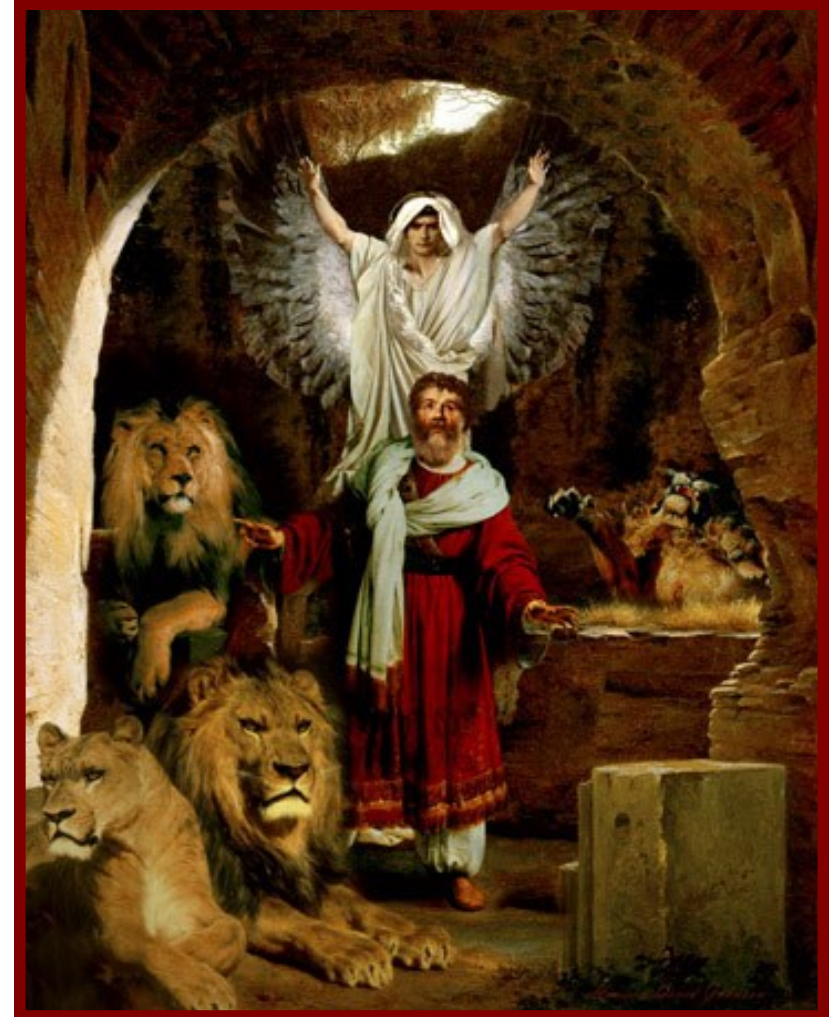


The Book of Daniel

Chapter 9



The Book of Daniel, as it now stands in the ordinary Hebrew Bibles, is generally divided into two main parts. The first includes a series of narratives which are told in the third person and the second, a series of visions which are described in the first person. From its content it readily appears that the Book of Daniel does not have as its objective a summary historical account of the period of the Babylonian Exile, or of the life of Daniel himself. The contents of the Prophecy of Daniel are of a peculiar kind which has no exact parallel in the Bible, except in the Apocalypse of St. John.

Commentary of the Book of Daniel is by Saint Jerome. St. Jerome, who was born Eusebius Hieronymus Sophronius, and is the most learned of the Fathers of the Western Church. The Church regards him as the greatest of all the doctors in clarifying the Divine Word. While at Rome he made a revision of the current Latin New Testament, and of the Psalms. Then he undertook to translate most of the books of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew. The only parts of the Latin Bible, now known as the Vulgate, which were not either translated or worked over by him are the Books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the two Books of the Maccabees. In the sixteenth century the great Council of Trent pronounced Jerome's Vulgate the authentic and authoritative Latin text of the Catholic Church, without, however, thereby implying a preference for it above the original text or above versions in other languages. In 1907 Pope Pius X entrusted to the Benedictine Order the office of restoring as far as possible the correct text of St. Jerome's Vulgate, which during fifteen centuries of use had naturally become altered in many places. The Bible now ordinarily used by English-speaking Catholics is a translation of the Vulgate, made at Rheims and Douay towards the end of the sixteenth century, and revised by Bishop Challoner in the eighteenth century. The Confraternity Edition of the New Testament appearing in 1950 represents a complete revision.

Chapter 9

Verses 1, 2. *"In the first year of the Darius who was the son of Ahasuerus of the race of the Medes and who reigned over the kingdom of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign. ..."* This is the Darius who in cooperation with Cyrus conquered the Chaldeans and Babylonians. We are not to think of that other Darius in the second year of whose reign the Temple was built (as Porphyry supposes in making out a late date for *Daniel*); nor are we to think of the Darius who was vanquished by Alexander, the king of the Macedonians. He therefore adds the name of his father and also refers to his victory, inasmuch as he was the first of the race of the Medes to overthrow the kingdom of the Chaldeans. He does this to avoid any mistake in the reading which might arise from the similarity of the name.

Verse 2. "I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years concerning which the word of the Lord had come to the prophet Jeremiah, that seventy years would be accomplished for the desolation of Jerusalem." Jeremiah had predicted seventy years for the desolation of the Temple (Jer. 52:29), at the end of which the people would again return to Judaea and build the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. But this fact did not render Daniel careless, but rather encouraged him to pray that God might through his supplications fulfil that which He had graciously promised. Thus he avoided the danger that carelessness might result in pride, and pride cause offense to the Lord. Accordingly we read in Genesis (chap. 9) [sic!] that prior to the Deluge one hundred and twenty years were appointed for men to come to repentance; and inasmuch as they refused to repent even within so long an interval of time as a hundred years, God did not wait for the remaining twenty years to be fulfilled, but brought on the punishment earlier which He had threatened for a later time. [This deduction seems to have been based upon the fact that Gen. 5:32 mentions that Noah was five hundred years old when he had begotten Ham, Shem, and Japheth, and therefore was still the same age when God appointed the one hundred twenty years in Gen. 6:3. Since the Flood dried up in the six hundred and first year of Noah (8:13), therefore the waiting period could not have been more than a hundred years. Yet it could also have been that the age given in Gen. 5:32 was the age when, within the one hundred twenty year period, Noah's family was complete, the youngest son being born within that period, and being old enough to be married by the time the Flood itself actually occurred.] So also Jeremiah is told, on account of the hardness of the heart of the Jewish people: "Pray not for this people, for I will not hearken unto thee" (Jer. 7:16). Samuel also was told: "How long wilt thou mourn over Saul? I also have rejected him" (I Sam. 16:1). And so it was with sackcloth and ashes that Daniel besought the Lord to fulfill what He had promised, not that Daniel lacked faith concerning the future, but rather he would avoid the danger that a feeling of security might produce carelessness, and carelessness produce an offense to God.

Verse 4. "'I beseech Thee, O Lord God, who art mighty and terrible....'" That is, Thou art terrible towards those who despise Thine injunctions.

"'...Who keepeth covenant and mercy towards those who love Thee and keep Thy commandments.' " It is not therefore the case that what God promises will come to pass without further ado, but rather, He fulfills His promises towards those who keep His commandments.

Verse 5. " 'We have sinned, we have behaved wickedly and impiously, and we have departed....'" He reviews the sins of the people as if he were personally guilty, on the ground of his being one of the people, just as we read the Apostle does also in his Epistle to the Romans.

Verse 7. " *Justice belongeth unto Thee, O Lord, but for us there is only confusion of face. . .* " It is of course just that we suffer what we deserve.

Verse 8. " *Unto Thee belongeth mercy, O Lord our God, and also propitiation. . .* ' " Concerning the same God of Whom he had previously said, "To Thee, O Lord, belongeth justice," he now says (since the Lord is not only just but also merciful): "To Thee belongeth mercy." He says this in order that he might call upon the Judge to show mercy, after His sentence has been imposed.

Verse 11. " *And (the curse) has come upon us drop by drop.* " That is, Thou hast not poured out upon us all of Thy wrath, for we should not have been able to bear it, but Thou hast poured forth a mere droplet of Thy fury, in order that we might return unto Thee once we have been enmeshed in Thy snare.

" *The malediction and the curse which were written in the book of Moses, the servant of God. . .* ' " In Deuteronomy we read the curses and blessings of the Lord (Deut. 27), which were afterwards uttered in Mount Gerizim and Ebal upon the righteous and upon the sinners.

Verse 13. " *All this evil has come upon us, and we have not entreated Thy face, O Lord our God, that we might turn back from our iniquities and consider Thy truth.* " Their obduracy was so great that even in the midst of their toils they would not entreat God, and even if they had entreated Him, it would not have been a genuine entreaty, because they had not turned back from their iniquities. Yet to consider the truth of God is equivalent to turning back from iniquity.

Verse 14. " *And the Lord hath kept watch over the evil and hath brought it upon us. . .* " Whenever we are rebuked because of our sins, God is keeping watch over us and visiting us with chastisement. But whenever we are left alone by God and we do not suffer judgment but are unworthy of the Lord's rebuke, then He is said to slumber. And so we read in the Psalms as well: "The Lord has risen up as one who was slumbering or as a man out of a drunken sleep" (Ps. 77=78). For our wickedness and iniquity inflames God with wine, and whenever it is rebuked in our case, God is said to be keeping careful watch and to be rising up out of His drunken sleep, in order that we who are drunken with sin may be made to pay careful heed unto righteousness.

Verse 15. " *And now, O Lord our God. . .* " Daniel remembers God's ancient kindness in order that he may appeal to Him for a similar act of clemency.

Verse 17. " *And show Thy face upon Thy sanctuary, which lies desolate.* " By deed fulfill that which Thou hast promised in word, for the approximate period of desolation has elapsed.

Verse 18. " *For Thine own sake, O my God, incline Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes and behold our desolation . . .* " This appeal is couched in anthropomorphic language (*anthropopathos*), with the implication that whenever our prayers are heard, God seems to incline His ear; and whenever God deigns to have regard to us,

'Be ye holy, for I also am holy' (Lev. 19:2). Know therefore that from this day on which I speak to thee and make thee the promise by the word of the Lord that the nation shall return and Jerusalem shall be restored, there shall be sixty-two weeks numbered unto the time of Christ the Prince and of the perpetual desolation of the Temple; and that there shall also be seven weeks in which the two events shall take place which I have already mentioned, namely that the nation shall return and the street shall be rebuilt by Nehemiah and Ezra. And so at the end of the weeks the decree of God shall be accomplished in distressing times, when the Temple shall again be destroyed, and the city taken captive. For after the sixty-two weeks the Christ shall be slain, and the nation who shall reject Him shall go out of existence" ---- or, as the Jews themselves put it, the kingdom of Christ which they imagined they would retain (G) shall not even be. And why do I speak of the slaying of Christ, and of the nation's utter forfeiture of God's help, since the Roman people were going to demolish the city and sanctuary under Vespasian, the leader who was to come? Upon his death the seven weeks or forty-nine years were complete, and after the city of Aelia was established upon the ruins of Jerusalem, Aelius Hadrian vanquished (H) the revolting Jews in their conflict with the general, Timus Rufus. It was at that time that the sacrifice and offering (ceased and) will continue to cease even unto the completion of the age, and the desolation is going to endure until the very end. We are not, say the Jews, greatly impressed by the fact that the seven weeks are mentioned first, and afterwards the sixty-two, and again a single week divided into two parts. For it is simply the idiomatic usage of the Hebrew language, as well as of antique Latin, that in quoting a figure, the small number is given first and then the larger. For example, we do not, according to good usage say in our language, "Abraham lived a hundred and seventy-five years"; on the contrary the Hebrews say, "Abraham lived five and seventy and one hundred years" (I). And so the fulfillment is not to follow the literal order of the words, but it shall be accomplished in terms of the whole sum, taken together. I am also well aware that some of the Jews assert that as for the statement about the single week, "He shall establish a covenant with many for one week," the division is between the reigns of Vespasian and Hadrian. According to the history of Josephus, Vespasian and Titus concluded peace with the Jews for three years and six month. And the [other] three years and six months are accounted for in Hadrian's reign, when Jerusalem was completely destroyed and the Jewish nation was massacred in large groups at a time, with the result that they were even expelled from the borders of Judaea. This is what the Hebrews have to say on the subject, paying little attention to the fact that from the first year of Darius, King of the Persians, until the final overthrow of Jerusalem, which befell them under Hadrian, the period involved is a hundred and seventy-four Olympiads or six hundred ninety-six years, which total up to ninety-nine Hebrew weeks plus three years ---- that being the time when Barcochebas, the leader of the Jews, was crushed and Jerusalem was demolished to the very ground.

End of Chapter 9

He appears to open His eyes; but whenever He turns His face away, we appear to be unworthy of attention either from His eyes or His ears.

Verse 20. "*Now while I was yet speaking and praying and confessing my sins and the sins of my people, Israel, so as to present (Vulg.: and was presenting) my petitions in the presence of my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God. ...*" And so, as we have pointed out above, he not only thought upon the sins of the people but also upon his own sins, as being one of the people. Or else it was by way of humility, although he had not personally committed sin; his purpose being to obtain pardon by reason of his humility. Observe what he said here: "I was confessing my sins." For there are many passages in Scripture where confession does not imply an expression of repentance so much as an expression of praise to God.

Verse 21. "*While I was still speaking in my prayer, behold the man Gabriel, whom I had seen at the beginning of the vision.*" He calls the previous vision preceding this one the beginning. The effect of his prayer was considerable, and the promise of God was fulfilled which says, "While thou art yet speaking, lo, I am at hand" (Isa. 58:9). And Gabriel appears not as an angel or archangel, but as a man (*vir*), a term used to indicate the quality of virtue rather than specifying his sex.

". . . *he quickly flew to me and touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice.*" It is stated that he flew, because he had made his appearance as a man. It is said that it was at the time of the evening sacrifice, in order to show that the prophet's prayer had persisted from the morning sacrifice even unto the evening sacrifice, and that God for that reason directed His mercy towards him.

Verse 22. "*And He instructed me and spoke to me, saying. ...*" The vision was so obscure that the prophet needed the angel's teaching.

"'. . . *Now, O Daniel, I have come forth that I may instruct thee and that thou mayest understand.*" That is, I have been sent to thee and have come forth, not from the presence of God in the sense of departing from Him, but only in the sense of coming unto thee.

Verse 23. " '*From the very beginning of thy prayers the word went forth and I myself have come to show it to thee, because thou art a man of desires.*'" That is, at the time when thou didst begin to ask God, thou didst straightway obtain His mercy, and His decision was put forth. I have therefore been sent to explain to thee the things of which thou art ignorant, inasmuch as thou art a man of desires, that is to say a lovable man, worthy of God's love ---- even as Solomon was called *Idida* (var: *Jedida*) or "man of desires." I have been sent because thou art worthy, in recompense for thine affection for God, to be told the secret

counsels of God and to have a knowledge of things to come.

" *Thou therefore pay heed to the word and understand the vision.* " Thus [reading *sic* instead of *si*] Daniel is told, "Pay diligent heed, in order that thou mayest hear and understand what thou seest." We too should do this, for our eyes have been blinded by the shadows of ignorance and the darkness of sins.

Verses 24----27. " *Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished, and everlasting justice may be brought to bear, and that the vision and prophecy may be fulfilled that the Holy One of the saints may be anointed. Know therefore and take note that from the going forth of the word to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, and the street shall be built again, and the walls, in distressing times. And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain, and (the people that shall deny Him) shall not be His. And a people, with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. And the end thereof shall be devastation, and after the end of the war there shall be the appointed desolation. And he shall confirm the covenant with many in one week; and in the middle of the week both victim and sacrifice shall fail. And there shall be in the Temple the abomination of desolation, and the desolation shall continue even unto the consummation and the end.* " Because the prophet had said, "Thou didst lead forth Thy people, and Thy name was pronounced upon Thy city and upon Thy people," Gabriel therefore, as the mouthpiece of God, says by implication: "By no means are they God's people, but only thy people; nor is Jerusalem the holy city of God, but it is only a holy city unto thee, as thou sayest." This is similar to what we read in Exodus also, when God says to Moses, "Descend, for thy people have committed sin" (Ex. 32:7). That is to say, they are not My people, for they have forsaken Me. And so, because thou dost supplicate for Jerusalem and prayest for the people of the Jews, hearken unto that which shall befall thy people in seventy weeks of years, and those things which will happen to thy city.

I realize that this question has been argued over in various ways by men of greatest learning, and that each of them has expressed his views according to the capacity of his own genius. And so, because it is unsafe to pass judgment upon the opinions of the great teachers of the Church and to set one above another, I shall simply repeat the view of each, and leave it to the reader's judgment as to whose explanation ought to be followed. In the fifth volume of his *Tempora* ["Chronology"], Africanus has this to say concerning the seventy weeks (and I quote him verbatim): "The chapter which we read in Daniel concerning the seventy weeks contains many remarkable details, which require too lengthy a discussion at this point; and so we must discuss only what pertains to our present task, namely that which concerns chronology. There is no doubt but what it constitutes a prediction of Christ's advent, for He appeared to the world at the end of seventy weeks. After Him the crimes were consummated and sin reached its end and iniquity was destroyed. An eternal righteousness also was proclaimed which overcame the mere righteousness of the law; and the vision and the prophecy were fulfilled, inasmuch as the Law and the Prophets endured until the time of John the Baptist (Luke 16), and then the Saint of saints was anointed. And

under Augustus...." It was because the prophecy was fulfilled by His advent that the vision was confirmed by a seal; and it was called a prophecy because Christ Himself is the seal of all the prophets, fulfilling as He did all that the prophets had previously declared concerning Him. Of course after His advent and His passion (variant; the passion of Christ), there is no longer any vision or prophecy (variant: or prophet) which declares that Christ will come [?]. And then a little later Tertullian says, "Let us see what is the meaning of (A) the seven and a half weeks, which in turn are divided up into a subsection of earlier weeks; by what transaction were they fulfilled? Well, after Augustus, (B) who lived on after Christ's birth, fifteen years elapsed. He was succeeded by Tiberius Caesar, and he held sway for twenty-two years, seven months and twenty-eight (C) days. In the fifteenth year of his reign (D) Christ suffered, being about thirty-three when He suffered. Then there was Gaius Caesar, also named Caligula, who reigned for three years, eight months and thirteen days. [Note that Claudius' reign of 13 years is here omitted.] Nero reigned for nine years, nine months and thirteen days. Galba ruled for seven months and twenty-eight (E) days; Otho for three months and five days; and Vitellius for eight months and twenty-eight (F) days. Vespasian vanquished the Jews in the first year of his reign, bringing the number of years to a total of fifty-two, plus six months. For he ruled for eleven years, and so by the date of his storming Jerusalem, the Jews had completed the seventy weeks foretold by Daniel."

As for the view which the Hebrews hold concerning this passage, I shall set it forth summarily and within a brief compass, leaving the credibility of their assertions to those who asserted them. And so let me put it in the form of a paraphrase (*paraphrastikds*) in order to bring out the sense more clearly. "O Daniel, know that from this day on which I now speak to thee (and that was the first year of the Darius who slew Belshazzar and transferred the Chaldean Empire to the Medes and Persians) unto the seventieth week of years (that is, four hundred and ninety years) the following events shall befall thy people in stages [literally: part by part]. First of all, God shall be appeased by thee in view of the earnest intercession thou hast just offered Him, and sin shall be canceled out and the transgression shall come to an end. For although the city at present lies deserted and the Temple lies destroyed to its very foundations [reading *fundamenta* for the non-existent *frudamenta*], so that the nation is plunged into mourning, yet within a fairly short time it shall be restored. And not only shall it come to pass within these seventy weeks that the city shall be rebuilt and the Temple restored, but also the Christ, who is the eternal righteousness, shall be born. And so shall the vision and the prophecy be sealed, with the result that there shall be no more any prophet to be found in Israel, and the Saint of saints shall be anointed. We read concerning Him in the Psalter: 'Because God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows' (Ps. 44:8 =45:7). And in another passage He says of Himself:

When Origen came to deal with [reading *prae-fuisset* instead of *profuisset*] this chapter, he urged us to seek out what information we do not possess; and because he had no leeway for allegorical interpretation, in which one may argue without constraint, but rather was restricted to matters of historical fact, he made this brief observation in the tenth volume of the *Stromata*: "We must quite carefully ascertain the amount of time between the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, and the advent of Christ, and discover how many years were involved, and what events are said to have occurred during them. Then we must see whether we can fit these data in with the time of the Lord's coming."

We may learn what Tertullian had to say on the subject by consulting the book which he wrote against the Jews (*Contra Judaeos*), and his remarks may be set forth in brief: "How, then, are we to show that Christ came within the sixty-two (A) weeks? This calculation begins with the first year of Darius, since that was the time when the vision itself was revealed to Daniel. For he was told: 'Understand and conclude from (B) the prophesying of the command for me to give thee this reply. ...' Hence we are to commence our computation with the first year of Darius, when Daniel beheld this vision. Let us see, then, how the years are fulfilled up to the advent of Christ. Darius reigned nineteen years; Artaxerxes forty years; the Ochus who was surnamed Cyrus twenty-four years; (C) Argus, one year. Then Darius II, who was called Melas, twenty-one (D) years. Alexander the Macedonian reigned twelve years. And then after Alexander (who had ruled over both the Medes and the Persians, after he had conquered them, and had established his rule in Alexandria, calling it after his own name), Soter reigned (E) there in Alexandria for thirty-five years, and was succeeded by Philadelphus, who reigned for thirty-eight years (F). After him Euergetes reigned for twenty-five years, and then Philopator for seventeen years, followed by Epiphanes for twenty-four years. Furthermore the second Euergetes ruled for twenty (G) and nine years, and Soter for thirty-eight years. Ptolemy [sic!] for thirty-seven (H) years, and Cleopatra for twenty years and five months (I). Furthermore Cleopatra shared the rule with Augustus for thirteen years. After Cleopatra Augustus reigned forty-three years more. For all of the years of the reign of Augustus were fifty-six in number. And let us see (variant: we see) that in the forty-first year of the reign of Augustus, who ruled after the death of Cleopatra (J), Christ was born. And this same Augustus lived on for fifteen years after the time when Christ was born. And so the resultant periods of years up to the day of Christ's birth and the forty-first year of Augustus, after the death of Cleopatra [actually only twenty-nine years after Cleopatra's death ---- the language here is confusing], come to the total figure of four hundred and thirty-seven years and five months. This means that sixty-two and a half weeks were used up, or the equivalent of four hundred and thirty-seven years and six months, by the day when Christ was born. Then eternal righteousness was revealed, and the Saint of saints was anointed, namely Christ, and the vision and prophecy were sealed, and those sins were remitted which are allowed through faith in Christ's name to all who believe in Him." But what is the meaning of the statement that the "vision and prophecy are confirmed by a seal"? It means that all the prophets made proclamation concerning [Christ] Himself, saying that He was going to come and that He would have to suffer. Hence we read shortly thereafter in this Tertullian passage, "The years were fifty-six in number; furthermore, Cleopatra continued to reign jointly

all these things were the objects of hope, prior to Christ's incarnation, rather than the objects of actual possession. Now the angel himself specified seventy weeks of years, that is to say, four hundred and ninety years from the issuing of the word that the petition be granted and that Jerusalem be rebuilt. The specified interval began in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, King of the Persians; for it was his cupbearer, Nehemiah (Neh. 1), who, as we read in the book of Ezra [the Vulgate reckons Nehemiah as II Esdras], petitioned the king and obtained his request that Jerusalem be rebuilt. And this was the word, or decree, which granted permission for the construction of the city and its encompassment with walls; for up until that time it had lain open to the incursions of the surrounding nations. But if one points to the command of King Cyrus, who granted to all who desired it permission to return to Jerusalem, the fact of the matter is that the high priest Jesus [Jeshua] and Zerubbabel, and later on the priest Ezra, together with the others who had been willing to set forth from Babylon with them, only made an abortive attempt to construct the Temple and the city with its walls, but were prevented by the surrounding nations from completing the task, on the pretext that the king had not so ordered. And thus the work remained incomplete until Nehemiah's time and the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes. Hence the captivity lasted for seventy years prior to the Persian rule. [This last sentence is bracketed by the editor.] At this period in the Persian Empire a hundred and fifteen years had elapsed since its inception, but it was the one hundred and eighty-fifth year from the captivity of Jerusalem when Artaxerxes first gave orders for the walls of Jerusalem to be built. [Actually only 141 years, the interval between 587 B.C. and 446 B.C.] Nehemiah was in charge of this undertaking, and the street was built and the surrounding walls were erected. Now if you compute seventy weeks of years from that date, you can come out to the time of Christ. But if we wish to take any other date as the starting point for these weeks, then the dates will show a discrepancy and we shall encounter many difficulties. For if the seventy weeks are computed from the time of Cyrus and his decree of indulgence which effectuated the release of the Jewish captives, then we shall encounter a deficit of a hundred years and more short of the stated number of seventy weeks [only seventy-eight years, by more recent computation, for Cyrus's decree was given in 538 B.C.]. If we reckon from the day when the angel spoke to Daniel, the deficit would be much greater [actually not more than a few months or a year]. An even greater number of years is added, if you wish to put the beginning of the weeks at the commencement of the captivity. For the kingdom of the Persians endured for two hundred and thirty years until the rise of the Macedonian kingdom; then the Macedonians themselves reigned for three hundred years. From that date until the sixteenth (i.e., the fifteenth) year of Tiberius Caesar, when Christ suffered death, is an interval of sixty [sic!] years [reckoning from the death of Cleopatra, the last of the Macedonian Ptolemies]. All of these years added together come to the number of five hundred and ninety, with the result that a hundred years remain to be accounted for. On the other hand, the interval from

the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to the time of Christ completes the figure of seventy weeks, if we reckon according to the lunar computation of the Hebrews, who did not number their months according to the movement of the sun, but rather according to the moon. For the interval from the one hundred fiftieth year of the Persian Empire, when Artaxerxes, as king thereof, attained the twentieth year of his reign (and this was the fourth year of the eighty-third Olympiad), up until the two hundred and second Olympiad (for it was the second year of that Olympiad which was the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar) comes out to be the grand total of four hundred seventy-five years. This would result in four hundred ninety Hebrew years, reckoning according to the lunar months as we have suggested. For according to their computation, these years can be made up of months of twenty-nine (variant: twenty-eight) and a half days each. This means that the sun, during a period of four hundred ninety years, completes its revolution in three hundred sixty-five days and a quarter, and this amounts to twelve lunar months for each individual year, with eleven and a fourth days left over to spare. Consequently the Greeks and Jews over a period of eight years insert three intercalary months (*embolimoi*). For if you will multiply eleven and a quarter days by eight, you will come out to ninety days, which equal three months. Now if you divide the eight-year periods into four hundred seventy-five years, your quotient will be fifty-nine plus three months. These fifty-nine plus eight-year periods produce enough intercalary months to make up fifteen years, more or less; and if you will add these fifteen years to the four hundred seventy-five years, you will come out to seventy weeks of years, that is, a total of four hundred and ninety years."

Africanus has expressed his views in these very words which we have copied out. Let us pass on to Eusebius Pamphili [the famous church historian, who assumed the cognomen Pamphili in honor of his beloved mentor, Bishop Pamphilus], who in the eighth book of his *Euangelike Apodeixis* [the full title was *Euangelikes Apodeixeos Proparaskeue* or "Preparation for the Demonstration of the Gospel"; the Latin title is *Praeparatio Evangelica*] ventures some such conjecture as this: "It does not seem to me that the seventy weeks have been divided up without purpose, in that seven is mentioned first, and then sixty-two, and then a last week is added, which in turn is itself divided into two parts. For it is written: 'Thou shalt know and understand that from the issuing of the word (command) that the petition be granted and Jerusalem be built until Christ the Prince there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.' And after the rest which he relates in the intervening section, he states at the end: 'He shall confirm a testimony (covenant) with many during one week.' It is clear that the angel did not detail these things in his reply to no purpose or apart from the inspiration of God. This observation seems to require some cautious and careful reasoning, so that the reader may pay diligent attention and inquire into the cause for this division (variant: vision). But if we must express our own opinion, in conformity with the rest of the interpretation which concerns this present context, in the angel's statement: 'From the issuing of the word that the petition be granted and that Jerusalem be built, until the time of Christ the Prince,' we are only to think of other princes who had charge of the Jewish people subsequent to this prophecy and subsequent to the return from Babylon. That is to say, we are to think of the

completed two years over a period of three Passover's. The years of Tiberius' reign from that point onward are to be reckoned at six; then there were the four years of the reign of Gaius Caesar, surnamed Caligula, and eight more years in the reign of Claudius. This makes a total of forty-nine years, or the equivalent of seven weeks of years. But when four hundred thirty-four years shall have elapsed after that date, that is to say, the sixty-two weeks, then [i.e. in 482 A.D.] Jerusalem and the Temple shall be rebuilt during three and a half years within the final week, beginning with the advent of Elias, who according to the dictum of our Lord and Savior (Luke 1) [sic!] is going to come and turn back the hearts of the fathers towards their children. And then the Antichrist shall come, and according to the Apostle [reading *apostolum* for *apostolorum*] he is going to sit in the temple of God (II Thess. 2) and be slain by the breath of our Lord and Savior after he has waged war against the saints. And thus it shall come to pass that the middle of the week shall mark the confirmation of God's covenant with the saints, and the middle of the week in turn shall mark the issuing of the decree under the authority of Antichrist that no more sacrifices be offered. For the Antichrist shall set up the abomination of desolation, that is, an idol or statue of his own god, within the Temple. Then shall ensue the final devastation and the condemnation of the Jewish people, who after their rejection of Christ's truth shall embrace the lie of the Antichrist. Moreover this same Apollinarius asserts that he conceived this idea about the proper dating from the fact that Africanus, the author of the *Tempora* [*Chronology*], whose explanation I have inserted above, affirms that the final week will occur at the end of the world. Yet, says Apollinarius, it is impossible that periods so linked together be wrenched apart, but rather the time-segments must all be joined together in conformity with Daniel's prophecy.

The learned scholar Clement, presbyter of the church at Alexandria, regards the number of years as a matter of slight consequence, asserting that the seventy weeks of years were completed by the span of time from the reign of Cyrus, King of the Persians, to the reign of the Roman emperors, Vespasian and Titus; that is to say, the interval of four hundred and ninety years, with the addition in that same figure of the two thousand three hundred days of which we made earlier mention. He attempts to reckon in these seventy weeks the ages of the Persians, Macedonians, and Caesars, even though according to the most careful computation, the number of years from the first year of Cyrus, King of the Persians and Medes, when Darius also bore rule, up to the reign of Vespasian and the destruction of the Temple amounts to six hundred and thirty.

upputatio as supputatio]. 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. And this, they assert, was the week of which the angel said to Daniel: "And he shall establish a compact with many for one week." For the Gospel was preached by the Apostles all over the world, since they survived even unto that late date. According to the tradition of the church historians, John the Evangelist lived up to the time of Trajan. Yet I am at a loss to know how we can understand the earlier seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks to involve seven years each, and just this last one to involve ten years for each unit of the seven, or seventy years in all.

So much for Eusebius. But Hippolytus has expressed the following opinion concerning these same weeks: he reckons the seven weeks as prior to the return of the people from Babylon, and the sixty-two weeks as subsequent to their return and extending to the birth of Christ. But the dates do not agree at all. If indeed the duration of the Persian Empire be reckoned at two hundred and thirty years, and the Macedonian Empire at three hundred, and the period thereafter up to the birth of the Lord be thirty years, then the total from the beginning of the reign of Cyrus, King of the Persians, until the advent of the Savior will be five hundred and sixty years. Moreover Hippolytus places the final week at the end of the world and divides it into the period of Elias and the period of Antichrist, so that during the [first] three and a half years of the last week the knowledge of God is established. And as for the statement, "He shall establish a compact with many for a week" (Dan. 9:27), during the other three years under the Antichrist the sacrifice and offering shall cease. But when Christ shall come and shall slay the wicked one by the breath of His mouth, desolation shall hold sway till the end.

On the other hand Apollinarius of Laodicea in his investigation of the problem breaks away from the stream of the past and directs his longing desires towards the future, very unsafely venturing an opinion concerning matters so obscure. And if by any chance those of future generations should not see these predictions of his fulfilled at the time he set, then they will be forced to seek for some other solution and to convict the teacher himself of erroneous interpretation. And so, in order to avoid the appearance of slandering a man as having made a statement he never made, he makes the following assertion ---- and I translate him word for word: "To the period of four hundred and ninety years the wicked deeds are to be confined as well as all the crimes which shall ensue from those deeds. After these shall come the times of blessing, and the world is to be reconciled unto God at the advent of Christ, His Son. For from the coming forth of the Word, when Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, to the forty-ninth year, that is, the end of the seven weeks, [God] waited for Israel to repent. Thereafter, indeed, from the eighth year of Claudius Caesar [i.e., 48 A.D.] onward, the Romans took up arms against the Jews. For it was in His thirtieth year, according to the Evangelist Luke, that the Lord incarnate began His preaching of the Gospel (Luke 1) [sic!]. According to the Evangelist John (John 2 and 11), Christ

arkhiereis [high priests] and pontiffs to whom the Scripture attaches the title of christs, by reason of the fact that they have been anointed. The first of these was Jesus [Jeshua] the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and then the rest who had that office up until the time of the advent of our Lord and Savior. And it is these who are intended by the prophet's prediction when it states: 'From the issuing of the word that the petition be granted and Jerusalem be built even unto Christ the Prince there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks.' That is to say, the purpose is that seven weeks be counted off, and then afterward sixty-two weeks, which come to a total of four hundred and eighty-three years after the time of Cyrus. And lest we appear to be putting forth a mere conjecture too rashly and without testing the truth of our statements, let us reckon up those who bore office as christs over the people from the time of Jeshua, the son of Jehozadak, until the advent of the Lord; that is to say, those who were anointed for the high priesthood. First, then, as we have already stated, subsequent to Daniel's prophecy, which occurred in the reign of Cyrus, and subsequent to the return of the people from Babylon, Jeshua the son of Jehozadak was the high priest, and together with Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, they laid the foundations of the temple. And because the undertaking was hindered by the Samaritans and the other surrounding nations, seven weeks of years elapsed (that is to say, forty-nine years), during which the work on the temple remained unfinished. These weeks are separated by the prophecy from the remaining sixty-two weeks. And lastly, the Jews also followed this view when they said to the Lord in the Gospel-narrative: 'This temple was built over a period of forty-six years, and shalt thou raise it up in three days' (John 2:20). For this was the number of years which elapsed between the first year of Cyrus, who granted to those Jews who so desired the permission to return to their fatherland, and the sixth year of King Darius, in whose reign the entire work upon the temple was finished. [Actually the two dates involved are 538 B.C. and 516 B.C., an interval of only twenty-two years.] Furthermore Josephus added on three more years, during which the *periboloi* (precincts) and certain other construction left undone were brought to completion; and when these are added to the forty-six years, they come out to forty-nine years, or seven weeks of years. And the remaining sixty-two weeks are computed from the seventh year of Darius. At that time Jeshua the son of Jehozadak, and Zerubbabel (who had already reached his majority) were in charge of the people, and it was in their time that Haggai and Zechariah prophesied. After them came Ezra and Nehemiah from Babylon and constructed the walls of the city during the high priesthood of Joiakim, son of Jeshua, who had the surname of Jehozadak. After him Eliashib succeeded to the priesthood, then Joiada and Johanan after him. Following him there was Jaddua, in whose lifetime Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, founded Alexandria, as Josephus relates in his books of the *Antiquities*, and actually came to Jerusalem and offered blood-sacrifices in the Temple. Now Alexander died in the one hundred and thirteenth Olympiad, in the two hundred thirty-sixth year of the Persian Empire, which in turn had begun in the first year of the

fifty-fifth Olympiad. That was the date when Cyrus, King of the Persians, conquered the Babylonians and Chaldeans. After the death of the priest Jaddua, who had been in charge of the temple in Alexander's reign, Onias received the high priesthood. It was at this period that Seleucus, after the conquest of Babylon, placed upon his own head the crown of all Syria and Asia, in the twelfth year after Alexander's death. Up to that time the years which had elapsed since the rule of Cyrus, when computed together, were two hundred and forty-eight. From that date the Scripture of the Maccabees computes the kingdom of the Greeks. Following Onias, the high priest Eleazar became head of the Jews. That was the period when the Seventy translators (*Septuaginta interpretes*) are said to have translated the Holy Scriptures into Greek at Alexandria. After him came Onias II, who was followed by Simon, who ruled over the people when Jesus the son of Sirach wrote the book which bears the Greek title of *Panaretos* ("A Completely Virtuous Man"), and which is by most people falsely attributed to Solomon. Another Onias followed him in the high priesthood, and that was the period when Antiochus was trying to force the Jews to sacrifice to the gods of the Gentiles. After the death of Onias, Judas Maccabaeus cleansed the Temple and smashed to bits the statues of the idols. His brother Jonathan followed him, and after Jonathan their brother Simon governed the people. By his death the two hundred and seventy-seventh year of the Syrian kingdom had elapsed, and the First Book of Maccabees contains a record of events up to that time. And so the total number of years from the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, until the end of the First Book of Maccabees and the death of the high priest Simon is four hundred twenty-five. After him John [Hyrcanus] occupied the high priesthood for twenty-nine years, and upon his death Aristobulus became head of the people for a year and was the first man after the return from Babylon to associate with the dignity of high priesthood the authority of kingship. His successor was Alexander, who likewise was high priest and king, and who governed the people for twenty-seven years. Up to this point, the number of years from the first year of Cyrus and the return of the captives who desired to come back to Judaea is to be computed at four hundred and eighty-three. This total is made up of the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks, or sixty-nine weeks altogether. And during this whole period high priests ruled over the Jewish people, and I now believe that they are those referred to as christ-princes. And when the last of them, Alexander, had died, the Jewish nation was rent in this direction and that into various factions, and was harassed by internal seditions in its leaderless condition; and that too to such an extent that Alexandra, who was also called Salina, and who was the wife of the same Alexander, seized power and kept the high priesthood for her son, Hyrcanus. But she passed on the royal power to her other son, Aristobulus, and he exercised it for ten years. But when the brothers fought with each other in civil war and the Jewish nation was drawn into various factions, then Gnaeus Pompey, the general of the Roman army, came upon the scene. Having captured Jerusalem, he penetrated even to the shrine in the temple which was called the Holy of holies. He sent Aristobulus back to Rome in chains, keeping him for his triumphal procession, and then he gave the high priesthood to his brother, Hyrcanus. Then for the first time the Jewish nation became tributary to the Romans. Succeeding him, Herod, the son of Antipater, received the royal authority over the Jews by senatorial decree, after Hyrcanus had been killed; and so he was the first foreigner to become governor of the Jews. Moreover when his parents had died, he handed over the high

priesthood to his children, even though they were non-Jews, utterly contrary to the law of Moses. Nor did he entrust the office to them for long, except upon their granting him favors and bribes, for he despised the commands of God's law."

The same Eusebius offered another explanation also, and if we wanted to translate it into Latin, we should greatly expand the size of this book. And so the sense of his interpretation is this, that the number of years from the sixth year of Darius, who reigned after Cyrus and his son, Cambyses, ---- and this was the date when the work on the temple was completed ---- until the time of Herod and Caesar Augustus is reckoned to be seven weeks plus sixty-two weeks, which make a total of four hundred eighty-three years. That was the date when the christ, that is to say, Hyrcanus, being the last high priest of the Maccabean line, was murdered by Herod, and the succession of high priests came to an end, so far as the law of God was concerned. It was then also that a Roman army under the leadership of a Roman general devastated both the city and the sanctuary itself. Or else it was Herod himself who committed the devastation, after he had through the Romans appropriated to himself a governmental authority to which he had no right. And as for the angel's statement, "For he shall establish a compact with many for one week (variant: "a compact for many weeks"), and in the midst of the week the sacrifice and offering shall cease," it is to be understood in this way, that Christ was born while Herod was reigning in Judaea and Augustus in Rome, and He preached the Gospel for three years and six months, according to John the Evangelist. And he established the worship of the true God with many people, undoubtedly meaning the Apostles and believers generally. And then, after our Lord's passion, the sacrifice and offering ceased in the middle of the week. For whatever took place in the Temple after that date was not a valid sacrifice to God but a mere worship of the devil, while they all cried out together, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matt. 27:25); and again, "We have no king but Caesar." Any reader who is interested may look up this passage in the *Chronicle* of this same Eusebius, for I translated it into Latin many years ago. But as for his statement that the number of years to be reckoned from the completion of the temple to the tenth year of the Emperor Augustus, that is, when Hyrcanus was slain and Herod obtained Judaea, amounts to a total of seven plus sixty-two weeks, or four hundred eighty-three years, we may check it in the following fashion. The building of the temple was finished in the seventy-sixth (here and in the other place read: "sixty-seventh" ---- Migne) Olympiad, which was the sixth year of Darius. In the third year of the one hundred and eighty-sixth Olympiad, that is, the tenth year of Augustus, Herod seized the rule over the Jews. This makes the interval four hundred and eighty-three years, reckoning up by the individual Olympiads and computing them at four years each. This same Eusebius reports another view as well, which I do not entirely reject, that most authorities extend the one [last] week of years to the sum of seventy years, reckoning each year as a ten-year period [reading the corrupt