

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks – 9

In order to demonstrate the fulfilment of the time factor in the prophecy of the seventy weeks there needs to be certainty regarding dates. In this regard, God set in motion the earth revolving upon its axis to establish the 24-hour day, making the earth's orbit around the sun its year, also the moon - all *"for signs and for seasons, and for days and years"* - **Genesis 1:14**.

- Isaac Newton, the renowned scientist, opened up an understanding of the laws of motion, providing a knowledge of the theoretical basis used much later by NASA to place man on the moon and bring the astronauts back home successfully. Not only could the motions of the Moon, planets, stars and galaxies be predicted, but their **historical positions** could also be calculated.

This fact can be useful in pinpointing historical dates, e.g., the king Herod who attempted to destroy the child Jesus - **Matthew 2**. Josephus recorded that a few days before Herod's death there was reported an eclipse of the moon, later calculated to have occurred in the spring of 4 BC.

- Isaac Newton, who also applied his mind to a deep study of the Bible, regarded those Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, as another of the works of God. In his study of the prophecy of Daniel he pinpointed the **dates of the Persian emperors**. The historical dates of interest in the Seventy Weeks Prophecy relate to **Daniel 9:25**, *"... from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince..."*

The overturning of David's throne - **Ezekiel 21:24-27** - occurred over a period of years - see **2 Kings 17 to 25**. Similarly, the steps leading to the restoration of Judea were spread over a period of years. We have already noted that in **Ezekiel 4:6** in Ezekiel's enacted prophecy, each day represented a year. Adding the seventy "weeks" = 490 years to each date results in terminal dates around the first advent of Christ.

- **2 Chronicles 36:22-23** reports the decree of Cyrus in the first year of his reign, which was in 538 BC. 490 years after that was 48 BC, when those who were looking for the fulfilment of Daniel 9 would receive an early alert that Messiah's appearance was approaching.

Ezra 4:24; 6:8-12 records the decree of Darius in the second year of his reign, 520 BC in which the work of restoration was re-started after the local population had managed to get it stopped for a time. 490 years later was 30 BC, providing another alert to those who were waiting for the appearance of Messiah.

- **Ezra 7:7, 11-27** tells about the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus in the seventh year of his reign, 457 BC, in which he commanded that (a) All those of the people of Israel who volunteer to go up to Jerusalem were released to go. (b) They were permitted to take with them all the money which had been donated for the cost of worship. (c) They were allowed to take back the gold and silver articles which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away from the temple.

In addition, (d) The neighbouring rulers were not to hinder the worship but were to assist the Jews. (e) No taxes were to be charged to any of those Jews connected with the temple services. (f) Ezra was to appoint magistrates and judges to both administer and teach the Law of Moses, with imperial permission for punishment of any non-observance of that Law. **This meant that Jerusalem was to be restored as a separate Jewish polity, and to have the Law of Moses as its constitution.**

- 490 years after this was AD 34. This was 3½ years after Jesus, *"in the middle of the [last] week"* - **Daniel 9:27** - had been by his enemies *"delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate"* when they *"killed the Prince of life"*, after which *"the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus,"* when he was *"declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead"* - **Acts 3:13-15; Romans 1:4**. More next time, God willing.

