



# Adventist Enterprises Newsletter

August 2010

This month has seen one of the worst disasters in Pakistan as thousands of villages have been flooded; at the same time in Moscow there have been forest fires and it has been reported that they have had the hottest weather for a thousand years. We must remember those affected by these disasters. It is clear that the weather patterns are changing, the earth is unsettled, could this be a sign of Jesus' second coming (Luke 21:25-31)?

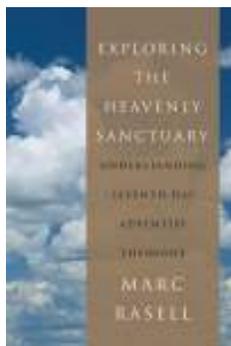
It is important to know and understand Bible prophecy so we can make sense of what is going on around us. We know that God loves us (1 John 4:10, 16; Romans 5:6-8); these disasters are a temporary disruption leading to His eternal kingdom when there will be no more sin, suffering and death (Revelation 21:1-4).

One of the best Bible prophecies is the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 which points to the year AD 27 for the coming of the Messiah (anointed one) and AD 31 for his crucifixion. The prophecy begins with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. There were several decrees but the one in the 7th year of King Artaxerxes as recorded in the Book of Ezra (ch. 4, 7) led to complaints by the enemies of the Jews that the walls of the city were being rebuilt. This decree also allowed the city a measure of legal independence with powers to appoint magistrates and enforce Jewish law. This decree is dated to 457 BC by a number of ancient documents. The Messiah was prophesied to come 69 weeks after the decree and be cut off in the middle of the last week. It is clear that we are not dealing with literal weeks. Even before the Christian era Jewish expositors recognised this principle. The 70 years of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10) were 10 sabbatical years, and the 70 weeks are equivalent to 10 jubilees or 490 years; this concept is found in Jewish writings from the 2nd century BC including Qumran writings and the Book of Enoch. Although these books are not considered canonical or inspired, it does show there was an expectation of the coming of the Messiah based on the 70 week prophecy of Daniel from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD.

This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus who began his ministry in the autumn of AD 27 as indicated by Luke's reference to Tiberius' 15th year (using the local dating system). The Gospel of John records four feasts, three of which are Passovers, so we have a 3-4 year ministry. Jesus was "cut off" in the spring of AD 31 as a guilt offering (Isa. 53:10), to make atonement for the sins of the world. Daniel indicates that the death of the Messiah brings sacrifices and offerings to an end (Dan. 9:26-27). The phrase "cut off" has connotations of cutting a covenant (Gen. 15:18); Jesus ushered in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). For more information please see my book, exploring the heavenly sanctuary.

Your brother in Christ

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