

indeed it should be if *dabar* is taken here as referring to a human command.⁷

Yet this synthesis has three serious defects:

- 1) Perhaps the strongest objection to the theory is the way it has to interpret the beginning of verse 26: "After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing." Those who present the theory say that this means that when Antichrist assumes power at the beginning of the final 'seven' Christ will lose all power on earth; He will be cut off and have nothing at all.⁸ This interpretation seems to ascribe to Antichrist a power that would even exceed the power of Satan, who can do nothing except as God permits it.
- 2) It is hard to see how the statement that in the second segment there will be a rebuilt city can describe the period between the death of Christ and the coming of Antichrist. The rebuilding of Jerusalem began soon after Cyrus gave his decree and the rebuilt city lasted until its destruction about forty years after the death of Christ. This theory requires that these terms in the description of the second segment be understood as not applying to the physical city involved in Cyrus' decree, but to a spiritual city, the Christian church. This would necessitate a very illogical change of subject in the middle of the prediction and therefore raises serious questions about the whole synthesis.
- 3) The theory takes the numbers "seven," "sixty-two," and "one" as merely indicating general periods of time. Such an interpretation cannot be rejected as impossible, but should not be adopted until a reasonable effort has been made to find a more definite meaning for the figures.

In view of these difficulties we must see whether a better synthesis can be found, but first we should note another point, generally overlooked, where two interpretations are equally possible.