

**Daniel**  
**The King of Beasts (Part 2)**  
**Selected Scriptures**  
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There are a few places in Scripture where in God's goodness we are allowed to see the curtains of the divine throne room drawn back and to glimpse into the very presence of God Himself. Isaiah chapter 6 is one of those texts; Ezekiel chapter 1, where we see that glorious vision of God; Revelation chapters 4 and 5 where, again, John ushers us in a vision into the throne room of God. Another of those magnificent passages is here in Daniel chapter 7. Daniel 7, as we discovered last time, is the very heart of Daniel's prophecy. It is the most important chapter in the entire book. And it is one of the most important chapters in the entire Old Testament, because it provides one of the clearest overviews of human history and its culmination in the kingdom of our Lord to be found anywhere in the Scripture.

As Daniel unfolds the theme of his prophecy, which is God's sovereignty over all of human history (individuals, nations and empires), he includes for us two chapters that are parallel. Chapters 2 and 7 both walk us through the same, essential information. They both describe a series of successive kingdoms that will dominate world history. Daniel 2 describes it from man's perspective, and it is this magnificent image of a man, larger than life in great metals of value. That's man's perspective of the empires of human history, but in chapter 7 we get God's view of human history and its empires. And what Daniel sees from God's perspective are beasts: devouring, destructive, ravenous beasts.

Just to remind you of what we've seen so far as we look at the king of beasts—and, obviously, that's an intentional play on words. These are the beasts, but tonight we meet the king over all of the beasts, the empires of our world. It begins with a vision that Daniel had in verses 1 to 14 of four beasts. This is where we find ourselves. We've already noted the vision's setting in verse 1. Notice, "It was in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon." This was the year 553 BC, about 15 years before the events of Daniel chapter 6 and the lion's den. So we've gone back in time for this vision. "It was in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon [notice in verse 1,

that] Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed.” One night, during that first year, he was asleep, and in his sleep he had a dream. And in that dream he had a vision. Verse 1 says, “Then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it.”

The vision consists of four great beasts, each of them representing a great empire or world kingdom. And that’ll become clearer when we get to the interpretation that comes later in the chapter. But just to give you an overview, these four beasts in verse 2 through 8 are these. The first beast we meet in verse 4 is the Kingdom of Babylon. (They correspond to the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in chapter 2.) The second beast is the Empire of Medo-Persia in verse 5. The third beast is Greece in verse 6. And the fourth beast in verses 7 and 8 is Rome. It follows Greece. It’s clear that Daniel is describing the Roman Empire.

And in verses 7 through 8, notice, he describes this fourth beast as “dreadful... terrifying and extremely strong.” With its “large iron teeth” it consumed everything in its path. It “devoured.” That is, it completely consumed other nations. It “crushed.” The Aramaic word is “shattered” or “broke in pieces.” And whatever was left, notice, it “trampled down... with its feet.” It was completely and utterly destructive. This kingdom would be unlike all the ones that went before it, because it would be more powerful, more terrifying, more destructive, and more widespread in its influence.

But then we notice this in verse 7: “It had ten horns.” Now these ten horns are identified clearly for us in the interpretation down in verse 24. Notice it says, “As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise.” So ten kings represented by these ten horns. Horns in the Scripture are always power. So ten kings will arise out of the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire, and will have some connection to it.

Now this fourth beast with its ten horns fascinated Daniel. Verse 8 says, “While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them.” Suddenly another horn appears among the other ten horns or ten kings. And this other horn or this other ruler, notice, starts out little but quickly grows in power. Verse 8 says, “And three of the first

horns were pulled out by the roots before it.” This new ruler surpasses the others in power very quickly. Verse 8 says he will uproot; that is, he will violently overpower or overthrow three other kings. Verse 24 says it plainly: he subdues three kings and their nations.

Verse 8 says, “And behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.” Eyes are the primary instruments through which most of us observe and learn. So this will be a king with extreme intelligence, keen insight, profound cleverness and worldly wisdom. His mouth will utter great boasts. Literally, “great things.” Verse 25 tells us these are blasphemies against the God of heaven.

Now who is this man? Well, as we discovered last time—and I’m not going to trace you back through all of the arguments—this man, this ruler, this little horn who becomes big is still in the future. How do we know that? Because the federation that he oversees, the empire that he controls—as we will see even tonight—will ultimately be destroyed by the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the kingdom of our Lord. So then, this little horn must be the man we meet in other places called the Antichrist: a powerful, political world ruler during the Great Tribulation.

Now that’s what we have seen so far. Tonight, Daniel’s vision continues to unfold, and we come to one of the most important passages in the Old Testament. We’ve seen the four beasts. Tonight we see the Ancient of Days in verses 9 through 12. Now glance at your Bibles and you’ll notice, first of all, that verses 9 through 10 and verses 13 and 14 are in the form of poetry in the Aramaic. They are poems celebrating these great realities: one about the Ancient of Days, and the other (we’ll see) about the Son of Man.

Now in verse 9, this awesome, terrifying scene begins to unfold as Daniel watches. He says, “I kept looking until thrones were set up.” As Daniel watched, in the throne room of heaven thrones are set in place. Notice, surprisingly, the plural: “thrones” Clearly, God Himself will sit upon the great throne of the universe. The Ancient of Days will occupy the great throne, but what are these other thrones? Amazingly, these thrones—Are you ready for this?—are for us.

Listen to Luke 22:30. Jesus, speaking to the disciples, He says, “You will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Now you might say, well, that’s just the apostles; that’s not us. Listen to 1 Corinthians 6:2: “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?” Revelation 3:21, Jesus says, “[To] he who overcomes [that’s every Christian], I will grant him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” Revelation 20:4 takes us into the scene of heaven and says,

Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. [Who are these people?] And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God [these are tribulation saints], and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

They sat on the thrones. We, brothers and sisters, will sit on thrones ruling with Christ. Not His equal, but His servants and friends.

Now notice verse 9 again: “I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat.” Once the thrones were in place, the Ancient of Days takes His seat. This pictures God exercising the divine prerogative to sit on His throne as the Great Judge of the universe. Notice, Daniel refers to God here as the “Ancient of Days.” It’s a title only used in this chapter in the Bible. In context—as we will see in a moment—this has to be the first person of the Trinity, God the Father. And He’s referred to as the Ancient of Days.

Now in a culture like ours that increasingly denigrates age and elevates youth, this title doesn’t, at first glance, seem to be very impressive: He’s the “Ancient of Days.” But it is, because it underscores two great attributes of God. First of all, His eternity. The kingdoms of this world, as we’ve just seen in the previous verses, they come and they go. The ashes of the previous world empires lie on the floor of history, but God remains unchanging on. He’s the Ancient of Days. And it also denotes, not only His eternity, but His wisdom. His wisdom. Because when

life is lived under God's direction, age brings wisdom. And God's own wisdom is so great that it can't be measured. He is the *Ancient* of Days, the repository of wisdom itself. And if we wanted to add a third attribute here or feature, we could add that this title, the Ancient of Days, also identifies His dignity and His nobility.

But don't miss the big point in verse 9. Don't miss the intentional contrast that's here. Because if you go back to verses 7 and 8, you see this raging, crushing power of the Roman Empire. We meet this great king that will come from it, the Antichrist, with a mouth speaking great blasphemies against the God of heaven. In other words, the world is raging against God, challenging God. The Antichrist puts his fist, as it were, in the face of God. Everything on this planet will be in a state of upheaval and unrest. And then we come to verse 9, and we find God seated on His throne, calmly going about His business, completely undisturbed by the raging waves of rebellion sweeping across this planet. He is on His throne. Sinclair Ferguson writes of God as He's described here: "He is never taken by surprise, never undecided, never in a panic about His world." When human rebellion reaches its absolute fever pitch, its highest level in human history under Antichrist, when the ruler of this planet blasphemies God, the God of heaven, God, calmly sits upon His throne.

Daniel provides us here with a vivid description of the image of God that he saw in his vision. Verse 9 says, "His vesture [that's His flowing robe] was like white snow." It was as white as the freshly fallen snow. This represents His absolute moral purity. Unlike the kings of our world, God has never compromised His own righteousness to gain or to maintain His control. "And the hair of His head [was] like pure wool." Like pure wool. Typically, white hair is a sign of old age, and it represents maturity in the Scripture. God is mature, but, of course, in God's case it goes way beyond this. In this case it represents His eternal nature. He's always been. He's always existed.

Verse 9 goes on to say, "His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels were a burning fire." God's throne here is described as a chariot throne with wheels. Now this is not unfamiliar to us. If you've ever read Ezekiel 1 or Ezekiel 10, you've see this same image of God's throne like a

chariot throne with wheels that moves here and there. What's the picture of that? By the way, this was not uncommon. Historians tell us that in the ancient Near East it was common for both kings and deities to have thrones with wheels. But in this case, what's it supposed to picture? A throne with wheels. It symbolizes God's universal rule. There's nowhere His throne cannot or does not go. He rules everywhere.

Now notice, in this case both the chariot and the wheels were made of fire. Or the other option, either they were made of fire themselves, they consisted of fire, or whatever substance they were made of is burning and blazing with fire. What does this represent? Well, fire is often associated with God in Scripture, but, specifically, most of the time fire is a symbol of the fury of God's judgment. You can see it, of course, in personal ways. In Leviticus 10, when fire comes out from the presence of God and consumes Aaron's sons because of how lightly they had treated God. And you see it, of course, in its ultimate expression in the lake of fire, with which the Bible ends, where all of those who have centered their rebellion against God will one day be thrown. So the fact that God's chariot throne and its wheels are engulfed in flames is intended, then, to be a terrifying picture of God's wrath. Hebrews 12:29 says, "Our God is a consuming fire."

Not only were His throne and its wheels flaming with fire, but notice verse 10: "A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him." Continually streaming out from the presence of God was this massive river of fire. It is a powerful picture of God's wrath coming from His throne and destroying the wicked by fire, especially, in this case, the fourth great world empire (its future form, the revised Roman Empire and its little horn), which is, of course, the destruction of Antichrist in his kingdom when Christ returns. A river of fire coming out from God to destroy His enemies.

Verse 10 says, "Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him." As this scene continues to unfold—think of it this way—the camera lens pans back and widens to take in the full sweep of heaven's glory and the majesty surrounding the Ancient of Days. He is surrounded by countless angels. Notice, Daniel uses two expressions to capture the vast number of the angelic hosts. He says, "Thousands upon thousands... and

myriads upon myriads.” They were attending Him. They were standing before Him. Now that last expression “myriads upon myriads” in Aramaic is, literally, “ten thousand times ten thousand.” You see, 10,000 was the largest number for which the ancient peoples had a word. And 10,000 times 10,000 was the square of that number. Literally, of course, we’re talking about 100 million. But it’s more than that, because, notice, Daniel adds thousands and thousands. Thousands upon thousands in addition to the myriads upon myriads. So not only was it 100 million, but by adding thousands of thousands he wants us to understand it was more. It was more than that.

Now this is really remarkable when you think about it. He is telling us that there were more angels surrounding the throne of God than a third of the population of the US. And if that doesn’t stagger you alone, think about this. In a single night, one angel killed 185,000 men, and here we’re told there are more than 100 million of them waiting to do God’s bidding. The unimaginable number of angels adds to the weight of this overwhelming, majestic vision of God. He is so great that He has 100 million plus of these powerful beings just standing waiting for Him to say the word. What does He want, and they will accomplish His will.

It’s also a great encouragement. It was a great encouragement to Daniel, and it’s a great encouragement to us. Because remember, Daniel, throughout this book we have seen him in Babylon doing what? Standing alone. And God allows him to see a vision of heaven, and he realizes he is most certainly not alone. In fact, I love the way Sinclair Ferguson puts it: “Daniel was an earthly outpost of the heavenly garrison.” Alone in one sense, but so much not alone in others. And that’s true of us.

Verse 10 goes on to say, as these 100 million plus angels are standing around the throne, “the court sat.” God, having taken His throne, calls His courtroom to order. Now this is interesting, because in other places we’re told that it’s Christ who will sit on the throne of judgment: John 5:22, for example; Matthew tells us that; other places. In fact, in Matthew 7 Jesus says, many will say to Me on the day of judgment, Lord, Lord, didn’t we do these things? and I’ll say I never knew you. So Jesus Himself is the One to whom judgment is given, but here it’s described as the

Ancient of Days, in this scenario, the Father. Why is that? Well, remember, it's by the Father's prerogative that Jesus will judge, and so it is legitimate to identify both the Father and the Son as judge. And here, because of the story and how it's going to unfold and what will happen next, Daniel describes the Father sitting on the throne of judgment.

He goes on in verse 10 to say, "And the books were opened." The books were opened. Now, the Scripture has much to say about these books. First of all, it's important to understand that both the Old Testament and the New Testament make it clear that your eternal destiny and mine will be determined by whether or not our names are written in what is called the Book of Life. Here's an example. Daniel 12:1: "At that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued." Here's how John puts it in Revelation 20:12 and 15. As he sees this great white throne of judgment,

I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; [and notice this] and another book was opened [so you have these books open, and then you have another book was open], which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from things which were written [notice] in the books, according to their deeds.

And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

So you have the Book of Life, and you have these other books from which human beings are judged. So understand, then, that once your eternal destiny has been determined by whether or not your name is in the Book of Life, then either your reward as a believer, or the degree of your punishment that you will endure as an unbeliever, will be determined by what is recorded in the books. The books of heaven.

Now, in Scripture these books are symbolic of God's memory. There may be books. If God chooses for there to be actual books, there will be. But certainly they picture for us the reality of the memory of God, His memory of every thought—think about this for a moment—of every thought that every human being has ever had. Every word that has ever been spoken, it is in the collective memory of God. It's in the books. Every single attitude. Every single action. There is nothing in your life or mine that is not in the books. Not one single detail. In other words, what we're learning here is that God's judgment for those who are not in Christ will be according to strict justice. It will be by the book. God doesn't grade on a curve, and the burning fury of His judgment described in this text by fire is perfectly just. It is by the books.

Now in verse 10, the books are opened specifically to find the record of the deeds of the Antichrist and of his evil empire, because after these books are opened his empire is judged, he is judged. So the timing of this judgment of the Antichrist must be at the time of the Second Coming since Antichrist reigns until Christ returns, Christ returns, He sets up His kingdom. So since the kingdom of God immediately follows this judgment on Antichrist, this has to be at the end of the Great Tribulation: the seven years of God's pouring out His wrath upon the earth. The books are opened; he's judged.

Verse 11. This is right at the end of the Tribulation, because this scene happens in heaven. And then something happens on earth. Notice verse 11: "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking." So notice what Daniel does. He sees this scene in heaven. He sees God sit down on His judgment throne. He sees the books opened, and immediately his eyes shift back to earth, back to this little horn, back to the Antichrist, this great king who is raging throughout the earth blaspheming God. Why? Because he realizes God has taken His throne in judgment, and so he looks at this little horn, the powerful king with intelligent eyes and a blasphemous mouth. Undoubtedly, he has been shocked by the blasphemy, and now he watches to see how God will respond.

Verse 11 says, "I kept looking until the beast was slain." This is the end of the Tribulation as Christ returns. What happens here is, when they open the books, when they examine the works

of the fourth beast (that is, the Roman Empire in its revived form at the time of the Tribulation), and when they look at its wicked ruler the Antichrist, they discovered that death was the rightful penalty. The sentence is passed and God's judgment comes quickly and decisively. "The beast was slain." Remember, the beast is the kingdom, the empire. So the entire empire along with its little horn, its blasphemous king, are destroyed together. Here's what one commentator writes. I love this. He says, "If it were not so sad, this scene would be humorous. This little horn with a big mouth is spewing out venom toward the Almighty when suddenly the fire of God's judgment falls, and the little horn is silenced forever."

Verse 11 says, "I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire." Its body, remember, refers back to the beast. That's the antecedent to the revived Roman Empire which includes its last powerful king, the Antichrist. It's "destroyed and given [notice, by God] to the burning fire." Notice carefully the wording. It doesn't say it was burned up, but "given" to the fire. Many commentators and scholars believe this is teaching the continuing existence of the wicked and their punishment after death. We know that's true, and it may very well be taught here. In Revelation 19:20, it records this about this very same person:

And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; [now listen to this] these two [these are two people, two human beings that will live during the Great Tribulation and blaspheme God] these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

They are given to the fire.

Verse 12. And "as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away." Daniel had described already for us the destruction of the fourth beast, the Roman Empire, including its final form at the end times. Now he returns to the other three beasts, the other three previous empires:

Babylon, Medo-Persian, and Greece. And Daniel says, “Their dominion was taken away [that is, they lost their right to rule], but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.” They lost their authority. They lost their rule, but in some form they continued to exist. Now this makes perfect sense when you think about it, because this fourth empire and its final ruler will be completely destroyed by our Lord Jesus Christ when He returns at the Second Coming. But the earlier three, they continued to exist after their fall. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, they continued to exist only in the sense that their people and culture were simply absorbed into the next empire.

And so here you have the Ancient of Days. He takes His throne, and He ends the world’s mess.

Next we meet the Son of Man in verses 13 and 14. These two verses are the great climax of Daniel’s vision. And again, notice Daniel returns to poetry. Now again, notice the contrast. The four beasts represented the four kingdoms of men, but now we meet the kingdom of God. Here is, to borrow Tolkien’s language, the true return of the King. Verse 13: “I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming.” As Daniel watched in awe, captivated by the sheer majesty of God, the greatness of the scene with its 100 million plus angels, a new person suddenly arrives in the throne room of the Ancient of Days. And notice, He arrives “with the clouds of heaven.” This is a way to bring out the majesty and glory and splendor of this person. And He’s described as “one like”—notice the language—“one like a Son of Man.” In contrast to the four beasts who had come up out of the earth’s turbulent sea, this one has a human likeness, and He comes from another world.

Who is this person? Who is this one like the Son of Man? Well, some have tried to argue that this Son of Man is merely a personification of the Nation of Israel, but that is utterly impossible. In fact, let me give you four reasons that the Son of Man can only be the divine Messiah.

First of all, in the Old Testament, clouds (which He comes with here, the clouds of heaven) are usually associated with deity. About 100 times clouds are mentioned. Seventy percent of the time they refer to the presence of God, either at Sinai or at the temple or in some future

manifestation or appearance of God. This has prompted one author, J. A. Emerton, to write this: “The act of coming with clouds suggests a theophany. [That’s an appearance of Yahweh Himself.] If Daniel 7:13 does not refer to a divine being, then it is the only exception out of about 70 passages in the Old Testament.”

A second reason that we would argue that the Son of Man has to be the divine Messiah is that in verse 14, notice, all the peoples of earth will worship Him. Now, this Aramaic verb for “serve” in verse 14 is used nine times in Daniel’s prophecy, always, without exception, to refer to the response to deity. Either the real and true God, or those who are supposed gods, but always deity. So the Son of Man must be God since only God is to be worshiped. You remember in Revelation 19:10, John writes, “I fell at [the angel’s] feet to worship Him. But He said to me, ‘Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold [to] the testimony of Jesus; worship God.’” So this must be a divine being.

A third reason that the Son of Man must be the divine Messiah is, identifying the Son of Man in Daniel 7 as the Messiah is the oldest and primary view of both the Jewish and Christian scholars. In rabbinical exegesis, and even in the Jewish Talmud, the person called the Son of Man in Daniel 7 was understood to be the Messiah. So the term, then, Son of Man is used here of the Messiah. Notice He appears in human form: Son of *Man*. This is a title that underscores the humanity of our Lord. But then notice He’s *like* a Son of Man. Why would it say that? Because while He is really and truly man, He is more than just a man. We’ve just seen He’s worshiped, so He is at the same time divine and yet human.

A fourth argument for the Son of Man being the divine Messiah is that Jesus used this name to refer to Himself during His earth ministry more than any other. And He especially used it in passages that refer to end times. Passages like Matthew 16:27-28 or Matthew 19:28, Matthew 25:31, and so forth. Jesus said, I am the Son of Man.

Now here’s the question for you. There are a lot of references in the Old Testament where, clearly, human beings are called a son of man. Ezekiel, of course, often is referred to as a son of

man. So here's the \$64,000,000 question. Was Jesus merely claiming to be a son of man like Ezekiel, or was He claiming to be this divine figure in Daniel 7? Well, we don't have to wonder. Turn to Mark 14:60. This is Jesus appearing before the Sanhedrin. And you remember the story. They're trying to drum up some sort of false testimony against Him, but even the false witnesses can't get their story straight, verse 59. So the high priest Caiaphas gets exasperated. And he decides to take matters into his own hands at Jesus' trial. Verse 60 says (this is Mark 14:60),

The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do you not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against you?" But He kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him.

And here Caiaphas decides to really go out on a limb. Since they're not managing to get any false testimony against Jesus, they can't get consistent testimony that's going to convict Him, he decides to put all of his chips on this approach: I'm going to take the direct approach; I'm going to ask Him point-blank in front of all these witnesses what He claims to be. And notice what he says. Verse 61: "Are you the Christ?" Are you the Christos? Are you the Messiah? And then he adds (and they understood this) "the Son of the Blessed One." Is that what You're claiming to be? And Jesus said—here's Jesus' answer: "I am." You can't be unclear about that. "I am."

But then just in case they missed the point, He adds this in verse 62: "And you shall see." Now you'll notice the next words are in all caps in your Bible. That's because Jesus is quoting from the Old Testament. He conflagrates, pulls together, combines two Old Testament texts: Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7. And notice what He says: "You [will] see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." You're going to see Me fulfilling that text.

Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy; [He said listen, He just claimed to be divine! Which is exactly what He claimed. And because they didn't believe it, he says] how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of

death. [They] began to spit at Him... blindfold Him... beat Him with their fists, and... say... “Prophecy!” And the officers received Him with slaps in the face.

So understand this. Here’s what Jesus said to the Sanhedrin. Think about this for a moment. Jesus is standing before the religious and political leaders of the nation, the seventy most powerful men in the nation, and He says to them, listen, there is coming a time when you will see Me, not as a prisoner in your court, but as judge in Mine. That’s what He said. In fact, E. J. Young writes of Jesus’ comments here: “The employment of this title in Daniel 7 by Jesus Christ is one of the strongest evidences that He attributed deity to Himself.” So folks, there’s no question but what the Sanhedrin believed this text spoke of a divine Messiah. And there’s no question but what Jesus claimed it for Himself.

Now go back to our text, because in this passage there’s one other really important theological point. We’ve seen the reality of a divine Messiah, but we also see the reality of the Trinity. This passage gives us a clear Old Testament glimpse of the Trinity, of the fact that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead, because here’s how the syllogism works. And this is how the argument for the Trinity always goes. And you can use any members of the Trinity you want. It always works out the same. Number one point in the syllogism is the Son of Man is deity. That’s God the Son. Number two, the Ancient of Days is deity. That’s God the Father. And number three, the Son of Man is distinct from the Ancient of Days. They’re two different persons. So you have deity, deity, but two different persons. There’s where you have the Trinity. That simple syllogism underscores the reality of the Trinity.

Look back again at verse 13. The Son of Man, the divine Messiah, our Lord “came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.” The Son of Man doesn’t merely arrive in the throne room, He is presented to the Ancient of Days, presumably by the heavenly attendants or the angels.

And He arrives to receive His Father’s gift: universal sovereignty and an eternal kingdom. As the New Testament would explain, and even some places in the Old, He earned this by His

perfect life, His substitutionary death and His resurrection, by His victory. He's here to get what He has earned. Verse 14: "And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom." This describes the coronation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Ancient of Days, notice, will give Him "dominion." That is, ruling authority. "Glory." That refers to the honor such authority deserves. "And a kingdom," which describes an organized form of government. And He's given these things (notice verse 14) "that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him." He is given a real kingdom. I mean, think about this. The other four kingdoms in this chapter, they are all real, earthly empires. There is no reason not to take His as real as well. Notice, His kingdom is also universal. All nations, all peoples and every language group on earth will worship Him.

Now, can you just feel your soul rest in the reality that some day there will be a perfectly just, all-wise, absolutely perfect ruler on this planet? There will be a government, His government, unmarred by pride, unmarred by sin, unmarred by texts, unmarred by mismanagement and oppression.

And notice, His kingdom is everlasting. Verse 14 says, "His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed." His right to rule can never and will never end. In the millions of years of history that follow the inauguration of His kingdom, no one will ever be able to mount a successful overthrow of His kingdom. It will not be destroyed. It is forever.

Now what's going on here? Well in context, this describes Jesus receiving the kingdom from the Father after He defeats the Antichrist at the end of the Great Tribulation. And we'll see this unfold as we—take my word for it now—but we'll see it unfold as we walk through the rest of Daniel. He defeats Antichrist at the end of the Great Tribulation and the initiation of His millennial reign for a thousand years. He will have a kingdom on this planet, completely renewed. Revelation 20:1-6 describes that reality. And when that thousand years are over, Revelation 21 and 22 tell us that His kingdom will continue in a new heaven and a new earth forever. You're not going to live in an ethereal world floating on clouds playing harps forever.

You're going to live for a thousand years on this planet in which Jesus will rule. And it'll be perfect, perfectly restored and renewed.

But then because of the fact that sin occurred here, the day will come after the rebellion that He will destroy this earth. And He will destroy the present earth and heavens, and He'll make a new one, as the prophet says, in which righteousness is at home. And that's where you will live with Christ forever. An earth just like this one, only never having a single sin. Daniel 7 tells us a day is coming when Jesus Christ our Lord will be crowned as the Sovereign of the universe, and His reign will never ever ever end. Is He worthy of this? He is. Revelation 5:12 says He is worthy.

Now here's the question. How did the Holy Spirit and how did the prophet Daniel intend for this passage to encourage the people of God? How is it supposed to be applied to us? There are a lot of things here that thrill my soul and encourage me, but what is the major point? Well, the early verses in this chapter focus on the turmoil and the political upheaval that happens in our world constantly. It's happening today. Many Christians feel it. They struggle with what's going on locally, at the state level, at the federal level and across our world. But verses 9 through 14 remind us that God doesn't want us to be absorbed by focusing on the political scene on this planet. We are not to be obsessed with the politics of the nations. Like Daniel, we're to lift our eyes from this planet, and through it all we're to remain constant in our focus on the Ancient of Days and on His Son. This text reminds us that whatever happens on this planet, however bad things get, even when they get their worst with the Antichrist, when he rages against God, when he blasphemes God, when he ridicules God, when everyone on this planet is holding their fist in the face of God, our sovereign God is still on His throne. He is not surprised. He is not panicked, and He is not powerless. He has infinite power. And just in case He decides not to do it Himself, He has more than 100 million angels who can take His purpose and accomplish it. He's not surprised. He's not panicked. He's not powerless. Instead, He sits on His throne and day by day, slowly, methodically works out His sovereign plan.

It was really this concept that I had in mind when I wrote the lyrics to the last verse of the hymn that we sing from time to time.

[Our God, the Ancient of Days] has written history's final page,  
His Son's return will end this age.  
The Lamb will come in glorious might,  
Take back His world and end its night.  
How deep the wisdom of our God;  
Unknown, unfathomed are His ways.  
None counsels Him, or knows His mind;  
We [like the angels of heaven] bow before Him all our days.

Folks, get your eyes off of the turmoil in this world and lift them to the Ancient of Days sitting on His throne and His eternal plan that He will accomplish in His eternal Son. Let's pray together.

Our Father, forgive us. O God, we are awed by this vision of You that You allowed Daniel to see, and through him You've allowed us to see. Forgive us. O Father, forgive us—You, the Great One, called in this text the Ancient of Days—for ever doubting You, for ever looking, like Peter did, at the waves around us rather than at You and our sovereign Lord. Father, help us as believers to lift our eyes from the turmoil and the upheaval on this planet and to look into Your throne room and to remember that not a single thing happens here outside of Your sovereign control, that You have a plan and that You will accomplish that plan. You have written history's final page. Your Son's return will end this age. The Lamb will come in glorious might, take back His world and end its night. O God, help us to live in the confidence and knowledge and the joy of that. We pray it in Jesus' name, until He comes, amen.