

The link for the video from last week is here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_xsth20rJU

We continue in Daniel 7 by picking up where we left off. Verse 13 again switches back to the scene in heaven, during the time when the little horn is judged.

Daniel 7:13–14

¹³ I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴ "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

We now come back to the vision of things in heaven. Daniel 7:13 is the most quoted verse from Daniel in the NT. That this personage is called the Son of Man gives us the idea that He is human. But the term "like a Son of Man" tells that He is more than a mere human.

There are three aspects to the first part of verse 13, that all play together to give us some indication of who this Son of Man is. Normally, we would understand the phrase "son of man" as referring to a human being, as in God's addressing of Ezekiel as "son of man." First, Daniel describes this personage whom he saw as "like a Son of Man." Since this Son of Man is said to be "like" a Son of Man, this seems to indicate that He is more than just a human entity. Second, the phrase "One like a Son of Man ... coming with the clouds of heaven" has an additional clue. What Daniel saw is that this One was coming on the clouds of heaven. Ancient Jewish rabbis believed that only absolute deity could come in the clouds of heaven. This would mean that this personage was human in appearance but divine in nature; and thus they believed this person was the Messiah. Perhaps they ascertained this from Psalm 104:3 ...

He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters; He makes the clouds His chariot; He walks upon the wings of the wind;

Isaiah 19:1 also alludes to this as well. In any event, it was believed that that only absolute deity can come on the clouds of heaven. Most expositors see this personage as none other than the Lord Jesus. What is the evidence for this? It comes from Jesus Himself. He referred to Himself as the Son of Man all throughout the gospels. The term Son of Man is a direct reference to Daniel 7:13 and thus the term is primarily a reference to Jesus' deity; not His humanity. Finally, He is coming. That basic concept ... that He is coming ... or He is the coming One ... is also spread throughout the scriptures. Often times a NT reference to this concept in Daniel 7 is presented as a substantive participle, lit. "the coming One." In this context, His coming refers to none other than the Second Coming.

Daniel tells us that the Son of Man "came up to" the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. It should be emphasized that this verb translated "came up to" does not have any translational characteristics, as in ... "I came up 20 feet to join dad on the roof to help with the shingles." It does not mean translation from one place to an elevated other place ... and thus any idea that this is referring to the ascension of Christ into heaven during His first advent must be rejected on lexical grounds. The word has more of a horizontal spatial understanding ... "I came up to Dave to ask him a question."

Now Daniel mentions two things about this Son of Man ... He was coming in the clouds ... and He was presented before the Ancient of Days. Nothing else is said. It seems like, as a result of this presentation, HE was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom. This is certainly the added detail of how the stone that struck the image in Daniel 2 finally "grew" into a kingdom. Notice that this kingdom includes every people, nation, and language ... i.e., like the four Gentile kingdoms that were before it (which ruled over the entire *known* world), this last kingdom would exercise rule over the entire existing world. The one detail here in chapter 7 that is not in chapter 2 is the king of this kingdom. He was given the kingdom; therefore, He will be the king of this kingdom of God.

One of the significant passages in the NT which highlights the fact that the Son of Man is viewed by Jews as the Messiah is Matthew 26:64. Here Jesus is before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest directly asks Him if He is the Christ. Jesus replied:

"You have said it *yourself*; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

What was the High Priest's response to Jesus statement? The High Priest tore his robes. Why? He understood that Jesus in this statement was claiming to be the Messiah, and that implied Jesus was claiming absolute deity for Himself.

Daniel finally directly links the coming kingdom to what Daniel said in chapter 2 concerning that kingdom. It will be an everlasting kingdom which will not be destroyed. Since there can only be one everlasting kingdom, the equivalency of the kingdoms of Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 is now established. Again, how long is the coming kingdom? Forever! The 1000-year reign in Revelation is the kick-off party for the kingdom in Daniel 2 and 7, which is an eternal one.

In summary, the few verses before the interpretation gives us a picture of the final period of time prior to the destruction of the little horn and the end of the fourth kingdom. These events depict a time that involves the final stages of the fourth kingdom, the rise of the little horn, and his destruction in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ ... and then ... the kingdom! Later, we will discover that this entire last time frame is condensed into a 7-year period.

One last comment. It is often suggested by non-dispensationalists that the concept of the premillennial return of Christ and a subsequent physical kingdom on earth is only taught in the first half of Revelation 20 and nowhere else in scripture. And because it is only in Revelation 20 (they presume), and Revelation is to be interpreted allegorically because of its many symbols (again, they presume), the entire concept of a physical earthly reign of the Messiah is, in their opinion, a faulty view. This week, we have started to put all that nonsense to bed once and for all.

The simple fact is that premillennialism is taught all throughout the OT scriptures. We saw that it is a necessary result of the promise made to Abraham, it is a conclusion of the Davidic covenant, it is taught all through the prophets of the OT, and it will be clearly seen here in the rest of Daniel ... We have a fourth beast with ten kings, the little horn, the coming of the Son of Man in conjunction with the destruction of the little horn, and then the kingdom. Premillennialism is clearly taught here in Daniel 7.

This concludes the vision section of the chapter. Daniel is now given details of the interpretation from a presumed angelic being.

Daniel 7:15–18

¹⁵ "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. ¹⁶ "I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ 'These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who* will arise from the earth. ¹⁸ 'But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'

Here is where we need a little assumption. The vision part of the chapter has just concluded and it has ended with a scene from heaven; namely, the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven and the receiving of the kingdom. Daniel mentions that he was distressed at what he had seen and naturally he had many questions. And he then mentions that there was "one who was standing by" and it is at this juncture that Daniel asks for the meaning of what he had just seen. It is important now that we take heed to what the angel tells Daniel, for this will solidify our preunderstanding of the vision. Daniel says "he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things."

The first thing the angel tells Daniel is something we have suspected since the image of chapter 2. These four beasts that Daniel saw are four kings which will arise from the earth. Recall back in verse 3 that these beasts were "coming up from the sea ..." Now we understand that these beasts represent kings, and from the discussions in chapter 2 (You Oh King are that head of gold ... after you, another kingdom ...) these kings rule over four kingdoms. The king in many ways is representative of his kingdom.

Now notice that the topic of discussion *appears* to change here. Not only is the angel still on topic, but he actually is giving us a contrast to the four beasts. These four kings will come upon the human scene and receive a kingdom in which they rule the world, each in their time. But ... "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever and ever." The angel is still on the topic of coming kingdoms and he ends with the final kingdom of God.

It is interesting that the Son of Man is not mentioned in this verse. From verse 14 we know that He will rule over that kingdom, but in some way His people (the saints or holy ones of the Most High) shall receive/possess that kingdom. Think about what God promised to Abraham ... He promised the Abraham would possess the promised land but he died before he could take possession

of it. Therefore, this verse 18 is one of the significant fulfillments of OT prophecy. The possession of the land, and kingdom, by Abraham.

Daniel then presses the angel for more information about the fourth beast. Here we learn things about that fourth empire that have not been previously revealed.

Daniel 7:19–22

¹⁹ "Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, *and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet,* ²⁰ *and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates.* ²¹ "I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them ²² until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

Now, we must take care to notice a few things that Daniel mentions here that he has not mentioned before in the vision part. First, he mentions that the fourth beast had claws of bronze. Is there an allusion to something else here since Daniel specifically mentions the claws are made of bronze. If so, it would have to be something concerning the previous kingdom (third beast which parallels the belly and thighs of bronze in Nebuchadnezzar's image). Since there is nothing else mentioned, and the immediate context concerns "devouring, crushing, and trampling" ... this is likely just a contextual detail concerning the destructive power of the fourth kingdom. What does a beast use his claws for? Ripping and tearing of his prey to pieces for consumption.

Second, Daniel mentions that, concerning the ten horns, three of them fell before the other one. What is the usual meaning of fell? It can mean the intentional or unintentional slipping of someone ... "But these three, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, fell into the midst of the furnace ..." Here we would assume unintentional lol. But it can also mean "fall by violence," which seems to be the meaning here ... to fall off because of external pressure to be removed from its place. Certainly, if these horns represent kings, and we will see that in just a minute, this one king will displace (presumably in power and ruling authority) three others.

Third, Daniel mentions that the little horn "was larger in appearance than its associates." Earlier, Daniel said that while he was contemplating the ten horns that were already in place, he saw a little horn come up from among the others. How do we harmonize the little horn in vs. 8 with the description of its size later in the vision interpretation? It seems that we are to understand this difference by the passage of time. It would be a natural progression ... the ten horns exist in this fourth kingdom, an eleventh horn, a little one, comes on the scene and uproots three of the horns, and eventually this horn becomes the largest among all the remaining horns.

Next comes another detail which has not been seen yet. The horn was "waging war against the saints and overpowering them." This would have surely alarmed Daniel as there could be no other understanding of the term "saints of the Most High" that was meant that his people Israel. What is clear depicted here ... is that once this little horn rises to power, presumably by the dispensing of the three other kings, he will begin to persecute the Jews and he will have a great deal of success. And we pause to consider what Daniel is now aware of.

In this future fourth kingdom, there will come a time when the ruler over this kingdom will persecute the Jewish people, and he will presumably kill many of them. This certainly caused Daniel great distress. Why? Because up until now, the visions and interpretations involved the destruction of the fourth kingdom followed by kingdom of God. Now we understand that during the reign of this little horn, and before the destruction of the fourth Gentile kingdom, there will be a time of persecution for the Jewish people that is likely to surpass anything thus far in history. (OK, I inserted that comment knowing a little more scripture needs to be brought to bear. We have several theological and eschatological concepts that need to be brought to bear; for example, the Time of Jacobs Trouble/Birth Pangs, Day of the Lord, etc.)

Now the next detail is one in which something is missing. This persecution is said by the angel to go on "until the Ancient of Days comes and judgment was passed ..." That word "until" implies some time frame by which this persecution fits into the entire series of events leading up to the establishment of the kingdom. However, there is no indication what that time duration is! Here is where we have to look forward a few verses, and to the next sections of Daniel, namely, chapter 9 – 12, that will explicitly

give us the timeframe for how long this persecution will last. We will find out later, and we have not had any indication of this duration thus far, that the total time being talked about for all these events to occur will be seven years.

It is also interesting that the wording in verse 22 suggests that it is the Ancient of Days that comes and executes the judgment on the little horn. We have already concluded that the Ancient of Days is a reference to God the Father. Very interesting! Here we have a little tension in the text, and we occasionally have to deal with some measure of tension in the text, as we understand from our knowledge of the Second Coming that it will be the Lord Jesus that comes to execute judgment. Are there passages that suggest that it is God the Father that will execute this final judgment? Yes, there are.

Consider the quotation of Psalm 110:1 used in Acts 2 and in Hebrews 10. In Acts 2, Peter is preaching the gospel on the day of Pentecost, explaining the manifestation of the Spirit that has occurred before the Jewish people. Picking up in verse 33 we have

³² "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. ³³ "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. ³⁴ "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, ³⁵ UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

Notice a few things. Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father. God the Father has declared to Jesus to remain at His right side until HE (God the Father) dispenses with His (Jesus) enemies. Likewise, Rev. 3:21 shows two things ... Jesus is currently sitting on the Father's throne, and His throne is distinct from the Father's throne. Those who believe that Jesus is now ruling and reigning in a Davidic sense on His throne are badly mistaken. Jesus will not occupy His throne until after the Second Coming (Matt. 19:28, 25:31, Luke 1:32, Heb. 2:8).

In Hebrews 11 we have a similar idea ...

¹¹ Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; ¹² but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, ¹³ waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

Hebrews 11 indicates that the Lord Jesus is currently sitting at the right hand of the Father, awaiting the time when all his enemies are a "footstool for His feet." The imagery of the footstool seems clear enough.

We could also go into the major and minor prophets to see the overwhelming evidence that it is the Lord God Almighty who gathers the nations together for final judgment before the Messianic age. So, while we admit there is some tension in the text of Daniel 7 here, there is not that much. We habitually encounter these tensions. The text teaches that the Ancient of Days will execute judgment on the little horn. Other places in the Bible teach that God the Son will execute judgment on the little horn and the nations. Since the Bible teaches both, they are both true and we are to believe them both. Does the Bible teach predestination? Yes. Does it teach man's responsibility to respond in faith to the gospel? Yes. We believe them both with the understanding that some items in the scriptures have a measure of mystery.

However, in this case there is not a whole lot of mystery. In fact, some expositors will relieve the tension in the text by viewing the Ancient of Days here in verse 22 as a reference to Jesus Himself. While you might view this as a theological cop-out, consider how we interpret Isaiah 9:6 ... here quoted from Handel's Messiah ...

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Somehow, we don't have as much tension here as we do in Daniel 7 lol.

Back to the text. Now in verse 22 it is clear that the time for the reception of the kingdom comes AFTER the destruction of the little horn. This is a critical aspect of the vision; for it dispenses with many alternate views of the end times.

Daniel 7:23–27

²³ "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. ²⁴ 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. ²⁵ 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ²⁶ 'But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. ²⁷ 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

The first interpretive detail here is the angel tells Daniel that this fourth beast will devour the whole earth. This is where we get the idea of an entire world kingdom during the time of the end. Since the little horn himself rules over this kingdom, we tend to view this as a one-world government or rule. Second, it is now clear that the ten horns are ten kings and the little horn is another one that will subdue three of the kings. Again, there is mention of his boastings; only this time the object of his boastings is apparent. He is speaking out against the Most High, thus committing blasphemy and this is potentially when the Jewish people recognize that the little horn is not aligned with them for their benefit.

Another interesting aspect of the little horn is that he will intend to make changes to times and the law. How would he make changes to time? What is meant here by changing times? There certainly could be many aspects; we merely need to look no further than what our own government is trying to administer. Perhaps the abolishment of religious holidays on the calendar, the calendar itself being replaced, the number of workdays in the week, etc. Who knows. Changes in the law would most certainly apply to religious law; the criminalization of the Judeo-Christian faith. We can certainly see these days the propensity to criminalize the preaching against sinful activity (which would be labeled as "hate speech") that is deemed permissible today.

Now we have our first indication of the time duration of some of these events. The grouping of events, namely, blasphemy against God, persecution of the saints, changing of times and laws, now has a timeframe associated with it. The angel says these things listed above will be given to the little horn for "time, times, and half a time." We are unsure exactly what this means in this context; however, we will see that this will indeed refer (with the help of Dan. 9 and other passages) to three and a half years.

The next verse tells us of the judgment that will come upon both the little horn and his final Gentile kingdom. The word "then" is certainly a time marker ... then the kingdom will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One. The focus is now on the One who will rule in the kingdom. "His kingdom," is a critical aspect here. Who is implied in His? Well, normally we would seek the nearest singular antecedent in the text, but in this case the nearest is the little horn. But we know he cannot be implied here because he was destroyed lol. It could only mean the Ancient of Days, and again we understand this to mean God the Son. Notice also that the ending phrase implies that all will serve and worship Him. Recall that this is why the interpretation for the Son of Man cannot be the nation of Israel OR a mere man; because all nations will worship Him and worship is only intended for God.

The interpretation of Daniel 7 has indeed filled in many details lacking both in the vision/interpretation of Daniel 2 and the vision section of Daniel 7. We now know that during the final days of the fourth Gentile kingdom a ruler will arise and take charge of the entire world. He will begin to make fundamental changes in human laws and blaspheme the God of the Bible. Along with that blasphemy, he will make enemies of the Jewish people and begin to persecute them. The amount of time for these events is three and a half years.

Daniel 7:28

²⁸ "At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself."

The entire vision ends and Daniel finds himself alarmed and looking like a ghost. He decided to keep these things to himself ... at least until he wrote them all down for us in the pages of his book.