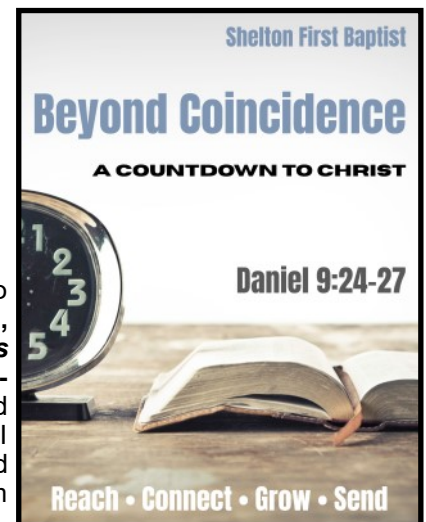


Beyond Coincidence | Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Daniel 9:24-27

DANIEL'S PRAYER

**9:1-5**, “1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— 2 in the first year of his reign, I, **Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.** 3 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek *Him* by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, 5 *we have sinned...*”



THE VISITATION

**9:20-23**, “ 20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in *my* extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. 22 He gave *me* instruction and talked with me and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to **give you insight with understanding.** 23 “At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell *you*, for you are highly esteemed; **so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.**”

THE PROPHECY

**9:24-25**, “**24 Seventy weeks** [ ] have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy *place* [=SALVATION!]. **25** “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem **until Messiah the Prince** there will be **seven weeks and sixty-two weeks** [=69 WEEKS = \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS]; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.”

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

**Ezra 7:7-11**, “7 And there went up also to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king, some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants. 8 And Ezra [the leader of the rebuilding campaign] came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. 9 For on the first day of the first month he began to go up from Babylonia, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the good hand of his God was on him....11 This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest... [insert decree!!!!]

**Who Made the Decree?** King Artaxerxes

**When?** Since King Artaxerxes began his reign on July 465 BC *and Persians only counted the first full year of a King's reign as their 1<sup>st</sup> year* (464-463 BC), his 7<sup>th</sup> year would be \_\_\_\_\_ B.C.

## CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

Add \_\_\_\_\_ years to \_\_\_\_\_ B.C., it takes you to \_\_\_\_\_ A.D.

## THE ASTONISHING FULFILLMENT (Mark 1:14; Luke 3:1-23\*; 19:41-44)

## THE ASTONSHING SALVATION

*What about the very last week/7 years?*

26 “Then after the sixty-two weeks [+ the previous 7 weeks -> sometime after the 483<sup>rd</sup> year] the Messiah will be **cut off and have nothing** [JESUS], and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined [ROME]. 27 “**And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering** [JESUS]; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate [ROME cf. Luke 19:41-44; 21:5-24].

*What about the last 3 ½ years?*

## THE ASTONISHING ODDS

In the book *Science Speaks*, the odds are calculated for one person accidentally fulfilling just 8 (out of the 300) Messianic prophecies. The result? A staggering 1 in 10<sup>17</sup> — that's a 1 followed by 17 zeros. Imagine covering the \_\_\_\_\_ with silver dollars to a depth of **two feet** — that would take 10<sup>17</sup> coins. Now mark **one** of those coins with a black X, then mix them all up. Blindfold a person, let them wander the state as far and as long as they want, and allow them to pick up **just one coin**. The odds that they would find the marked one on their first try are the same as **one person fulfilling just 8 of the hundreds of prophecies about Christ — by chance**.

\*“In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar... the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness...” **Tiberius Caesar began his reign in AD 13AD** The **15th year of Tiberius** would be around 26/27 AD

### Small Group Discussion Guide Beyond Coincidence: *Daniel's Seventy Weeks* Text: *Daniel 9:24–27*

## Getting Started

### 1. Context Check

- Who is Daniel, and where is he living during this part of the Bible?
- Why were Daniel and other Jews taken to Babylon in the first place?

## 2. Reading the Signs

- What was Daniel reading when he realized the exile was almost over (Daniel 9:2)?
- How did Daniel respond to what he read in Jeremiah?

## Digging In: The Prophecy

### 3. Big Picture

- According to Daniel 9:24, what are the six things God promised would happen by the end of the “seventy weeks”?
- Why are these promises a bigger deal than just returning to the land?

### 4. Doing some Math

- What does a “week” mean in Daniel 9:24?
- How many total years make up 70 weeks of years? What about 69 weeks?

### 5. Starting the Clock

- When did the countdown begin? Explain the circumstances and dating. Ezra 7:9-28.

### 6. Jesus & the Prophecy

- When you add 483 years to 457 B.C., you get about 27. A.D. What key event happened soon before or soon after 27 A.D. (cf. Luke 3:1; Mark 1:14-15)?
- Why did Jesus say things like “The time is fulfilled” (Mark 1:15)? What time?

### 7. The Cross in the Prophecy

- Read Daniel 9:26. What does it mean that “the Messiah will be cut off”?
- What major event happened about 3½ years after Jesus began His public ministry?
- How does Jesus’ death fulfill the prophecy of “ending sin” and “making atonement”?
- Verses 26 & 27 also predicts that God will use Rome to do what He used Babylon to do. Discuss how Jesus predicts this from Daniel 9 in the following passages: Luke 19:41-44; 21:5-24.
- What happens around the 490th year?

### 8. The Odds

- The odds of just 8 messianic prophecies coming true by chance is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. What was the illustration of these odds?
- Why do fulfilled prophecies matter to your faith? How do they help you trust the Bible more?

## Wrap Up: Prayer & Response

- Thank God for being a promise-keeping God who controls history.
- Ask for open eyes to recognize Jesus and not miss Him.
- Invite God to transform your heart—just like Daniel prayed for his people.