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The Significance Of 70 Years



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- INTRODUCTION -

It is clear from a number of Second-Temple sources that a cycle of 7 years was religiously observed throughout Judea. Each 7th year appears to have been celebrated as a Sabbatical year--where in Sabbatical years fields were not sown, tended, or harvested.

Several of the early sources indicate that some kind of calendar was used to determine the epoch of the Sabbatical year. It appears that a peculiar count of weeks-of-days and weeks-of-years could have been used to schedule the 7th year event (the Sabbatical year).

Subsequent chapters will attempt to show that instances of 7 days, 7 years, and 70 years--written down in the late Second-Temple Era--exactly conform to a chronological sequence of 70 years. The indicated Jewish chronology can ultimately be cross-referenced to known chronologies--those of contemporary Greeks and Romans. (By the time of the late Second Temple, the existence and correctness of a running chronology of 70 years seems rather certain).

In association with a study of the chronological count of 7 sets throughout the Second-Temple Era, the concluding chapters of the current analysis focuses upon certain predictions given through prophecy. It seems that certain prophesied events literally did come to pass (and exactly according to the 'weekly' counts predicted in passages of the Bible). The cited prophecies--given in cycles of weeks--appear to have almost certainly been fulfilled.

- CHAPTER ONE -
The 70-Year Cycle

Scrolls recovered at Qumran (the Dead Sea scrolls) reflect that some among the ancient Jewish sects did once adhere to a calendar of weeks. As is further explained below, there is little doubt but that a formal calendar--predicated upon an annual reckoning of 52 weeks or 364 days--was followed by the religious sect that produced the scrolls.

Also indicated from literature produced/circulated outside of Qumran is that mainstream Judeans were quite familiar with some version of this respective calendar. For example, the use of a weekly calendar of 364 days can be recited from the '***Book of Jubilees***'. A calendar of weeks can also be recited from other literature that was circulated among more mainstream Jews. Consequently, it seems probable that some kind of a calendar predicated upon the reckoning of the week was in rather widespread usage in Judea around the time of the first century.

A study of the cited calendar of weeks reveals that the week unit (a 7-day cycle) was almost surely reckoned across long cycle segments of weeks-of-years (or 7-year cycles). Ultimately, great cycles of 7 years and 70 years appear to have been time tracked.

The origin of this peculiar calendar of weeks may herald from the time of the Jewish kings (in the 7th century BCE). In fact, some version of a calendar predicated upon weeks-of-days and weeks-of-years may have been sanctioned for use in the environs of Jerusalem throughout the Second-Temple Era.

What is remarkable about the cited calendar is that the epoch of the solar year can almost perfectly be determined through a method of tracking week cycles. As such, it is possible that early astronomers at Jerusalem were quite capable of precisely defining the limits of the solar year (in average time).

An early-used calendar of 364 days

According to some literature produced in the Second-Temple Era, the annual circle (or the year) was determined or reckoned through a count of 364 stations:

> *"... the exactness of the year is accomplished through its separate **three hundred and sixty-four stations**." ('Enoch', Chapter 75: 2-3, translated by R.H. Charles).*

Most of these sources indicate that the length of the year was counted out using a fixed count of 364 days:

- *"And the year is complete - **three hundred and si[xty-four] days**" (refer to Scroll 4QMMT, lines 20-21).*
- *"On that very day, Noah went from the ark at the end of a complete year of **three hundred and sixty four days**, on the first (day) of the week... " (refer to Scroll 4Q252 2:2-3).*
- *"... Four [seasons]... divide the four portions of the year... they belong to the reckoning of the year... one [seasonal division] in the first portal and one in the third, and one in the fourth and one in the sixth, and the year is completed in **three hundred and sixty-four days**." ('Enoch', Chapter 82:4-6, translated by R.H. Charles).*

It is significant that the cited annual count of 364 days was sometimes represented as 52 weeks of days. (Note that 52 weeks per year at 7 days per week is equal to an annual count of 364 days).

> *"And all the days of the commandment will be **two and fifty weeks of days**, and (these will make) the entire year complete... observe the years according to this reckoning - **three hundred and sixty-four days**... [You must] make the year three hundred and sixty-four days only... " ('Jubilees', Chapter 6:30-38; translated by R.H. Charles).*

A functional calendar

Because a 364-day calendar is shorter in length than the solar year of 365.24 days, it becomes a given conclusion that the cited calendar of weeks would have required periodic intercalation. This then means that certain of the calendar years would have required the insertion of a leap week.

> *The intercalation of a week would have been necessary in certain of the years so as to keep a calendar of 364 days (the length of 52-week units) properly aligned with the solar year (which is 1.24 days longer than 364 days).*

It is here significant that a calendar comprised of 7-day units can be recognized to additionally define a uniform grid of 7-year units. A greater calendar grid comprised of 7-year cycles is inherent from the requirement to add a leap week at the interval of each 7th year (as is further shown below).

> *The continuous track of both time cycles (7 days and 7 years) can be recited from numerous passages of Second-Temple literature. For example, 'Antiquities of the Jews' has: "[The Judeans rest] every seventh year, just as on the seventh day." (Book 13:8:1); 'Wars of the Jews' also has: "the Jews rest every seventh year as they do on every seventh day"; and 'The Book of Jubilees' shows that "[Enoch] recounted the weeks of the jubilees... and recounted the Sabbaths of the years... " (Chapter 4:18).*

The following diagram is presented to show that a sequence of 7-year cycles is easy to interpret from out of an ongoing count of 7-day cycles (52 weeks per year). Take note that a distinct 7-year cycle is inherently defined from out of the requirement to

intercalate a week at always the distance of 7 solar years. The respective leap week--required at each 7-year interval as diagrammed--is fully necessary so as to interface the fixed rate of 52 weeks (or the rate of 364 days) with the longer rate of the annual circle (which is 365.24 days).

A Perpetual Interface *
(52 Weeks Per Year)

7 years (1) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (2) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (3) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (4) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (5) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (6) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (7) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (8) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (9) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (10)= 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
At Each 70 Years... + 1 Week

*** - Requires intercalation of an additional week in a loop at 7 sets of 7 years.**

A given conclusion from the indicated calendar count of 364 days (or 52 weeks) per year then is that additional intercalation would have been necessary to keep the stated calendar of weeks in pace with the length of the tropical year (365.24 days). Remarkable here is that the required rate of calendar intercalation does inherently overlay a time grid of 7 years.

Thus, an effective annual calendar (which averages 365.24 days over time) is possible through a simple accounting of 52 weeks per year. According to this respective interpretation of an annual calendar, the uniform rate of a cycle of 7 days is used to ultimately define sets of 7 years in long-cycle segments.

> *A count of the 'weeks-of-days' across 'weeks-of-years' represents an extremely effective method of determining the length of the annual circle (refer to the previous diagram). Note from the rates expressed in the diagram that 52 weeks per year times 7 days per week is equal to 364 days in each annual cycle. The addition of 1 more week at time intervals of 7 years, 49 years, and 70 years equates to the following day rates: 7 days in 7 years is equal to 1.00 more day per year on the average; 7 days in 49 years is equal to 0.14286 more day per year on the average; and 7 days in 70 years is equal to 0.10 more day per year on the average. Thus, the average annual rate of the cited calendar of weeks inherently is 364 days + 1.00 + 0.14286 + 0.10 days = 365.24286 days. This annual calendar rate compares very closely with the actual solar year of 365.24219 days (by **less than 1 minute per solar year**).*

Weeks of years

A time grid of weeks-of-years is defined as the result of counting weeks-of-days (as cited above).

The possibility that early Jewish astronomers did simultaneously reckon sequences of weeks-of-days and also sequences of weeks-of-years is made more certain from the content of the previously cited '***Book of Jubilees***'. This respective book (produced in the Second-Temple Era) is very explicit in the description of a time-tracking system predicated upon the reckoning of 7 sets.

From definitions and calendar terms stated in the '***Book of Jubilees***', it seems possible to interpret that the *path* and *order of years*, and even *sets of 7 years* or *jubilees*, were once defined/determined through a simple reckoning of weeks:

> *"... it is engraven and ordained on the heavenly tablets. And there is no neglecting (this commandment) for a single year or from year to year. And command thou the children of Israel that they observe the years according to this reckoning - **three hundred and sixty-four days**, and (these) will constitute a complete year... if they do neglect and do not observe them according to His commandment, then they will disturb all their seasons and the years will be dislodged from this (order)... and they will neglect their ordinances. And all the children of Israel will forget and will not find the **path of the years**, and will forget the new moons, and seasons, and sabbaths and they will go wrong as to all **the order of the years**... they will go wrong as to the months and sabbaths and feasts and **jubilees** [=7 sets of 7 years]..." ('**The Book of Jubilees**', Chapter 6, Translated by R.H. Charles).*

The engravings on the tablets (heavenly tablets) as is stated in the cited '***Book of Jubilees***' indicates the usage of some kind of a formal calendar. Because of the stated requirement to always count 364 days in each annual cycle--as perhaps a most integral or a most fundamental component of the stated calendar system--it is easy to recognize that the calendar system being described would have required a 7-year rate of intercalation (as previously explained).

> *It seems significant that the '**Book of Jubilees**'--as is quoted above--is explicit in showing that a fixed annual count (a count of 364 days, the length of 52 weeks) was required in the ultimate definition of 7 sets of 7 years (or a jubilee cycle).*

Because cycles of 7 years and even cycles of 7 weeks-of-years (or 49 years) appear to have been defined through the continuous reckoning of a cycle of 7 days, it seems obvious that required calendar intercalation could have been performed at the given interval of 7 years (and even at 7 weeks-of-years).

The following diagram is synonymous to the previous diagram but with an emphasis upon a cycle of 7 sets of 7 years (as is shown in the '***Book of Jubilees***'). The

diagram--like the prior diagram--illustrates a fixed distribution of weeks (a rate necessary to achieve an average annual calendar of 365.24 days):

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          A Perpetual Interface *
            (52 Weeks Per Year)
_____________________________________________

7 years (1) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (2) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (3) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (4) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (5) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (6) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
7 years (7) = 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 + 1 Week
       At Each 49 Years... + 1 Week
_____________________________________________


* - Requires intercalation of an additional
     week in a loop at 10 sets of 7 years.
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What is both peculiar and yet quite significant concerning the cited calendar of weeks is that the intercalation of an additional week at 7 sets of 7 years (the jubilee rate) would have required yet additional intercalation. The additional rate of intercalation would have corresponded with a time loop equivalent to 10 sets of 7 years--which is 70 years (as previously diagrammed).

Essentially, the cited calendar system that once counted weeks-of-days and weeks-of-years inherently would have required the reckoning of a long cycle of 10 weeks-of-years (or 70 years)--and this in addition or overplus to the reckoning of a long cycle of 7 weeks-of-years (the jubilee rate).

The possibility then seems to be that a calendar of continuous weeks was reckoned by ancient astronomers. This calendar required the insertion of a leap week at the frequency of each 7th year. Because cycles of 7 days and 7 years were continuously reckoned, early astronomers also reckoned an additional leap week at the repeating interval of 7 sets of 7 years (or 49 years) and an additional leap week at the repeating interval of 10 sets of 7 years (or 70 years).

This strange reckoning of weeks-of-days (a 7-day cycle) across weeks-of-years (a 7-year cycle) seems to explain just why texts produced in the Second-Temple Era refer to a calendar count of 49 years (7 weeks-of-years). These texts also refer to a calendar count of 70 years (10 weeks-of-years).

The equivalency of the ancient terminology of 'weeks-of-years' (sometimes used in association with a cycle of 49 years and sometimes used in association with a cycle of

70 years) tends to confirm that the cited count of 7 sets of 7 years was also reckoned in association with a long cycle of 10 sets of 7 years. Essentially, the reckoning of both long time cycles (49 years and 70 years) may have been predicated upon the requirement to intercalate an annual calendar of weeks (as documented).

Summary

Certain astronomers of the late Second-Temple Era are indicated to have once reckoned the solar year in association with a fixed count of 364 days (or the length of 52 weeks).

If no more than 364 days were counted in correspondence with each solar year then there is hardly any doubt but that a leap week was also reckoned in certain of the calendar years.

Because weeks-of-days (cycles of 7 days) and also weeks-of-years (cycles of 7 years) were once reckoned, it seems somewhat probable that the required leap week was intercalated at the cited 7-year rate.

It is then possible that the length of the year, the length of a long cycle of 7 years, and ultimately the length of great cycles (of 7 weeks-of-years and of 10 weeks-of-years) were effectively determined through nothing more than the count of a 7-day cycle.

> *In the context of the late Second-Temple Era, referrals to time spans of '364 days', '52 weeks-of-days', '49 years' (or '7 weeks-of-years'), and '70 years' (or '10 weeks-of-years)' all appear to pertain to a calendar of 'weeks'. This popular calendar system was seemingly predicated upon nothing more than a simple ongoing count of '7 days'.*

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- CHAPTER TWO -
A Kingly Cycle

The use of a solar-based calendar the length of 52 'weeks-of-days' (or a calendar of 364 days) is apparent from Second-Temple literature (as previously cited).

An annual count of 364 days is explicitly described in literature written at Qumran (the sea scrolls). The use of an annual count of 364 days can also be recited from literature authored outside of Qumran. For example, the books of Enoch and Jubilees, and the scrolls recovered at Masada were authored outside of Qumran. (These respective documents all contain references to a solar-based calendar--based upon the count of 364 days).

Essentially, a number of ancient sources (or more than a single source) reference a common method of counting out the year (always the length of 364 days).

> *The widespread circulation of the book of Jubilees (in particular) attests to the popularity of counting weeks-of-days and weeks-of-years.*

The following quotes represent extracts from certain Second-Temple sources. These respective quotes perhaps all pertain to the previously cited calendar system of weeks (where a count of weeks-of-days appears to have once been counted across weeks-of-years):

- *"... concerning the ages made by God, all the eras for the accomplishment of all the events, past and future. Before ever He made them, He determined... era by era. And it was the order... from Noah to Abraham until the birth of Isaac; ten weeks of years" (refer to Scroll 4Q180).*
- *"... the land kept the Sabbath, till seventy years were complete." (BBE text of 2Chronicles 36:19-21).*
- *"Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years... seventy sets of seven has been decreed for your people and your holy city... " (Daniel 9, based upon NLT).*
- *"... in their appearings and holy weeks in their appointed time and sets of months... of years in their revolutions and... festival seasons in their.... fixed periods.... and the sabbatical years of the land in their divisions, fixed times for liberty... ongoing... light and darkness..." (refer to Scroll 4Q286).*
- *Scroll 4Q385 has a reference to "70 [year]s".*
- *Scroll 4Q390 perhaps refers to a span of 70 years (as most translations show).*
- *"... the seasons of years unto their weeks... at the commencement of their weeks unto the season of Jubilee. (The Community Rule)."*
- *"... nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon... " (Jeremiah 25:11-12).*
- *"[The Judeans rest] every seventh year, just as on the seventh day." ('**Antiquities of the Jews**', Book 13:8:1).*

- *"the Jews rest every seventh year as they do on every seventh day" ('**Wars of the Jews**')*
- *"[Enoch] recounted the weeks of the jubilees... and recounted the Sabbaths of the years... " ('**The Book of Jubilees**', Chapter 4:18).*
- *"For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you... " (Jeremiah 29:10).*

The origin of a calendar of weeks

The cited calendar system (based upon nothing more than a repeating count of '7 days') appears to have had an origin at least as early as the 7th century BCE.

Certain early sources tend to indicate that an annual calendar was in use in the time of the Jewish kings (or those kings descended from Judah). This respective annual calendar was probably implemented at an official level for various scheduling purposes (as more fully explained below).

The early use of an annual schedule (by the Davidic kings) can seemingly be recognized from the accounts of Kings and Chronicles. A composite of these records seems to show that the officers of the primal Jewish kings were once rotated on an annual basis. (This annual rotation of the kingly officers appears to have been rather different from the itinerary adhered to by the priests--who are indicated to have rotated their 24 offices on a Sabbath-by-Sabbath basis).

The use of a king's calendar among the ancients is also mirrored in the writings of the early rabbis--as follows:

- *"There are four 'New Year' days...[1] the New Year **for kings** and feasts... [2] the New Year for the Tithe of cattle... [3] the New year for [the reckoning of] the years [of foreign eras], the years of Release and Jubilee years, for the planting [of trees] and for vegetables... [4] the New Year for [fruit] trees" (R.Sh. 1:1).*
- *"The one [= New Year which begins in the spring] refers to **Jewish kings**, the other [= the New Year which begins in the autumn] to kings of other nations...." (B.Azar.10a.).*

  Note that the rabbinic writings (some of which were written in the 3rd century CE) point back to a much earlier period in Israel's history.

Because an indicated yearly calendar is attributed to the 'kings' (perhaps a schedule used by the king's officers) then a question concerning the use of some sort of solar-based schedule is ultimately raised.

A passage written in the book of Isaiah tends to further indicate that a time cycle of 70 years was understood to pertain to "days of a king":

> *"... Tyre will go out of mind for seventy years, that is, the days of one king... And it will be after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will have mercy on Tyre... " (BBE text of Isaiah 23:15,17).*

Note that the previously cited calendar of 52 weeks, or 364 days, inherently defines a great cycle of 70 years. Thus, the Isaiah reference to a long cycle of 70 years does possibly indicate that knowledge of a calendar count of 364 days was held as early as the 7th century BCE.

Because the cited passage of Isaiah shows the reckoning of 70 years to be equivalent to the "days" of one king [cycle], it can be concluded that some kind of calendar count was being referenced.

A connection between the roster sanctioned by early kings and the cited annual count of 364 days can also be deduced from a passage in the Psalms Scroll--as follows:

> *"And David son of Jesse... to him YHWH gave wisdom... And he wrote psalms... for all the days of the year: three hundred and sixty four; and for the Sabbath offerings: fifty two songs... " (refer to the Psalms Scroll recovered at Q2).*

The book of Daniel contains an even more graphic description of a calendar of weeks. This respective document (written after the beginning of the 6th century BCE) not only refers to a 70-year cycle but also refers to a full cycle of 70 weeks-of-years--or to a time span of 490 years. Additional information concerning the long-cycle count of 70 weeks-of-years is shown below (in the concluding chapter).

> *The cited calendar system that once reckoned weeks would have inherently defined a long cycle of 70 weeks-of-years. A long cycle of 70 weeks-of-years is uniquely defined because the attendant cycles of 7 weeks-of-years and 10 weeks-of-years inherently come into conjunction, or time-out together, in a time cycle of 70 weeks-of-years--which is 490 years.*

The several references to the cyclical count of 70 years--as are found in the book of Daniel--are made more significant in the regard that the author of Daniel is indicated to have been a resident of Jerusalem (as a governmental official).

Thus, a time track of weeks-of-days across weeks-of-years may have been popular at Jerusalem as early as the 7th century BCE.

As is more fully documented in the next chapter, literature written late in the Second-Temple Era positively indicates that a cycle of 7 years was ceremoniously observed. In each of the 7th years, crops were not sown or harvested, and indentured servants were released.

> *Because early astronomers at Jerusalem appear to have once counted weeks-of-days and weeks-of-years then it is possible that the length of the year was then being reckoned to within about the same limits of accuracy (on average) as modern astronomers now reckon (or 365.243 days versus 365.242 days)*

- CHAPTER THREE -
The Chronology Of 70 Years

The writings of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (c. 90 CE) and certain miscellaneous sources indicate that an ongoing count of 7 years was being performed under the Second Temple.

It appears that 7-year cycles were counted in an unbroken sequence. After the full count of 70 years was reached (or after 10 segments of 7 years was counted out) the count of 70 years would have then been renewed. In association with the reckoning of 7 years across 70 years, it also appears that Jerusalem astronomers likewise tracked a long cycle of 7 segments of 7 years (or 49 years).

> *Long cycles of both 7 weeks-of-years (or 49 years) and 10 weeks-of-years (or 70 years) were seemingly reckoned in association with a calendar of weeks (as is documented in the previous chapters).*

The several explicit instances of the count of 7 years--as are noted in the writings of Flavius Josephus--are further shown below.

It is most unusual that Josephus did seemingly reference the epoch of a 70th year in at least two separate instances. Both of these instances of the occurrence of a 70th year are noted in his book entitled ***'Antiquities of the Jews'***.

- *Josephus noted the year in which Herod became king of Judea (in 37-36 BCE) "...happened to be a Sabbatic year" ('Antiquities Of The Jews' as translated by Whiston, Book 14:16:2). [Note that in this respective passage, the English word 'Sabbatic' was translated from an original Greek word 'hebdomatikon'. The Greek word 'hebdomatikon' should probably best be translated to pertain to 70-year chronology--as further shown below.]*
- *In a second instance, Josephus used the Greek word 'hebdomatikon'. This second instance was also used in reference to the year when Herod became king of Judea (37-36 BCE). This reference appears in the next book of 'Antiquities Of The Jews'--as follows: "...the Sabbatic year which was still going on" (Book, 15:1:2). [Note that, again, the English word 'Sabbatic' was translated from 'hebdomatikon' (which pertained to 70-year chronology].*
- *In addition to these two instances, a similar referral to counting weeks-of-years [hebdomatidou] can also be found in Book 11:8:6.*

The possibility that the cited references to a 'hebdomatikon' year most properly pertain to the system of counting 'weeks-of-years' is made manifest from an analysis of the meaning of the original Greek language (as used in ***'Antiquities Of The Jews'***).

> *"As observed by Professor Placid Csizmazia, a noted expert in the ancient Greek language at the University of Dallas, the term 'hebdomatikon'... which is utilized in this passage, means more than the seventh year in the general sense." (**'The Sabbath and Jubilee Cycle'**, by Clover, Second Edition, 1995, Chapter 16).*

Thus, Josephus could have been referring to either a 49th year or a 70th year in reference to the year when Herod became king of Judea (37-36 BCE).

The possibility that the cited references to a 'hebdomatikon' year do pertain to the special meaning of counting 'weeks-of-years' is more certain from a comparison of the meaning and the frequency of usage of the two Greek words: 'hebdomatikos' and 'hebdomos'.

> *Throughout the writings of Josephus, the word 'hebdomatikon' is used only 2 times (and another form 'hebdomatidou' is used only 1 time--as is cited above). By contrast, Josephus more frequently used the word 'hebdomos' when referring to a 'seventh' (a frequency of about 25 times greater). The fact that Josephus chose to use the unusual word 'hebdomatikon' only twice--and both times in reference to the year 37-36 BCE--tends to indicate that his choice in using the unusual word 'hebdomatikon' was so as to indicate that the respective year (of 37-36 BCE) was more than only a 7th year.*

As is documented throughout subsequent sections, Second-Temple chronology also points to the possibility that this respective year (37-36 BCE) was a 70th year (not just a '7th year').

Then, it seems significant that extant Temple chronology tends to verify/corroborate the Josephus' record by indicating that the respective year of 37-36 BCE was a '70th year'.

> *It seems very significant that the Josephus' record points to the possibility that Judeans of the late Second Temple were keeping track of the respective boundary of 70 years. It is possible--as further explained in subsequent chapters--that the respective year (37-36 BCE) was reckoned by early astronomers to correspond with the end of a great cycle of 490 years (containing 7 cycles of 70 years). This great cycle also would have likewise contained 10 cycles of 49 years. This essentially means that the year 37-36 BCE may have had the double significance to Second-Temple astronomers of also pertaining to a 49th year.*

The 70-year cycle

The chronology of 70 years--as Judeans living under the Second Temple would probably have known--isn't difficult to reconstruct. An outline of this chronology can be sketched based on the following information:

- One of the 70-year boundaries is recorded in the time of the prophet Jeremiah. This respective time boundary can positively be identified as the year 597-596 BCE (as further explained below).
- The second instance of a 70-year boundary occurred in the year 527-526 BCE. This respective epoch is referred to in the books of Jeremiah and Daniel, and seems to have prophetic significance (as further explained below).
- The third instance of a 70-year boundary is implicitly referred to in the time of the priest Ezra. This respective boundary corresponds to the year 457-456 BCE.

- An implicit referral to the epoch of 70 years can possibly be found in the book of Malachi. There are certain indications that this document might have been written sometime around the epoch of the 70-year cycle. This epoch would have occurred in correspondence to the year 387-386 BCE.
- Several 70-year boundaries (between 597 BCE and 70 CE) are referred to in prophetic writings--as is further explained below. The referrals to these respective 70-year epochs are rather specific, and they do verify the use of an ongoing count of 70 years.
- In addition to these instances and referrals, the year in which Herod became king of Judea (in 37-36 BCE) can positively be identified to be the epoch of a 70th year (as previously cited).
- Another implicit instance of a 70-year boundary seemingly occurred in the year 34-35 CE. This epoch ended the 70-year cycle in which Jesus lived and died. It seems that an awareness of the count of 70 years--and especially of this respective boundary--may be mirrored in certain passages of the New Testament. This respective boundary is also somewhat certain based upon a reference to the time of the destruction of the Temple (as is further described below).
- The last positive instance in substantiation of 70-year chronology can be identified at the time the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE (which occurred right at half of a cycle of 70 years).
- Other than these respective implicit and explicit referrals to the boundary of 70 years, a number of occurrences of a 7th year can be recited from Josephus and from other sources (as shown below).
- These various year-dates consisting of 7-year boundaries and 70-year boundaries all seem to align together. The rather exact chronological agreement ultimately becomes the basis for believing that a 70-year cycle was being counted throughout the Second-Temple Era.

Because a positive instance of the boundary of a 70-year cycle can be identified in the time of prophet Jeremiah, it becomes advantageous to begin an analysis of the indicated chronology of a 70-year cycle from the time of this first instance.

The following diagram represents a chain of 70-year cycles beginning with the earliest known boundary of 70 years (which is 597-596 BCE):

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        A Chronology Of 70 Years
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70th year: 597-596 BCE (Jeremiah's letter)
    [half: 562-561 BCE]
70th year: 527-526 BCE (A rebuild decree)
    [half: 492-491 BCE]
70th year: 457-456 BCE (Ezra at Jerusalem)
    [half: 422-421 BCE]
70th year: 387-386 BCE (Malachi)
    [half: 352-351 BCE]
70th year: 317-316 BCE (prophecy)
    [half: 282-281 BCE
70th year: 247-246 BCE (prophecy)
    [half: 212-211 BCE]
70th year: 177-176 BCE (prophecy)
    [half: 142-141 BCE]
70th year: 107-106 BCE (prophecy)
    [half:   72-71 BCE]
70th year:   37-36 BCE (Herod's rule)
    [half:     2-1 BCE]
70th year:   34-35  CE (Christian Era)
    [half:   69-70  CE](Temple ends)
70th year: 104-105  CE
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The begin and end of the Second Temple

The initial building of the Second Temple--as well as the ultimate destruction the Second-Temple system--was described in some detail by a number of historic authors.

For example, Rabbi Judah argued that the First Temple was destroyed in the 3rd year of a 7-year cycle (B. Arak., 12b). The cited referral to the early count of 7 years by Rabbi Judah is significant in the regard that the fall of the First Temple is indicated to have occurred in the year 587-586 BCE. An analysis of this respective year date (587-586 BCE) in correspondence with the cited chronology of 7 years indicates that Rabbi Judah was correct in stating that the First Temple was destroyed in the 3rd year of a 7-year cycle.

> *In reference to the previous diagram, the first year of a 70-year cycle would have occurred in the year 596-595 BCE. It then follows that a third year of the 7-year cycle (or the 10th year of the respective 70-year cycle) occurred in the year 587-586 BCE (the year in which the First Temple fell).*

Following the destruction of the First Temple--after several decades--the foundation of a new Temple (the Second Temple) was subsequently laid. At last, in the year 515 BCE, a new Temple (the Second Temple) was ultimately dedicated. Following this time of restoration, a number of changes and improvements were made to the Temple site.

The Second Temple was ultimately destroyed in summer of the year 70 CE under Roman occupation. The respective year of the destruction of the Second Temple (69-70 CE) is shown by the rabbis to have coincided at the end of a 7th year (or a 'year-of-release'). The following snippets from rabbinical literature all indicate that a 7th year boundary did occur at the time the Temple was destroyed:

- The Taanith indicates that the Second Temple was destroyed in a post-sabbatical year (B. Taan., 29a).
- The Arakin has *"thus it is found that it [= the destruction of the Second Temple] happened during the last part of a septennate" (B. Arak., 12 b)*
- Rabbi Hunna (c. 3rd century CE) computed the sabbatical cycle based upon the fact that the Second Temple was destroyed in a sabbath year (B. Azar., 9b).
- Rabbi Jose (Yose) ben Khalapha commented that the year prior to the destruction of the Second Temple was a sabbatical year (Seder Olam, 30).

Thus, the fall of the Temple (70 CE) is indicated to have occurred at the end of a Sabbatical year. (This respective Sabbatical year is indicated to have ended in fall of the year 70 CE--2 months after the Temple was destroyed).

> *Note that--in the time of the late Second Temple--the 7th year (or year-of-release) was counted from autumn-to-autumn (as per the rabbis).*

It seems significant that the 7-year alignments in correspondence to the destruction of the two Temples--as given by the rabbis--are apparently correct in reference to a continuous chronology of 7 years. The noted 7-year alignments (which are proper in respect of a chronological sequence) tend to indicate that 7 years was counted in an unbroken cycle throughout the Second-Temple Era.

In reference to the previously cited chronology of 70 years, an analysis of the 35-year period--which preceded the Temple's destruction--shows that in the year 35-36 CE a 70-year cycle would have began anew in its first year. This means that a 7th year (or a year-of-release) would have occurred in the following years: 41-42 CE (the first year release of the respective 70-year cycle); 48-49 CE (the second year-of-release of the cycle); 55-56 CE (the third year-of-release of the cycle); 62-63 CE (the fourth year-of-release of the cycle); and 69-70 CE (the fifth year-of-release of the cycle).

Thus, an overview of extant 7-year chronology and 70-year chronology confirms that a 7th year (or a year-of-release) would have begun in the year 69 CE (in the autumn). This respective year would have subsequently ended in autumn of the 70 CE (about the time the Second Temple was destroyed).

> *The year of the destruction of the Second Temple--at the end of the 35th year of a 70-year cycle, or exactly halfway into a cycle of 70 years--seems to have considerable prophetic significance (as is fully detailed in the subsequent chapter).*

70 years in history

The current section will more thoroughly examine the evidence that seems to substantiate the previously cited 70-year chronology.

There are a number of instances of the occurrence of 7 years (and 70 years) throughout Second-Temple history.

The following epochs (which correspond to various 70-year boundaries) all seem to indicate that 70 years was being reckoned in a continuous cycle:

- The first of the hypothetical revolutions of a 70-year cycle would have occurred in the time of Jeremiah the prophet--as cited. Jeremiah had forewarned: *"nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years"* (refer to Jeremiah 25:11-12). The respective prophet ultimately sent out a letter announcing the 70 years. The epoch of the 70-year span then would have begun just about the time the Jewish king Jehoiachin was taken captive (refer to Jeremiah 29). The respective Jewish king was taken into custody in the 8th year of King Nebuchadnezzar's reign (refer to Chapter 29, and to 2 Kings 24:12). Because the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (Nabuchodonosar II) began in 605-604 BCE, this unusual event then would have occurred in the year 597-596 BCE (or in the 8th year the king's reign). The possibility that the epoch of a 70th year turned over in this year (597-596 BCE) is then somewhat certain based upon the content of Jeremiah's letter. Certain of the Bible verses (in the original Hebrew language) seem to further indicate that the Jews of that time reckoned the respective captivity as occurring in a 7th year of the Jerusalem Calendar. *("This [is] the people whom Nebuchadrezzar hath removed: in the seventh year of Jews three thousand and twenty and three"--Young's Literal Translation, Jeremiah 52:28).* Thus, it seems that a number of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (including the king) were taken captive exactly in the year 597-596 BCE (a 7th year event, and also a 70th year event). It is possible that the Jewish king remained garrisoned (near Jerusalem) for a while before he and a large number of persons were transported to Babylon. Of associated interest is that the book of 2 Chronicles (Chapter 36:9-10) contains some unusual wording concerning this respective epoch. This passage relates: *"At the turn of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent for him [= the new Jewish king] and brought him to Babylon" (NIV translation).* In this passage, a very unusual Hebrew word, which literally means the 'turn' or 'return' of the year, is used. The use of this vary rare Hebrew word could mean that it was at the spring season of the year that this respective event occurred. However, because this 'turn over' time seems to have literally corresponded to the epoch of a 70th year (as cited) then the usage may additionally mean that the time of this event was at the return of a 70th calendar year. (It is noteworthy that the respective Jewish monarch--descended from the Davidic dynasty--did not return from out of a state of captivity, as was prophesied in several biblical passages). The 70-year cycle did then commence at about the time the king was transported to Babylon--after perhaps spending some time in custody). *("And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign"--KJV of Kings 24:12*). After arresting the Jewish king, King Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, leaving the Jewish king in custody near Jerusalem. King Nebuchadnezzar then arranged for the deportation of King Jehoiachin to Babylon. *("And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem"--2 Chronicles 36:10).* The time of Jeremiah's letter announcing the duration of 70 years of captivity then seems to positively indicate that a 70th year occurred in the year 597-596 BCE (Note that it is unclear if the 70-year cycle would have been reckoned from spring-to-spring or from fall-to-fall in that early era).

- The contemporary time track of 70 years is implicit from passages of the book of Ezekiel. Most of the year dates recorded by the author of Ezekiel refer to a year date relative to the capture of King Jehoiachin. This Jewish king almost surely would have landed in prison in Babylon at the epoch of a 70-year cycle (as documented). Calendar dates recorded in Ezekiel can be stated to pertain to a formal calendar in that there are several references to months and days. To more fully comprehend Ezekiel's calendar, it is necessary to first try and determine the 'year of the captivity' as Ezekiel reckoned it. The biblical sources relate that the king of Babylon made an initial conquest of Jerusalem shortly prior to the turn of the 6th century BCE. At this time a number of the Jewish nobility (and treasures) were taken. Even through Jehoiachin was not in office and was not transported to Babylon until the year 597-596 BCE (at the epoch of a 70th year--as cited) it may have been that the author of Ezekiel reckoned the year of Jehoiachin's captivity' as coinciding with the time of the initial Babylonian conquest of Judea. Thus, the author of Ezekiel--in the initial chapters--may have reckoned the year of Jehoiachin's captivity as occurring in the time of the father of Jehoiachin (who was named Jehoiakin, and who was also taken captive). Another possibility concerning the year of Jehoiachin's captivity is that even though King Jehoiachin was arrested in 597 BCE (at the epoch of a 70th year), he may not have been transported to Babylon until the following year (after the 'turn' of the year--as cited). Thus, after being transported to Babylon, Jehoiachin would have been tried and ultimately sentenced to prison. Therefore, the author of Ezekiel may have reckoned the year of the captivity of Jehoiachin as commencing with the actual year when Jehoiachin was imprisoned (which possibly was a year or two years after the epoch of the 70th year in 597-596 BCE). Because the author of Ezekiel insisted upon using a 'kingly' reckoning (or the 'year of Jehoiachin's captivity') for almost all of his year dates then it is logical to suspect that a solar-based calendar (or a kingly calendar popular at Jerusalem) was being referenced. Further investigation shows the author of Ezekiel used an explicit reference to the count of a 'week'--as follows: *"I sat... and remained there astonished among them seven days"* (Chapter 3:15). Thus, because the author of Ezekiel made reference to the cycle of the 'week' (seemingly so) then the calendar system that was referenced could possibly have been the same calendar as is referred to in other Second-Temple literature (or a 364-day calendar system). Other days and year dates shown in Ezekiel also indicate the author could have held knowledge of a calendar of 'weeks' (or to a government schedule used in the time of the late Davidic kings--as previously documented). For example, in Chapter 1, a date corresponding to the 5th year and 4th month and 5th day (of the respective Jewish kings captivity) is listed. In Chapter 8, a subsequent date corresponding to the 6th year and 6th month and 5th day is listed. The day count between the recorded dates (if counted according to the previously cited 364-day calendar system) would exactly be 424 days (or 364 days + 30 days + 30 days). However, because either the 5th or 6th year of the Jewish kings captivity (as Ezekiel formally reckoned it) could have corresponded to a 7th year of the civil-calendar system (presumed to have then been in use) then 7 intercalated days could have been reckoned in that respective year. This then means that the sum of calendar days between the two dates would inherently have accrued to that of 431 days (or 424 days + 7 days). In addition, the cited 7-year event could have corresponded to a leap boundary (occurring at either a 49th year or a 70th year--as previously documented). Thus, the total number of days between the cited calendar dates (because the boundary of either a 49th year or a 70th year might have been crossed) could have accumulated to a total count of 438 days (note that 431 days + 7 days is equal to 438 days). The possibility that 438 days between the cited calendar dates was totaled is of interest in the regard the author of Exekiel shows the number of days between the respective calendar dates--as follows: 7 days are shown in Chapter 3:15... a span of 390 days is listed in Chapter 4:5... and a span of 40 days is listed in Chapter 4:6. The sum of these intervening days then happens to total 437 days (note that 7 days + 390 days + 40 days is equal to 437 days). This close equivalency again tends to indicate that the cited governmental calendar could have been that of 364 days. (Note that the cited calendar would have required the additional intercalation of a 'week' at specific segments of 7 years, 7 sets of 7 years, and 70

years--as previously documented). (Of related interest is that the Septuagint does not show the cited span of 390 days--as does the Hebrew Bible).

- Following the capture of King Jehoiachin in 597-596 BCE, the next turn of a 70th year would inherently have occurred in the year 527-526 BCE. It was at about this time that Jews began to migrate back to Palestine (after spending decades in Babylonian captivity). The respective year of 527-526; as a 70th year; is implicitly referenced in the book of Zechariah. A passage in this respective book was reputedly written in the reign of the Persian King Darius I--and not very long after a cycle of 70 years would have elapsed (refer to Chapter 1:12). This referral to 70 years doesn't explicitly define the year date of the end of the respective 70-year cycle, but it limits the end of the cycle to no later than the 2nd year of Darius I--or the year 521 BCE. (In consideration that the boundary of a 70th year occurred in correspondence with the year 597-596 BCE--as previously cited--then the first year of Darius I would have corresponded with the 5th year of a 70-year cycle). The book of Daniel also has a reference to a cycle of 70 years--and specifically a reference to the epoch 597-596 BCE (refer to the Book of Daniel, Chapter 9:2). Further verses of this chapter contain a number of references to 70-year chronology (as further shown in subsequent sections). Most scholars would agree (and biblical sources confirm) that a Persian King named Cyrus did issue a significant decree to rebuild the Temple (refer to 2 Chronicles 36:22, and Ezra 1:1). It would seem that this decree was issued sometime between 540 and 530 BCE (with most scholars believing the decree was issued when Cyrus ascended to the throne over the Chaldeans in 536 BCE). This decree would have been issued not long before the boundary of a 70-year cycle was reached (as per Daniel). Thus, the boundary of a 70-year cycle is indicated to have occurred between about 536 BCE and no later than 521 BCE. Because a calendar epoch of 70 years can be identified in the year 597-596 BCE (as cited) then the next epoch would inherently have occurred after 70 years in the year 527-526 BCE. (Note that the epoch of 527-526 BCE occurred 70 years after Jeremiah's prophecy, and also after the decree to rebuild the Temple).
- After the cited epoch of a 70th year in 597-596 BCE, a 70th year would have turned over for the third time in the year 457-456 BCE (or about the 7th year of Artaxerxes I). At the epoch of this respective 70-year boundary, a significant scholar named Ezra is indicated to have arrived in Jerusalem (refer to Ezra 7:1-8). The prospect that this respective year was a 70th year (or the first year after) is apparent from an overall analysis of the chronology of 70 years (as cited). First of all, the author of the book Ezra recites that a 70-year chronology was being counted prior to his own era. In example, the beginning chapter of Ezra rehearses the 70-year prophecy previously given by Jeremiah. (The respective prophecy of Jeremiah stated that the Temple would not be rebuilt until a punitive time span of 70 years had elapsed--as previously explained). The reference to the 70-year prophecy--originally given exactly 140 years prior to Ezra's journey--tends to indicate that the current actions of Ezra might have coincided with the revolution of a calendar cycle (70 years). The 70-year reference made by the author of Ezra then agrees with the cited civil calendar. (Note that the 7th year of Artaxerxes I would inherently have coincided with the epoch of a 70-year boundary). The Apocrypha furthermore contains some rather unusual wording in the description of the special year of Ezra's journey: *"In the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes [= the 7th year of the reign of Artaxerxes], in the fifth month, this was the king's seventh year [= the 7th year of a 70 year cycle]; for they went up from Babylon in the first day of the first month, and came to Jerusalem... " (1 Esradas 8:6).* Because a kingly cycle (a king's calendar) was presumably counted at this time, the cited description of "the king's 7th year" does indicate the epoch of a specific calendar year (a year in the king's calendar) This notation of a turn over in the king's cycle (the epoch of a 7th year) as well as the description of a specific year of travel (as is shown in Ezra, I Esradas, and Josephus) thus points to the year of Ezra's journey to Jerusalem as coinciding with a 70th year according to 70-year chronology (as cited).
- A subsequent (or a fourth) instance of a 70-year cycle would inherently have occurred in the year 387-386 BCE. It seems of significance that the book of Malachi might have been written in rather close correspondence to this respective 70-year epoch (if not shortly before 387-386

BCE). This respective document prophetically announced the coming of a divinely sent 'Messenger' (refer to Chapter 3). A related prophecy is contained in the book of Daniel--where the future appearance of an Anointed One--or a Messiah is predicted (refer to Daniel, Chapter 9). The respective chapter of Daniel dates the coming of the Messiah using what appears to be a chronology of 70-year cycles (as further shown below). The prophetic referral to a messianic figure in the book of Malachi (Chapter 3) then could possibly have been delivered inline with the previously given 70-year prophecy (in the time of Daniel).

- The fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth epochs of 70 years would have occurred in the years 317-316, 247-246, 177-176, and 107-106 BCE respectively. These epochs likewise were referred to prophetically in the book of Daniel (where a continuous chronology of 70 years is shown). In the book of Daniel (Chapter 1), the time of Jeremiah's initial 70-year prophecy was first referenced. A chronological count of 70 years was thereafter shown to extend across quite a number of 70-year segments (refer to Chapter 9). Of significance here is that the author of the book of Daniel is typed to have been a resident of Jerusalem (at the time of the last of the Davidic monarchs). The stated referrals to a chronology of 70 years by this author thus tends to further indicate that a calendar cycle of 70 years was tracked throughout the Second-Temple Era.
- The ninth instance of the epoch of a 70-year boundary (in the year 37-36 BCE) can rather positively be identified. This easy to identify 70-year epoch would have occurred in the year when Herod conquered Jerusalem and became king of Judea. Josephus (the Jewish historian) made note of this year--where in ***'Antiquities of the Jews'*** (in 2 instances) this respective year (37-36 BCE) is described to be a 'hebdomatikon' year (as previously documented).

7 years in history

In concert with the above cited referrals to a calendar cycle of 70 years are an additional number of historic referrals to the celebration of a 7th year (or a Sabbatical year).

Almost all of several instances of the celebration of a 7th year (especially those of the late Second-Temple Era) seem to exactly agree with the cited 70-year chronology.

Here, it is important to keep in mind a 50-year jubilee was probably being counted and celebrated sometime prior to the time of the Maccabees. For additional information concerning 50-year chronology, refer to the online article:

Chronology of Jubilees

The following instances of a 7th year can be found in literature from the late Second-Temple literature. All of these respective instances can be recognized to pertain to 70-year chronology:

- The year 135-134 BCE (or the year 177 of the Seleucid Era) was noted to be a 7th year in the writings of Josephus. In ***'Antiquities of the Jews'*** he noted: *"... there came around the*

year in which the Jews are wont to remain inactive, for they observe this custom every seventh year, just as on the seventh day." (Book 13:8:1).

- The same year (135-134 BCE) was also noted to be a year of 'rest' in 'Wars of the Jews'. In this book, Josephus noted the following: "the year of rest came on, upon which the Jews rest every seventh year as they do on every seventh day".
- The year 44-43 BCE could have been a 7th year. In 'Antiquities of the Jews', Josephus stated that the Jews had a legal agreement with the Romans concerning a reduction of taxes in 7th years. In substantiation of this, he cited a decree from one of the Roman emperors. The decree stated when Caius Caesar was consul for the fifth time he ordered in the 2nd year of the current land-use agreement that a deduction in the amount of taxes that land users paid to the Romans should be granted to the Jews (refer to Antiquities, Book 14:10:5-6). If the current year (44-43 BCE) did correspond to the cited 2nd year of the land-use agreement then it might be possible to interpret this passage to mean that the respective year did correspond to a 7th year (as celebrated by the Jews).
- Josephus rehearsed another Roman decree concerning a grant to Jews allowing celebration of the 7th years. This respective decree substantiates that Jews--under the late Second-Temple--positively were celebrating Sabbatical years. *"[Judea should pay a tribute yearly]... excepting the seventh, which they call the sabbatical year, because thereon they neither receive the fruits of their trees, nor do they sow their land... [taxes are to be paid] every year, the seventh year, which they call the Sabbatic year, excepted, whereon they neither plough, nor receive the product of their trees." (Antiquities, Book 14:10:6).*
- The year 37-36 BCE appears to have been both a 7th year and a 70th year (as noted by Josephus). This year--the year when Herod was declared king at Jerusalem--is referred to as a 'hebdomatikon' year as follows: "Now the Jews that were enclosed within the walls of the city fought against Herod with great alacrity and zeal (for the whole nation was gathered together); they also gave out many prophecies about the temple, and many things agreeable to the people, as if God would deliver them out of the dangers they were in ... this happened to be a Sabbatic year [or literally, a 'hebdomatikon' year]" (***'Antiquities of the Jews'***, 14:16:2).
- The year 37-36 BCE is noted to have been both a 7th year and a 70th year in a second passage of ***'Antiquities of the Jews'***. This instance is recorded in the next book as follows: *"At this time Herod, now he had got Jerusalem under his power... the Sabbatic year [or literally, a 'hebdomatidon' year]... was still going on, and forced the country to lie still uncultivated, since we are forbidden to sow our land in that year." (Book 15:1:2).*
- The year 55-56 CE (autumn-to-autumn) was almost surely a 7th year--based on an ancient Deed of Loan. This paper was recovered at Wadi Murabba near Bethlehem (for an English language translation of this Deed of Loan, refer to www.stolaf.edu/people/kchanson/loan.htm).This legal note explicitly stated that a 'year-of-release' was underway in the 2nd year of Nero Caesar. Because Nero ascended to the throne in autumn of the year 54 CE, there is hardly any doubt that the cited Sabbatical year (autumn-to-autumn) largely corresponded to 2nd year of the reign of Nero.
- The year 69-70 CE (autumn-to-autumn) is shown to have been a 7th year by the early rabbis. The Taanith indicates that the Second Temple was destroyed in a post-sabbatical year (B. Taan., 29a). The Arakin has *"thus it is found that it [= the destruction of the Second Temple] happened during the last part of a septennate"* (B. Arak., 12 b). A 3rd century rabbi (Hunna) computed the sabbatical cycle based upon the fact that the Second Temple was destroyed in a sabbath year (B. Azar., 9b).Rabbi Jose (Yose) ben Khalapha commented that the year prior to the destruction of the Second Temple was a sabbatical year (Seder Olam, 30). Because the Second Temple was destroyed in autumn of the year 70 CE then a given conclusion from the rabbis is that a Sabbatical year occurred immediately prior to the destruction of the Temple. Essentially, the Temple is indicated to have been destroyed in autumn of the year 70 CE very close to the boundary of a 7th year (at the end of the respective 7-year cycle). It is noteworthy that because the current 70-year cycle in which the Temple was destroyed would have ended in the year 104-105 CE (which year would have corresponded to the epoch of

the next 70th year) then the Temple was destroyed exactly at the end of a 35th year (and right at the beginning of the 36th year). Thus, the Temple was destroyed in the middle of a cycle of 70 years (based upon extant 70-year chronology).

- The year 139-140 CE (autumn-to-autumn) also appears to have been a 7th year--as based upon another legal paper recovered at Wadi Murabba. This respective contract (Mur 24E) was written in late autumn of the year 134 CE. This sub-lease agreement describes what appears to be a 5-year lease term. The respective lease was to last until the 'eve of the Sabbatical year' (for an English language translation of this lease agreement, refer to: www.uchicago.edu). A given conclusion then is that 5 years from autumn in the year 134 CE ends with autumn of the year 139 CE, and this respective year was the very beginning of a 'year-of-release'.

It is significant that these several instances of the occurrences of Sabbatical years all exactly agree with the previously cited chronology of 70 years.

Additional occurrences of 7th years (even prior to the time of the Maccabees) can be recited. References to a 7th year (prior to 160 BCE) can be found in the writings of Josephus, the Maccabees, the Rabbis, and the Bible sources.

These additional instances could pertain to a time when the prior Zadok priests counted out a 50-year cycle. In this era, it is possible that a solar-based, 70-year cycle would have additionally been tracked by adherents of the kingly order.

The following list pertains to historical instances of Sabbatical years prior to the time of the Maccabees. Most of these instances seem to align with both the cited chronology of 70 years and with a chronology of 50 years. (For additional information concerning 50-year chronology, refer the following online article:

Chronology of Jubilees

Note that the list is presented in reverse chronology (or backwards) beginning at the time when the Maccabees ascended to the office of the high priesthood in 160 BCE:

- A Sabbatical year is noted to have occurred in the 150th year of the Seleucid Era. (This occurrence is mentioned in both the book of ***'Antiquities of the Jews'***, and also in the books of the Maccabees). The equivalency of this year to modern chronology depends upon the epoch of Seleucid chronology (which apparently began in the autumn of the year 312 BCE). Thus, 150 years from the epoch (312-311 BCE) is equivalent to the year 162-161 BCE (autumn-to-autumn). This technically means that the year 162-161 BCE (autumn-to-autumn) would have been celebrated as a Sabbatical year. This respective 'year-of-release' would then have been celebrated exactly 1 year later than what would be expected from the cited 70-year chronology. According to 70-year chronology, a Sabbatical year should have been celebrated in the year 163-162 BCE. At this respective time, the Zadok priests were out of office (167 BCE) but the Maccabees had not yet ascended to the office of the high priest (160 BCE). This means that the priestly count of a 7th year (according to 50-year chronology) could possibly have overlapped the kingly count of a 7th year (according to 70-year chronology). If so, then it is possible that the stated 50-year system was not continued in use after this respective overlapped year was past. (Note that following the time of the

Maccabees, Sabbatical years appear to have been reckoned only according to 70-year chronology).

- The previously cited count of 'weeks-of-days' across 'weeks-of-years' would inherently have resulted in the definition of a great cycle of 490 years. (Note that a count of 490 years--based upon a count of 'weeks'--is indicated to contain 10 cycles of 49 years and 7 cycles of 70 years). The book of Daniel (as explained in the subsequent chapter) explicitly recites a long-cycle count of 490 years (or 70 'weeks-of-years'). Based upon the composite information, it is reasonably clear that a great cycle of 490 years was once specially reckoned in the Second-Temple Era. From certain literature produced in this era, it is seemingly possible to actually reconstruct this respective chronology (as further shown below). To determine the epoch of the cited cycle of 490 years, the chronology of the 49-year cycle must be determined (in addition that of 70 years). The respective boundary of a 49-year cycle can seemingly be identified in the writings of the Jewish historian, Josephus. In ***'Antiquities of the Jews'***, it is stated: *"... they [the Samaritans] petitioned that he [King Alexander] would remit the tribute of the 'hebdomatikou' year to them because they did not sow thereon"*--refer to Book 11, 8:6. (Note that a 'hebdomatikou' year most properly pertains to the meaning of either a 49th year or a 70th year--as previously explained). This may mean that the year Alexander assumed control of Judea--the year 331-330 BCE--corresponded with a 49th year. Through the identification of a 49-year boundary (in correspondence with the year 331-330 BCE), the chronology of 490 years can ultimately be determined. It follows that the epoch of a 490th year would have occurred in the year 527-526 BCE. The following years would then have all corresponded with the epoch of a 49th year: 478-477, 429-428, 380-379, 331-330, 282-281, 233-231, 184-183, 135-134, 86-85, and 37-36 BCE. Thus, the epoch of a 490th year may have occurred in correspondence with the year 527-526 BCE (both a 49th year and also a 70th year). This respective epoch (a 490th year) can also be confirmed from the book of Daniel (Chapter 9). The next epoch of a 490th year (following the year 527-526 BCE) is indicated to have corresponded with the year 37-36 BCE. In two additional instances--shown in 'Antiquities of the Jews'--the word 'hebdomatikon' was exclusively used in reference to the year 37-36 BCE (apparently, the 490th year). Thus, the record of Josephus and calendar definitions found in the book of Jubilees, the book of Daniel, and certain of the Dead Sea Scrolls point to the possibility that a 49-year cycle (and also a 70-year cycle) was tracked all throughout the Second-Temple Era. It is of special significance that the year 37 BCE (the year when King Herod ascended to the throne of Jerusalem) is indicated to have been the year of a conjunction of both cycles--of 70 years and of 49 years. (For additional information of the early Jewish reckoning of a long cycle of 490 years or 70 'weeks-of-years', refer to the subsequent chapter).
- The books of Ezra-Nehemiah and the book of Antiquities may contain a reference to a 7th year. These books describe the occurrence of a certain feast (Tabernacles or Booths). According to a certain passage in the book of Deuteronomy, it seems that Moses was to be read aloud in public in each 'year-of-release'. Consequently, the reading of the books of Moses (as is noted in the era of Ezra and Nehemiah) might have corresponded to a 7th year. Nehemiah is noted to have become governor of Jerusalem in the 20th year of Artaxerxes I. If Moses was read in the 21st year as the book of Nehemiah seems to imply (refer to Nehemiah, Chapter 8) then that respective year (443 BCE) could have been a 7th year. It is then of interest that the year 443-442 BCE aligns with the cited chronology of 70 years.
- A description of the same 7th year festival or Tabernacles (as was described in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah) can be found in ***'Antiquities of the Jews'*** (by Josephus). The version by Josephus is rather different from the version shown in the biblical books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The description of Josephus is much more plausible in that his description seems to more properly account for the time that would have been required for Nehemiah to receive the office of governor from Artaxerxes I, travel to Jerusalem, rebuild the walls of the city, and ultimately participate in the celebration of a festival. Based upon a composite analysis of these diverse accounts, it seems that the cited festival was not a single event. Essentially, the two festivals mentioned in Antiquities, and the single festival mentioned in Ezra-

Nehemiah, were obviously celebrated at different times. Josephus did describe Ezra's initial activities about the same as the author of Ezra-Nehemiah described them. In both accounts (Josephus and Ezra-Nehemiah) a scribe named Ezra is shown to arrive in Jerusalem in the 7th year of Artaxerxes I. This year of arriving in Jerusalem would have been in proximity with the epoch of a 70th year (or the year 457-456 BCE--as previously explained). Josephus noted that Ezra presented gifts to the *"family of the priests".* It is especially noteworthy that Josephus also mentioned that Ezra *"delivered the kings epistle to the king's officers"* (Refer to ***'Antiquities of the Jews'***, Book 11:5:2. Refer also to Nehemiah Chapter 12). The wording of these various accounts very much indicates diversity in the ruling agencies at Jerusalem (both a priestly or Levite agency, and also a kingly or civil agency). Ezra (the well educated scribe) is noted to have confronted the priesthood with a number of wrongs (intermarriage being the most major transgression). Josephus mentioned that Ezra did read the book of Moses at a respective feast. The year when this feast was observed (in the Josephus account) cannot be determined. Logically, if Ezra arrived in a 70th year, the feast and the public reading could have occurred in that very year (or in 457 BCE). The subsequent public reading (based upon 70-year chronology) would have occurred 7 years later (in 450 BCE)... and the next public reading would have occurred 7 years later (in 443 BCE). It is peculiar that the author of Ezra-Nehemiah seems to show that Ezra read the law in the respective year (443 BCE)--or 14 years after first arriving in Jerusalem. (Why an interval of 14 years elapsed before Ezra read the law is unclear?) The Josephus account does show the observance of a yet subsequent festival (right in the 28th year of Artaxerxes). The year of this latter feast would then have corresponded to the year 436 BCE. It is of interest that this respective 8-day festival also exactly agrees with the cited chronology of 70 years.

- Rabbi Judah noted the destruction of the First Temple (c. 587-586 BCE) occurred in the 3rd year of a 7-year cycle. It is probable that this respective reference was backwards computed based upon late Second-Temple chronology. Even so, it is remarkable that the respective year when the First Temple was destroyed did occur in-line with a continuous 7-year chronology (extending into the late Second Temple).
- The book of Isaiah possibly contains the description of a 7th year--as follows: *"This will be the sign for you, O Hezekiah: This year you will eat what grows by itself, and the second year what springs from that. But in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. Once more a remnant of the house of Judah will take root below and bear fruit above." (NIV translation of Isaiah 37:30-31).* This passage cites a year (or years) when the city of Jerusalem was under siege by the Assyrians. Based upon Assyrian records, Jerusalem was sieged in the year 701 BCE. The unusual reference to not sowing crops in the respective year (or years) may not at-all refer to the celebration of a Sabbatical year (as the respective passage may refer to a time of being under siege). It is however noteworthy that the year of 702-701 is exactly inline with the chronology of 7 years (as it was counted under the late Second Temple).

For additional information concerning 50-year chronology, be sure and refer to this online document:

Chronology of Jubilees

- CHAPTER FOUR -
End of the Second Temple

The Second Temple fell when Roman legions broke through the inner walls in 70 CE. What is most remarkable is that this circumstance--to the very year date--appears to have been predicted well before the Temple was destroyed (presumably about 6 centuries prior to the event). The year in which the Temple was to be destroyed was foretold using what appears to be a straightforward chronology of 70-year cycles.

As is more thoroughly documented in the previous chapter, it appears that--beginning from the time of the Prophet Jeremiah--a running chronology of 70 years can be identified--as follows:

Chronology of 70 Years

70th year:	597-596 BCE	(Jeremiah)
70th year:	527-526 BCE	(rebuild decree)
70th year:	457-456 BCE	
70th year:	387-386 BCE	
70th year:	317-316 BCE	
70th year:	247-246 BCE	
70th year:	177-176 BCE	
70th year:	107-106 BCE	
70th year:	37-36 BCE	(Herod's rule)
70th year:	34-35 CE	(Christian Era)
half:	69-70 CE	(Temple ends)

The prophecy that predicted the destruction of the Temple is recorded in the Book of Daniel (as further explained below).

> *The book of Daniel contains a remarkable prediction that the Temple would fall at a half point of the 70-year cycle. The prediction--concerning the destruction of the Temple at the middle of a 70-year cycle--would seem to be a rather general prediction (or not greatly specific). However, in the regard that the Temple was destroyed at the boundary of a 35th year of a 70-year cycle then the respective prophecy appears to have been correct in forecasting the very year of the Temple's destruction.*
>
> *Because Judeans living under the late Second Temple were knowledgeable of a calendar count of 70 years--and certain prophecies surrounding this calendar count--they would have been looking for some kind of change in the current Temple system. It appears that those living in the 'generation' prior to the Temple being destroyed were aware that the Temple system might soon come to an end (refer to Matthew 24:2; Mark 13:2; Luke 19:44; 21:6; 23:28).*

An angelic message

The cited book of Daniel contains the record of an angelic message. (Daniel's amazing account of his encounter with an Angel--or Angels--can be found throughout his book).

> *The author of Daniel is reputed to have once been a civil officer, or prince, at Jerusalem. The author is unusual in the regard of his belonging among the palace in-crowd. Daniel was carried into captivity during one of the first Babylonian campaigns against Jerusalem. This then would have occurred very close to the end of the 7th century BCE.*

The specific prophetic message given by the Angel Gabriel is very unusual in that this prophecy sets down some specific year dates. Through a very straightforward number count of 7-year cycles and 70-year cycles, the very year date in which the Second Temple was destroyed (in 70 CE) appears to have been accurately predicted by this Angel.

The record of Daniel--of his receiving of the Angel Gabriel's message--is shown throughout subsequent paragraphs. The English text--as listed--begins with Chapter 9 and is based upon the NLT translation (or New Living Translation). The NLT translation was chosen because it more correctly translates the Hebrew word for 'sevens' (or 'sevened') to be 'sets of seven'. Here, it seems important to distinguish an original Hebrew word--which literally means 'sevens' (or 'sevened')--to be different than the English word 'weeks' (used in many popular translations). The NLT text of Daniel, Chapter 9 (as quoted below) is liberally supplemented with the addition of comments--shown in bold text or inside of brackets--so as to help make clear the intended 70-year chronology:

"It was the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, the son of Ahasuerus, who became king of the Babylonians. During the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, was studying the writings of the prophets. I learned from the word of the LORD, as recorded by Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years."

> ***The cited reference to a 70-year period does possibly pertain to the cited civil calendar once popular at Jerusalem... a calendar system predicated upon a count of 7 years in 70-year segments. From the previously presented analysis, it should be obvious that the respective 70 years (a period when Jerusalem was to lie desolate) would have begun after the epoch of 597-596 BCE (as documented).***

"So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and fasting... [... skipping on to verse 20...]... I went on praying and confessing my sin and the sins of my people, pleading with the LORD my God for Jerusalem, his holy mountain. As I was praying, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the earlier vision, came swiftly to me at the time of the evening sacrifice. He explained to me, "Daniel, I have come here to give you insight and understanding. The moment you began praying, a command was given. I am here to tell you what it was, for God loves you very much. Now listen, so you can understand the meaning of your vision."

"A period of seventy sets of seven [literally '70 sevens', or '70 sevened'] has been decreed for your people and your holy city"

> ***Note here the referral to a period of '70 sevened'. This reference almost surely corresponds to the once-used, civil-calendar system (as explained). In the quoted passage, the Angelic messenger reveals that a decree has been issued concerning the city of Jerusalem--and the occupants. This divine decree seems to define a particular punitive period (literally: 70 sevens, or 70 sevened). For the expression '70 sevened', the Hebrew Bible has: 'shibiym shibiym'; the Greek Septuagint has: 'Hebdomhkonta Hebdomades'; and most English translations show 'seventy weeks'.***
>
> ***[Repeating 17 words of Chapter 9, and resuming...]***

"A period of seventy sets of seven [literally '70 sevened'] has been decreed for your people and your holy city, to put down rebellion, to bring an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the prophetic vision, and to anoint the Most Holy Place."

"Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven ['7 sevened'] plus sixty-two sets of seven ['62 sevened'] will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes.

Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defenses, despite the perilous times.

After this period of sixty-two sets of seven ['62 sevened'], the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple."

> ***The respective passage (which contains references to '70 sevened' and also to '7 sevened') seems to be focusing upon a specific time sequence 7 times greater than 70 years, or 490 years (as most scholars agree). Thus, the specific referral to a time period of '7 segments of sevened' appears to mean a time span of 490 years (but counted according to the extant calendar system--based upon 70-year chronology).***
>
> ***The prediction that an 'Anointed One' would come AFTER 7 sets of 70 years (following the issuing of the Temple decree) seems to literally mean that a special prince would specifically appear after 490 years. In this same segment of time--or after 7 sets of 70 years--an evil ruler was also predicted to arise ("whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple"). (Note the prophesied 7 sets of 70 years, or 490 years, would have ended at the epoch of 37-36 BCE).***
>
> ***A Messiah and also an evil ruler were thus predicted to appear IN a predetermined segment of 70 years. Essentially, it was IN a predetermined segment of 70 years that a special 'Anointed One' and also an evil ruler were to appear. The respective predetermined 70-year span of the appearing was to be counted according to the extant civil calendar system (490 years after the beginning epoch).***
>
> ***The Septuagint version--in reference to this respective passage of Daniel--seems to reinforce the interpretation of the appearing of a Messiah and an evil ruler after a full time cycle of 490 years had elapsed. In describing the prophecy and associated time span, the Septuagint shows 'hebdomades hepta' (which can mean 'seven of a set-of-sevened') and 'kia hebdomades hexekonta dua' (which***

can mean 'and sixty-two [into] a set-of-sevens'). Of special interest is that the Septuigent version additionally insets the phrase 'kai epistrepho'. Here, 'kai epistrepho' is shown by some translators as: 'and the time shall be renewed'. This inset description (which only appears in the Septuigent version) seems to put special significance upon the beginning or the renewal of the particular 'hebdomades set' in which the Messiah was to appear. In the context of the cited calendar-of-weeks, it seems that the meaning of the expression: "hebdomades hepta kia hebdomades hexekonta dua kia epistrepho" quantifies the noted count-of-62 as commencing with a particular hebdomades set. This respective point of renewal was thus predicted to coincide with the beginning of a 70-year cycle. Furthermore, the respective set of 70 years was prophesied to correspond with the next (or with the consecutive) 70-year set that was to come after the epoch of a 490-year calendar cycle (as cited).

Thus, both the Messiah and also an evil ruler were predicted by an angelic messenger to appear in the next hebdomades set, or within the next 70-year span following the stated 490 years.

In the context of the extant calendar-of-weeks, the following time sequence can ultimately be recognized in association with the time that the 'Anointed One' or 'Messiah' was to appear:

1. ***A full 490-year calendar count was to elapse. This calendar count appears to have began 70 years after Jeremiah's initial prophecy. (Note that this calendar epoch was the next to occur after the decree to rebuild the Temple was issued).***
2. ***In the very next set of 70 years an evil ruler was to rise and the Messiah was to be killed.***

The Messiah's death was specifically predicted to occur after the 62nd year into the predetermined 70-year cycle (after the renewal) 'appearing to have accomplished nothing' (as further explained below).

Thus, it seems clear--in the context of the then used calendar-of-weeks--that the Messiah was to be killed in a predetermined 70-year cycle (after the epoch of 37-36 BCE--as is further explained below). It is of special interest that a predicted evil ruler--presumably King Herod--is indicated to have assumed the throne of Jerusalem in correspondence with the beginning/end of a 70-year cycle (37-36 BCE).

[Repeating 13 words... and resuming with Chapter 9...]

"... a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple. The end [= of the Jerusalem and the Temple] will come with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that time to the very end. He [= a foreign ruler with armies] will make a treaty with the people [or will be at peace with Judea] for a period of one set of seven(ed) [or from the beginning of a cycle of 70 years] but after half this time [which is exactly 35 years into the fateful set of 70 years], he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings...." (NLT 9:1-27).

As explained above, a ruler (King Herod) did lead a campaign against Judea. Herod--with the assistance of Roman armies--was proclaimed to be king of Jerusalem in the year 37 BCE (exactly inline with a 490-year calendar cycle).

More remarkable is that after 105 more years--Roman legions did eventually

destroy the Temple in the year 69-70 CE. It seems that Herod--for a duration--implemented peace throughout Judea. Following 37-36 BCE, this peaceful period lasted for exactly the span of one 'hebdomas' set (or throughout one full set of 70 years), and also for an additional span of 'half a hebdomades' set (or throughout half of 70 years, or throughout but 35 more years).

In reference to the predicted time when the Temple sacrifices and offerings were to cease, the Septuagint version is perhaps more explicit than the Hebrew version in pinpointing when this destructive event was to occur.

The Septuagint version cites the 'renewal' relative to the appearing of the Messiah (as cited). The Septuigent version then indicates that the Temple system would end after: "hebdomas mia kai en tw hemirei ths hebdomados--or after "one set-of-sevens plus half of a set-of-sevened (or after the stated duration of 70 years and 35 years).

The Temple was therefore predicted to end exactly in the middle of a respective 70-year cycle (at the 35th year). At this very time it was predicted that the 'sacrifices and offerings' were to cease or end.

It here seems pertinent to note that a number of early-held interpretations about the cited Temple prophecy can be recited from Saint Jerome's 'Commentary on Daniel'. This respective work is significant in reflecting that early Christians appear to have also all understood this prophecy in terms of 70-year sets. Of special significance is that some among the ancient Christians appear to have likewise interpreted the year of Herod as king (37-36 BCE) with the first year of a set of 70 years--as follows:

"... Eusebius reports another view [of Gabriel's prophecy] as well, which I do not entirely reject (A), that most authorities extend the one [last] week of years to the sum of seventy years... They also claim that thirty-five years intervened between the passion of the Lord and the reign of Nero, and that it was at this latter date when the weapons of Rome were first lifted up against the Jews, this being the half-way point of the week of seventy years. After that, indeed, from the time of Vespasian and Titus (and it was right after their accession to power that Jerusalem and the temple were burned) up to the reign of Trajan another thirty-five years elapsed..." [English translation by Gleason L. Archer, 1958].

It is thus made manifest from certain writings left by 4th century historians of the Church that a chronology of 70 years (in line with the kingship of Herod) was understood--at least among a segment of the then Christians. (This information then further points to the year 37-36 BCE as the 1st year of a new calendar set of 70 years). It is also manifested from early Church records that certain among the Christians did also understand that the Temple was destroyed in the middle of a set of 70 years (after 35 more years).

The destruction of the Temple

In the context of the cited calendar-of-weeks, the prediction concerning the end of the Temple system appears to have accurately been fulfilled. The Temple system literally was ended exactly in the middle of a cycle of 70 years of the extant calendar-of-weeks.

A time line for the prophecy surrounding the beginning and the ending of the Second Temple reveals the following remarkable itinerary:

1. A decree to build a new Temple (the Second Temple) was to be issued.
2. A full calendar cycle of 490 years was to elapse (a time span of 7 sets of 70 years). This calendar cycle would have ended and renewed with the year 37-36 BCE (as explained).
3. The time of the renewal of the calendar cycle (in 36 BCE) was predicted to be significant. It was in this respective set of 70 years that the Messiah was to be killed. Also, in this same set of 70 years an evil ruler was predicted to appear in control of Jerusalem (whose armies would eventually destroy the Temple).
4. Upon the renewal of the calendar cycle (in 36 BCE), Jerusalem and the Temple were predicted to endure or exist for the span of one 'hebdomas' (or throughout a full span of 70 years). Peace was to continue to exist for the span of an additional 'half of a hebdomados set' (or for only 35 more years). Jerusalem and the Second Temple were then predicted to both be destroyed

It is then made clear--in the context of both history and Jerusalem's calendar-of-weeks--that Jerusalem and the Second Temple were destroyed in the very year predicted by the Angel (in the year 69-70 CE).

Year Date	Corresponding 70-Year Chronology
37-36 BCE	The calendar-of-weeks is renewed at the beginning of Herod's reign
34-35 CE	'hebdomas mia' ['one 70-year cycle']
69-70 CE	'kai en tw hemirei ths hebdomados' ['and in the middle of 70 years']

Thus, the year of the Temple's destruction appears to have corresponded with the exact middle of a 70-year calendar cycle. This year was (straightforwardly) predicted to come to pass using an extant 70-year calendar system. After the 'renewing of the calendar' following 37-36 BCE--or after a full calendar cycle of 490 years--there is hardly any doubt but that the Temple was destroyed following one set of 70 years and at the middle of the very next set of 70 years (in the year 69-70 CE).

It is additionally remarkable that the Angel foretold that the destroyed Temple was to endure (as 'decreed)'. This decreed period was stated to last 'from that time to the very end' (or presumably for a very lengthy duration). This prediction has proved to be painfully accurate (in that the Temple--to this date--has never been rebuilt).

The Prophesied King

The Angel foretold that after a great cycle of 490 years, one would be anointed as prince or Messiah. It appears the Angel predicted that this anointing would occur after 490 years (or after 7 segments of 70 years, or after 10 segments of 49 years).

> *"Now listen and understand! seven 'sets of sevened' [or a great cycle of 490 years] plus 'sixty-two [into or of] 'sets of sevened' will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes" (based on the NLT).*

The composite prophecy (in consideration of a once extant calendar-of-weeks--and interpreted using both the Hebrew and Greek versions) does almost surely mean that a prince was to be anointed (as the Messiah) in the 70-year segment that occurred after a great cycle of 490 years had elapsed (where the 490th year corresponded to the epoch of 37-36 BCE--as cited).

In association with the arrival of the cited new calendar cycle (or a renewing of the time), the anointing of a prince was predicted after 62 more years.

> *"After sixty-two [into or of] 'a set-of-sevened' [or after 62 years into or of a 70-year cycle], the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing... " (based on the NLT).*

An almost given conclusion then is that a calendar-of-weeks (and 70-year chronology) was being used to predict a sequence of future events--where specific 'weekly' segments, or certain boundaries of the 70-year cycle were referenced in the foretelling of upcoming occurrences.

> *The Messiah and also a destroying ruler were thus predicted to appear after 7 segments of 70 years--at the return or at the renewal of the cited calendar-of-weeks. The Temple was then predicted to be destroyed in the very middle of the next 70-year segment.*

In correlating the respective 70-year segments to equivalent modern chronology the prophesied 7 segments would have rolled over at the epoch of 37-36 BCE (when Herod was crowned king at Jerusalem).

> *Note that in addition to the Jeremiah and Daniel prophecies, two diverse passages in 'Antiquities' do positively confirm that the year 37-36 BCE was the epoch of a 70th year. For additional information about the location of the year 37-36 BCE--as a 490th calendar year--refer to the subsequent section.*

Based upon the almost certain identification of the year 37-36 BCE (as being the 490th year of the Angelic prophecy), it can further be recognized that the anointing of a prince (Messiah) was predicted in the year 26-27 CE (or perhaps in the year just after).

Year 62 = 26-27 CE = the prince (Messiah) is anointed
Year 63 = 27-28 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 64 = 28-29 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 65 = 29-30 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 66 = 30-31 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 67 = 31-32 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 68 = 32-33 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 69 = 33-34 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed
Year 70 = 34-35 CE = the Messiah is predicted to be killed

Carefully note that the anointing of a prince (the Messiah) was to come in or after the 62nd year of the respective 70-year cycle--a 'hebdomados' set. After being anointed in a specific year of the 70-year calendar, the Messiah was predicted to be killed inside of the current 70-year cycle. Essentially, a prince was to be anointed in correspondence with the calendar year 26-27 CE (or possibly in the following year). The Messiah was then to be killed ("cut off") before to the end of the same 70-year set (or before 35-36 CE).

The prophecy was then specific in indicating that the 'Anointed One' was to be killed in a time range that came AFTER the 62nd year of a specific 70-year cycle. However, the Messiah was to be killed BEFORE the 1st year of the next cycle of 70 years. (Refer to Matthew 26:18, John 7:6-8).

A prince (the Messiah) was to be anointed 9 years prior to the end of a 70-year set. The 'Anointed One' (Messiah) was predicted to subsequently be killed in a specific time range (probably sometime within the last 7-year cycle of the 70-year set. This time range of 7 years--according to the stated chronology of 70 years--can be recognized as commencing with the year 28-29 CE.

The significance of 490 years

The epoch of the 490th year--as is cited in the Daniel prophecy--is especially noteworthy in that its equivalency with the year 37-36 BCE can be determined to within a degree of almost certainty.

In ***'Antiquities of the Jews'***--in two diverse passages--this year was referenced as a 'hebdomatikon' year. The use of the unusual word 'hebdomatikon' (in the original Greek text) means that the year of 37-36 BCE was more than an ordinary 7th year.

> *Second-Temple astronomers are indicated to have counted 'weeks-of-days' across 'weeks-of-years' (as previous explained). This cycle inherently results in a great cycle of 490 years. (Note that a count of 490 years--based upon a count of 'weeks'--is indicated to contain 10 cycles of 49 years and 7 cycles of 70 years). In the ultimate determination of the epoch of the cited cycle of 490 years, it is necessary that both chronologies be constructed (or that of the 49-year cycle in addition to that of the 70-year cycle). If it is assumed--based upon the previously presented analysis--that the once reckoned cycle of 490 years was renewed in the year 526 BCE--and was again renewed 490 years later (in the year 36 BCE)--then the following years are all recognizable as corresponding with the epoch of a 49th year: 1. 478 BCE; 2. 429 BCE; 3. 380 BCE; 4. 331 BCE; 5. 282 BCE; 6. 233 BCE; 7. 184 BCE; 8. 135 BCE; 9. 86 BCE; and 10. 37 BCE. It is here signficant that--throughout the cited 490-year time range--the epoch of an intervening 49th year can seemingly be recited from the writings of the priest-historian Josephus. In Book 11 of* ***'Antiquities of the Jews'*** *(in chapter 8 and verse 6), Josephus refers to the epoch of an intervening 49th year--as follows: "... they [the Samaritans] petitioned that he [King Alexander] would remit the tribute of the 'hebdomatikou' year to them because they did not sow thereon... ". (Note that Josephus' reference to a 'hebdomatikou' year is here rare and very unusual). An analysis of when this special year did occur reveals that the respective 'hebdomatikou' year--or the year when Alexander assumed control of Judea in 331-330 BCE--would have corresponded with both a Sabbatic year and with a 49th year. Thus, the limits of the cited 490-year cycle (from 526 to 37 BCE) is even more firmly established on the basis of the Josephus' record. It seems rather probable that a calendar cycle of 49 years was continuously tracked throughout the Second-Temple Era. The year 331-330 BCE as well as the year 37-36 BCE appear to have both corresponded with the epoch of a 49th year. (The year 37-36 BCE appears to have had the double significance of corresponding with the epoch a 490th year).*

It was in this respective year (37-36 BCE, or the 490th year) that Herod captured Jerusalem and was declared to be king (as previously cited). Thus, it is significant to a research of Second-Temple history that the year 37 BCE (the year when King Herod ascended to the throne of Jerusalem) coincided with a great-cycle conjunction of both cycles (of 70 years and of 49 years).

Josephus wrote that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were seemingly aware of the prophetic significance of 37-36 BCE (the epoch of a full calendar cycle of 490 years)--as follows:

> *"Now the Jews that were enclosed within the walls of the city fought against Herod with great alacrity and zeal (for the whole nation was gathered together); they also gave out many prophecies about the temple, and many things agreeable to the people, as if God would deliver them out of the dangers they were in ... this happened to be a Sabbatic year [or literally, a 'hebdomatikon' year]" (Antiquities, 14:16:2).*

It seems that Jerusalem was under siege in that respective 490th year. At this time, the inhabitants of the city were expecting a miraculous deliverance. Unfortunately for them, Herod got control of the city and was declared king of Judea. (It is of interest that after this time the new King Herod was believed by some segments of the Jewish populous to be the Messiah).

> *Because Herod captured the city of Jerusalem in the 490th year, he was thereafter believed by some to be the expected Christ (hence the origin of the Herodians). While Herod did capture and rule over Jerusalem--right at the 490-year epoch--it wasn't until after 62 more years that the prophecy concerning the Messiah could have been fulfilled.*

In the context of ancient history, it would seem that Herod did fulfill the role of corresponding to the prophetic evil ruler--whose armies (or whose Roman legions) eventually did destroy the Temple system.

Some of the prophecies that surrounded disturbances of the Temple system were fully electric in predicting that the dead would eventually be raised to life again:

> *"... thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Daniel, Chapter 12:1-3).*

These remarkable prophecies surrounding a great-calendar cycle of 490 years tend to explain exactly why Jesus was ultimately so universally accepted as the Christ, or as the Messiah. He happened to be on the scene--and was crucified--right in the very narrow window of time as was long-before predicted. The New Testament accounts also insist that Jesus was raised from the dead.

In Josephus' history of the Jews (written c. 93 CE), while discussing the time when Pontius Pilate governed Judea, it is most unusual that he declared Jesus to be the expected Messiah--as follows:

> *"About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned him to a cross, those who had first come to love him did not cease. He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared." (Jewish Antiquities, 18, 3:3, based on the translation of Louis H. Feldman, The Loeb Classical Library.)*

Conclusions

A majority of the books, which comprise the Hebrew Bible, relate to prophecy. Of the 39 canonized books in the Bible, 5 of the books make up '*The Law*' (or Torah), 21 of the books belong to '*The Prophets*', and 13 books pertain to '*The Writings*'. Thus, the largest collection of these books (21 in total) happens to belong to '*The Prophets*'.

This significant collection of documents either describes the life and times of a specific prophet and/or contains material that relates to prophecies.

Through an improved perspective of Second-Temple chronology (and a perspective of the solar-based calendar system used to define it) certain of the respective prophecies appear to be unusually accurate.

Perhaps the most remarkable of all of the Bible's prophecies (at least in this current dispensation) does concern the fall of the Second Temple. This monumental event is indicated to have occurred in the very year upon which the Temple was prophesied to eventually fall. According to this amazing prophecy--presumably written down several centuries before the event--the Temple was to be destroyed in the middle of a predetermined cycle of 70 years. This predicted event literally did come-to-pass--in that Roman legions broke through the walls and burned the Temple in 70 CE.

Biblical texts also appear to be fully correct in predicting that--after the fall of the Second Temple--the Temple would remain in a desolate (or destroyed) condition. This destroyed condition is predicted to exist until a specific time of yet future restoration. The prophecy of the Temple remaining in a destroyed condition has proven to be exactly accurate. The Temple has never been rebuilt from the time that it was destroyed in 70 CE.

In association with the prophecy of the fall of the Temple is an extraordinary prophecy that predicted the 'anointing' of a prince (the 'Messiah' or the Christ). The time given in association with this respective prophecy (27-28 CE) seems very explicit. Here, it is evident that the anointing of the prince (the Messiah) seems to very well correspond with the set of miraculous events that were reported to have occurred at the baptism of the historical Jesus (refer to Matthew 3:16-17; Mark 1:10-11; Luke 3:22). The subsequent time range that corresponded with the ministry and crucifixion of Jesus (only a few years) does also appear to exactly match the time range that was predicted for the appearing of the Messiah.

- CHAPTER FIVE -
490 Years in Modern Times

It was on August 4-5, in the year 70 CE, that the Romans breached the inner walls of the Second Temple. (This date corresponds to the 9th day of the Hebrew month of AV). Once the walls were breached, the Romans proceeded to throw down and burn the Temple building. At this time, sacrifices were stopped in July, and the Temple was ultimately destroyed in the month of August.

Of significance here is that snippets from rabbinical writings show that a 7th year boundary (or Sabbatical year) did occur at the time the Temple was destroyed:

> The Temple was destroyed ...*"at the culmination of the sabbatical year ... and it was the ninth of Av"* (refer to Seder Olam, Chapter 30).

So, to be more specific, this respective year was reckoned to have began in autumn of 69 CE, and the track of that Sabbatical year was over in autumn of 70 CE (when the Temple was destroyed).

> Throughout the era of the Temple it is significant that the beginning of a Sabbatical year would have been determined by a supreme Jewish council (the Sanhedrin). It is abundantly clear from many historical sources (including Josephus) that period Temple administrators would have followed a calendar of lunar months. (Note that this calendar was closely equivalent to the Babylonian Calendar).

The above cited prophesy of Daniel, Chapter 9, then appears to have accurately been fulfilled. The date of the Temple's destruction in 70 CE was amazingly foretold by the Angel Gabriel (This has been shown in previously presented chapters).

> It should here be noted that the 'calendar of weeks' the Angel Gabriel referenced to date the Temple's destruction (6th century BCE) appears to have not been lunar based. In essence, the lunar calendar that was sanctioned by the Sanhedrin appears to have been different. In spite of whether the Angel Gabriel counted weeks rather than months, it is obvious that the Sabbatical year (or the 7th year) was ultimately predicated upon a 7-year count. It is furthermore clear that--in the era of the late Second Temple--the Sabbatical year was then determined to begin and end with the autumn season of the year.

The content of the current chapter will then attempt to illustrate the significance of a 7-year count right from when the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. This calendar count of 70 years will furthermore be listed in reference to the establishment of the State of Israel and to the future in Jerusalem. The Angel Gabriel's 70-year calendar will ultimately be studied in an effort to show when long prophesied, world rule from

Jerusalem might finally be established, and when a Temple system in Jerusalem, might begin anew.

> World rule from Jerusalem was predicted to FAIL in 70 CE by the Angel Gabriel. Instead, of success, the Temple (and Jerusalem) was prophesied to be destroyed 35 years inside a 70-year cycle. This respective prophecy of 70-year sets is both amazing and significant in the accuracy of its fulfillment. So can it be that a calendar predicated upon a calendar of 70 years might have prophetic significance . . . even within our current era?

The Timeline of 490 years

Certain astronomer-priests of the ancient past were keen to track current events and to predict the future in long cycles of 490 years. This is especially manifested in a passage from Scroll 4Q180--as follows:

> *"... concerning the ages made by God, all the eras for the accomplishment of all the events, past and future. Before ever He made them, He determined... era by era. And it was the order... from Noah to Abraham until the birth of Isaac; ten weeks of years" (refer to Scroll 4Q180).*

So, the 490-year count that appears in Daniel, Chapter 9, would have been no surprise to Temple adherents from so long ago. This respective calendar of weeks was simply predicated up a track of both 49-year cycles and 70-year cycles. Of significance here is that both cycles inherently time out together every 490 years. (Note that 10 cycles of 49 years is equal to 490 years, and 7 cycles of 70 years is also equal to 490 years).

Thus, a technical study of history and prophecy (as previously has been shown) reveals that a 1st century resident of Jerusalem would not have been ignorant of a calendar that tracked 490 years. Furthermore, contemporary adherents of the Temple would have known that this calendar renewed right in, or right after, the year 37-36 BCE (right at the time Herod became King of the Jews).

This respective calendar of weeks, if explored on beyond 37-36 BCE, makes it manifest that a cycle of 490 years renewed again in the year 454-455 CE, and the cycle renewed again in 944-945 CE, and renewed again in 1434-1435 CE; and yet again within the Twentieth Century (in spring or autumn of the year 1924-1925). Throughout all of these 490-year time segments there has not yet been one cycle during which world rule has been established from Jerusalem.

So, how about the modern era? Will the prophesied world rule under a Messiah finally come to pass? Will these significant prophecies come about within the current 490-year calendar?

> Note that it was the year 1925 that last defined the very beginning of a cycle of 490-years. This respective year then represents the very 1st year of a 70-year set, and this

respective year also represents the very 1st year of a 49-year set.

The Modern cycle of 490 years

The 70-year sets that came after 37-36 BCE seem very significant because the Angel Gabriel so explicitly foretold the time of Jerusalem's destruction (at exactly halfway into the 2nd set of 70 years). Furthermore, the Angel accurately foretold that the Anointed Messiah (the 'King of the Jews') would appear and be killed within a 70-year cycle. (Note that Jesus was crucified within the 70-year cycle that came first after the renewal of a 490-year calendar).

Year Date	Corresponding 70-Year Chronology
37-36 BCE	The renewal of 490 years
	... Herod rules Judea as king
	... The 'King of Jews' is killed
34-35 CE	The first 70-year set ends
70 CE	... City of Jerusalem destroyed
	[in the middle of 70 years']

Many of the events that were foretold in the Bible can ultimately be recognized to have fulfillment in these modern times (and within the respective 70-year sets that first renewed in 1925 CE).

In example, it was in this first set of 70 years that the modern State of Israel was established. Furthermore, it was within this same 70-year set that the Jews gained control of the city of Jerusalem. (Note that both of these events were long ago prophesied in the Bible).

> In addition to the establishment of the State of Israel within this respective set of 70 years, it seems significant that Earth's inhabitants experienced the horrors of 'nation warring against nation' during World War 2. Furthermore, it was within this 70-year set that atomic and hydrogen weapons of mass destruction were developed by the nations (and stockpiled around the world).

In further example of the modern fulfillment of Bible prophesy, there can be no debate that--throughout the 20th and 21st centuries--'knowledge has been increased'. Furthermore, in these times, we can travel around the world (and we take the availability of high-speed transportation for granted).

The 70-year count that followed 1925 inherently renewed in the year 1995 (as cited). Of interest here is that 35 years on beyond the renewal of 1995 reaches out ahead to the year 2030 (which is halfway into this current 70-year set). The upcoming year of 2030 CE (halfway in a 70-year set) could then represent a very pivotal year in terms of fulfilling Bible prophecy (as is further shown below).

Year Date	Corresponding 70-Year Chronology
1924-1925 CE	The modern renewal of 490 years
	... World War 2 is fought
	... The State of Israel established
	... Jews gain control of Jerusalem
	... Atomic/Hydrogen weapons invented
1994-1995 CE	The second 70-year set begins
	... Internet available worldwide
	... Middle East conflicts abound
	... Russia wars against Europe
2029-2030 CE	... A prophetic event will occur ???
	['in the middle of 70 years']

Of interest about possible future events is that the stage is now set in the Middle East for the establishment of a new Temple (a Third Temple). In fact certain Jewish organizations are currently planning and making provisions to resume sacrifices on Temple Mount.

Bible Prophecies

Four decades before 70 CE, Jesus prophesied that the Second Temple would be destroyed. This remarkable prophecy is written down in Chapter 21 of the book of Luke--as follows:

> "[The Temple was then] . . . adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he [Jesus] said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down . . . And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled . . ."

In the context of relaying this remarkable prophecy, Jesus predicted that--following the Temple's destruction--the Jews would be 'led away captive into all nations'. This period of exhile would eventually be ended when 'the times of the Gentiles' were finally fulfilled.

So, Jesus was clear in predicting a time when foreign rule over Jerusalem was finally ended. In association with the time when this would come about, Jesus prophesied the coming of a "Son of man" appearing "in a cloud with power and great glory":

> *"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (ibid)*

The prophecies of Chapters 2, 7, and 9 in the book Daniel do likewise predict everlasting world rule will ultimately be established at Jerusalem. However, before the arrival of a new world order, Bible prophecies warn of the coming of false prophets, false Christs, and the end time appearing of a 'man of sin'. So while the Bible predicts some very rough times ahead there is also the prediction and promise of an everlasting rule under the glorified Messiah.

> *"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."* (prophecy recorded in Luke Chapter 21, KJV).

Chapter Summary

The Angel Gabriel predicted the overthrow of Jerusalem (and the Temple) would come about in the year 70 CE. Of significance here is that the fulfillment of this remarkable prophecy is recognizable within the context of a calendar of '70 sets of 7' (or 490 years).

> Note the cited cycle of 490 years inherently renewed in the years 37-36 BCE, 454-455 CE, 944-945 CE, 1434-1435 CE; and yet again within the Twentieth Century (in spring or autumn of the 1924-1925 CE). Throughout all of these 490-year time cycles there was not one revolution in which prophesied world rule from Jerusalem came about.

So is Gabriel's prophetic calendar of '7 sets' now pointing to future fulfillment of important end time events? If the answer of this question is 'yes', it is then significant that this respective 'weeks calendar' inherently renewed in the year 1925 (as cited).

Perhaps the most major prophetic event that came to pass within the 70-year cycle that straddled between 1925 and 1995 CE was--for the first time in centuries--the city of Jerusalem came back under Jewish rule.

The next set of 70-years that renewed in the year 1995 straddles a timespan that extends for yet many years ahead. This span of years seems predestined to possibly contain a significant event to occur in the year 2030 CE. (Take note that this year is 35 years into the 70-year cycle).

The most notable of all Bible prophesies (also yet to be fulfilled) is the prediction of a glorified Messiah who will come to establish world rule under the 'Kingdom of God'. So, can it be that the eventual establishment of God's Rule will come about within the context of the very SAME calendar that was long ago referenced by the Angel Gabriel.

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