

# Musings from the Manse-Week 7. 3/05/20

Musings number seven already! It's been a long lime in lock down. I am almost at the stage of wanting to trim my beard (Jill says please do) remember the competition with Ollie the dog in week one?

Many people are getting restless and frustrated. When will it end? The novelty has indeed begun to wear off. So, in these challenging times there needs to be things to distract us. It was a poignant moment on Tuesday when we marked a time of silence and reflection in contrast to our Thursday at eight loud raucous thanksgiving ritual. We also celebrated Captain, no Colonel Tom's 100 birthday. And Boris had a bouncing baby or rather his partner Carrie did. So, its been a very mixed week news wise. It is uplifting however to see the good news stories among the tragedy.

In my sermon last week, I mentioned the conversation between the donkey and Shrek as they were travelling to the Kingdom of Far, Far Away. **Are we nearly there yet?** The donkey kept on asking. There is a terrific demand on the government and their medical advisors at the moment to predict when the lockdown will end. Just when will we get back to normal? What will normal be? Are we nearly there yet? It is going to be crucial to get the timing right. Too soon and the virus can take hold again. Too cautious and the economy suffers even more. Either way people will be affected; from health issues to financial crisis. This hunger and demand for a glimpse into the near future reminded me of how we study prophetic insights of the Bible. What is prophesy? Prophesy [*a verb*] to say that a specified thing or event will happen sometime in the future.

I am going to look at just one prophesy from the Old Testament today. It is very relevant to this season of Easter. In 538 B.C. Daniel wrote the following bold prediction: 538 B.C.!!!

*"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 of years and sixty-two weeks of years"* (Daniel 9:25).

People have often been puzzled by the times referenced in Daniel. In this prophecy, Daniel is claiming that there will be 69 weeks of years

between the issuing of a decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the appearance of the Messiah. Now keep in mind that this bold prediction came 538 years before Christ was born. I haven't got space here to reference all the historic evidence to make this work so you will have to trust me a little, but it does all add up I promise.

Through Nehemiah's writing we know March 5, 444 B.C. was the day on which the decree was issued to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Now let's remember this date, March 5, 444 B.C. and take a look at the appearance of the Messiah. You may recall that the Gospels tell us that Jesus, on numerous occasions, had forbidden his followers to make him known as "the Messiah". because his "hour has not yet come" (John 2:4, 7:6). However, on March 30, 33 A.D., when he entered Jerusalem on a donkey, the whole multitude of his disciples shouted, "**Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord**". And Jesus said, "If these become silent, the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:38-40). This was the day on which Jesus was publicly declared the **Messiah**. Now let's compare the date of the decree (March 5, 444 BC) with the date of Jesus' declaration (March 30, 33 AD). Before we begin, we need to clarify the fact that the Jewish prophetic year was composed of twelve 30 day months. In other words, the ancient evidence indicates that the Jewish prophetic year had 360 days, not 365 days. Since Daniel states 69 weeks of seven years each, and each year has 360 days, the equation is as follows: **69 x 7 x 360 = 173,880** days. the number of days in the period from March 5, 444 B.C. (the twentieth year of Artaxerxes) to March 30, 33 A.D. (the day Jesus entered Jerusalem on the donkey) can be determined at this point.

The time span from 444 B.C. to 33 A.D. is 476 years (remember that 1 B.C. to 1 A.D. is only one year). And if we multiply 476 years x 365.2421879 days per year (corrected for leap years), we get the result of 173,855 days. Now let's add back the difference between March 5 and March 30 (25 days). What is our total? You guessed it, **173,880** days, exactly as Daniel predicted it, phew! So now we have the benefit of knowing that Jesus was the Messiah. Who was crucified, buried and rose again. In his time Jesus fulfilled over 300 OT prophesies. .... Are we nearly there yet?