

“70 WEEKS ARE DETERMINED UPON YOUR PEOPLE . . .”

Here is one of the most remarkable prophecies in Scripture giving the very year of Christ's baptism and death over 550 years before the historic events actually took place?

You can read about it in the book of Daniel, chapter 9. First of all you should understand that prophecy was always given on the 'day/year' principle, that is, that one day of prophecy was to represent an actual year in time. This you may see by reading passages like Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 or just check in the RSV or TEV translations.

The angel comes to Daniel and says that God will give another 70 weeks for Israel to turn from its sins. Seventy weeks of seven days each week would be 490 prophetic DAYS, which is 490 YEARS. At the time of Daniel's vision Jerusalem was in ruins and the time of prophecy was to begin "at the going forth of the decree; to build Jerusalem." There were three decrees; all are recorded in the book of Ezra (Ezra 1:1-4; 6:7 – 12; 7:11-26). The last decree issued by Artaxerxes in 457BC was the most complete decree establishing not only the right to worship in Jerusalem but provided also for the re-constitution of the Hebrew state.

Now 490 years from this decree of 457BC brings us to 34AD (taking into account the year to be added when passing from BC to AD, as there is no year '0'.) This is when Israel's time of probation would end and the gospel would then go to the Gentiles. However, the angel went on to say that after the 7 weeks and 3 score and 2 weeks (i.e. 69 weeks or 483 years) the Messiah would come. Messiah [(Hebrew) in Greek it is 'Christ'] means "anointed", and this is what took place when Jesus was baptised and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove alighted upon Him - see Luke 3:21-23 and 4:14-21. So, 483 years after the starting-point of 457BC we come to 27AD, the very year of Christ's baptism. Then 'in the midst of the week' - half a week is $3\frac{1}{2}$ prophetic days, which is $3\frac{1}{2}$ years - "Messiah was cut off", or died. So 31AD, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years after His baptism CHRIST DIED FOR THE WORLD, THE VERY TIME THE PROPHECY FORETOLD!

