

THE LARGER CONTEXT OF DANIEL'S 4TH VISION

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PREAMBLE

Chronologists have always recognized that Daniel's 4th Vision is extremely important in determining the dates of (a) the *Conquest of Jerusalem* by Nebuchadnezzar, which marks the beginning of the Exile, (b) the *Conquest of Babylon* by a Persian Emperor, (c) the *Proclamation of Cyrus*, (d) the *Birth of Messiah*, (e) the *Baptism of Messiah* in the late summer of Tiberius 15 and the beginning of the *Ministry of Messiah* in the early autumn shortly thereafter, and finally (f) the *Crucifixion of Messiah* on Passover 3.5 years later.

What Chronologists have not recognized are the serious defects in the orthodox version of ancient history, which are at significant odds with what the Scriptures indicate, such as Babylon was conquered by Darius-the-Mede,¹ who ruled in Babylon for two years, died, and was succeeded by Cyrus-the Persian,² who immediately issued the *Proclamation of Cyrus*, which marks the end of the 70-year Exile and the start of the Postexilic Period in Hebrew History.

The foregoing does not fit into the orthodox version of ancient history, which indicates that the sequence of Persian kings was the following: Cyrus II, Bardiya, Darius I, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, Xerxes II, Sogdianus, and Darius II. Moreover, the orthodox version credits Cyrus II with the Conquest of Babylon and the later issuance of the Proclamation of Cyrus about seven years before the reign of Darius I).

Unfortunately, faced with this conflict, some chronologists have put conformance to what the orthodox historians say above what the Bible says.

The conflict between what the orthodox historians say and what the Bible says, does not trouble me, because I recognize that the Bible is the Word of God and therefore inerrant, and any scientific or scholarly theory that contradicts the Biblical account must be incorrect and either revised or abandoned altogether. Thus, it became easy to see that the sequence of Persian emperors must have been the following:

- PE-06 Cyrus II (also Cyrus-the-Great, 558-529 BC);
- PE-07 Cambyses I (579-558 BC);
- PE-08 Bardiya (522 BC);
- PE-09 Darius I (also Darius-the-Mede or Darius-the-Great, 522-485 BC),
who conquered Babylon in 487 BC;
- PE-10 Cyrus III (also Cyrus-the-Persian, 485-582 BC), who must have been
the eldest son of Darius I and the older brother of Xerxes I;
- PE-11 Xerxes I (also Xerxes-the-Great, 482-465 BC), who was the second
son of Darius I and married Esther;
- PE-12 Artaxerxes I (also Longimanus, 465-424 BC), who was the son of
Xerxes I;
- PE-13 Xerxes II (also Ahaseurus III, 424 BC), who was the first son of
Xerxes II;

¹ Daniel 5:31.

² Daniel 6:28.

PE-14 Sogdianus (424-423 BC), who was the second son of Xerxes II;
PE-15 Darius II (also Nothus or Ochus) (423-405 BC), who was the third son
of Xerxes II; and
PE-16 Artaxerxes II (also Arcases, 405-359), who was the son of Darius II.

Of course, the first question one might ask is, “Why does the orthodox version of ancient history not refer to Cyrus III. The answer to this question is both simple and, in my opinion, obvious. The Persian dynasty started by Darius I exhibits a startling number of assassinations by kings who had their predecessor killed and then usurped their places on the throne. Bardiya was removed by his distant relative Darius I; Xerxes II, by his brother Sogdianus; and Sogdianus by his brother Darius II.

Where Cyrus III is concerned, I believe that his brother Xerxes I (a) served as his co-regent for three years (485-482 BC), (b) removed him just as their father had done to Bardiya, (c) ruled as his successor for 17 years (482-465 BC), (d) expunged all evidence of his existence in Persia, and (e) saw to it that the Persian records indicated that Xerxes I ruled Persia for 20 years (485-465 BC).

Xerxes elimination of his brother made the behavior of his grandsons all the more likely. Their great-grandfather did it. Their grandfather did it. Why would anyone object to their doing it?.

What Xerxes did not know, let alone plan for, was that the Hebrew prophet Daniel would record what had happened, and that it would be included in the Word of God Written, which (a) was inspired by God-the-Holy Spirit and (b) conformed to God-the-Father’s Script for Creation that he wrote before God-the-Son spoke Universe into existence. Evidence of Cyrus III’s existence survived.

SECTION 1 - THE OLD TESTAMENT & THE NEW TESTAMENT **CONTRASTED**

The Old Testament or Tenakh covers the period from the Creation to the Crucifixion of the Christ on Passover 33 AD, which lasted 4,009 years (3977 BC-33 AD). The Old Testament (a) *does* include the time in which Christ’s lived (2 BC-33 AD), but (b) *does not* include an account of it.

The New Testament or New Covenant Scriptures covers the period from the Crucifixion of Christ on Passover 33 AD to the Parousia, which will last an unknown number of year (1,989 years (33-2022 AD) so far). The New Testament (a) *does not* include the time in which Christ lived (2 BC-33 AD), but (b) *does* include an account of it.

A major difference between the two testaments is that the Old Testament is a gradual revelation of the persons and purposes of God, whereas the New Testament is the final and full revelation of the persons and purposes of God.

SECTION 2 - DANIEL'S 4TH VISION

At the beginning of Chapter 9, Daniel's describes that he was praying to the Lord during his evening devotional, and he asked the Lord to help him understand the reference in Jeremiah the Lord's indication that he would "accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem."³

As Daniel was praying, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to him and said,

24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be *seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks*: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and *in the midst of the week* he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (KJV Daniel 9:24-27)

SECTION 3 - THE LARGER CONTEXT

The above text speaks of a period that would last 490 years, but it can only be fully understood in the larger context of a much longer span of time that lasted 624 years (555 BC-70 AD). This span of time can be divided into three periods: (a) Period 1, which preceded Daniel's 490 Years, (b) Period 2, which contains Daniel's 490 years, and (c) Period 3, which follows Daniel's 490 years.

PERIOD 1 - THE EXILE IN BABYLON (555-485 BC)

The Exile in Babylon lasted 70 years (555-485 BC) and can be divided into two subperiods:

Subperiod 1A - Rule of Babylonian Kings (555-487 BC) - It (a) began with the *Conquest of Jerusalem* by King Nebuchadnezzar and his general Nebuzaradan in 555 BC, (b) lasted 68 years (555-487 BC), and (c) ended with the *Conquest of Babylon* by the Persian king Darius-the-Mede.

Subperiod 1B - Rule of Persian Kings (487-485 BC) - As I have indicated above, it (a) began with the *Conquest of Babylon* by Darius-the-Mede, who was the son of Astyages, King of Media and ruled Persia for 37 years (522-485 BV), (b) lasted 2 years (487-485 BC), and (c) ended with the death of Darius, the ascension of Cyrus-of-the-Bible, and the *Proclamation of Cyrus*. who reigned for 3 years (485-482 BC) and was undoubtedly the eldest son of Darius-the-Mede and the older brother of Xerxes-the-Great, who reigned for 17 years (482-465 BC) and married Esther c. 475 BC.

PERIOD 2 - DANIEL'S 4TH VISUION (485 BC-37 AD)

³ Jeremiah 22:5,25:11-12,18 & 29:10 and Daniel 9:3.

The Daniel's 4th Vision covers a period that lasted 521 years (485 BC-37 AD) and can be divided into four subperiods:

Subperiod 2A - The Postexilic Period (485-2 BC), which (a) began with the *Proclamation of Cyrus* that commanded the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuilt its temple, walls, and streets (b) lasted 483 years (485-2 BC), and (c) ended with the Birth of Messiah.

Subperiod 2B - The Private Life of Messiah (2 BC-29 AD), which consisted of His childhood, adolescence, youth, and early manhood and (a) began with the *His Birth* and the *Proclamation of Gabriel*, who appeared with a heavenly host of angels in the sky above a field just outside Bethlehem, where a group of shepherds were tending their flocks by night, (b) lasted 30 years (2 BC-29 AD), and (c) ended with the *His Baptism*..

Subperiod 2C - The Public Life of Messiah (29-33 AD), which consisted of His ministry and (a) began with the *His Baptism* by John-the-Baptist and the *Proclamation of God*, who spoke from Heaven and identified Jesus as his Son, in whom he was well pleased, (b) lasted 3.5 years (29-33 AD), and (c) ended on with *His Death, Burial, Resurrection, and Ascension*. At the moment of *His Death* at the ninth hour (3:00 pm) on Passover, the veil before the Holy of Holies in the Temple was rent from top to bottom, thereby indicating that the Shekinah Glory - God's presence - had departed from the *physical* Temple in Jerusalem and enter the *spiritual* Temple of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all believers who accept Jesus as their divine Lord and Savior.

Subperiod 2D - The Confirmation of the Covenant (33-37 AD), which consisted of the Testimony of the Saints and (a) began with the *Proclamation of Jesus* in the final moments before His death on the cross at Golgotha that "It is finished," meaning that He had accomplished His God-given mission to live a sinless life and to die as the unique, one-time, all-sufficient, never-to-be-repeated sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind, (b) lasted 3.5 years (33-37 AD), and (c) included the *Witness of Stephen* to the identity of Jesus and the *Proclamation of the Gospel* by Peter to begin fulfilling the Great Commission to evangelize the world. and make disciples of all nations, as well as the early years of the *Abomination of Desolation*, which began with the temple priests ignoring God's unique sacrifice of his Son and continuing the animal and bird sacrifices to atone for sins of the Jews.

PERIOD 3- LATE YEARS OF THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (37-70 AD)

The Late years of the 1st instance of the Abomination of Desolation lasted 33.5 years (37-70 AD), and resulted in the *Destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple* and the *Banishment of the Jews from Judea* for almost two millennia (70-1948 AD).

SECTION 3 - CHART OF THE 70 WEEKS OF YEARS AND ITS CONTEXT

THE LARGER CONTEXT OF DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS OF YEARS (all dates derive from my Bible chronology)

PERIOD 1 - THE EXILE IN BABYLON, which lasted 70 years (555-485 BC), which began with the *Conquest of Jerusalem* by King Nebuchadnezzar and his general Nebuzaradan.

Subperiod 1A - Rule of Babylonian Kings, which (a) lasted 68 years (555-487 BC) ended with the *Conquest of Babylon* by Darius-the-Mede.⁴

Subperiod 1B - Rule of Persian King Darius, which (a) lasted 2 years (487-485 BC) and (b) ended with the death of Darius and the enthronement of Cyrus III and his **Proclamation of Cyrus**.⁵

PERIOD 2 - DANIEL'S 4TH VISION (485-37 AD).

Subperiod 2A - Daniel's 69 Weeks of Years = Postexilic Period, which (a) lasted 483 years (485-2 BC) and (B) Daniel divides into two phases:

Phase 2A-1 - Daniel's 7 Weeks of Years, which (a) lasted 49 years (485-436 BC) and (b) ended with an unidentified event.

Phase 2A-2 - Daniel's 62 Weeks of Years, which (c) lasted 434 years (436-2 BC) and (b) ended with the *Birth of Messiah*⁶ and the **Proclamation of Gabriel**.⁷

Subperiod 2C - Messiah's Private Life (childhood, adolescence, youth, and early adulthood), to which Daniel does not refer, which (a) lasted nearly 30 years (August 28, 2 BC-mid-August, 29 AD) and (b) ended with the *Baptism of Messiah* and the **Proclamation of God**.⁸

Subperiod 2D - Messiah's Public Life (Ministry) = the 1st Half of Daniel's 70th Week, which (a) lasted 3.5 years (29-33 AD), (b) included four Passovers,⁹ and (c) ended with Messiah's death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. Just before Messiah died, he issue the **Proclamation of Jesus**.¹⁰

PERIOD 3- LATE YEARS OF THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, which lasted 33.5 years (37-70 AD), and resulted in (a) the *Destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple* and (b) the *Banishment of the Jews from Judea* for almost two millennia (70-1948 AD).

⁴ The Bible is quite clear. The Babylon Empire ended with the Conquest of Babylon by Darius I = Darius-the-Mede (PE-09, 522-485 BC), not Cyrus II = Cyrus-the-Great (PE-06, 558-529 BC). See Daniel 5:31.

⁵ Cyrus III = Cyrus-of-the-Bible (PE-10, 485-482) BC) was undoubtedly the eldest son of Darius-the-Mede and the older brother of Xerxes I = Xerxes-the-Great (PE-11, 482-465 BC). The *Proclamation of Cyrus* commanded the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls and temple.

⁶ Messiah was born on August 28, 2 BC, which was Tishri 1, which is (a) the first day of the seventh month in the Hebrew calendar and (b) called Rosh-Hashanah or the Day of Trumpets.

⁷ The Proclamation of Gabriel declared the *Birth of the Prince*.

⁸ At the sound of a Trumpet, the Archangel Gabriel and a heavenly host of angels appeared in the sky over a field just outside Bethlehem, where shepherds were tending their flocks by night, and the archangel proclaimed that the Prince of Peace had come and could be found lying in a manger at the inn in town.

⁹ 1st Passover 30 AD, 2nd Passover 31 AD, 3rd Passover 32 AD, and 4th Passover 33 AD, which fell in early April.

¹⁰ Messiah declared. "It is finished!," which indicated that that His mission to live a sinless life and be sacrificed to atone for the sins of mankind had been accomplished, thereby terminating the Mosaic Covenantal Period and beginning the New Covenantal Period.

SECTION 4 - THE FOUR PROCLAMATIONS

The four Proclamations which occurred during the time covered by Daniel's 4th Vision are worth examining. Note that they form a progression: (a) the most powerful mortal monarch of the time, (b) the most powerful archangel in Heaven, (c) Almighty God himself, and (d) the Son of God, whom God had appointed King of kings and Lord of Lords to rule over the heavens and the earth.

SUBSECTION 4A - THE PROCLAMATION OF CYRUS

The *Proclamation of Cyrus* in 485 BC (a) ended the Exilic Period and (b) began the Postexilic Period. It is described in the Book of Ezra as follows:

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia,

The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. 4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. 6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.¹¹ 7 Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; 8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar,¹² the prince of Judah. 9 And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, 10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. 11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem. (KJV Ezra 1:1-11).

SUBSECTION 4B - THE PROCLAMATION OF GABRIEL

The *Proclamation of Gabriel* in 2 BC (a) ended the Postexilic Period and (b) began the Private Life of Jesus. Appearing in the sky above the heads of a group of shepherds tending their flocks by night, Gabriel announced:

¹¹ There appears to be two categories of precious things which the Jews took with them to Jerusalem: (1) the willing gifts of gold and silver vessels, goods, beasts, and other precious things which they received from the Babylonians and (2) the temple treasures (a) which Nebuchadnezzar removed from Jerusalem before he destroyed it in 555 BC and (b) which Cyrus entrusted to Sheshbazzar at the start of the *Return to Jerusalem* in 485 BC, which he instructed were to be put back in the temple after it was rebuilt. The willing gifts in 485 BC remind me of the willing gifts that the Jews received from the Egyptians at the start of the Exodus in 1464 BC.

¹² Sheshbazzar, Prince of Judah, and Tirshatha (Governor) were other names for Daniel, who undoubtedly informed Cyrus of what Jeremiah had said about 70 years, and in whom Cyrus had come to trust implicitly.

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. (KJV Luke 2-10-12)

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying “Glory to God in the highest (KJV Luke 2:13-14b),

and on earth peace toward men of goodwill (JH Luke 2:10-14b).¹³

SUBSECTION 4C - THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD

The *Proclamation of God* in 29 AD (a) ended Messiah’s Private Life and (b) began Messiah’s Public Life or Ministry.

Probably in mid-August of 29 AD, while Jesus is being baptized by John-the-Baptist, God speaks from heaven, identifying Jesus as His Son, in whom he is well pleased, which is recorded three times in the synoptic gospels:

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my *beloved* Son, in whom I am well pleased” (KJV Matthew 3:16-17).

“And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my *beloved* Son, in whom I am well pleased” KJV Mark 1:10-11).

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, 22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my *beloved* Son; in thee I am well pleased” (KJV Luke 3:21-22).

SUBSECTION 4D - THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S SON

The *Proclamation of Jesus* in 33 AD (a) ended Messiah’s Public Life or Ministry and the Mosaic Covenantal Period and (b) began the New Covenantal Period.

¹³ After the Archangel Gabriel issued his Proclamation to the shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem, the heavenly host which accompanied him sang out, as translated in the King James Version: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, good will toward men” (KJV Luke 2:14). Note the unconditional nature of the second phrase in this sentence. Modern translations render it differently -e.g. the English Standard Version states: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased” (ESV Luke 2:14). The second phrase is now clearly conditional. God’s peace is reserved for those with whom he is pleased. This phrase conforms to the Biblical Gospel, which makes clear that salvation will be granted only to people who repent of their sins and accept God’s Son as their divine Savior and Lord. Because I treasure the beauty of the KJV’s language – particularly in Luke’s rendition of the Nativity story - I have changed the phrase in the KJV only slightly to “peace toward men of goodwill.” It is not perfect, but it clearly indicates that the granting of peace between God and his creatures is conditional upon what he sees in their hearts.

4D-1 – The Seven Last Sayings of Jesus

Jesus had been hanging on the a cross at Golgotha for six hours, from the third hour (9:00 am) to the ninth hour (3:00 pm) on Passover in 33 AD, during which he spoke seven times:

4D-1A - The Word of Forgiveness - “Then said Jesus, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do’” (Luke 23:34).

4D-1B - The Word of Salvation - “And [the dying thief] said unto Jesus, ‘Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.’ And Jesus said unto him, “Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23: 42-43).

4D-1C - The Word of Affection - “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, ‘Woman, behold thy Son!’ Then saith He to the disciple, ‘Behold thy mother!’” (John 19: 25-26).

4D-1D - The Word of Anguish - “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ - that is to say, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?’” (Matthew 27: 46).

4D-1E - The Word of Suffering - “Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, ‘I thirst’” (John 19: 28).¹⁴

4D-1F - The Word of Victory - When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, “It is finished” (John 19: 30).

4D-1G - The Word of Contentment - And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, “Father, into thy hands I commend My spirit;” and having said thus, He gave up His spirit (Luke 23: 46).

4D-2 – The Proclamation of Jesus

4D-2A - Messiah’s Mission

At the ninth hour (3:00 pm), several things occurred simultaneously:

4D-2A-1 - Jesus died, which constituted the *unique, one-time, all-sufficient, never-to-be-repeated* sacrifice for the sins of mankind;

4D-2A-2 - The veil before the Holy of Holies was rent from top to bottom, which indicated that the *Shekinah Glory* had (2a) departed from the *physical* temple on the Temple Mount in

¹⁴ What Jesus thirsts for here is a drink from the Cup of Wrath that will be poured out (a) on Him for the sins of all those men, women, and children whose names God-the-Father wrote in the Book of Life before the foundations of the world were laid and (b) on all the rest of mankind for their failure to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Jerusalem and (2b) entered the spiritual *Temple of the Holy Spirit* in the heats of the saints forever after.

4D-2A-3 - The *Mosaic Covenant*, which God had established with Abraham's *physical* descendants, expired and the *New Covenant*, which God established with Abraham's *spiritual* descendants, replaced and superseded it.

4D-2A-4 - Israel underwent a significant change, splitting into two parts: (1) **Israel of the Spirit**, which consists of (1a) **believing Jews**, who are the *Faithful Remnant of Israel* and remain in the *Cultivated Olive Tree*, and (1b) **believing Gentiles**, who are pruned from the *Wild Olive Tree* and grafted into the *Cultivated Olive Tree*, and (2) **Israel of the Flesh**, which consists of **unbelieving Jews**, who are pruned out of the *Cultivated Olive Tree* and cast away. **Unbelieving Gentiles** remain in the *Wild Olive Tree*.

4D-2B - Messiah's Proclamation

Immediately before He died, Jesus declared: "It is Finished." His Father's plan to redeem and form an unblemished bride and "helmet" for his Son had been accomplished.