.”



*The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts, Vol. VIII, Part I, by Albert T. Clay, 1908, pp. 34, 83, and Plate 57, Tablet No. 127, designated CBM 12803 (Philadelphia, 1908), P1. "The circled inscription is the number '51.' "*

### Hieroglyphic evidence for co-reign

Sir G. Wilkinson, in his work *The Ancient Egyptians*, records hieroglyphic inscriptions found in slate quarries on the road from Coptos to the Red Sea. One of the inscriptions says "the sixth year of Cambyses" and two ovals say "the thirty-sixth year of Darius" and "the twelfth year of Xerxes." On another rock at the same place there is a record of "the sixteenth year of Xerxes and the fifth year of Artaxerxes." If genuine, this evidence proves that Xerxes did not die in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, that he co-reigned with Artaxerxes, and that Xerxes was in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of his reign when Artaxerxes was in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his reign because the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Xerxes was also the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes.

### *Artaxerxes' ascension to the throne after the death of Xerxes contradicts Ptolemy's Canon*

The other opinion that contradicts Ptolemy's Canon is that Xerxes the Great died in 476 or 475 after ruling for 10 or 11 years and only then did Artaxerxes ascend the throne and begin the 1<sup>st</sup> year of his reign in 475 BC. This still gives Artaxerxes a 51-year reign from 475 BC to 424 BC. While a 10-year reign for Xerxes upholds a 62-year reign for both kings as recorded by Ptolemy (11 for Xerxes and 51 for Artaxerxes), it does not uphold a 21-year reign for Xerxes as recorded by Ptolemy. Hence this opinion contradicts Ptolemy's Canon. Some hold this opinion based on Plutarch's following statement:

“Thucydides and Charon of Lampsacus say that Xerxes was dead and that Themistocles had an interview with his son, Artaxerxes; but Ephorus, Dinon, Clitarchus, Heraclides and many others, write that he came to Xerxes. The chronological tables better agree with the account of Thucydides.” (Themistocles, chapter 27)

But Thucydides and Charon did not say that Xerxes had died or was dead but only that Artaxerxes had recently ascended the throne. Plutarch is presuming that Xerxes was dead:

Thucydides, book 1, chapter 137: “...Themistocles then went up the country with one of the Persians who dwelt in the coast, and sent a letter to Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes, who had just succeeded to the throne.”

Even though the opinion that Xerxes died in 476 or 475 BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes was in 475 BC contradicts Ptolemy's Canon, it does not contradict Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. One must be very careful not to give Ptolemy's Canon an air of infallibility especially if it contradicts dogmas or the true interpretation of a prophecy. Whatever opinion one holds regarding the reign of these two kings, Xerxes and Artaxerxes, it must have the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes beginning on Tishri 1, 475 BC to uphold Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. This places the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes Longimanus in Nisan 455 BC when Artaxerxes gave the Decree to Nehemias to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem.

### **Darius-Xerxes co-reign opinion**

In order to uphold a 21-year reign for Xerxes the Great, his death in 475 BC, and the ascension of his son Artaxerxes Longimanus in the same year, some have Xerxes co-reigning with his father Darius Hystaspes (aka Darius the Great) for 10 years and then reigning alone for 11 years from 486 BC to 475 BC. However, evidence from the historian Herodotus in his book 7 contradicts this opinion. It has Xerxes the Great co-reigning with his father Darius the Great for no more than one year before Darius died:

Herodotus, book 7: “[7.1] ...After this, in the fourth year, the Egyptians whom Cambyses had enslaved revolted from the Persians; whereupon Darius was more hot for war than ever, and earnestly desired to march an army against both adversaries.

“[7.2] Now, as he was about to lead forth his levies against Egypt and Athens, a fierce contention for the sovereign power arose among his sons; since the law of the

Persians was that a king must not go out with his army until he has appointed one to succeed him upon the throne.

“[7.3] ...Xerxes followed this counsel, and Darius, persuaded that he had justice on his side, appointed him his successor. For my own part I believe that, even without this, the crown would have gone to Xerxes; for Atossa was all-powerful.

“[7.4] Darius, when he had thus appointed Xerxes his heir, was minded to lead forth his armies; but he was prevented by death while his preparations were still proceeding. **He died in the year following the revolt of Egypt and the matters here related**, after having reigned in all six-and-thirty years, leaving the revolted Egyptians and the Athenians alike unpunished. At his death the kingdom passed to his son Xerxes.”

### **Beware of astronomical evidence**

Some have presented astronomical evidence to prove that Artaxerxes Longimanus began his reign in 475 BC and others that he began his reign in 465 BC. Without getting into the lengthy and complicated dispute, any year other than 475 BC is automatically ruled out by Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. Hence any astronomical calculations that do not place the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes in 475 BC are erroneous because of fraudulent or mistranslated or misinterpreted eclipse evidence or because of an erroneous astronomy.

### **Beware of fraudulent evidence**

One must always be aware of the fact that the Devil always has more than enough so-called scientists, historians, and chronologers put forward a false science and false evidence in order to discredit dogmas or the true meaning and fulfillment of prophecy. And many of these men knowingly serve the Devil by lying about or tampering with evidence. The Devil always has men who will present ten pieces of false evidence to contradict one true piece of evidence that upholds a dogma or a prophecy. For example, modern so-called evidence from a multitude of liars says that Pilate hunted down Jesus Christ as an enemy to the Roman State and pressed for His murder, when the opposite is the truth. And more lying and blasphemous evidence says that the bones of Jesus have been found or that Jesus married Mary Magdalen. And all these lying pieces of evidence deny the following dogmas: Pilate favored Christ, Jesus never married, and Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven body and soul. No amount of lying evidence from lying scientists, historians, or chronologists can change the truth into a lie.

## **The Error That the Walls and Gates Were Built in 52 Days**

### **Walls and gates are completed after several years**

The minimum but not probable time in which the walls and gates of Jerusalem could have been finished is one year after Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews. The Bible teaches that the walls and gates were completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Elul but does not give the year: *“The wall was finished the five and twentieth day of the month of Elul...”* (2 Esd. 6:15) King Artaxerxes gave the Decree to Nehemias in Nisan, which falls in March

or April. The first Elul that followed was 5 months away. It is not possible for Nehemias' trip to Jerusalem in which he made contracts for materials, his gathering of the materials, and then the start and finish of the walls and gates to be completed in 5 months from the time King Artaxerxes gave the Decree to Nehemias in the Hebrew month of Nisan. The trip alone took at least four months because Nehemias had to stop on the way to make contracts for the materials. The trip itself most probably took more than four months because it took Esdras four months to travel from Babylon to Jerusalem stopping on the way to collect money:

“For upon the first day of the first month he [Esdras] began to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem according to the good hand of his God upon him.” (1 Esd. 7:9)

Catholic Commentary on 1 Esd. 7: “Ver. 9. Month. Thus four entire months were spent on the journey, as they did not go the shortest way, and had much baggage, &c. ”

Nehemias' trip to Jerusalem had to take more time than Esdras' trip because Nehemias had to stop on the way to make contracts for materials:

“And I [Nehemias] said to the king: If it seem good to the king, let him give me letters to the governors of the country beyond the river, that they convey me over, till I come into Judea: And a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, to give me timber that I may cover the gates of the tower of the house, and the walls of the city, and the house that I shall enter into. And the king gave me according to the good hand of my God with me. And I came to the governors of the country beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of soldiers, and horsemen.” (2 Esd. 2:7-9)

Thus one can reasonably assume it took Nehemias more than four months to travel from Babylon to Jerusalem. When Nehemias got the Decree from Artaxerxes in the month of Nisan, the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Elul was five months away and hence would have left the Jews only about 30 days to build the walls and gates if it took Nehemias four months to reach Jerusalem. But even 52 days is not possible for the walls and gates to be completed. Hence the first 25<sup>th</sup> day of Elul on which the walls and gates could have been completed would be the following Elul which was one year away. However, it is most probable that it took several years to complete the walls and gates for two reasons:

1. The size of the walls and gates required much material and manpower.
2. The building was often interrupted or slowed down by persecution from the surrounding Gentiles.

When the building began, the Jews had to defend themselves against the attacks from their enemies. Hence the Jews allotted half of the men who were building the walls and gates to soldier duty and hence lost half their work force. We read of this in 2 Esdras, chapter 4:

“[Introduction: The building is carried on notwithstanding the opposition of their enemies.] And it came to pass, that when Sanaballat heard that we were building the wall he was angry: and being moved exceedingly he scoffed at the Jews. And said before his brethren, and the multitude of the Samaritans: What are the silly Jews doing? Will the Gentiles let them alone? Will they sacrifice and make an end in a day? Are they able to raise stones out of the heaps of the rubbish, which are burnt? ...And it came to pass, when Sanaballat, and Tobias, and the Arabians, and the

Ammonites, and the Azotians heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and the breaches began to be closed, that they were exceedingly angry. And they all assembled themselves together, to come, and to fight against Jerusalem, and to prepare ambushes. And we prayed to our God, and set watchmen upon the wall day and night against them. And Juda said: The strength of the bearer of burdens is decayed, and the rubbish is very much, and we shall not be able to build the wall. And our enemies said: Let them not know, nor understand, till we come in the midst of them, and kill them, and cause the work to cease. And it came to pass, that when the Jews that dwelt by them came and told us ten times, out of all the places from whence they came to us, I set the people in the place behind the wall round about in order, with their swords, and spears, and bows. ...And it came to pass from that day forward, that half of their young men did the work, and half were ready for to fight, with spears, and shields, and bows, and coats of mail, and the rulers were behind them in all the house of Juda.” (2 Esd. 4:1-2, 7-13, 16)

A Catholic commentary on 2 Esdras 1:1, quoting Josephus, says it took the Jews over two years to build the walls of Jerusalem:

Catholic Commentary on 2 Esd. 6: “Ver. 15. Elul, the last of the civil year, corresponding with our August and September... Josephus (xi. 5) says, ‘two years and three (Greek four) months’ had been spent in perfecting the work.”

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 11:5: “8. But now when the Ammonites, and Moabites, and Samaritans, and all that inhabited Celesyria, heard that the building went on apace, they took it heinously, and proceeded to lay snares for them, and to hinder their intentions. They also slew many of the Jews, and sought how they might destroy Nehemiah himself, by hiring some of the foreigners to kill him. They also put the Jews in fear, and disturbed them, and spread abroad rumors, as if many nations were ready to make an expedition against them, by which means they were harassed, and had almost left off the building. But none of these things could deter Nehemiah from being diligent about the work... And this trouble he underwent for two years and four months; for in so long a time was the wall built...”

Hence the very least of time in which the walls could have been completed is one year. But it most probably took several years to complete, which refutes the illogical opinion that it took only 52 days to build the walls from start to finish.

### *Walls and gates finished 52 days after the last persecution*

Fifty-two days after the last persecution, the walls and gates of Jerusalem were completed. In this persecution the Gentiles tried to prevent Nehemias from completing the gates, as the walls were already finished. This is recorded in 2 Esdras, chapter 6, which teaches that 52 days after this persecution the gates were also completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Elul:

“[Introduction: The enemies seek to terrify Nehemias. He proceedeth and finisheth the wall.] And it came to pass, when Sanaballat, and Tobias, and Gossem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had built the wall, and that there was no breach left in it, (though at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates,) Sanaballat and Gossem sent to me, saying: Come, and let us make a league together in the villages, in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. And I sent messengers to them, saying: I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down, lest it be neglected whilst I come, and go down to you. And they sent to me according to this word, four times: and I answered them after the same manner. And Sanaballat sent his servant to me the fifth time according to the former word, and he had a



letter in his hand written in this manner: It is reported amongst the Gentiles, and Gossem hath said it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel, and therefore thou buildest the wall, and hast a mind to set thyself king over them: for which end thou hast also set up prophets, to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying: There is a king in Judea. The king will hear of these things: therefore come now, that we may take counsel together. And I sent to them, saying: There is no such thing done as thou sayest: but thou feignest these things out of thy own heart. For all these men thought to frighten us, thinking that our hands would cease from the work, and that we would leave off. Wherefore I strengthened my hands the more... But the wall was finished the five and twentieth day of the month of Elul, in two and fifty days. And it came to pass when all our enemies heard of it, that all nations which were round about us, were afraid, and were cast down within themselves, for they perceived that this work was the work of God.” (2 Esd. 6:1-9, 15-16)

Beware, then, of those who incorrectly teach that the walls and gates were completed in 52 days from the time Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews to rebuild the walls and gates and the rest of Jerusalem. They take 2 Esdras 6:15 out of context: “*The wall was finished the five and twentieth day of the month of Elul, in two and fifty days.*” (2 Esd. 6:15) Not only is this opinion illogical because of the immense task of building all the walls and gates of Jerusalem amidst the persecutions that stopped or stalled the building but most importantly it contradicts Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. It contradicts the prophecy because according to the prophecy Nehemias gave the Decree to the Jews in the 7<sup>th</sup> Hebrew month of Tishri but if the walls were completed from beginning to end in 52 days and on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> Hebrew month of Elul, then the walls and gates would have already been completed before the 7<sup>th</sup> month of Tishri. Instead of giving the Decree to the Jews in the 7<sup>th</sup> month of Tishri, Nehemias would have given the Decree to the Jews on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> Hebrew month of Av, which is 52 days before the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Elul.

If Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy began in the 5<sup>th</sup> Hebrew month of Av (July/Aug) instead of the 7<sup>th</sup> Hebrew month of Tishri (Sept/Oct), then the prophecy could not be an exact-to-the-day prophecy because Jesus could not have died exactly 486½ years after the prophecy began. An exact 486½ years from the Hebrew month of Av falls in the Hebrew month of Shevat (Jan/Feb) in which Jesus could not have died because He died on the solemnity day of Passover on Nisan 15 (March/April). Whereas if the prophecy began in Tishri, then an exact 486½ years from then places the death of Jesus in the Hebrew month of Nisan.

Therefore the prophecy demands that the earliest 25<sup>th</sup> day of Elul on which the walls and gates could have been completed is not the first Elul after the king gave the Decree to Nehemias in the month of Nisan but the second Elul, which gives the Jews at least one year to complete the walls and gates. But even this is not probable considering the immense size of the walls and the persecutions that stopped or slowed the building.

Hence the walls being finished in 52 days means 52 days after *the last persecution*. One can reasonably presume that it took several years to complete the walls and gates. And one can presume it took twelve years to complete the walls and gates because Nehemias did not return to King Artaxerxes until twelve years after he got the Decree from the king. Hence Nehemias remained in Jerusalem until the walls and gates were completed and then promptly returned to the king. In 2 Esdras 13:6 we read that Nehemias returned to King Artaxerxes in the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of his reign:

“But in all this time I was not in Jerusalem, because in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, I went to the king...” (2 Esd. 13:6)

So from the 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Artaxerxes, when Nehemias got the Decree from Artaxerxes, until the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of King Artaxerxes, when Nehemias returned to the king, is twelve years. Nehemias tells us in 2 Esdras 5:14 that during this twelve-year period he did not eat the yearly allowance due to governors, which indicates he sacrificed these things until the walls and gates were completed:

“And from the day, in which the king commanded me to be governor in the land of Juda, from the twentieth year even to the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, for twelve years, I and my brethren did not eat the yearly allowance that was due to the governors.” (2 Esd. 5:14)

The Heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “Ezra recalls that Nehemiah, who constructed the walls of Jerusalem, had finished the work in the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians.”

Hence one can reasonably assume that the walls and gates took twelve years to complete. The only viable opinions, then, regarding the time it took to build the walls are time periods of several years because of the immense task and the persecutions and the sequence of events mentioned in 2 Esdras.

## The Error That the Prophecy Does Not Apply to Jesus Christ

### Apostate Jews believe someone else fulfilled it or their messiah the Antichrist will fulfill it

Because apostate Jews believe that Jesus Christ is not the Messiah, they misinterpret Old Testament Bible passages that refer to Jesus Christ as the Messiah and apply them to other persons or things. One such Old Testament Bible passage is Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, as recorded in Daniel 9:23-27:

“From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: and I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the Holy of holies may be anointed. Know thou therefore, and take notice: that from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny him shall not be his. And a people with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste, and after the end of the war the appointed desolation. And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end.” (Dan. 9:23-27)

Apostate Jews hate this passage because it can only apply to Jesus Christ who fulfilled it. (See in this book [“The Person of the Prophecy Is Jesus Christ, Who Is God, Man, and Messiah,”](#) p. 11.)

Douay Commentary on Daniel 9:24: “Forgiveness of sins, infusion of justice, fulfilling of prophecies, and anointed Holy of holies agree only to Christ.”

Julius Africanus (c. 160 - c. 240), *The Extant Fragments of The Five Books Of The Chronography*: “XVI. On the Seventy Weeks of Daniel. This passage, therefore, as it stands thus, touches on many marvelous things. At present, however, I shall speak only of those things in it which bear upon chronology, and matters connected therewith. That the passage speaks then of the advent of Christ, who was to manifest Himself after seventy weeks, is evident. For in the Saviour’s time, or from Him, are transgressions abrogated, and sins brought to an end. And through remission, moreover, are iniquities, along with offences, blotted out by expiation; and an everlasting righteousness is preached, different from that which is by the law, and visions and prophecies (are) until John, and the Most Holy is anointed. For before the advent of the Saviour these things were not yet, and were therefore only looked for.”

Saint Athanasius, *Against the Heathens*: “39. Do you look for another [other than Jesus Christ]? But Daniel foretells the escort time. Objections to this removed. But perhaps even they being unable to fight continually against plain facts, they will without denying what is written maintain that they are looking for these things and that the Word of God is not yet come. For this it is on which they are for ever harping, not blushing to brazen it out in the face of plain facts. 2. But on this one point, above all, they shall be all the more refuted, not at our hands but at those of the most wise Daniel who marks both the actual date, and the divine sojourn of the Saviour, saying: ‘Seventy weeks are cut short upon thy people and upon the holy city for a full end to be made of sin, and for sins to be sealed up, and to blot out iniquities, and to make atonement for iniquities, and to bring everlasting righteousness, and to seal vision and prophet, and to anoint a Holy of holies; and thou shalt know and understand from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Christ the Prince.’ 3. Perhaps with regard to the other (prophecies) they may be able even to find excuses and to put off what is written to a future time. But what can they say to this, or can they face it at all? Where not only is the Christ referred to but He that is to be anointed is declared to be not man simply but Holy of holies; and Jerusalem is to stand till His coming, and thenceforth prophet and vision cease in Israel. 4. David was anointed of old and Solomon and Ezechias; but then, nevertheless, Jerusalem and the place stood and prophets were prophesying: Gad and Asaph and Nathan and later Isaias and Osee and Amos and others. And again, the actual men that were anointed were called holy, and not Holy of holies. 5. But if they shield themselves with the captivity and say that because of it Jerusalem was not, what can they say about the prophets too? For in fact when first the people went down to Babylon, Daniel and Jeremias were there, and Ezechiel and Aggeus and Zachary were prophesying.

“40. What more remains for the Messiah to do that Christ has not done? So the Jews are trifling and the time in question which they refer to the future is actually come. For when did prophet and vision cease from Israel save when Christ came, the Holy of holies? For it is a sign and an important proof of the coming of the Word of God that Jerusalem no longer stands nor is any prophet raised up nor vision revealed to them,—and that very naturally. 2. For when He that was signified was come, what need was there any longer of any to signify Him? When the truth was there, what need any more of the shadow? For this was the reason of their prophesying at all,—namely, till the true Righteousness should come, and He that was to ransom the sins of all. And this was why Jerusalem stood till then—namely, that there they might be exercised in the types as a preparation for the reality. 3. So when the Holy of holies was come, naturally vision and prophecy were sealed and the kingdom of Jerusalem ceased... 6. ...For what more is there for him whom they expect to do, when he is come? To call the heathen? But they are called already. To make prophecy and king

and vision to cease? This too has already come to pass. To expose the godlessness of idolatry? It is already exposed and condemned. Or to destroy death? He is already destroyed. 7. What then has not come to pass that the Christ must do? What is left unfulfilled that the Jews should now disbelieve with impunity? For if, I say—which is just what we actually see—there is no longer king nor prophet nor Jerusalem nor sacrifice nor vision among them, but even the whole earth is tilled with the knowledge of God; and gentiles leaving their godlessness are now taking refuge with the God of Abraham, through the Word, even our Lord Jesus Christ, then it must be plain, even to those who are exceedingly obstinate, that the Christ is come and that He has illumined absolutely all with His light and given them the true and divine teaching concerning His Father.”

Catholic Commentary on Daniel 9: “Ver. 24. ...*Anointed*. Christ is the great anointed of God, the source of justice, and the end of the law and of the prophets, (Acts 10:38), (1 Cor. 1:30), and (Rom. 10:4), as well as the pardoner of crimes. These four characters belong only to Christ... Ver. 25. Marsham begins twenty-one years after the captivity commenced, when Darius took Susa, and ends in the second of Judas Machabeus, when the temple was purified. This system would destroy the prediction of Christ’s coming.”

Instead of applying the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy to Jesus Christ, apostate Jews apply it either to another person who they say already fulfilled it (such as King Cyrus, Zorobabel, Josedec the high priest, or Judas Machabeus) or to their false messiah, the Antichrist, who has yet to come. Either opinion undermines Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy and Jesus Christ, who is the only anointed one to whom it can apply.

- The anointed one mentioned in Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy redeems men from their sins by being slain; ends the Old Covenant animal sacrifices and replaces them with a New Covenant new sacrifice; abolishes all iniquity and sins; brings everlasting justice; causes the Second Temple to be destroyed; fulfills all the prophecies regarding the Messiah; and is called the Holy of holies, which means He is not just a man but also God. All these things can only apply to Jesus Christ.
- No high priest or Machabees, holy as some were, could redeem men from their sins by being slain, replace the Old Covenant sacrifices with the New Covenant sacrifice, abolish all iniquity and sins, nor bring everlasting justice. Neither did their deaths cause the destruction of the Second Temple, which stood long after the end of the Machabean era. Nor could any man be the Holy of holies except Jesus Christ, who is both God and man since His incarnation.

Hence, to not apply Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy to Jesus Christ is to undermine Jesus Christ and His whole purpose and mission. And it not only gives credence to Jews who deny that Jesus Christ is the Messiah but also helps them justify their messiah, the Antichrist, whom they are bringing to power.

One could truly say that the holy Machabean high priests were figures of the Messiah and thus figuratively fulfilled *some* prophecies about Jesus Christ. But the holy Machabees did not figuratively fulfill *all* of the prophecies about Jesus Christ nor did they literally fulfill even one prophecy about Jesus Christ. Only Jesus Christ could literally fulfill the prophecies regarding the Messiah. Likewise one could truly say that

Antiochus Epiphanes was a figure of the Antichrist and thus figuratively fulfilled some of the prophecies about the Antichrist. But Antiochus did not figuratively fulfill all the prophecies about the Antichrist nor could he literally fulfill even one prophecy about the Antichrist. Only the Antichrist himself could literally fulfill the prophecies regarding the Antichrist.

### *Apostate Jewish evidence*

The apostate Jewish Rabbis Maimonides and Moses Levi correctly teach that Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy applies to the Messiah:

Igeret Teiman, chapter 3, p.24: "1a. Maimonides (Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon): Daniel has elucidated to us the knowledge of the end times. However, since they are secret, the wise [rabbis] have barred the calculation of the days of Messiah's coming so that the untutored populace will not be led astray when they see that the End Times have already come but there is no sign of the Messiah.

"1b. Rabbi Moses Abraham Levi: I have examined and searched all the Holy Scriptures and have not found the time for the coming of Messiah clearly fixed, except in the words of Gabriel to the prophet Daniel, which are written in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of the prophecy of Daniel."

But the messiah these apostate Jews believe in is actually the Antichrist because the one and only true Messiah, Jesus Christ, whom they deny, already fulfilled Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. Hence these apostate Jews are looking for a messiah other than Jesus Christ to fulfill the prophecy. And that messiah will be the Antichrist. Other apostate Jews believe that Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy does not refer to the Messiah but only to minor anointed ones and has already been fulfilled:

*Wikipedia*, "Prophecy of Seventy Weeks": "Other Jewish viewpoints - Rashi explains that this scripture passage refers to the 70 years of exile that have passed from the destruction of the First Temple until this vision, and the entire 420 year period of the Second Temple. Rashi believes it refers to Agrippa II (whom he believes to have died at the time of the Temple's destruction). There is an opinion that the 'anointed' here is actually Joshua ben Jozadak, the High Priest who was one of the first Jews to return from Babylon to Israel and restore the sacrificial service in the Temple. Others say that the 'anointed' is Zerubabel, who led the return to Israel. As he was of royal pedigree, he is called 'anointed' (every Jewish king was anointed). Rabbi Saadia Gaon understands it as a reference to the Temple service of Kohanim that will come to an end with the destruction of the Second Temple. ...According to Jews for Judaism, ...this 'anointed one' is the High Priest Alexander Yannai (103-76 BC) who came to power just at the end of the sixty-two week period in 103 BC and was the last of the important Hasmonean leaders."

### **So-called Catholics who followed the Jewish lie that Jesus Christ did not fulfill the prophecy**

One would expect apostate Jews to undermine Jesus Christ by misinterpreting Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. But one would not expect this from Catholics or so-called Catholics. But sad to say, some Catholic and so-called Catholic authors have followed the apostate Jewish lie that Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy was literally

fulfilled by someone other than Jesus Christ, such as by King Cyrus or Judas Machabeus or the Machabean line.

### *The heretic Eusebius of Caesarea*

For example, the Arian heretic Eusebius of Caesarea, a so-called Catholic, says that the high priests were the Christs or the anointed ones mentioned in Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy, with John Hyrcanus, the last Machabean ruler and high priest, as the ultimate Christ or anointed one who fulfilled the prophecy instead of Jesus Christ. This Christ-denying error, no doubt, pleases the Christ-denying Jews:

The heretic Eusebius of Caesarea, *Chronology*: "186 OL, Accession year 34 BC, Herod the foreigner reigned over the Jews, the secular power of the pontificate having ended, for 37 years. a Herod, the son of Antipater from Ascalon and whose mother was Cypris from Arabia, received the principate of the Jews from the Romans... And in this very place, Christ, whom the Scripture of Daniel prophesies, received his end. For until Herod, christs (=anointed ones), i.e. the high priests, were the kings of the Jews, who began to rule from the 65<sup>th</sup> Olympiad and the restoration of the Temple under Darius, until Hyrcanus and the 186<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, around 433 years having passed: which is what Daniel also signifies, saying: These 69 weeks come to 483 years, in which the christs (=anointed ones), that is, the high priests reigned through the anointing of oil until Hyrcanus. The latter having been captured finally by the Parthians, Herod son of Antipater received Judaea, which did not belong to him, from Augustus and the Senate. And his sons after him reigned until the most recent captivity of Jerusalem, never having been appointed high priests from the succession of the sacerdotal line, serving God according to the Law of Moses for all their lives. Indeed, certain lay persons, and others at another time, and not a few, used to buy the priestly office from Roman Emperors, for a single year or a bit more. All these things Daniel the prophet also foretells, saying: 'And after 7 and 62 weeks the anointing will perish, and there will be no sound judgement there and the people will defile the temple and the sanctuary with the leader who is coming: and they will be struck down in the flood of war.' And in what follows: 'And upon the Temple, he says, an abomination of desolation: and until the fulfillment of the time, a fulfillment will be given upon the desolation.' "

Hence the heretic Eusebius has Daniel's 483 years ending with the anointing of John Hyrcanus II in the second century before Christ instead of with the anointing of Jesus Christ in 29 AD when He was baptized by Saint John the Baptist. And the heretical *Catholic New American Bible* follows the apostate Jewish belief that Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy does not apply to Jesus Christ:

*Wikipedia*, Prophecy of Seventy Weeks: "Scholarly viewpoint - Modern Biblical scholars, the Jewish Encyclopedia, the Jewish Publication Society study bible, the Catholic New American Bible and some Evangelical Christian scholars (Vanderwaal, Goldingay, Lucas) all concur that it was an *ex eventu* prophecy fulfilled in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. The 'anointed,' the 'prince,' mentioned after the first seven times seven units, must be Cyrus, who is called the anointed of the Lord in Isa. xlv. 1 also. He concluded the first seven weeks of years by issuing the decree of liberation, and the time that elapsed between the Chaldean destruction of Jerusalem (586) and the year 538 was just about forty-nine years. ... This week of years began with the 'cutting off of an anointed one' (9:26)—referring to the murder of the legitimate high priest Onias III (compare Lev. iv. 3 et seq. on the anointing of the priest) in 170 BC; the 'destruction of the city' (9:26) refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of the Temple in 168 BC by

the forces of Antiochus (1 Macc 1:29-39); the ‘unto the end of the war’(9:26) refers to the end of the Sixth Syrian War when Antiochus vented his anger on Jerusalem after suffering a humiliating defeat against Egypt (cf Daniel 11:30); the ‘strong covenant’ (9:27) refers to a treaty between apostate Jews and Antiochus; the ‘cessation of sacrifice and offering’ (9:27) refers to the decree of Antiochus suspending temple offerings in 167 BC; the ‘abomination that causes desolation’ (9:27) refers to the altar of Zeus which Antiochus set up in the temple; and the anointing of the Holy of holies (9:24) refers to the reconsecration of the Temple in 164 BC.”

### **Some errors of the heretic Eusebius of Caesarea**

The chronology of the Arian heretic Eusebius of Caesarea contains many errors and contradictions and lacks necessary commentaries in many places. As you just read in the last section, one of his worst errors was that Daniel’s Seventy-Weeks Prophecy does not apply to Jesus Christ.

#### *Says Judas Machabeus died three years later than the biblical account*

Many historians and chronologists, including many Church Fathers, used Josephus’ history and chronology of the Jews as a primary source, especially regarding facts not recorded in the Bible. Hence they also incorporated some of Josephus’ errors from his otherwise good history and chronology.

The heretic Eusebius, like Josephus, errs regarding the reign and death of Judas Machabeus. Eusebius’ error is less excusable than Josephus’ because Eusebius had the biblical Books of Machabees, which contradict his and Josephus’ errors. If Josephus had access to these books, he did not look upon them as authoritative because his history deviates in some places from the biblical Books of Machabees. Eusebius records the reign of Judas Machabeus as general of the Hebrew army from 166 to 160 BC and as general and high priest from 160 until 157 BC. Eusebius has Judas Machabeus dying in 157 BC after having been high priest for three years since 160 BC:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “155<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, 157 BC: b The battle against the generals of Demetrius having begun, Judas is killed, having carried on the pontificate for 3 years.”

Hence Eusebius says that Judas died in 157 BC after having been high priest for three years. But the Bible says that Judas died in Nisan 160 BC and does not say he was the high priest. Hence Eusebius copied Josephus’ error by saying that Judas became high priest in 160 BC. But he differs from Josephus on the death of Judas. The heretic Eusebius says Judas died in 157 BC and Josephus says he died in 155 or 154 BC. Both contradict the Bible which says that Judas died in Nisan 160 BC. The Bible records the reign of Judas Machabeus from 166 BC to his death in 160 BC. (See my book *Errors of Josephus: Erred by Five or Six Years Regarding the Death and Reign of Judas Machabeus*.) The Bible says that Judas died in the 152<sup>nd</sup> year of the Seleucid Era (SE):

Catholic Bible: “In the first month of the hundred and fifty-second year they brought the army to Jerusalem... And Judas was slain, and the rest fled away.” (1 Mac. 9:3, 18)

The Seleucid Era began in October 312 BC, and Eusebius correctly records this date in his chronology:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “117<sup>th</sup> Olympiad: In Syria and Babylon and the upper regions reigned Seleucus Nicator, for 32 years. 312 BC is his accession year.”

The 117<sup>th</sup> Olympiad fell within the years of 312, 311, 310, 309, and 308 BC. Hence Eusebius correctly dates the beginning of the Seleucid Era in 312 BC and thus has no excuse for misdating the Bible, which says that Judas died in the 152<sup>nd</sup> year of the Seleucid Era. According to the post-dating method used by the Jews for counting regnal years, the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Seleucid Era was Nisan 1, 311 BC (according to the Hebrew sacred calendar) or Tishri 1, 311 BC (according to the Hebrew civil calendar). The author of the First Book of Machabees uses the post-dating method and the Hebrew sacred calendar. Hence the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 152<sup>nd</sup> year of the Seleucid Era (152 SE-n), in which Judas died, was Nisan 160 BC. Yet the heretic Eusebius says he died in 157 BC in contradiction to the Catholic Bible and his own correct year for the beginning of the Seleucid Era. It is the Catholic Bible, then, that Eusebius ignores or disbelieves.

And even if one counts the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Seleucid Era by the anniversary-dating method from the day it began in October 312 BC, then 152 SE fell within 161 and 160 BC and not in 157 BC. In both cases this does not equal 157 BC in which Eusebius says that Judas died. The heretic Eusebius contradicts the Bible (the First Book of Machabees) and himself because he did not check his math according to the Seleucid Era. Consequently, Eusebius' chronology is off by three years regarding the death of Judas Machabeus. Because of this error, Eusebius' chronology contains other errors regarding Herod the Great and the Asmonean or Machabean line. But his errors are not consistent and thus he introduces new errors to compound the confusion of his chronology.

*Says Herod took Jerusalem and Antigonus was killed in 40 BC instead of 37 BC*

Herod procured the death of Antigonus in 37 BC. The heretic Eusebius says this happened in 40 BC:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “40 BC, e Antigonus while fighting against the Jews is at length killed. From then on down to the present time the kingship of Jerusalem has been destroyed. Accordingly after him Herod, a foreign prince, and in no way relating to Judea, was installed by the Romans.”

*Says Herod did not rule until 34 BC instead of 37 BC*

Herod took Jerusalem and ruled over the Jews in 37 BC. The heretic Eusebius says this happened in 34 BC and gives no reason why he believes that Herod began his reign in that year:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “34 BC, a Herod, the son of Antipater from Ascalon and whose mother was Cypris from Arabia, received the principate of the Jews from the Romans... **Herod the foreigner reigned over the Jews, the secular power of the pontificate having ended, for 37 years.**”



*Says John Hyrcanus died in 8 BC instead of 30 BC*

John Hyrcanus died in 30 BC. The heretic Eusebius says he died in 8 BC:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “8 BC, a Herod killed Hyrcanus, who previously had been high priest of the Jews, when he returned from his Parthian captivity, and killed his son, who had succeeded his father in the high priesthood: in addition, he most cruelly puts to death his (Hyrcanus’) sister, his very own wife, with his own two sons already in adolescence, and the mother of his murdered wife, his mother-in-law.”

*Says Pompey took Jerusalem in 68 BC instead of 63 BC*

Pompey took Jerusalem in 63 BC. The heretic Eusebius says he took Jerusalem in 68 BC:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “68 BC, The Jews made tributaries by Pompey, and Hyrcanus received the pontificate among them, for 34 years.”

*Says the Battle of Actium ended in 32 BC instead of 31 BC*

The Battle of Actium ended in 31 BC. The heretic Eusebius says it ended in 32 BC:

The heretic Eusebius, *Chronology*: “32 BC, b Artorius the doctor of Augustus perishes after the victory of Actium in a shipwreck.”



## **Main Tables and Charts**

Table: Main Events in the Life of Jesus Christ

Based on Jesus' birth on 12/25/2 BC, 3½ yr public ministry, and death at 33 yrs old on 3/25/33 AD

AUC	BC/AD	Rca	Rtc	OL	Age	
Jan	Jan.	Apr	Aug	July		
752	2 BC	42		194/3	0	<b>Jesus Christ is born</b> (12/25: 752 AUC - 2 BC - 42 Rca - 194/3 OL)
753	1 BC	43		194/4	1	
754	1 AD	44		195/1	2	
755	2	45		195/2	3	
756	3	46		195/3	4	
757	4	47		195/4	5	
758	5	48		196/1	6	
759	6	49		196/2	7	
760	7	50		196/3	8	
761	8	51		196/4	9	
762	9	52		197/1	10	
763	10	53		197/2	11	
764	11	54		197/3	12	
765	12	55		197/4	13	
766	13	56		198/1	14	
767	14	57	1	198/2	15	<b>Tiberius Caesar's reign begins</b> (8/19: 767 AUC - 14 AD - 1 Rtc - 198/2 OL)
768	15		2	198/3	16	
769	16		3	198/4	17	
770	17		4	199/1	18	
771	18		5	199/2	19	
772	19		6	199/3	20	
773	20		7	199/4	21	
774	21		8	200/1	22	
775	22		9	200/2	23	
776	23		10	200/3	24	
777	24		11	200/4	25	
778	25		12	201/1	26	
779	26		13	201/2	27	
780	27		14	201/3	28	
781	28		15	201/4	29	
782	29		15*	201/4	29	<b>John the Baptist begins ministry</b> (3/25: 782 AUC - 29 AD - 15 Rtc - 201/4 OL - 29 yr)
			16	202/1	29	<b>Jesus is baptized</b> (9/25: 782 AUC - 29 AD - 16 Rtc - 202/1 OL - 29 yr)
					30	(12/25: Jesus turns 30)
783	30		17	202/2	31	
784	31		18	202/3	32	
785	32		19	202/4	33	
786	33		19	202/4	33	<b>Jesus Christ dies</b> (3/25: 786 AUC - 33 AD - 19 Rtc - 202/4 OL - 33 yr)
			20	203/1	34	(12/25: Jesus would have been 34)

\*Dates of eras that start within the year are listed in the year they begin and not when they end.

For example, 15 Rtc begins in 28 AD and ends in 29 AD, and 16 Rtc begins in 29 AD and ends in 30 AD.

Chart: Main Events in the Life of Jesus Christ

Rca	Caesar Augustus' Reign	STARTS	4/21
Rtc	Tiberius Caesar's Reign	STARTS	8/19
OL	Olympiad	STARTS	7/17
AUC	From the Founding of Rome	STARTS	1/1
BC	Before Christ	STARTS	1/1
AD	Year of Our Lord	STARTS	1/1

# Main Events in The Life of Jesus Christ

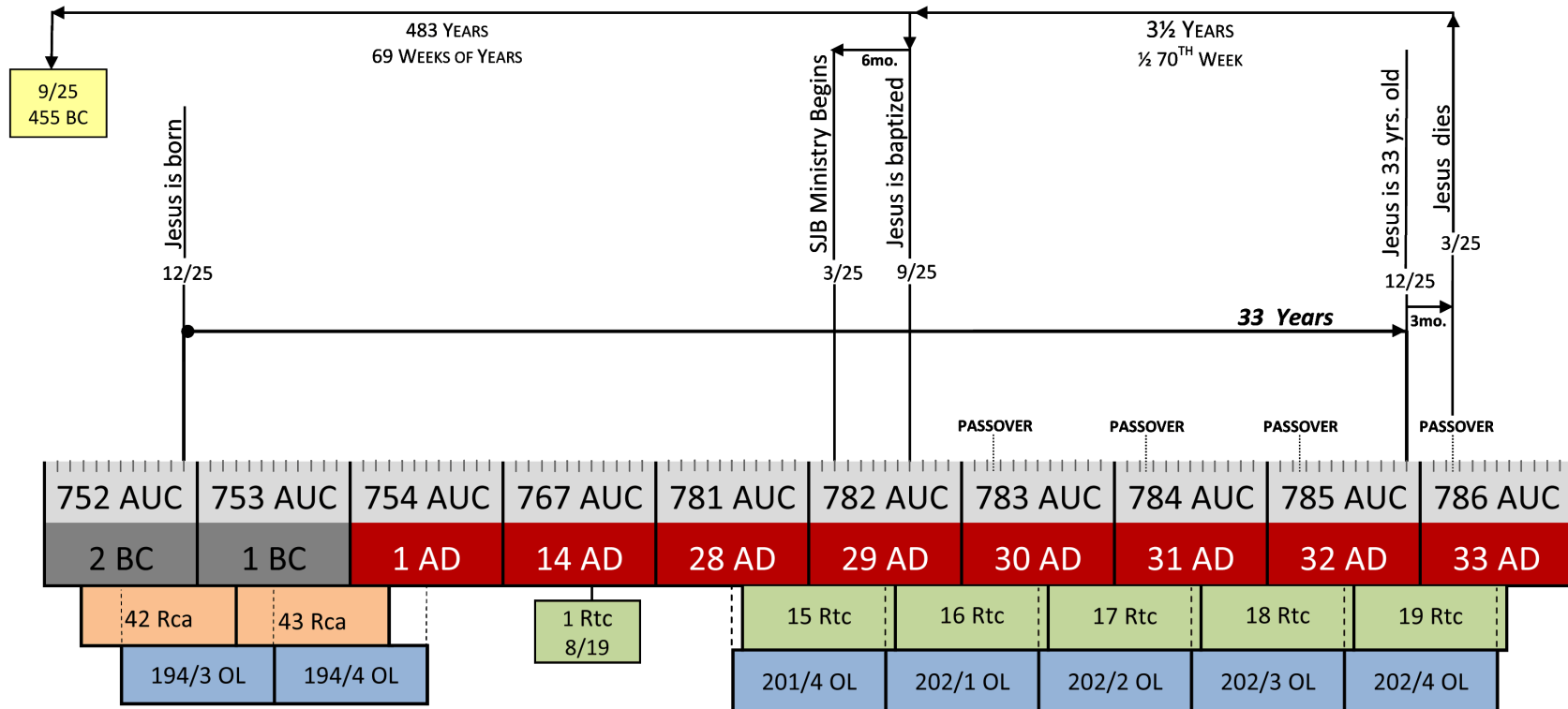
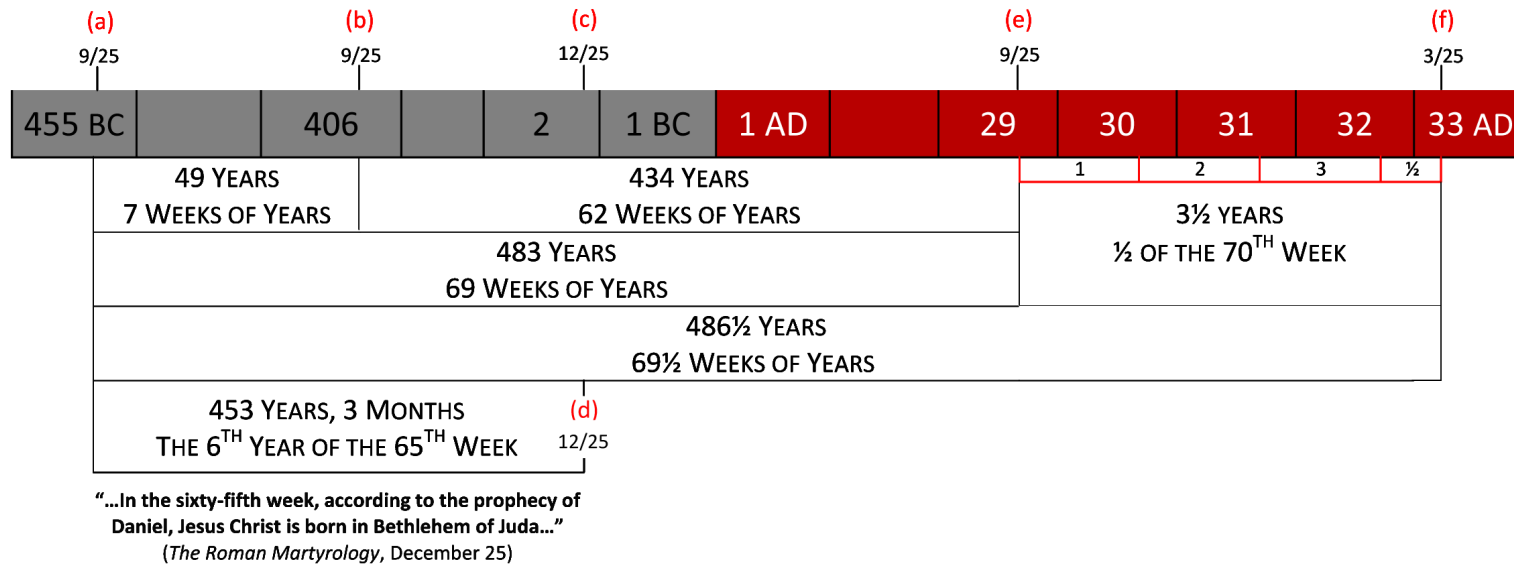


Table: Main Events of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

Event	Day	Yr	Fulfillment	Weeks x Years
Daniel gets the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy under Darius the Mede at Babylon.	Daniel is in his 80's.	538 BC		
Nehemias prays in the 20 <sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes for the walls and the rest of Jerusalem to be rebuilt.	Casleu (Nov/Dec)	456 BC		
King Artaxerxes gives Nehemias the Decree in the 20 <sup>th</sup> year of his reign to rebuild the walls.	Nisan (March/April)	455 BC		
Nehemias gives the Decree to the Jews in Jerusalem in the 21 <sup>st</sup> year of Artaxerxes.	Tishri (September 25)	455 BC	<b>Beginning</b> of 70-Weeks Prophecy	1 <sup>st</sup> day of 1 <sup>st</sup> wk of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr
Walls, gates, streets, and rest of city are completely finished.	Tishri (September 25)	406 BC	<b>1st part</b> fulfilled	7 wks x 7 yr = 49 yrs
Jesus Christ, the prince and Holy of holies, is baptized or anointed.	Tishri (September 25)	29 AD	<b>2nd part</b> fulfilled	62 wks x 7 yrs = 434 yrs + 7 wks x 7 yrs = 49 yrs 69 wks x 7 yrs = 483 yrs
Christ dies and redeems men from sin.	Nisan 15 (March 25)	33 AD	<b>3rd part</b> fulfilled	$\frac{1}{2}$ wk x 7 yrs = $3\frac{1}{2}$ yrs + 69 wks x 7 yrs = 483 yrs 69½ wks x 7 yrs = 486½ yrs

Chart: Main Events of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

# Main Events of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy



a)	9/25/455 BC	Decree to rebuild the walls and the rest of Jerusalem begins the 1 <sup>st</sup> Week (Dan. 9:25; 2 Esd. 1, 2)
b)	9/25/406 BC	Major structures of the city of Jerusalem are completed at the end of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Week (Dan. 9:25)
c, d)	12/25/2 BC	(c) Jesus is born (d) in the 6 <sup>th</sup> year of the 65 <sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy
e)	9/25/29 AD	Jesus is baptized at the end of the 69 <sup>th</sup> Week (Dan. 9:24-25; Lk. 3:21-23)
f)	3/25/33 AD	Jesus dies in ½ of the 70 <sup>th</sup> Week, exactly 3½ years after His baptism (Dan. 9:26)

Table: Reigns of Kings and Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

	<b>OL</b>	<b>AUC</b>	<b>Rarl</b>	<b>BC/AD</b>	<b>Rca</b>	<b>Rtc</b>
	July	April/Jan.	Tishri 1	Jan.	April	Aug.
Olympiad (July 17)	1/1	X	X	776 BC	X	X
Roman Year (April 21 till 45 BC and then Jan. 1)	6/3	1	X	753 BC	X	X
Artaxerxes Longimanus' Reign (Tishri 1)	76/2	279	1	475 BC	X	X
Caesar Augustus' reign (Nov. 27)	184/2	711	X	43 BC	1	X
Before Christ (Jan. 1)	194/4	753	X	1 BC	43	X
After Christ (Jan. 1)	195/1	754	X	1 AD	44	X
Tiberius Caesar's reign (Aug. 19)	198/2	767	X	14 AD	57	1
	<b>OL</b>	<b>AUC</b>	<b>Rarl</b>	<b>BC/AD</b>	<b>Rca</b>	<b>Rtc</b>
	July	April/Jan.	Tishri 1	Jan.	April	Aug.
Artaxerxes begins reign	76/ 2	279	1	475 BC	X	X
Nehemias' prayer (Casleu – Nov./Dec.)	81/1	298	20	456 BC	X	X
Nehemias gets Decree (Nisan - March/April)	81/1	298	20	455 BC	X	X
Nehemias gives Decree to Jews (Tishri - Sept. 25)	81/2	299	21	455 BC	X	X
Jerusalem totally rebuilt (Tishri - Sept. 25)	93/3	348	X	406 BC	X	X
Caesar Augustus begins reign (Nov. 27)	184/2	711	X	43 BC	1	X
Jesus is born (Dec. 25)	194/3	752	X	2 BC	42	X
Tiberius Caesar begins reign (Aug. 19)	198/2	767	X	14 AD	57	1
John the Baptist begins ministry (March 25)	201/4	782	X	29 AD	X	15
Jesus is baptized at 29 years old (Sept. 25)	202/1	782	X	29 AD	X	16
Jesus dies at 33 years old (Nisan 15 - March 25)	202/4	786	X	33 AD	X	19
R = Reign of; arl = Artaxerxes Longimanus; ca = Caesar Augustus; tc = Tiberius Caesar; OL = Olympiad; AUC = Roman Year						



