

THE KING OF KINGS

DANIEL 9:20-27

OUR KING IS CRUCIFIED FOR US



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

How do we know that Christianity is true and all other religions are wrong? I was asked that question this morning in one of the Sunday school classes. I gave a few answers, but as I was studying this passage again this afternoon, I realized that fulfilled prophecy is one of the greatest proofs for Christianity. No other religion comes close in terms of predicting the future. Daniel 9:20-27 is one of the most detailed Old Testament prophecies, and also one of the hardest to understand.

BACKGROUND

Be faithful in faithless times because:

- Our King Cares for us (Daniel 1)
- Our King Communicates with us (Daniel 2:1-30)
- Our King Conquers for us (Daniel 2:31-49)
- Our King Commands us (Daniel 3)
- Our King Condemns the Proud (Daniel 4:1-33)
- Our King Converts the Lost (Daniel 4:34-37)
- Our King Calculates Spiritual Weight (Daniel 5)
- Our King Closes Lions Mouths (Daniel 6)
- Our King Concludes History (Daniel 7)
- Our King Crushes the Antichrist (Daniel 8)
- Our King Covenants with Us (Daniel 9:1-19)
- Our King is Crucified for Us (Daniel 9:20-27)

Daniel 9 so far

- God's covenant calls us to confess (9:1-15)
- God's covenant calls us to Christ (9:16-19)
- God's covenant reveals a crucified Christ (9:20-29)

While Daniel is reading his Bible and praying, the angel Gabriel reappeared and promised to give him **insight and understanding** (22). Indeed, as soon as Daniel started praying for mercy, mercy was on its way with an explanation of Daniel's salvation through the Messiah.



Who is this Messiah? This Christ? How can he save me?



1. THE COVENANTER WILL CUT OFF SIN

Seventy Sevens

Seventy weeks [sevens] are decreed about your people and your holy city (24).

In previous sermons we noted how apocalyptic books like Daniel were full of figurative language. Here's another example. The Bible uses 'seven' as a figure of perfection, and 'ten' as a figure of completion. Therefore, 'seventy sevens' ('sevens' is a better translation than 'weeks') is a perfect and complete period of time (7x10x7). Just as forgiving 'seventy times seven' is a figure for complete and perfect forgiveness (Matt. 18:22), so 'seventy sevens' is the 'decreed' period in which the greatest work of God for his people is brought to complete perfection.

Six Events

What is this greatest work of God? God's greatest work is salvation from sin, which Gabriel describes with three negatives and three positives (we'll come to the numbers in a moment).

The Negatives (24).

- He will **finish the transgression**: 'Finish' means 'control.' Sin will be brought under control so that it no longer reigns to the same extent.
- He will **put an end to sins**: 'Put an end' means 'seal' or 'lock.' Sin will be securely sealed up and locked up.
- He will **atone for iniquity**: 'Atone' means 'cover.' Sin will be covered not covered up.

The Positives (24).

- He will **bring in everlasting righteousness**: This righteousness comes from outside of us and is eternal in origin and duration
- He will **seal both vision and prophet**: 'Seal here means 'authenticated.' God's Word will be accredited, attested, and authenticated by these events.
- He will **anoint a most holy place (or, 'most holy one')**: Anointing was the way to qualify someone for massive responsibility. God will qualify and enable His Son, the 'Holy of Holies' for his central role and huge responsibilities in this great work of redemption.

CHANGE YOUR STORY WITH GOD'S STORY

If sin is your greatest problem, here is the greatest solution. In Jesus, God can finish it, end it, cover it, and give perfection instead of it. God anointed Christ to authenticate his message of salvation.

JESUS IS GOD'S GREATEST SOLUTION
TO YOUR GREATEST PROBLEM



How can Christ cut off my sin?



2. THE COVENANTER WILL BE CUT OFF

Gabriel has told us *what's* going to happen. Now he tells us *how* and *when* it will happen. He divides the 'seventy sevens' into three phases.

7 Sevens = a medium period of time (25).

Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven Sevens (25).

This period began when the Persian king Artaxerxes gave the command to rebuild Jerusalem. This restoration and rebuilding occurred under Ezra and Nehemiah (@460 to 410 BC).

62 Sevens = a long period of time (25).

...to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven Sevens and sixty-two Sevens (see marginal note for this alternative translation). It shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time (25).

The medium period of seven Sevens is followed by a long period of sixty-two Sevens. This lengthy period began at the end of the medium period of time when Jerusalem was rebuilt and restored (@410 BC). It finished with **the coming of an anointed one, a prince**. This is a reference to Christ's coming, especially the beginning of his public ministry (@30 AD). These sixty-two Sevens were a tumultuous and painful time in Israel's history

1 Seven = relatively short period of time (27).

And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing (26).

Compared with the previous two periods, this is a relatively short time and describes the few years of Christ's ministry (@30-33 AD) with a focus on its painful ending. In the seventieth Seven, Christ will be **cut off**, killed, ended. **And shall have nothing** indicates how defeated this Anointed One will be. Other translations put it this way: **Messiah will be cut off, but not for himself (NKJV)**. This gives us a clue that he suffered this for the benefit of others. He accepted defeat so others could be given success.

CHANGE YOUR STORY WITH GOD'S STORY

Five hundred years before it happened, Daniel predicted the what, the how, and the when of Christ's death with remarkable detail and accuracy. Does that not strengthen your faith in God and his Word?

CHRIST WAS CUT OFF
BY SIN AND FOR SIN



How can I be sure Christ's cutting off cuts off my sin?



3. THE COVENANTER WILL CUT THE COVENANT

And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week (27).

During this short period of time, the Messiah will cut off sin by being cut off, and in the process will confirm the covenant of Grace. 'Cut' is a verb used throughout the Old Testament for violent death and making a covenant. Old Testament covenants were enacted and confirmed by the cutting of a sacrifice. So common was this sacrificial cutting and shedding of blood that the most common word for making a covenant is 'cutting a covenant.'

During a short period of time, the Messiah will be cut as a sacrifice in order to cut (confirm) the covenant with many. His being cut, cuts the covenant. His cutting stops all other cutting. His cutting cuts off all other sacrificial cuttings. **And for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering (27).** In the middle of the seventieth Seven, Messiah will cause the whole temple worship to cease, to be rendered unnecessary.

Verses 26 and 27 have a similar pattern. Both begin with descriptions of how Christ would end sacrifice. Both end with descriptions of what happened when the Jews did not accept that Jesus's sacrifice replaced all others. Because the Jews did not accept Christ's sacrifice or Christ as their temple, and continued to put their trust in their own sacrifices and in their temple, God sent the judgment predicted in these verses by Gabriel.

The temple system did not actually cease until Jerusalem was desolated by Titus in 70 AD, but that was really just the outward manifestation of what had already happened in God's eyes. In God's eyes, Christ's death rendered the sacrificial system unnecessary and over. So, although the Jews continued to reject Christ's sacrifice, God viewed this an abomination and therefore decreed the abomination and desolation of the Temple. He used Titus until he had no further use for him.

CHANGE YOUR STORY WITH GOD'S STORY

Rejection of Christ is rejection of God's covenant and will result in God's rejection of you. If you continue to put your trust in your religious works, then you are an abomination to God and destined for judgment. But if you accept God's covenant, you accept the Conventer was cut off for your sin and therefore God delights in you and approves of you.

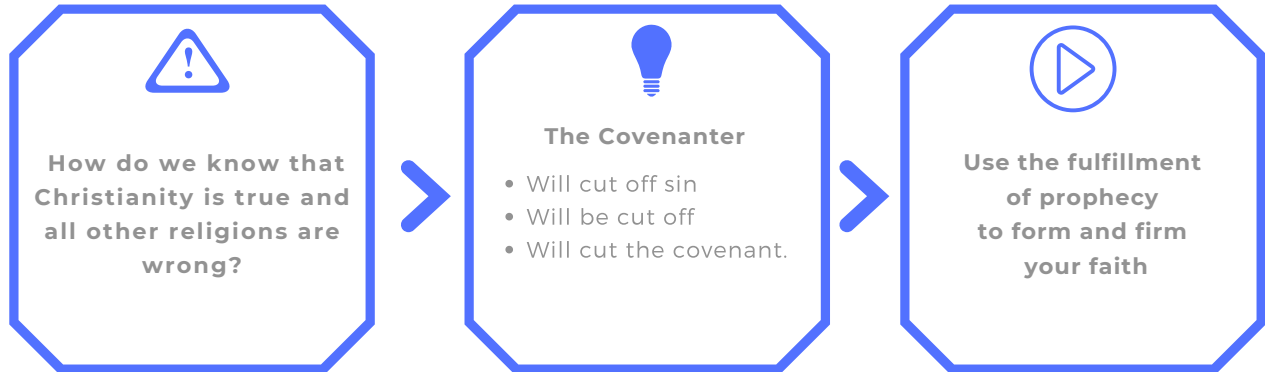
THE COVENANTER WAS CUT
TO CUT THE COVENANT



Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story



CONCLUSION



PRAYER: Faithful and true God, form and firm my faith with the cement of fulfilled prophecy in Christ. Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do we know that Christianity is true and all other religions are wrong? How would you answer?
2. What other Old Testament prophecies help to prove the Christian faith?
3. What did you think this passage meant before this sermon?
4. What did you learn about Christ's death from these verses?
5. How would you use this passage to help someone troubled by their sin?
6. What do you learn about the fate of those who reject Christ?

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