

The Tribulation of Daniel's 70th Week

By way of review... In 539 BC, a new ruler took over Babylon, a Medo-Persian royal by the name of Darius. This change of power (from Babylonian to Persian) caused Daniel to search Jeremiah's scroll to see if there was prophetic significance to the capture of Babylon. Daniel knew that Persia would fall to Greece, and Greece to Rome. His question: **"What about Your people?"** Jeremiah had prophesied that Israel would lay barren 70 years (Jeremiah 25:12; 29:10). Would Israel cease to exist as a nation? Not yet. The LORD gives Daniel a timeline of when YHWH'S covenant with Israel would come to an end, and when the entire world would be invited to *rest in the Messiah* and the Shabbat that He gives His people.

The LORD says to Daniel *"seventy (sevens) have been decreed for your people and your holy city"* (9:24). The countdown (480 years) began *"from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem"* (9:25).

There are *four decrees by Persian kings regarding the Jews returning to Jerusalem in the Bible.*

1. 536 BC - The decree of King Cyrus (Persia) - II Chronicles 36:22-23, Ezra 1:1-4 leading to Ezra 2:64-67.
2. 519 BC - The decree of King Darius the Great (Persia) - Ezra 6:1, 6:12 which reinforced Cyrus' decree.
3. **458 BC** - The decree of Artaxerxes I - **Ezra 7:11-26** which gave **Ezra "everything" to rebuild the city.**
4. 444 BC - The decree of Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah - Nehemiah 2:1-8.

The *"decree to rebuild and restore Jerusalem"* (9:25) was issued in 458 BC by Artaxerxes I "Longimanus" (465-424 BC). King Artaxerxes was the son of Xerxes, and his decree is found in **Ezra 7:11-26**. The decree was issued in *"seventh year of the king"* (458 BC), the year the countdown of **Daniel's 70 Weeks** begins. King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra *"everything he requested"* to restore and repair Jerusalem, and fourteen years later (444 BC), Nehemiah was surprised that the work had not yet been completed (Neh. 2:1-3).

458 BC - Artaxerxes' decree (commandment) issued for the Jews to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

For 7 weeks (**49 years**) the people worked in *"times of distress"* to rebuild the walls and the moat around Jerusalem (the time period of **Ezra** and **Nehemiah**) with *"sword and trowel"* in alternating hands. Thus, Jerusalem was rebuilt by **409 BC (49 years or 7 weeks** from 458 BC).

409 BC - Begins the second time period mentioned in **Daniel 9:25**, the *threescore and two weeks, (62 weeks)* which translates to **434 years**. This time period is what we call the inter-Testament time (that is, "between the Testaments"). During these dark ages for Israel there arise religious groups like the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Sanhedrin, and other religious inventions of man.

26 AD - Is exactly 483 years (69 weeks) from Artaxerxes' decree to *"rebuild and restore Jerusalem."* Jesus was baptized by John in 26 AD and began his **three- and one-half year public ministry.** *"From the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks (that is 69 weeks or 483 years)"* (9:25).

The 70th Week of Daniel begins at JESUS' baptism and continues for the next 7 years! *There is no break!*

1. *"He (the Prince) will make a **firm covenant** with many for one week..."* (Jesus taught the Kingdom!) Jesus said, *"This is the blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many"* (Matthew 26:28).
2. *"The Messiah will be cut off and have nothing"* - a reference to the crucifixion (Is. 53:8; Lev. 7:20)
3. *"And the people of the prince to come will come to destroy the city"* - these people are agents of the Prince (see the parallel in the parable of Jesus in Matthew 22:7). The Romans came to destroy.
4. *"And its end will come with a flood; even to the end of the city and sanctuary"* (see Matthew 24:1-6).
5. *"Desolations are **determined**"* (see Matthew 23:38). The destruction of Jerusalem was 40 years later.
6. *"In the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering"* (Jesus ended it in 30 AD).
7. 3 ½ years AFTER the resurrection of Christ the first New Covenant martyr of faith (Stephen) died.