

The 70 Weeks Prophecy – The Messiah’s Ministry Predicted

- Purpose:** To prove that Jesus Christ is truly the long awaited Messiah.
- Focus:** The prophecies are the foundation of the gospel of Jesus. Rejecting the prophecies could jeopardize our salvation.
- Introduction** How do we know that Jesus was the Messiah? Today we will look at an *amazing* prophecy that will prove that Jesus of Nazareth is actually the Messiah, and that the Bible can be fully trusted. You will love it!
- The prophecy is found in Daniel 9. Background: Jerusalem destroyed because of Israel’s sins...*
- Dan 9:20-24** Daniel prays for forgiveness. He gets an answer. How many weeks are determined for Israel to finish their transgressions and make an end to sin?
But the time period is symbolic. We need to let the Bible explain itself as to what a day represents...
- Num 14:34** A day = a year (**Ezek 4:6**). 490 years. “All teachers are in harmony that these are year-weeks and not day-weeks, that means, a week encompasses seven years and not seven days.” (Luther, *Schriften* 6:906). God is merciful!
- Jesus alludes to this prophecy when He teaches Peter about forgiveness...*
- Matt 18:21-22** How many times should Peter forgive his brother? 70x7. “Be just as merciful to your brother as I have been to the people of Israel”. Israel got a second chance.
To know when Israel’s time of probation ends we need to know when they start.
- Dan 9:25a** When did the 70 weeks (490 years) start?
The entire command is written in Ezra 7:11-26. In the previous verses we can read when it was given...
- Ezra 7:7-8** When was it issued? 7th year of Artaxerxes Longimanus = **Fall 457 BC**
The prophecy adds more details of the Messiah...
- Dan 9:25** Who is Messiah the Prince? How many years would transpire from 457 BC until the Messiah would come? What date do we get to? 27 AD (No year 0).
This is when the Messiah would come! Does it fit with Jesus?
- Acts 10:38** When was Jesus Anointed to be the Messiah? With what was He anointed?
When did this happen?
- Luke 3:21-23, 1-2** Tiberius 15th year of reign was exactly **27 AD!** Amazing!
Was Jesus aware that this prophecy was fulfilled?
- Mark 1:14-15** What did Jesus preach after His baptism? What time? The 483 year prophecy!
But the prophecy makes even more amazing predictions...
- Dan 9:26a, 27a** What would happen sometime after Jesus’ baptism? What would the Messiah bring to an end at the middle of the last week? Spring 31 AD.
That’s exactly they year when Christ died!
- Matt 27:50-51** What happened when Jesus died? What did it mean? (**Heb 7:26-27, 10:1-10**)
He made an *end* to sacrifices by His own sacrifice. Exactly on time!
What happened at the end of the 70 weeks?
- Acts 7:51-60** Stephen was stoned. The Jewish nation rejected their last chance. The faithful remnant (the Christian Church) took over the election as God’s chosen people and His Commission (**Matt 21:43, 1 Pet 2:9-10**). The Gentiles were grafted in.
The prophecy tells of the consequences of the Jew’s rejection of the Messiah...
- Dan 9:26b, 27b** What would happen to the temple?
Jesus knew it would happen, and wept over the city...
- Luke 19:41-44** Why was Jerusalem and the temple supposed to be destroyed? Because they didn’t know the time! What time? The time when Christ was to visit them – the 70-week prophecy. It was not that they were ignorant. IE: Rabbinical curse.
- APPEAL** The Jews missed the Messiah’s advent because they refused to study the prophecies. Can we make the same mistake as them? Is it your desire to continue to study the prophecies and learn more about Jesus?

APPENDIX

Rabbinical curses

"R. Samuel b. Nahmani said in the name of R. Jonathan: Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the End [the time of the Messiah's advent]." (*Babylonian Talmud*: Tractate Sanhedrin, folio 97b)

"Daniel has elucidated to us the knowledge of the end times. However, since they are secret, the wise [rabbis], may their memory be blessed, have barred the calculation of the days of Messiah's coming so that the untutored populace will not be led astray when they see that the End Times have already come but there is no sign of the Messiah." (Rabbi Moses Ben Maimonides, *Igeret Teiman*, Chapter 3 p. 24)

Closer historical facts concerning each date:

457 BC

Artaxerxes' command was the last of three commands to restore Jerusalem (**Ezra 6:14**). Siegfried Horn concludes: "according to Jewish reckoning, the king's 7th year ran from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 BC ... These documents, taken together with the Biblical statements of Nehemiah and Ezra, lead to the inescapable conclusion that the decree of Artaxerxes 1 went into effect after Ezra's return from Babylon, in the late summer or early fall of 457 BC." (Siegfried Horn, Lynn Wood, *Chronology of Ezra 7*, chapter 5)

27 AD

How old was Jesus when He was baptized? 30 years. What year was Jesus 30? Herod died year 4 BC. If Jesus was born that year, He was about 30 in AD 27. The 15th year of Tiberius Caesar = 27 AD. Caesar Augustus died on August 19 AD 14. Jewish calendar starts October. Tiberius first year was only about a month. Already in second year on autumn AD 14. Fifteenth year starts Autumn AD 27.

31 AD

Jesus was baptized in the fall of 27 AD. There are four Passovers mentioned in Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of John (**John 2:13, 5:1, 6:4, 13:1**). The last one was the one of His crucifixion. This makes His ministry 3 ½ years. The unnamed feast of **John 5:1** is assumed to be a Passover because it is the first pilgrim festival (Exod 23:15-17) that comes after the events described in John 4 when Jesus says that "There are still four months and then comes the harvest" (**John 4:35**). The barley and wheat harvest began right after Passover and was finished by Pentecost when the first fruits were offered (**Lev 23:5-15**). This makes Jesus' statement in John 4:35 around December/January.

34 AD

To date the stoning of Stephen we need to see it in relationship to Paul's conversion that took place around the same time. In Galatians Paul shares His testimony. He tells of his conversion in Gal 1:13-16, and says in **Gal 2:1-4** that he "after fourteen years" went up to Jerusalem to meet with the church leaders to discuss circumcision. Likely this is the same event as described in **Acts 15** that has been able to be dated to about 49 AD. 14 years earlier is 35 AD. 34 AD is therefore a reasonable date for the stoning of Stephen – exactly when the 70-year prophecy expired.

The 70 weeks

