

Allan MacRae, The Prophecies of Daniel: Lecture 6

We notice that chapter 7 of Daniel says, “In the first year of Belshazzar King of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions while his head was upon his bed.” I had a very interesting question given to me at the end of the hour last time asking, “Does this mean that Daniel saw real things or does it mean that God caused pictures to appear before him, or that he had a dream and there were pictures in his head.” Well how God gave it to him we really don’t know. You might say that everything we see is pictures in our head. Did you ever think of the fact you get light in through the right eye and light through the left eye, but you don’t see two pictures, you see one. And they tell us that actually everything from the right side of both eyes goes to the left side of the brain, and everything from the left side of both eyes goes to the right side of the brain. And how are those four things put together to be one picture? We don’t know. But we see one picture, and God caused Daniel to see one picture. Maybe it was simply a dream. Maybe he was still conscious but God caused him to see things, but he knew it was a vision. He knew it was not things that were actually happening then, but things God caused him to see. These things sometimes might be representations in actual pictures of something that’s going to happen in the future, but more often they are symbolic. They represent symbols, like in the statue Nebuchadnezzar saw and in the four beasts Daniel saw.

Chapter 7 starts, “In the first year of Belshazzar, Daniel had a dream.” Then we read about the dream and the interpretation is mixed in with it. Chapter 8 begins, “In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto Daniel, after that which appeared to me before.” So here we have a new vision, a new experience two years later. So that chapter division is in a very good place. Then Chapter 9, “In the first year of Darius the Son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent) who was taking over the realm of the Caldeans in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by books,” etc. and etc. And he goes on and tells what happened. At a later time than Chapter 8, he tells of his prayer and of God’s answer to the prayer. And then Chapter 10 begins, “In the third year of Cyrus King of Persia it was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar.”

And so all four of these chapters start with a new time given when Daniel either received a new message from God or made a prayer as a result of which he received a message from God. There were several commentators who made a division which put chapters 9 to 11 together as one unit. Well the beginning of 10 is a clear break. Just as clear as at the beginning of 9 and the beginning of 8, so I was sorry to see anyone make the division that way. And then at chapter 10 we have how Daniel prays and the Lord says He will send him an answer and he sends an angel who says, “Now I will tell you the truth: Behold there will yet stand up three Kings of Persia and the fourth shall be far richer than they.” And then it goes right on with God’s message to him through chapter 11 and through at least part of chapter 12. So if you want to say 10 to 12 is one unit as compared to the three previous units, that is a good division, even though it makes your last one much longer than the others.

Now in chapter 12 I believe there should be a break. There are a few verses that are separate from the rest. But for that you’d have to really study the chapter carefully to find where that would be. We’re not that far as yet. However, I was quite disappointed to find a few, not a great many, who began a new vision with chapter 11 verse 1. And of course it’s not much worse than the archbishop, who made the chapter division there, but after all he was riding on horseback, so there’s an excuse for his not seeing it very clearly. But you notice how different it is: Chapter 10, “In the third year of Cyrus King of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel.” Chapter 11, “Also I, in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I stood to confirm and strengthen him.” That’s not an introduction of a vision. That’s a continuation of what has been said by the messenger before that, who is now introducing his message. And so if you want to make a break at 11:2, having the prayer and the coming of the messenger, and then a break between that and what the messenger says, that is alright. But to make one at 11:1, as the arch-bishop did, is excusable, so I won’t mark him down for it.

Well now we want to look at all of these chapters, but we want to go further in our examination of chapter 7 first, and so we will turn back to it now. In chapter 7 we begin

with number 3 in our outline; "The prophesy in Daniel 7, the setting of the prophecy." We notice that it is at least 45 years after Daniel 2. And we don't know exactly how long because we don't know when Belshazzar was associated with his father as co-king. Then second, we noted what is true of all the succeeding chapters, that the vision was given to Daniel himself. That is true of the entire last half of Daniel. In number 3 we've already noted that the interpretation was included in the vision here. And that is true for the rest of the book too. In contrast to chapter 2 where Nebuchadnezzar had the vision, and Daniel gave him the interpretation.

Number 4: "Part of the vision is retold with added detail." This is a peculiar feature of chapter 7, not paralleled anywhere else in the book. And then number 5: "Symbolism and plain language not so sharply separated as in chapter 2." That we've already discussed to some extent. Then B: "Though the symbolism is entirely different, there are four obvious parallels to chapter 2." And the first of these is that there are four kingdoms present. Now in Chapter 2 we have 5 parts to the image, and the question we could not give an answer strictly from chapter 2 alone was: Are there 5 kingdoms or 4? But there was a possibility that there were 4 intended because iron was in both of the last two parts. So that was a definite possibility in 2. But you cannot say positively from 2 alone. But when you get to chapter 7 you find that there are four beasts, and you find that the fourth beast has additional things said about it. And so we learn from chapter 7 that we are justified in carrying this back to chapter 2: That chapter 2 has 4 kingdoms and not 5. I say that we are justified in carrying it back because it is not introducing something new into chapter 2, but is deciding which of 2 possibilities is the correct one, and chapter 7 gives us the answer on that.

Now on to number 2: "The parallel is that the fourth is to have a second face." So that is a marked similarity to the fourth and fifth parts of the statue in chapter 2. Number 3: "The complete destruction of the kingdoms." In chapter 2 the statue is so completely destroyed that no slightest trace of it remains. In chapter 7 the fourth beast is burnt; its body is given to the fire; it is completely destroyed. This complete destruction of these

kings is not a taking over of their qualities into any new king. And number 4: "There is a new universal regime in both visions." So we have these marked similarities between chapters 2 and 7 which justifies us in saying these two are giving a picture of the same thing. A foreview of certain important events in history, running for a long period after the time of Daniel and a foreview in which certain features are suggested in chapter 2, a few things told about them, but added matters are told in chapter 7.

And so capital C we look at "The four kingdoms." Now I don't know whether you have noted this next point, as in chapter 2 there is no specific prediction of the overthrow of any of the first three kings. That is to say, the whole statue is destroyed, but what happened was that the Babylonian kingdom was conquered by the Persians and taken over. And the Persian kingdom was conquered by Alexander the Great and taken over. And the different parts of Alexander the Great's kingdom were conquered by the Romans and taken over. But the Scripture merely says after it there will be another king, and after it a third, which shall rule over the whole earth. And so the first three kingdoms there is no specific prediction in either chapter of an overthrow of any one of them. Now this is something which someone might immediately question, and I myself would have questioned not very long ago. Because you notice that in chapter 7 it speaks about the first kingdom in a way which at first sight might seem to tell of its destruction.

Chapter 7, verse 4, "The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings. I beheld and its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand upon its feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." Now at first sight you can say, "Here's the first kingdom lifted up from the earth; it is destroyed." But that is no way to say something was destroyed, to say it was made to stand on its feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. That's no account of destruction. And certainly the conquest of the Babylonian kingdom by the Persians couldn't be called a man's heart being given to it. It is quite obvious when you look closely at it that this verse describes something quite different from that, and so I've made that number 2 here: "The added detail about the first kingdom: verse 2." And what it means is shown in Daniel 4, because in the 4th

chapter of Daniel we have the account of how God told Daniel that Nebuchadnezzar was going to go out of his mind; that he was going to grovel on the ground; that he was going to live like an animal. And then he was told that after a certain length of time that God would raise him up again from this condition, and again give him a man's heart and return his kingdom to him. And so this is a description of what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, not to the Babylonian kingdom. And that fits of course with the way that the first part of the statue was introduced in chapter 2, where is said "Oh King, thou art the head of gold." This describes something that had happened to Nebuchadnezzar at least ten years, maybe twenty years, before Daniel had this vision. And so here he is giving him a statement about the first kingdom, which shows to him clearly that the first kingdom is the same as the head of the statue, that it is Nebuchadnezzar. It shows him something that has already happened. And, therefore, this strengthens his faith that what follows in chapter 7 is also going to happen. So here a part of the description is not a prophesy, but a picture of what has already happened.

And then we notice number 3, about the second kingdom. And the second kingdom is in verse 5, where he says, "Behold another beast, a second like a bear and it raised itself up on one side." And many think that this statement: "It raised itself up on one side" suggests the fact that the second kingdom was the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, in which the Persians had been subordinate to the Medes, but in which they gained superiority over the Medes before the time that they conquered the Babylonians. "It raised itself up on one side." Others say, "Well, that's just the description of how a bear walks, with one side sort of lifted up." Well I haven't seen enough bears walking to make a judgment between those two interpretations. At any rate, the bear raised up was true of the second kingdom. Does this give a picture of the Mede/Persian connection or not? I don't think we can say for certain, it is at least a possibility.

But then it says that it had "three ribs in the mouth of it between its teeth and they said 'arise, devour much flesh.'" And this is a good picture of what Cyrus did, because Cyrus rose in his kingdom and gained supremacy over all the Medes, and then he led his

army westward and conquered the region north of Babylonia, and then conquered all of Asia Minor to the west, and then he led his army back and down south again and conquered Babylonia. And then he went east and conquered further going right to the very borders of India. And so this “arise and devour much flesh” is a picture of the conquest of Cyrus going way beyond the territory held by the Babylonians. But it says there were three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And many commentators will tell you what these ribs represent. Now I have a footnote here: That is, Lydia, Babylonia, Egypt, etc. He conquered many areas, and I don’t think we have a right to pick three and say these are the most important of them. We can’t, because he conquered so many areas, including several that were very great and important. I think all we can say here is that the three ribs are simply a vivid picture of the fact that he was conquering nations and absorbing them into his kingdom and that the number three here is just that. It was not just a conquest of the Babylonian empire; it was a conquest of more. But the attempt to precisely say what these three refer to, we have no clear evidence in history to pick out three and I think we are justified in saying it just means a number, and that he conquered a lot. So I don’t think there is any special significance here to the number three.

And then we look at what we’re told about the fourth kingdom, and we read about the fourth kingdom in chapter 7 verse 6, “And after this I beheld below another like a leopard which had on its back four wings of a fowl, the beast also had four heads and dominion was given to it.” Now I don’t think the number 4 in “four wings of a fowl” has any particular specific importance, but I think that it is true you’d never expect a leopard to have wings. And to say it has four wings stresses the fact of great mobility. And the kingdom of Alexander with conquest was made so rapidly that it can hardly be paralleled in history until you get to Napoleon and Hitler, with the blitzkrieg that each of these men carried out. Cyrus was a tremendous conqueror, and conquered many areas, but it was a slow, steady, constant conquest over a series of years. While Alexander, during a short reign of only 12 years, conquered the greatest empire the world had ever seen up to that time. It was marked by its tremendous rapidity. And so the four wings shows its

tremendous movement. I think we are justified in taking that from the wings, but not in giving any particular attention to the fact there were four wings rather than three or five.

But then the beast also had four heads, and that's a curious thing, that one beast would have more than one head. The beast had four heads. And I believe we are justified in saying there is the suggestion there, two hundred years in advance, of the fact that Alexander's empire would not remain united very long. It had one great head, Alexander, who by his genius conquered all these areas, and to whom all his soldiers were devoted, and who controlled definitely everything that was done during the twelve years of his reign. But after his death, his generals couldn't decide who should succeed him and they tried to make one person succeed him, but the others would not submit to him and after a period of disagreement and dissention they fought with each other for forty years and finally ended up with dividing Alexander's kingdom up into various sections, each independent of the other. And yet we can think of them still as being one empire because Hellenistic Greek culture was made predominant in all of them, and there was a similarity of outlook and attitude in all of these kingdoms into which Alexander's empire was divided. So when we say it has four heads, it is predicting something that people two hundred years after Daniel's time could look at and say, "Yes, that corresponds to what actually happened;" and that would give them increased faith that what else was said would also come to pass.

Then we come to the fourth kingdom in chapter 7, verses 7 and 19. And we have a number of things told us about the fourth kingdom, that is, what Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are really leading up to. We find in these verses that it is strong and destructive. We find that was suggested in Daniel 2 by the fact that it was made of iron, and like iron that crushes, it would crush. Here we are told that the fourth kingdom has iron claws and part of it is bronze. It is strong and destructive. It is not named; it is simply a beast, very great and very terrible. So we find it is different from its predecessors. I don't think it was different from them in being more terrible, actually. I don't think it was different in being more brutal. I don't think it was different in being more determined to take a great

oversight over every one of its citizens. But it was when it was formed that it became very brutal. When there were uprisings against it, it became very brutal, or when someone refused to submit to it.

How then was the Roman Empire different from the preceding? Actually, the ways in which it was would hardly be suggested by the brief statements here. But it was very different in three ways: First, there was an entirely different kind of organization, and that's one of the reasons why the Roman Empire lasted longer than any two of the others put together; almost as long as all three put together. The preceding ones were dependent on hereditary control, and the power went from father to son, and sometimes the son inherits his father's abilities as strengths but very often he doesn't. And so through history the hereditary type of control has not been very satisfactory. But in the case of the Romans, they had a long period of Democracy in which for many years the Roman people decided what would happen in their realm until they finally got into such a terrible condition that some individuals with great strength were able to seize control, but even then they had types of organization so established that it gave a continuing strength to the empire that lasted for four more centuries when it had leaders called emperors. But comparatively seldom were there as many as three men in a row who went from father to son. And in a great many cases in the Roman Empire, when an emperor tried to have his son succeed him, it was found to be a failure.

Perhaps the best government that any part of the world has ever had in its history was the government of the Roman Empire in the second century A.D. A government which perhaps had more justice for its citizens, more general equality and opportunity and freedom and general safety than almost any period in history, was the second century A.D. And what made the second century such a wonderful period was that each emperor during that period carefully studied to pick the man who would be most fit to carry on as he did, and adopted him, and then he became his successor. So there is, until you get to the end of the century, there is no going from father to son. But neither did its leaders come into power because they could speak well over T.V., could make a good impression

with their personality, but because a careful study was made of their qualities and abilities and they were selected for that. And toward the end of the second century Marcus Aurelius very foolishly had his own son succeed him, and he proved to be one of the worst emperors Rome ever had, and it broke this succession of success. But even so, even though this was broken and for the next century the Roman emperors were selected generally by the army, and there was an average of four years that the one who was selected would last before he was killed and another one was brought in, yet the general strength of the empire was such that it lasted in whole strength for another two centuries, after the end of that wonderful period of the second century A.D.

So a different kind of organization characterized the fourth kingdom, altogether different from that of the three preceding kingdoms. No hereditary monarchy. This point is so important I listed it separately. And of course as a result of this Rome lasted far longer than the others. The Roman Senate had the power over the conquered nations, and the emperor always said “The Roman Senate has decreed”, and so on. It was a system that had great strength in it, and at this time when the Roman Catholic church is endeavoring to find a new head, we can notice that part of that feature is continued. There has been only one time I know of when a Pope has tried to get his son made Pope succeeding him. And since according to the law the Pope isn’t supposed to have a son, he did not succeed in accomplishing that. But there is a marvelous organization in the Roman Catholic church in that the Pope can appoint cardinals, but he can’t say what those cardinals are going to do after he dies. Many Popes have tried to dictate who would be his successor, but rarely, if ever, has one succeeded. And so you have a group of men who have been selected by the previous Pope, or by previous Popes, and who have to make a decision among themselves who will be pope instead of having a great number of people decide, which is apt to be on the basis of who makes the best personal impression and so on. And so it is the type of organization which is one of the main reasons the fourth kingdom has lasted so long.

And perhaps there is another reason why we might be able to think of the Roman Empire, to some extent as continuing all through this period. It was not conquered like the three previous ones were, but instead other groups just integrated into it and various features of it have continued in the many little sovereignties that have taken its place in the years since. Should we think of it as continuing through this period, or should we think of the empire having actually come to an end and that the second phase must be something that is still future with an unmentioned interval between? I don't think we can be dogmatic on this point, but we can say there is this long perspective that the prophet had.

Let's look at the "second phase" of the fourth kingdom, and here there's a very interesting thing. Number 1: "There is no obvious similarity to the fifth part of Nebuchadnezzar's dream." If you just had the account of the fifth part of the statue in Daniel 2, and you just had what is told about what happened to this fourth beast of Daniel 7, how it got ten horns and then one horn came up, and three disappeared in front of it, and then how it had a voice that spoke great boasts, and how it tried to change times and seasons and so on--why nobody would think that was representing the same thing as the feet and toes of the statue in Daniel 2 being made of iron and clay together Daniel 2's description is very, very different from the account of the second phase of the fourth kingdom in Daniel 7. But since we have so many similarities between the two descriptions of the fourth kingdom, we are justified in saying these two utterly different pictures of the second phase of the fourth kingdom are referring to events or situations that take place in the same time period, and therefore, we can put them together. And then in this second phase we find something that we had really no hint of in the statue: that there would be ten new kings. Well, now, we have in the interpretation here in Daniel 7, in verse 17, "The one who stood by said to Daniel 'These four great beasts are four kings.'" The beasts are four, and yet it says that the ten horns on the fourth beast are part of the fourth kingdom. And so we notice that the word "king" and "kingdom" are used rather indiscriminately in these chapters. Sometimes they are used to represent, as it

does here, a whole long period of two or more centuries, not as a king, but as a kingdom. Sometimes, however, they are used for an individual king.

And so when Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art this head of gold," we are left with the question: Is Nebuchadnezzar the head of gold; or is the Neo-Babylonian empire the head; or is it the whole period of Assyrian-Babylonian supremacy? I think the latter is most likely, but I wouldn't be dogmatic about it.

Well then we have these ten new kings and immediately you ask, "We are simply told there are ten horns; this beast had ten horns. Now do these ten horns represent ten kings who reigned at the same time, or do they represent ten kings who came one after the other?" We have no way to prove one or the other from the statements here in chapter 7. Both are possible interpretations. Are the kings simultaneous, or are they successive?

We can't say for sure. We find that a little horn came up, and before it three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots; and that seems to suggest ten kings who were reigning at one time, in different areas, and that a new one came up and got control of three of them. It may suggest, on the other hand, what those who hold the critical theory say: that Antiochus Epiphanes, and his father, Antiochus III, who had been ruling before him, that his father had died and his brother who ruled just before him, had been murdered, and the brother's son, who should logically have succeeded him, got in ahead of him and seized the power, and so they say that three kings disappeared before Antiochus Epiphanes. I do not think this critical interpretation of the history is correct, but I can say that on this particular idea that it might be three successive kings--rather than three simultaneous kings--that they are necessarily wrong in that particular feature. I tend towards simultaneous kings. We cannot draw a great deal more from this passage. We have the two possibilities.

Then number 3 of the outline is: "The rise of the little horn," and we find the little horn discussed in verses 8, 11, 20 and 24. And you, of course, have looked at these in

connection with your study of the chapter. You have noticed that verse 8 and verse 24 tell about the growing power of this little horn. This little horn came up and became bigger than the others, stronger than the others. Three disappeared before it. We find its arrogance in verse 25: "He shall speak great words against the Most High." This is part of the interpretation in the picture where it said the little horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things. "He shall speak great words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High and think to change the times and the seasons." It wasn't so many years ago when some were suggesting this was fulfilled in Franklin Delanor Roosevelt when he tried to change the date of Thanksgiving. But he didn't succeed, since that time we've had Congress changing the date of a number of our holidays, but I don't think it describes Congress here. It does describe the arrogance of this one called the "little horn" and his attempt to make great changes. Some have thought this could be fulfilled in Julius Caesar, because Julius Caesar changed the times and seasons. He introduced a new calendar, which we have used ever since, except for a slight modification made two hundred years ago. But I certainly don't think it's speaking about Julius Caesar.

Then we have this specific feature, that the little horn makes war against the saints. Verse 21: "I beheld the same horn made war against the saints and prevailed against them until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." How different from the idea that is coming to be widely taught in certain circles, that the church is going to gradually reach more and more people with the gospel until the whole world is converted, and this judgment is to happen before the return of Christ. It doesn't fit at all with what is said here, that "He made war against the saints and prevailed against them until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." They didn't seize the judgment; they weren't able to take it by power; it was given to them. And we notice in connection with the little horns apparent victory, verses 21 and 25: "He [the little horn] prevailed against them [the saints]."

And then number 4 under this second part of the outline, we notice: "The destruction of the fourth kingdom." Verses 11 and 26: "I beheld, then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke; I beheld even until the beast was slain and its body destroyed." It doesn't say the horn was destroyed; it says the beast was destroyed. It's like in chapter 2, where it doesn't say that the feet and toes were destroyed; it says the whole statue was destroyed. So it is to be completely destroyed--the entire fourth kingdom.

But here there's a very interesting little feature: verse 12. I was puzzled with verse 12 when I first studied it. "As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." And nothing is told us here of the destruction of the other three beasts. But we are told in chapter 2 that the whole statue was destroyed. And so I feel that when it says "their lives were prolonged for a season and a time," it means they were prolonged until the fourth beast was destroyed, but then they are all destroyed, which means of course that certain individuals are destroyed along with all the principles that enter into the type of human government represented by Nebuchadnezzar, and by the Persian, and by the Greek leaders. That type of human government: All of its features are going to be completely destroyed. But it doesn't specifically say that about the other three kings in chapter 7; but it does say they had their dominion taken away, and their lives were prolonged for a season and a time, and that makes clear that the four together are one entity. The qualities of the Babylonian kingdom were at least many of them, taken over by the Persians; and the qualities of the Persians were--many of them--taken over by the Greeks; and the qualities of the Greeks were--many of them--taken over by the Roman Empire. Their lives were prolonged for a season and a time, but the whole thing is to be completely destroyed at the time the beast is killed and its body is given to the flames.

Now we have capital E in the outline: "A division of deity, verses 9-10." And notice it is still in the dream; still in the vision that Daniel has. And in the King James Version, the first verse of it, gives us a very wrong impression at first: "I beheld till the

thrones were cast down.” The error made is that the word "to cast down" normally means "to place" or "put;" it's used in Ezra where the king says they shall not place imports or taxes upon these people. It means that he looked and he saw thrones coming into his vision. It might be suggested that verses 9 and 10 fit with the destruction of the beast. But there's no destruction until you get to verse 11.

And so this is simply: “As he looked he saw come into view before him thrones.” And how many people sat on thrones? Just one did. The Ancient of Days sat, and yet there were many thrones there. And that of course has caused many people great curiosity. Why are there multiple thrones mentioned when only one sits? It is a peculiar thing, and some say he was merely the presiding officer, like a judge, who sees that the various attorneys are fair in what they do. He has the twelve jurors with Him and they make the decision. But I don't think that's what the picture sounds like at all. It sounds to me like a picture of the great omnipotent God seated rather than the picture of the presiding officer of a court trial. And the fact that it has the plural "thrones," we, with our understanding from the New Testament, may suggest the Trinity, but I think that is perhaps reading back too much into this passage.

Perhaps we can think of the greatness of the deity that uses the word "throne" and the plural, but there is certainly no suggestion here that there was any one else sharing power with the one pictured here. That's why I call it a vision of deity. I don't think it's a picture of a court case, and that's why I am rather disturbed that practically all recent translations translate the end of verse 10, “The court sat and the books were opened.” And that sounds as if he is the presiding judge and others sat with him to make decisions. I don't think that's the picture you have here at all. I think you have a picture here of the powerful God, the great, pure one, the one with absolute authority, who looks down upon Earth and sees the little horn ranting against Him and trying to change times and seasons and establish things the way he wants them on earth.

In contrast to that, Daniel sees something that illustrates the great power and majesty of God. Certainly he did not see God; God is a spirit; God does not have a body. He did not see God, but he saw a representation that symbolized the power, and greatness, and eternality of God. “The Ancient of Days sat, his garment was white as snow, the hair on his head was pure wool. His throne was like a fiery flame.” The King James has the word “like” in italics which is not in the original. His throne was a picture of fiery flame. “The wheels of the throne were burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him, a thousand thousands ministered unto Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.” Who are these ten thousand times ten thousand? Are they the members of the court that is going to make a decision? It is quite obvious. You don’t have to have a judgment to decide what to do with the beast. It is pictured very clearly from his wickedness and from his arrogance to his brutality. Here we have, in contrast to the vain boasts of the beast, the great power of the great God, and His authority and the tremendous number of representatives ready to do his bidding. And so when it says the “judgment was set,” the word here translated “judgment” is not a concrete word, and most of those who take this as a court setting say that the word for "decision", or "judgment", is here used abstractly for a concrete item, and, it means "the court." But the word in the King James represents the thought of the whole situation much better. God’s judgment was set, it was determined, it continued, it still sat there. The beast with his arrogance, the little horn with his declarations and his attempts to destroy all that God desired, could not succeed because God’s judgment has been set, or determined, from all eternity. It is not a judgment seat as seen in my opinion, in the sense of a court making a decision. But it is God as the one who carries out the decision that He has made long before.

Now it says “The books were opened.” I would take this as being a symbolic representation of God’s omniscience, of the fact that He knows everything, and the fact He acts wisely in all that He does. I would not take the scene as these various ones with

Him trying to explain to Him just what is happening and all that. It seems to me that this is not what we have here in this picture.

Now number 7 in the outline: "The son of man." Here in a picture that is symbolic, we have something happening that, as far as this passage is concerned, could be symbolic, but I believe we have in the midst of the symbols a literal thing. That is to say, Daniel saw something. He saw all these things of course, but he saw this thing which was not meant to be a symbol, but a picture in advance of something that was actually going to happen. I don't think we could say that dogmatically apart from the New Testament, however. But I think the New Testament makes it clear. Daniel saw in the night visions, "And behold one like a son of man," Now this word "son of man" is used in Daniel 8:17 where God's messenger says to Daniel, "Understand son of man." "Son of man" just means any man. One of the class of man. But here Daniel saw one who looked like a man, but the picture here came to be recognized by the Jews as a picture of the coming of the Messiah. And Jesus Christ used the term of himself, the Son of Man, clearly referring back to its usage in Daniel 7:13, not the usage here in chapter 8 where it just means an ordinary man. In Ezekiel, there are dozens of times Ezekiel is addressed as "son of man." But it is this one picture in Daniel 7:13 which shows the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven. And here we have one coming who has great authority. Now whether you would say Daniel saw one who would be coming with the clouds of heaven, who came to the Ancient of Days and was given authority prior to his coming, or whether you say Daniel saw him coming and he realized what had already happened as he was brought before the Ancient of Days and been given dominion, glory and kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve him--whichever way you take it--I believe the usages in the New Testament shows, and also Psalm 110:1, that the giving of authority to the Son of Man precedes his coming with the clouds of heaven. This is a literal picture of one coming in the clouds of heaven as shown by the New Testament references, but that of course his coming is also symbolic as he is brought before the Ancient of Days. That is symbolic because the Ancient of Days is a spirit, that wouldn't

be a physical thing. But it is exactly what is described in Psalm 110:1 that “The Lord said to him [Son of Man by implication] ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.’” Now we discussed this Son of Man bit already. There’s only a little more we need to look at in this chapter, but I think that this would be a good place to make a break. We’ll have a little more to say about this chapter later.

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