

I.N.I.

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Daniel 9:20-27

Sept. 12, 2010

In Christ Jesus, in Whom all history centers, and to Whom all prophecy points, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

This morning's sermon text is an outline,

an **OUTLINE OF GOD'S SALVATION TO MANKIND.**

But there is one big difference between this outline and any of the outlines we would ever write and that is---this one was written before the events even took place, before it even happened. Therefore it is a prophetic outline, and because it is prophetic, it is not easy to determine exactly what is meant. But by searching the Scriptures, the answer, the meaning becomes clear. For God clearly tells us that Scripture interprets Scripture!

Our text concerns itself with a time span of 70 weeks, lit. 70 sevens. The question is, is this an indefinite number of time, or a literal time of 70 years times 7? The number 7 in the Hebrews is a heptad (a period of seven years), kind of like our decade (a period of 10 years). It appears that as we study the chronology of Scripture we find that God not only told the Old Testament Israelites where and by whom Jesus would be born; how He would suffer and die; but from Daniel 9 He is telling them exactly when the Messiah would begin His ministry and when He would be cut off.

According to our text, the angel Gabriel came to Daniel and revealed to him God's Salvation of Mankind. This was in direct response to Daniel's beautiful confession, his prayer of repentance that we heard in our first Scripture reading this morning. Daniel asked the LORD to forgive him and the Lord's people. He said, **HEAR, FORGIVE, LISTEN AND ACT! FOR YOUR SAKE, O LORD!** And even before he was done praying the LORD sent Gabriel to reveal to Daniel how and when God would act on the behalf of mankind.

Daniel was told that in the space of 70 sevens the Salvation of mankind would be accomplished! If one takes those numbers literally 70 x 7 years would be 490 years. But when does this 490 year period begin? God clearly states this in vs. 25; **KNOW THEREFORE AND UNDERSTAND, THAT FROM THE GOING FORTH OF THE COMMAND TO RESTORE AND BUILD JERUSALEM UNTIL MESSIAH THE PRINCE, THERE SHALL BE SEVEN WEEKS AND SIXTY-TWO WEEKS;**...

The beginning point then was the decree from King Cyrus that the Israelites could return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city and the temple of God. This happened in the 70th year of exile. Now the Israelites were free to return home. From that point in time, from that decree of Cyrus to the coming of the Messiah would be 7 sevens and 62 sevens. Two separate periods of time, or lit. 483 years. During the first period of time the 7 sevens the temple would be rebuilt and then at the end of the 62 sevens the Messiah would come. According to historical records King Cyrus issued his decree in 457 B.C. Jesus was Anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism which signaled the beginning of His public ministry when He was 30 years old. This would be 487 years. But we must remember that Jesus was really born around 4 B.C. This brings us to exactly 483 years after the decree or to 26-27 A.D.

But even more important than the time period were the events. Did you notice that in God's Outline He passes over the important event of Christ's birth? He does so for good reason. Jesus' birth was indeed important, but His birth did not accomplish our salvation: His being cut off--His death and resurrection did. In God's outline He emphasizes only the most important points. Jesus being anointed and half a

seven later being cut off. It is Christ's crucifixion that rises even above His birth. Every Christmas we mention that the cradle is important—it signifies Jesus birth, His coming in human flesh and blood as one of us; but rising above the cradle, looming larger than the cradle is the **CROSS!** The one and only reason for the **CRADLE**, for His birth, was His **DEATH** and resurrection for all of mankind.

The LORD lists in our text 6 things that will happen in the middle of the 70th seven. We have separated them into two points.

1) THINGS THAT WILL BE REMOVED

2) THINGS THAT WILL BE FULFILLED

Vs. 24 again reads, **SEVENTY WEEKS ARE DETERMINED FOR YOUR PEOPLE AND FOR YOUR HOLY CITY,**

1) TO FINISH (RESTRAIN) THE TRANSGRESSION,

2) TO MAKE AN END OF SINS,

3) TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR INIQUITY.

These are the three things removed. Let's touch on them for a moment. These things will be removed by Jesus' being cut off from the living.

TO FINISH (RESTRAIN OR WITHHOLD) THE TRANSGRESSION AND TO MAKE AN END OF SIN. The word transgression literally means "rebellion or falling away." It is a strong word for sin. But at Christ's death this type of sinful activity, willful rebellion against God will be checked or restrained. Remember Genesis 3:15 God's promise to Adam & Eve of deliverance and salvation. What will happen? Jesus will have His heel bruised, He would die on the cross, but Satan would have his head crushed, his authority, his power over mankind will be destroyed. An escape has been made through Christ. Jesus is the one who **AT THE END OF THE AGES, APPEARED TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF.**

But has sin come to an end? Isn't sin still a very evil presence and powerful force in our lives and in the world? Yes, it is. It infects every one of us. Yet its power has come to an end; its sting has been removed. Sin can no longer condemn us. Paul literally shouts in Rom. 8, **WHO SHALL BRING A CHARGE AGAINST GOD'S ELECT? IT IS GOD WHO JUSTIFIES. WHO IS HE WHO CONDEMNS? IT IS CHRIST WHO DIED, AND FURTHERMORE IS ALSO RISEN, WHO IS EVEN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, WHO ALSO MAKES INTERCESSION FOR US.**

As a result of Christ's work, sin's work in man's heart has been checked, Satan's power and authority has been crushed, the damage sin has done has been undone. Scripture says **THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST; HIS SON CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN!** and again it says, **YOUR SINS HAVE BEEN CAST INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA AND ARE REMOVED AS FAR AS EAST IS FROM THE WEST,** and again Scripture says, **THE LORD SHALL REMEMBER THEM NO MORE.** Finally Paul declares boldly in I Corinthians 15: **O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING? O HADES, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? THE STING OF DEATH IS SIN, AND THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW. BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

The third point is **TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR INIQUITY.** In the first two points the LORD is speaking of sin's damning power being removed, here He says that by Christ's death our sins are paid for in full, atoned, covered, pardoned. Reconciliation, peace, a oneness has been made between us and Holy God. The divine "cover-up" of the Old Testament was the sprinkling of the lamb's blood on the mercy seat. Christ sprinkled His blood upon the cross and covered, atoned for our sins.

Three different words are used in these verses for sin-

TRANSGRESSION (rebellion)

SIN (to miss the mark)

INIQUITY (wickedness)

These 3 words well represent in their ugliness and horror the full nature of that curse that was brought upon us and which separated us from God. But through Christ's death that curse is abolished. Through Jesus being cut off, transgression, sin and iniquity has been removed, brought to an end and atoned for.

But the LORD tells Daniel; and us that there's more. Through Christ's death things also have been fulfilled.

1) EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BROUGHT IN.

Through Jesus' death for us we are not just cleansed and washed of our sins, so that we now stand before Him empty, but Christ fills us with His Righteousness. With Christ's perfect life and shed blood covering our sinful hearts we stand before God in perfection, not our own, but in Christ's. Paul states, **BUT NOW A RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD APART FROM THE LAW, HAS BEEN MADE KNOWN, TO WHICH THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS TESTIFY. THIS RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD COMES THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS TO ALL WHO BELIEVE.**

Can we stand on that last great Day of Judgment with any righteousness or perfection of our own? **NO WAY!** The one who thinks he can, Scripture calls a **DAMNED LIAR!**

Since this righteousness has now been given to us by Christ, there is no more need for prophecy or visions such as Daniel had. And that is the second thing fulfilled

2) REVELATIONS HAVE COME TO AN END!

The Old Testament prophecies finished with Christ, the fulfillment. Jesus said **DO NOT THINK THAT I HAVE COME TO ABOLISH THE LAW OR THE PROPHETS. I HAVE NOT COME TO ABOLISH THEM BUT TO FULFILL THEM.** All of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ's coming; His perfect life of obedient love; His sacrificial death on the cross; His resurrection from the dead and His Ascension into heaven have all been fulfilled and have come to pass.

The last thing to be fulfilled is

3) ANOINTING THE MOST HOLY.

The Most Holy Place was in the middle of the temple where God dwelt with the Ark of the Covenant. Today the **MOST HOLY PLACE** is the **CHURCH**---His Church of believers. But it is not a building or a place--it is people, you and I and all believers. It is God's presence and rule in our hearts through His Word and Spirit. The anointing of the Most Holy therefore took place 50 days after His resurrection on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples in a special way and the New Testament Church of believers was born.

All of this was prophesied to Daniel and all of it has come to pass. Even the prophecies in the last 2 verses concerning the ruler who will come and destroy the city and the temple like a flood have been fulfilled. Forty years after Jesus' death and resurrection in 70 A.D. the Roman general Titus attacked and leveled that once magnificent city and temple in Jerusalem. The Lord Jesus by means of His sin-offering, being sacrificed for us has put an end to all sacrifices and offerings. No more would the people need to bring lambs, goats and bulls, for the real sacrifice had come. The Covenant has been confirmed, there was therefore no need for the temple; no need for any more sacrifices. Since the Jewish people continued in their rejection of the Lord Jesus the fulfillment of this prophecy took place and the temple and the city was laid to ruins.

God began this message to Daniel by speaking through the angel and saying **I HAVE NOW COME FORTH TO GIVE YOU SKILL TO UNDERSTAND; THEREFORE CONSIDER THE MATTER (pay careful attention), AND UNDERSTAND THE VISION (listen to the message).**

That same directive is being given to us today. When we come to God's Word and use it, by reading

and studying it on our own, hearing it preached in church, learning it in Bible Class it gives us insight and understanding; wisdom about Christ and about all that He has done for us--His perfect life of obedience, His perfect sacrificial death as payment for our sins, and His glorious resurrection as victory over all our enemies.

But we need to pay careful attention too, we need to take heed to consider the matter and understand the vision for it is a matter of life and death. Daniel listened and paid careful attention and believed. Unfortunately many of the Jews of Jesus' day did not. Today there are many who have not really heard the message, they think they know all about Jesus, but what they know is not this message, this revelation of a Savior slain and risen for them.

That is our calling to get the message out. Mission work is simply reaping the fruits of what Christ has already done. His is the victory. He rules even now. It is not up to us to win the world for Christ. He's already won the victory. We need to just get the message out, proclaim the Good News that the victory is already ours, the battle is already won in Christ; Satan has been defeated, sin has been removed; death has been vanquished; the doors of hell have been shut; the doors to heaven are opened to all who believe in Christ. We are simply called to proclaim that and then the Holy Spirit will do the work on the hearts of those who hear.

May we be moved by the Good News of Christ's sacrifice for us to give of our time in personal witnessing to others, to give of our money in supporting mission work throughout our country and across the world, and to give of our energies in speaking to one another here at Peace Thru Christ. Why? So that all will be able to do what David wrote in our pre-service Psalm---**TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD! BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO TRUSTS IN HIM!** We proclaim this Gospel message of Jesus so that all will know that Jesus lived and died for them and rose again so that they too can understand and believe and be saved.

The Apostle Paul wrote **THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, EVEN IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART.** You and I have tasted the goodness of our Lord, may we be led by the Spirit to bring that spiritual food of God's Word to others so that they too can be led by the Holy Spirit to **CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS AND BE SAVED.**

Amen.