



COUNTDOWN TO THE CROSS

Study 1 The 70 Weeks Prophecy

When God gave instructions to Moses at the beginning of Israel's exodus out of Egypt, he set in motion a continuous calendar based on **seven years**.

Our modern equivalent is called a 'decade'; theirs was called a 'week'. People knew the difference between a week of days and a week of years even though it was the same word.

Read Leviticus 25:1-10 and answer the following questions:

- What name was given to the seventh year? _____
- What name was the great year after 7 times 7 years? _____

These special years became the subject of the prophet Daniel, who used them to count down to Messiah. It was called the **'Prophecy of the 70 Weeks'** and is found in chapter

nine of his book. Read verse 24 and answer: • How many actual years were prophesied? _____

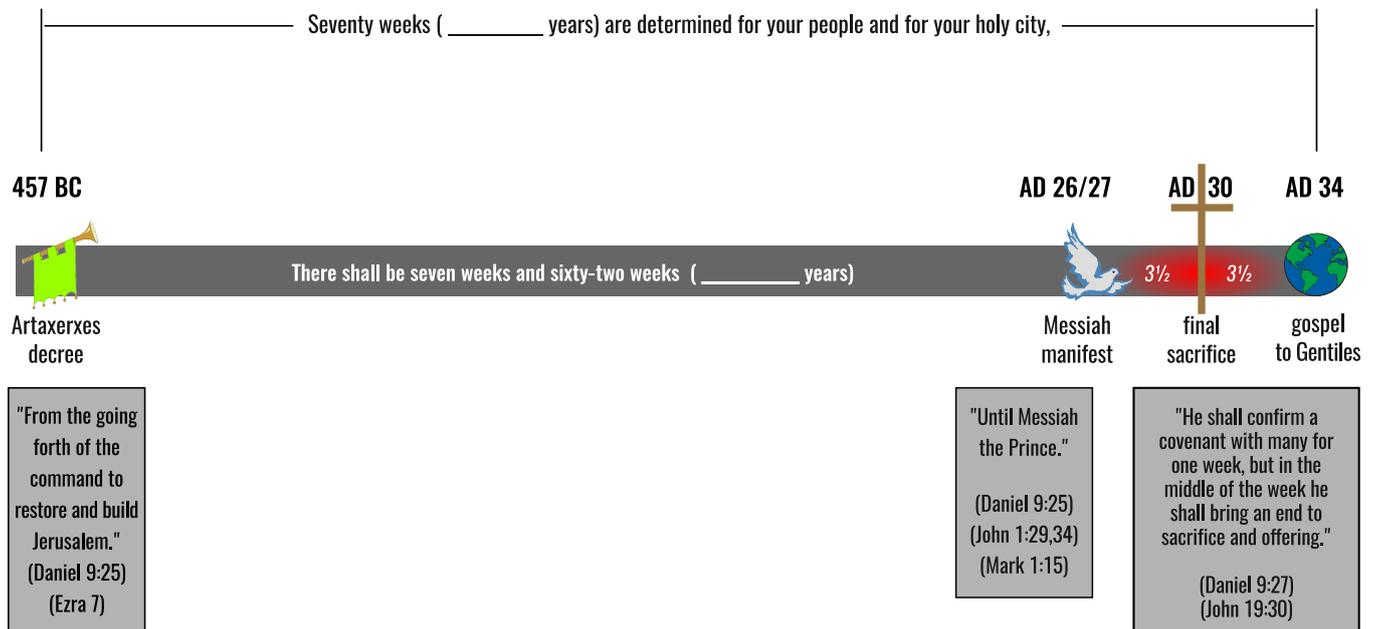
- How many years from the issuing of a decree until the 'Anointed One' comes? (verse 25) _____

WHEN WERE THE SEVENTY WEEKS?

Unfortunately, there are several records of a decree being issued concerning Jerusalem, so the starting point is hard to pin down. Which of these have you heard mentioned as the proper date?

 When Cyrus made a decree in 538 BC. (Ezra 1:1-4)	 When Artaxerxes made a decree in 457 BC. (Ezra 7:7-26)	 When he made another command in 444 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-6)
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This study uses the decree made by Emperor Artaxerxes in **457 BC** because it is the only one that fits the known dates of Jesus' ministry. Write into the diagram below the number of years between the dates. (Note: There is no year zero between BC and AD)



WHAT HAPPENED IN THE 70TH WEEK?

The 70th week lasted from when Jesus was revealed as Messiah in AD 27 until AD 34. (See diagram) Stunning things happened throughout that time and Daniel explains what those things would be. Finish the 3 missing headings from Daniel 9:24.

"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city ...

... 1. TO FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION.

What happened was that up till the Cross, the law required mandatory judgement upon all who transgressed it. After the atonement however - after Messiah met the laws demands - he effectively ended the law for those who believe, because his sacrifice paid the penalty for all transgression over all time. Read Galatians 3:19, 23-25 then fill in the missing words from Romans.

"Therefore, there is now

for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:1-2)

... 2. TO _____

John the Baptist quotes this in John 1:29. Then in the midst of the week it happened. Fill in the missing words from Hebrews 9:26.

"Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to

_____ by the sacrifice of himself."

... 3. TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR INIQUITY.

This clause in Daniels prophecy also happened at the Cross. It is the subject of our next study, '**The Purpose of the Cross.**'

... 4. TO _____

Speaking of it, Paul says, *"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."* (2 Cor. 5:21) It is wonder enough that God does not impute sin to the believer's account, but what is even more astonishing is that He actually credits to our account the righteousness of Christ instead. And the promise is now! It is not a dream for some future age to come. Additional scriptures include Isaiah 53:11, Romans 4:5-8, 5:18-19, Hebrews 10:14)

... 5. TO SEAL UP VISION AND PROPHECY.

The body of prophecy that was being sealed was the covenant first made with the Patriarchs that in their seed, *"all the families of the earth would be blessed."* (Acts 3:13-25) Christ submitted himself to the law in order to confirm this covenant as explained in Romans 15:8-9. *"For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name."* This was fulfilled at the end of the seventieth week when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles at Cornelius' house.

... 6. AND TO _____

To understand this phrase properly we need to consider the tabernacle of Moses and see how it was anointed originally. Indeed, the structure was anointed with holy oil along with every item of furniture, and finally the priests were anointed as well. (Leviticus 8:10-12, 33-35) Therefore, 'to anoint the most holy' means to consecrate Christ and his New Testament temple.

Please note that the consecration of the priests took **seven days**. This represents the years required to anoint God's temple not made by man's hands, that is, Jesus and His church. They go together. He is the foundation; we are the stones. He is the head; we are the body. It is a single holy temple extending from heaven to earth, anointed during the span of the 70th week. Accordingly, Jesus was anointed at his baptism, and then the temple was raised up after his sacrificial death. Next, the Church was anointed at Pentecost, and finally the completed Church was anointed when the Gentiles were grafted in. Thus, the 'most holy' is indeed a temple, though not a physical building. Nor is it solely the person of Christ, but is the anointed manifestation of Christ together with His Church.