For Anderson's first date Hoehner substitutes Nisan 1, 444 B.C., which he says "was March 4, or more likely March 5 since the crescent of the new moon would have been first visible so late at night (ca. 10 p.m.) on March 4 and could easily have been missed." Then he presents calculations intended to demonstrate that the time between March 5, 444 B.C. and March 30, A.D. 33 is exactly 483 "prophetic years" to the very day.

Yet Parker and Dubberstein,^10 an authority to which Hoehner refers, points out that there is evidence of a month being intercalated in 446 B.C., and therefore gives April 13 as the date of Nisan 1 in 445 B.C. and April 3 as its date in 444, thus raising great doubt about the dates given by either writer. In view of this evidence, even 483 "prophetic years" would reach a time several weeks beyond either date suggested for the crucifixion.

A theory somewhat similar to Anderson's was proposed as early as the third century A.D. by Julius Africanus, the first great Christian chronographer. Africanus made no effort to interpret the three segments of the predicted 70 weeks but simply assumed that the entire period should reach from a decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the time of Christ. Taking the 20th year of Artaxerxes as a starting point he decided that 70 weeks (490 years) would reach fifteen years beyond the time of the crucifixion, and therefore suggested that the years should be considered as lunar years. (Actually, "lunar year" is a contradiction in terms. Months, not years, were originally based upon the moon. Except for the present Mohammedan calendar, a year has always been understood to mean a round of the seasons, caused by the earth's changing relation to the sun.) According to Africanus' calculation there were 475 years between the 20th year of Artaxerxes' reign and the year in which the crucifixion of Christ occurred. Since a well-established system of intercalation was followed in Babylonia and also in Israel, it was easy to figure that during these 475 years 180 months would have been intercalated. Dividing this number by 12 he said that the intercalations would equal 15 lunar years and that therefore the 475 solar years should be considered as 490