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JEWISH APOLOGETICS (100)
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Objection #84: Daniel 9:24-27 speaks of two anointed ones.

Brown's short response to this objection:

It is possible that the text does speak of two anointed ones, the first in 9:25 and the second in 9:26. This depends on how the seventy weeks of years are divided This does not present a problem. However, since it is clear that (1) if there are two anointed ones, the second anointed one is the Messiah, and (2) the Messianic era had to be inaugurated before the Second Temple was destroyed, thus pointing decisively to Jesus as the key figure of whom the text speaks.¹

The texts:

Daniel 9:25 "So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

Daniel 9:26 "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

After Brown demonstrates that only one Messiah really works, he concludes:

To repeat our premise, then, we can safely conclude that (1) if the text speaks of two anointed ones, the second of these two is Jesus the Messiah, and (2) if the text speaks of one anointed one, and all the more can we be sure that it refers to our Messiah and King. Honestly, now, can anyone claim that there is one candidate who even remotely displaces Yeshua as the obvious, central subject of the text? I think not.

The most natural way to read the text is that there is one Messiah. However, either way, Jesus is the Messiah. This is the central point. Right? This is the last DDR with respect to Daniel.

¹Michael L. Brown, *Messianic Prophecy Objections—Volume 3*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 109-11. In his book, Brown lists the objection and then gives a short response which is followed by a more developed response. This DDR series, for the most part, tracks the objection and his *short* response after which you will find my comments. I highly recommend his book if you are interested in his longer responses (there is far too much material to include in this series).

For those who are interested in the most recent scholarship regarding the details of the most incredible chronological prophecy in the Word of God, I have included a commentary by

Thomas Ice:

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel

Part VI

by Thomas Ice

I believe that I demonstrated in my previous article that the starting point for the Daniel 9:25 prophecy was the decree of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:5-8, 17, 18) to rebuild Jerusalem. In this article, I hope to show that the decree was given to Nehemiah on March 5, 444 b.c.

The passage under discussion reads as follows:

"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. (Dan. 9:25)

Because there is no need to reinvent the wheel, I want to approach this issue by presenting the two best statements on this matter. First, I will look at Sir Robert Anderson's masterful presentation in *The Coming Prince*. Then, I will present Dr. Harold Hoehner's insightful refinement of Anderson's basic position from *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*.

Sir Robert Anderson

Sir Robert Anderson, a British Brethren, developed a chronology that used a 360-day year, that he called a "prophetic year." Anderson bases this upon the Jewish calendar and the clear implication that the prophetic timetable of Daniel was derived from it as well (i.e., 42 months = 1260 days). Anderson began the 483-year countdown with Artaxerxes' decree that he said was March 14, 445 b.c. (Nisan 1, 445 b.c.) and it culminates in Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on April 6, a.d. 32 (Nisan 10, a.d. 32). Here is Anderson's explanation:

. . . According to the Jewish custom, our Lord went up to Jerusalem on the 8th Nisan, which, as we know, fell that year upon a Friday.

And having spent the Sabbath at Bethany, He entered the Holy City the following day, as recorded in the Gospels. The Julian date of that 10th Nisan was Sunday the 6th of April, a.d. 32. What then was the length of the period intervening between the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and this public advent of "Messiah the Prince" – between the 14th of March, b.c. 445 and the 6th of April a.d. 32 (when He entered into Jerusalem)? THE INTERVAL WAS EXACTLY AND TO THE VERY DAY 173,880 DAYS, OR SEVEN TIMES SIXTY-NINE PROPHETIC YEARS OF 360 DAYS).

From b.c. 445 to a.d. 32 is 476 years = 173,740 days (476 x 365) + 116 days for leap years. And from 14th March to 6th April, reckoned inclusively according to Jewish practice is 24 days. But 173,740 + 116 + 24 = 173,880. And $69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$.

It must be borne in mind here that in reckoning years from b.c. to a.d. one year must always be omitted; for, of course, the interval between b.c. 1 and a.d. 1 is not two years but one year. In fact, b.c. 1 ought to be called b.c. 0; and it is so described by astronomers, with whom b.c. 445 is –444. And again, as the Julian year is 11 m. 10.46 s., or about the 129th part of a day, longer than the mean solar year, the Julian calendar has three leap years too many in every four centuries. This error is corrected by the Gregorian reform, which reckons three secular years out of four as common years. For instance, 1700, 1800, and 1900 were common years, and 2000 will be a leap year.

As valuable as Anderson's work continues to be, I believe that it does contain a few errors, even though this overall approach was a major breakthrough in understanding this part of Daniel's prophecy. The needed corrections have been pointed by Dr. Harold Hoehner of Dallas Theological Seminary.

Harold Hoehner

Dr. Hoehner has questioned the starting and ending times put forth by Anderson. Hoehner advocates the time of Artaxerxes' decree as 444 b.c. and not 445 b.c. Dr. Hoehner explains:

The date of this decree is given in the biblical record. Nehemiah 1:1 states that Nehemiah heard of Jerusalem's desolate conditions in the month of Chislev (November/ December) in Artaxerxes' twentieth year. Then later in Artaxerxes' twentieth year in the month of Nisan (March/April) Nehemiah reports that he was

granted permission to restore the city and build its walls (2:1). To have Nisan later than Chislev (in the same year) may seem strange until one realizes that Nehemiah was using a Tishri-to-Tishri (September/October) dating method rather than the Persian Nisan-to-Nisan method. Nehemiah was following what was used by the kings of Judah earlier in their history. This method used by Nehemiah is confirmed by the Jews in Elephantine who also used this method during the same time period as Nehemiah.

Next, one needs to establish the beginning of Artaxerxes' rule. His father Xerxes died shortly after December 17, 465 b.c. and Artaxerxes immediately succeeded him. Since the accession-year system was used the first year of Artaxerxes' reign according to the Persian Nisan-to-Nisan reckoning would be Nisan 464 to Nisan 463 and according to the Jewish Tishri-to-Tishri reckoning would be Tishri 464 to Tishri 463. . . .

In conclusion, the report to Nehemiah (1:1) occurred in Chislev (November/December) of 445 B.C. and the decree of Artaxerxes (2:1) occurred in Nisan (March/April of 444 b.c.

Therefore, Nisan 444 b.c. marks the *terminus ad quo* of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24-27.

Dr. Hoehner further objects to Anderson's use of the solar year instead of the sabbatical year. Dr. Hoehner also corrects some of Anderson's calculations. Dr. Hoehner spells out his difference in the following:

First, in the light of new evidence since Anderson's day, the 445 b.c. date is not acceptable for Artaxerxes' twentieth year; instead the decree was given in Nisan, 444 b.c. Second, the a.d. 32 date for the crucifixion is untenable. It would mean that Christ was crucified on either a Sunday or Monday. In fact, Anderson realizes the dilemma and he has to do mathematical gymnastics to arrive at a Friday crucifixion. This makes one immediately suspect. Actually there is no good evidence for an a.d. 32 crucifixion date.

In previous chapters in this book it was concluded that Christ's crucifixion occurred on Friday, Nisan 14, in a.d. 33. Reckoning His death according to the Julian calendar, Christ died on Friday, April 3, a.d. 33. As discussed above, the *terminus a quo* occurred in Nisan, 444 b.c. Although Nehemiah 2:1 does not specify which day of Nisan the decree to rebuild Jerusalem occurred, it cannot have

occurred before Nisan 1. . . . it could have occurred on some other day in Nisan.

"Using the calculating method Anderson used, Hoehner comes up with the 476 solar years. This is the difference between 444 b.c. and a.d. 33. By multiplying 476 by 365.24219879 days, comes to 173,855 days, and Hoehner states:"

This leaves only 25 days to be accounted for between 444 b.c. and a.d. 33. By adding the 25 days to Nisan 1 or March 5 (of 444 b.c.), one comes to March 30 (of a.d. 33) which was Nisan 10 in a.d. 33. This is the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. . . . The *terminus ad quem* of the sixty-ninth week was on the day of Christ's triumphal entry on March 30, a.d. 33.

As predicted in Zechariah 9:9, Christ presented Himself to Israel as Messiah the king for the last time and the multitude of the disciples shouted loudly by quoting from a messianic psalm: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord" (Ps. 118:26; Matt.21:9; Mark 11:10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13). This occurred on Monday, Nisan 10 (March 30) and only four days later on Friday, Nisan 14, April 3, A.D. 33, Jesus was cut off or crucified.

The seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. When that is accomplished, Daniel's inquiry will be fully realized for Israel will be back in her homeland with her Messiah.

Dr. Hoehner has put together an airtight case for his understanding of the beginning and ending of the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel's prophecy. Dr. John Walvoord notes, in support of Dr. Hoehner, that "the best explanation of the time when the sixty-nine sevens ended is that it occurred shortly before the death of Christ anticipated in Daniel 9:26 as following the sixty-ninth seven. Practically all expositors agree that the death of Christ occurred after the sixty-ninth seven."

Conclusion

To date, no one has been able to answer the work done by Dr. Hoehner. It is fully supportive of the literal interpretation of Daniel's prophecy and is the only approach that has been demonstrated, thus far, to make the numbers work out. This is why most all those who take this text literally have adopted Dr. Hoehner's view. Those taking other views, like preterists Gary DeMar and Ken Gentry, offer vague generalities when it comes to the number of the seventy weeks prophecy.

A further value of the literal approach of Dr. Hoehner is that this prophecy provides an exact time in which Israel's Messiah was predicted to show up in history. "And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, 'If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. . . . because you did not recognize the time of your visitation'" (Luke 19:41-42, 44). How was Israel to have known the *time* of their visitation? From a literal understanding of Daniel's prophecy. In fact, this prophecy, along with Christ's fulfillment of every other first coming Messianic prophecy proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was Israel's Messiah. Many Jews have come to faith, over the years, as a result of being challenged by this prediction about the time of Messiah's coming. It is clear that a literal interpretation of this passage is demanded by the text itself. Maranatha!

In Christ Alone,

Pastor Don