

THE COMING KINGDOM
Daniel 7:1-14

Between the first [7:1] and third [8:1] years of Belshazzar's rule, Daniel has two of the most amazing prophetic dreams; at least as remarkable as Ezekiel's vision of the great battle against Gog and the hoards of evil. Interestingly, there are events and characters in Daniel's dreams which correspond with things Ezekiel saw in his great temple vision. The first dream shows four beasts which represent the four kingdoms prior to the kingdom of the Most High. The second dream in Chapter 8 pictures a battle between a ram and a goat. It apparently has to do with the time when the anti-Christ will challenge the Prince of Princes.

“Various themes are evident. Throughout the universe, just as between warring nations, there is an ongoing battle between the forces of good and evil, between God and Satan, between justice and injustice, between morality and immorality. And the same battle is waged within every individual. While evil brings about its own destruction even now, there will come a time when the great destruction of evil and its champions will take place. It will be a final destruction, giving way to a permanent state of peace and righteousness in the eternal kingdom of God.”

The Narrated Bible, p 1222

Daniel himself did not exactly know what to make of all the things he had seen, and any difficult questions which the visions may raise should not obscure the more obvious message of hope which the visions clearly bring.

God was pleased to give us encouragement in the form of prophecy. After all the arguments about which view of eschatology is more scriptural, we are left with one sure thing. God is the winner!

Chapter 7 covers the same subject as Chapter 2, but more thoroughly. Both narratives tell us that human history will culminate with the return of Christ to earth.

Chapters 1-6 of Daniel are mostly historical.

From Chapter 7 forward the book is almost entirely prophetic and Daniel's dreams are interpreted for him by an angel [7:16; 8:16].

Chapters 1-6 are written in Aramaic and Daniel is referred to in the third person. Now he uses the first person and provides more insight into his experiences.

1. DANIEL'S DREAM 7:1

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter. ESV

The event of Chapter 7 took place in Belshazzar's first year (553 B.C).
SOME 14 YEARS BEFORE THE FALL OF BABYLON.

[While on his bed] Cf. 4:5

[Then he wrote the dream] He made a record of it at the time. He did not leave it to tradition, or wait for its fulfillment before it was recorded, but long before the events referred to occurred he committed the prediction to writing, that when the prophecy was fulfilled they might be compared with it. It was customary among the prophets to record their predictions, whether communicated in a dream, in a vision, or by voices to them, that there might be no doubt when the event occurred that there had been an inspired prediction of it, and that there might be an opportunity of a careful comparison of the prediction with the event.

[And told the sum of the matter] That is, he spoke or told them by writing. He made a communication of them in this manner. It is not implied that he made any oral communication of them to anyone, but that he communicated them in writing.

a) Four Beasts 7:2-8

² Daniel declared, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. ³ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. ⁴ The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it. ⁵ And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.' ⁶ After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. ⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces^w and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸ I considered the horns, and behold, there

came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.

The "four winds of heaven" symbolizes heavenly powers by which God controls nations and men. Cf. Jer 23:19; 49:36; 7:14

Jer 23:19
Behold, the storm of the LORD!
Wrath has gone forth,
a whirling tempest;
it will burst upon the head of the wicked.

Jer 49:36
And I will bring upon Elam the four winds from the four quarters of heaven. And I will scatter them to all those winds, and there shall be no nation to which those driven out of Elam shall not come.

Zech 7:14
"and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the pleasant land was made desolate."

The world of human beings is pictured as the "great sea."
Cf. Isa 57:20; Jer 51:42

Isa 57:20-21
²⁰ But the wicked are like the tossing sea;
for it cannot be quiet,
and its waters toss up mire and dirt.
²¹ There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Jer 51:42
The sea has come up on Babylon;
she is covered with its tumultuous waves.

In Daniel 2:31, the four great world empires are pictured as a four-sectioned man; here they are portrayed as four great beasts.

The **first beast** was like a lion with eagle's wings. This is obviously Babylon which had a national symbol of a winged-lion, symbolizing power, swiftness, and cruelty. A heart...perhaps refers to Nebuchadnezzar after he was tamed (4:33-37).

The **second beast** is Medo-Persia which was like a bear, high on strength and vicious.

The **third beast**, a leopard, is swift, silent, and cunning; represents the Greek Empire of Alexander and his successors.

With an army of only 40,000 men, Alexander crossed Hellespont in 334 B.C. and challenged the Medo-Persian Empire with armies of millions. He became the master of Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and vast territories to the east, north, and southeast.

How did this “leopard” gain power (6)?

Alexander conquered everything but himself. He died at age 32 from stress and dissipation. The four heads may picture Alexander's divided empire after his death.

The **forth beast** is Rome, the last great world empire.

"Horns" refers to power and can mean kingdoms or rulers.

Daniel 7:2

[Daniel spake and said] That is, he spake and said in the manner intimated in the previous verse. It was by a record made at the time, and thus he might be said to speak to his own generation and to all future times.

[I saw in my vision by night] I beheld in the vision; that is, he saw represented to him the scene which he proceeds to describe. He seemed to see the sea in a tempest, and these monsters come up from it, and the strange succession of events which followed.

[And behold, the four winds of the heaven] The winds that blow under the heaven, or that seem to come from the heaven, or the air. The number of the winds is here referred to as four as they are now, as blowing mainly from the four quarters of the earth. Nothing is more common now than to designate them in this manner-as the east, the south, the west, the north wind.

[Upon the great sea] This expression would properly apply to any great sea or ocean, but it is probable that the one that would occur to Daniel would be the Mediterranean Sea, as that was best known to him and his contemporaries.

A heaving ocean, or an ocean tossed with storms, would be a natural emblem to denote a nation, or nations, agitated with internal conflicts, or nations in the midst of revolutions.

Daniel 7:3

[And four great beasts came up from the sea] Not at once, but in succession. The design of mentioning them here, as coming up from, the sea, seems to have been to show that this succession of kingdoms sprang from the agitations and commotions among the nations represented by the heaving ocean.

It is not uncommon for the prophets to make use of animals to represent or symbolize kingdoms and nations-usually by some animal which was in a manner peculiar to the land that was symbolized, or which abounded there.

Daniel 7:3

[Diverse one from another] Though they all came up from the same abyss, yet they differed from each other-denoting, doubtless, that though the successive kingdoms referred to would all rise out of the nations represented by the agitated sea, yet that in important respects they would differ from each other.

Daniel 7:4

[The first was like a lion]

(a) The animal that was seen: "the lion." The lion, "the king of beasts," is the symbol of strength and courage, and becomes the proper emblem of a king.

(b) The eagle's wings: "and had eagle's wings." Here appears one peculiarity of the emblem, the union of things which are not found joined together in nature, the representation of things or qualities which no one animal would represent. The lion would denote one thing, or one quality in the kingdom referred to-power, dominion, sovereignty, but there would be some characteristic in that king or kingdom which nothing in the lion would properly represent, and which could be symbolized only by attaching to him qualities to be found in some other animal.

The lion, distinguished for his power, his dominion, his keeping other animals in awe, his spring, and the severity of his blow, is not remarkable for his speed, nor for going forth to conquest. He does not range far to accomplish his purpose, nor are his movements eminent for fleetness. Hence, there were attached to the lion the wings of an eagle. The proper notion, therefore, of this symbol, would be that of a dominion or conquest rapidly secured, as if a lion, the king of beasts, should move, not as he commonly does, with a spring or bound, confining himself to a certain

space or range, but should move as the eagle does, with rapid and prolonged flight, extending his conquests afar. The eagle is an emblem of swiftness: Jer 4:13,

(c) The clipping of the wings: "I beheld until the wings thereof were plucked" The word used means, to pluck or pull, as to pull out the beard and would here be properly applied to some process of pulling out the feathers or quills from the wings of the eagle. The meaning of this symbol is, that there was some check put to the progress of the conqueror-as there would be to an eagle by plucking off the feathers from his wings; that is, the rapidity of his conquests would cease. The prophet says, that he looked on until this was done, implying that it was not accomplished at once. They were, however, checked, and we see the lion again without the wings; the sovereign who has ceased to spread his triumphs over the earth.

(d) The lifting up from the earth: "and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet as a man." That is, the lion, with the wings thus plucked off, was made to stand upright on his hind feet-an unusual position, but the meaning of the symbol is not difficult. It was still the lion-the monarch-but changed as if the lion was changed to a man; that is, as if the ferocity, and the power, and the energy of the lion had given place to the comparative weakness of a man.

(e) The giving to it of a man's heart: "and a man heart was given to it." The word heart in the Scriptures often has a closer relation to the intellect or the understanding; and here perhaps it is a general term to denote something like human nature-that is, there would be as great a change in the case as if the nature of the lion should be transformed to that of a man; or, the meaning may be, that this mighty empire, carrying its arms with the rapidity of an eagle, and the fierceness of a lion, through the world, would be checked in its career; its ferocity would be tamed, and it would be characterized by comparative moderation and humanity.

In Dan 4:16, it is said of Nebuchadnezzar, "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him;" here, if the symbol refers to him, it does not refer to that scene of humiliation when he was compelled to eat grass like a beast, but to the fact that he was brought to look at things as a man should do; he ceased to act like a ravenous beast, and was led to calm reflection, and to think and speak like a man-a rational being.

Daniel 7:5

[And, behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear] That is, after the lion had appeared, and he had watched it until it had undergone these surprising transformations.

(a) The animal seen: the bear. The animal is well known, and has properties quite distinct from the lion and other animals. There was doubtless some reason why this symbol was employed to denote a particular kingdom, and there was something in the kingdom that corresponded with these peculiar properties, as there was in the case of the lion.

Daniel 7:6

(b) The four wings. These represent well the rapidity of the conquests of Alexander, for no more rapid conquests were ever made than were his in the East.

(c) The four heads united to one body. It is well known that when Alexander died, his empire was left to four of his generals, and that they came to be at the head of as many distinct dominions, yet all springing from the same source, and all, in fact, out of the Macedonian empire. This fact would not be so well represented by four distinct and separate animals, as by one animal with four heads; that is, as the head represents authority or dominion, one empire, in fact, now ruling by four distinct authorities. The one empire, considered as Macedonian, continued its sway until it was swallowed up by the Romans.

(d) The dominion given to it. No one can doubt that a dominion was given to Alexander and the Macedonian dynasty, which would fully correspond with this. In fact the dominion of the world was practically conceded to that kingdom.

Daniel 7:7-8

[And, behold, a fourth beast] This beast had peculiar characteristics, all of which were regarded as symbolic,

(a) The animal itself: "a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly." The form or nature of the beast is not given as in the preceding cases-the lion, the bear, and the leopard-but it is left for the imagination to fill up.

It was a beast more terrific in its appearance than either of the others, and was evidently a monster such as could not be designated by a single name. The terms which are used here in describing the beast - "dreadful, terrible, exceedingly strong," are nearly synonymous, and are heaped together in order to give an impressive view of the terror inspired by the beast. There can be no doubt as to the general meaning of this, for it is explained (Dan 7:23) as denoting a kingdom that "should devour the whole earth, and tread it down, and break it in pieces."

(b) The teeth (Dan 7:7): "and it had great iron teeth." Not only teeth or tusks, such as other animals may have, but teeth made of iron. This is characteristic of a monster, and shows that there was to be something very peculiar in the dominion that was here symbolized. The teeth are of use to eat or devour; and the symbol here is that of devouring or rending-as a fierce monster with such teeth might be supposed to rend or devour all that was before it.

(c) The stamping with the feet (Dan 7:7): "it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it." That is, like a fierce monster, whatever it could not devour it stamped down and crushed in the earth. This indicates a disposition or purpose to destroy, for the sake of destroying, or where no other purpose could be gained. It denotes rage, wrath, a determination to crush all in its way, to have universal dominion; and would be applicable to a nation that subdued and crushed others for the mere sake of doing it.

(d) The fact that it was different from all that went before it (Dan 7:7): "and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it." The prophet does not specify particularly in what respects it was different, for he does not attempt to give its appearance. It was not a lion, a bear, or a leopard, but he does not say precisely what it was. Probably it was such a monster that there were no animals with which it could be compared. He states some circumstances, however, in which it was different-as in regard to the ten horns, the little horn, the iron teeth, etc., but still the imagination is left to fill up the picture in general. The meaning of this must be, that the fourth kingdom, represented by this beast, would be materially different from those which preceded it, and we must look for the fulfillment in some features that would characterize it by which it would be unlike the others. There must be something marked in the difference-something that would be more than the common difference between nations.

(e) The ten horns (Dan 7:7): "and it had ten horns." That is, the prophet saw on it ten horns as characterizing the beast. The horn is a symbol of power, and is frequently so used as an emblem or symbol in Daniel (Dan 7:7-8, 20,24; 8:3-9, 20-22) and Revelation (Rev 5:6; 13:1,11; 17:3,12,16). It is used as a symbol because the great strength of horned animals is found there.

(f) The springing up of the little horn (Dan 7:8): "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn." There are several points to be noticed in regard to this:

(1) The fact that he "considered the horns;" that is, he looked on them until another sprang up among them. This implies that when he first saw the monster, it had no such horn, and that the horn sprang up a considerable time after he first saw it-intimating that it would occur, perhaps, far on in the history of the kingdom that was symbolized. It is implied that it was not an event which would soon occur.

(2) It sprang up "among" the others - starting from the same source, and pertaining to the same animal, and therefore a development or putting forth of the same power. The language used here does not designate, with any degree of certainty, the precise place which it occupied, but it would seem that the others stood close together, and that this sprang out of the center, or from the very midst of them- implying that the new dominion symbolized would not be a foreign dominion, but one that would spring out of the kingdom itself, or that would seem to grow up in the kingdom.

(3) It was a little horn; that is, it was small at first, though subsequently it grew so as to be emblematic of great power. This would denote that the power symbolized would be small at first-springing up gradually. The fulfillment of this would be found, neither in conquest nor in revolution, nor in a change of dynasty, but in some power that had an obscure origin, and that was feeble and small at the beginning, yet gradually increasing. We should naturally look for the fulfillment of this in the increase of some power within the state that had a humble origin, and that slowly developed itself until it absorbed a considerable portion of the authority that essentially resided in the kingdom represented by the monster.

(4) In the growth of that "horn," three of the others were plucked up by the roots. The proper meaning of the word used to express this is, that they were rooted out—as a tree is overturned by the roots, or the roots are turned out from the earth. The process by which this was done seems to have been by growth. The gradual increase of the horn so crowded on the others that a portion of them was forced out, and fell.

What is indicated by this was not any act of violence, or any sudden convulsion or revolution, but such a gradual growth of power.

(5) The eyes: "and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man." Eyes denote intelligence, as we see objects by their aid. The rims of the wheels in Ezekiel's vision were full of eyes (Ezek 1:18), as symbolic of intelligence. We should naturally look for the fulfillment of this in a power that laid its plans wisely and intelligently; that had large and clear views of policy; that was shrewd and far-seeing in its counsels and purposes; that was skilled in diplomacy; or, that was eminent for statesman-like plans.

(6) The mouth: "and a mouth speaking great things." A mouth indicating pride and arrogance. This is explained in Dan 7:25, as meaning that he to whom it refers would "speak great words against the Most High;" that is, would be guilty of blasphemy. There would be such arrogance, and such claims set up, and such a spirit evinced, that it would be in fact a speaking against God. We naturally look for the fulfillment of this to some haughty and blaspheming power; some power that would really blaspheme religion, and that would be opposed to its progress and prosperity in the world.

b) The Ancient of Days 7:9-14

⁹ As I looked,

thrones were placed,
and the Ancient of days took his seat;
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames;
its wheels were burning fire.

¹⁰ A stream of fire issued
and came out from before him;
a thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;
the court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened.

¹¹ I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³ I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
¹⁴ And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.

"Ancient" here is not old and decrepit, but before time.
This is a judgment scene (10-12).

The solution to man's problems, including sin, is Christ! (13-14)

This is an important passage in that it links the O.T. and the N.T.

Most of the things ascribed to the person here are seen in Jesus Christ.

Jesus referred to Himself as the "Son of Man" 27 times in Luke alone.

Clearly He was claiming to be deity.

This passage is still being fulfilled; the blaspheming "little horn" has not yet appeared

Daniel 7:9-10

[I beheld] "I continued looking on these strange sights, and contemplating these transformations." This implies that some time elapsed before all these things had occurred. He looked on until he saw a solemn judgment passed on this fourth beast particularly, as if God had come forth in his majesty and glory to pronounce that judgment, and to bring the power and arrogance of the beast to an end.

[Till the thrones were cast down] So far as the word is concerned, it would apply either to a throne occupied by an earthly monarch, or to the throne of God. The use of the plural here would seem to imply, at least, that the reference is not to the throne of God, but to some other throne.

The era, or period, therefore, marked here, would be when a solemn Divine judgment was to be passed on the "beast," or when some events were to take place, as if such a judgment were pronounced. The events pertaining to the fourth beast were to be the last in the series preparatory to the reign of the saints, or the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah, and therefore it is introduced in this manner, as if a solemn judgment scene were to occur.

[And the Ancient of days did sit] Was seated for the purposes of judgment. The phrase "Ancient of days" - is one that denotes an elderly or old person; meaning, he who is most ancient as to days, and is equivalent to The Eternal. It occurs only in (Dan 7:9, 13, 22), and is a representation of one venerable in years, sitting down for the purposes of judgment.

God is often represented under some such appellation, as he that is "from everlasting to everlasting" (Ps 90:2), "the first and the last" (Isa 44:6), etc. There can be no doubt that the reference here is to God as a Judge, or as about to pronounce judgment.

[Whose garment was white as snow] Whose robe. The reference here is to the long flowing robe that was worn by ancient princes, noblemen, or priests. See Isa 6:1; Rev :1:13. White was an emblem of purity and honor, and was not an improper symbol of the purity of the judge, and of the justness of the sentence which he would pronounce.

[And the hair of his head like the pure wool] That is, for whiteness-a characteristic of venerable age. Compare Rev 1:14. The image here set before us is that of one venerable by years and wisdom.

[His throne was like the fiery flame] The seat on which he sat seemed to be fire. That is, it was brilliant and splendid, as if it were a mass of flame.

[And his wheels as burning fire] The wheels of his throne-for, as in Ezek 1; 10, the throne on which Jehovah sat appeared to be on wheels. In Ezekiel 1:16; 10:9 the wheels of the throne appeared to be of the color of beryl; that is, they were like precious stones.

[A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him] Streams of fire seemed to burst forth from his throne.

Compare Rev 4:5, "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices." Ex 19:16; Hab 3:4; Ps 18:8.

[Thousand thousands ministered unto him] "A thousand of thousands;" that is, thousands multiplied a thousand times. The mind is struck with the fact that there are thousands present; and then the number seems as great as if those thousands were multiplied a thousand times. The idea is that there was an immense; a countless host.

The reference here is to the angels, and God is often represented as attended with great numbers of these celestial beings when he comes down to our world. Deut 33:2, "He came with ten thousands of saints;" that is, of holy ones. Ps 68:17, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." Compare Jude 14. The word "ministered" means that they attended on him.

[And ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him] An innumerable host. These were not to be judged, but were attendants on him as he pronounced sentence.

[The judgment was set] That is, all the arrangements for a solemn act of judgment were made, and the process of the judgment commenced.

[And the books were opened] As containing the record of the deeds of those who were to be judged. Compare Rev 20:12. The great Judge is represented as having before him the record of all the deeds on which judgment was to be pronounced, and to be about to pronounce sentence according to those deeds. The judgment here referred to seems to have been some solemn act on the part of God transferring the power over the world, from what had long swayed it, to the saints.

Daniel 7:11

I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

[I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake] I was attracted by these words-by their arrogance, and haughtiness, and pride; and I saw that it was on account of these mainly that the solemn judgment proceeded against the beast. The attitude of the seer here is this-he heard arrogant and proud words uttered by the "horn," and he waited in deep attention, and in earnest expectation, to learn what judgment would be pronounced. He had seen (Dan 7:8) that horn spring up and grow to great power, and utter great things; he had then seen, immediately on this, a solemn and sublime preparation for judgment, and he now waited anxiously to learn what sentence would be pronounced. The result is stated in the subsequent part of the verse.

[I beheld] I continued beholding. This would seem to imply that it was not done at once, but that some time intervened.

[Even until the beast was slain] The fourth beast: what had the ten horns, and on which the little horn had sprung up. This was the result of the judgment. It is evidently implied here that the beast was slain on account of the words uttered by the horn that sprang up, or that the pride and arrogance denoted by that symbol were the cause of the fact that the beast was put to death. It is not said by whom the beast would be slain; but the fair meaning is, that the procuring cause of that death would be the Divine judgment, on account of the pride and arrogance of the "horn" that sprang up in the midst of the others.

[And his body destroyed] That is, there would be a destruction of the kingdom here represented as much as there would be of the beast if his body was destroyed. The power of that kingdom, as such, is to come to an end.

[And given to the burning flame] Consumed. This would represent, in strong terms, that the power here symbolized by the beast would be utterly destroyed.

Daniel 7:12

As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

[As concerning the rest of the beasts] They had been superseded, but not destroyed. It would seem that they were still represented in vision to Daniel, as retaining their existence, though their power was taken away, and their fierceness subdued, or that they still seemed to remain alive for a time, or while the vision was passing. They were not cut down, destroyed, and consumed as the fourth beast was.

[They had their dominion taken away] They were superseded, or they no longer exercised power. They no more appeared exerting a control over the nations. They still existed, but they were subdued and quiet. It was possible to discern them, but they no longer acted the conspicuous part which they had done in the days of their greatness and grandeur. Their power had passed away.

We should look for the fulfillment of this in the fact that the nations referred to by these first three beasts were still in being, and could be recognized as nations, in their boundaries, or customs, or languages; but that the power which they had wielded had passed into other hands.

[Yet their lives were prolonged] That is, they were not utterly destroyed and consumed as the power of the fourth beast was after the solemn judgment. The meaning is, that in these kingdoms there would be energy for a time. They had life still; and the difference between them and the kingdom represented by the fourth beast was what would exist between wild animals subdued but still living, and a wild animal killed and burned.

[For a season and time] Compare 7:25. The time mentioned here is not definite. The phrase used refers to a definite period, both the words in the original referring to a designated or appointed time, though neither of them indicates anything about the length of the time, anymore than our word time does. Luther renders this, "For there was a time and an hour appointed to them how long each one should continue." Grotius explains this as meaning, "Beyond the time fixed by God they could not continue."

The true meaning of the Chaldee is probably this: "For a time, even a definite time." The mind of the prophet is at first fixed upon the fact that they continue to live; then upon the fact, somehow apparent, that it is for a definite period. Perhaps in the vision he saw them one after another die or disappear. In the words used here, however, there is nothing by which we can determine how long they were to continue. The time that the power represented by the little horn is to continue explained in Dan 7:25, but there is no clue by which we can ascertain how long the existence of the power represented by the first three beasts was to continue.

All that is clear is that it was to be lengthened out for some period, but that that was a definite and fixed period.

Daniel 7:13

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

[I saw in the night visions] Evidently in the same night visions, or on the same occasion, for the visions are connected. See Dan 7:1, 7. The meaning is, that he continued beholding, or that a new vision passed before him.

[And, behold, one like the Son of man ...] The representation by symbols ceases with the fourth beast; and now the description assumes a literal form—the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah and of the saints.

Why this change of form occurs is not stated or known, but the sacred writers seem carefully to have avoided any representation of the Messiah by symbols. The phrase "The Son of Man" does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament in such a connection, and with such a reference as it has here, though it is often found in the New, and is, in fact, the favorite term by which the Saviour designates himself.

In Dan 3:25, we have the phrase "the Son of God" as applicable to one who appeared with the three "children" that were cast into the burning furnace; and in Ezekiel, the phrase "son of man" often occurs as applicable to himself as a prophet, being found more than eighty times in his prophecies, but the expression here used does not elsewhere occur in the Old Testament as applicable to the personage intended. As occurring here, it is important to explain it, not only in view of the events connected with it in the prophecy, but as having done much to mould the language of the New Testament. There are three questions in regard to its meaning: What does it signify? To whom does it refer? And what would be its proper fulfillment?

(1) The phrase is more than a mere Hebrew or Chaldee expression to denote man, but is always used with some peculiar significance, and with relation to some peculiar characteristic of the person to whom it is applied, or with some special design.

The expression used here is *bar*, and would properly refer to man as weak and feeble, and as liable to be sick, etc. Applied to anyone as "a Son of man," it would be used to denote that he partook of the weakness and infirmities of the race; and, as the phrase "THE Son of man" is used in the New Testament when applied by the Saviour to himself, there is an undoubted reference to this fact-that he sustained a peculiar relation to our race; that he was in all respects a man; that he was one of us; that he had so taken our nature on himself that there was a peculiar propriety that a term which would at once designate this should be given to him.

The phrase used here by Daniel would denote someone:

(a) in the human form;

(b) someone sustaining a peculiar relation to man; as if human nature were embodied in him.

(2) The next inquiry here is, to whom, this refers? Who, in fact, was the one that was thus seen in vision by the prophet? This inquiry is not so much, who did Daniel suppose or understand this to be? As, who was in fact designed to be represented; or in whom would the fulfillment be found?

For, on the supposition that this was a heavenly vision, it is clear that it was intended to designate some one in whom the complete fulfillment was to be found. Now, admitting that this was a heavenly vision, and that it was intended to represent what would occur in future times, there are the clearest reasons for supposing that the Messiah was referred to; and indeed this is so plain, that it may be assumed as one of the indisputable things by which to determine the character and design of the prophecy.

Among these reasons are the following:

(a) The name itself, as a name assumed by the Lord Jesus-the favorite name by which he chose to designate himself when on the earth. This name he used technically; he used it as one that would be understood to denote the Messiah; he used it as if it needed no explanation as having a reference to the Messiah. But this usage could have been derived only from this passage in Daniel, for there is no other place in the Old Testament where the name could refer with propriety to the Messiah, or would be understood to be applicable to him.

(b) This interpretation has been given to it by the Jewish writers in general, in all ages. I refer to this, not to say that their explanation is authoritative, but to show that it is the natural and obvious meaning.

It is true that this interpretation has not been uniform among the Jewish rabbis, but still it has prevailed among them, as it has among Christian interpreters.

(c) It may be added, that it cannot with propriety be applied to any other.

The title-so often used by the Saviour himself; the attending circumstances of the clouds of heaven; the place which the vision occupies-so immediately preceding the setting up of the kingdom of the saints; and the fact that that kingdom can be set up only under the Messiah, all point to him as the personage represented in the vision.

(3) But if it refers to the Messiah, the next inquiry is, What is to be regarded as the proper fulfillment of the vision? To what precisely does it relate? Are we to suppose that there will be a literal appearing of the Son of man-the Messiah-in the clouds of heaven, and a passing over of the kingdom in a public and solemn manner into the hands of the saints? In reply to these questions, it may be remarked

(a), that this cannot be understood as relating to the last judgment, for it is not introduced with reference to at all. The "Son of man" is not here represented as coming with a view to judge the world at the winding-up of human affairs, but for the purpose of setting up a kingdom, or procuring a kingdom for his saints. It is evident that the world is to continue much longer under the dominion of the saints,

(b) The proper interpretation is to regard this, as it was seen by Daniel, as a vision-a representation of a state of things in the world as if what is here described would occur. That is, great events were to take place, of which this would be a proper symbolic representation-or as if the Son of man, the Messiah, would thus appear; would approach the "Ancient of days;" would receive a kingdom, and would make it over to the saints. Now, there is no real difficulty in understanding what is here meant to be taught, and what we are to expect; and these points of fact are the following, namely,:

1. That he who is here called the "Ancient of days" is the source of power and dominion.
2. That there would be some severe adjudication of the power here represented by the beast and the horn.
3. That the kingdom or dominion of the world is to be in fact given to him who is here called "the Son of man" - the Messiah-a fact represented here by his approaching the "Ancient of days," who is the source of all power.
4. That there is to be some passing over of the kingdom or power into the hands of the saints; or some setting up of a kingdom on the earth, of which he is to be the head, and in which the dominion over the world shall be in fact in the hands of his people, and the laws of the Messiah everywhere prevail.

[Came with the clouds of heaven] That is, he seemed to come down from the sky encompassed with clouds. So the Saviour, probably intending to refer to this language, speaks of himself, when he shall come to judge the world, as coming in clouds, or encompassed by clouds, Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62. Compare Rev 1:7.

Clouds are an appropriate symbol of the Divinity. See Ps 97:2; 104:3.

The allusion in the place before us is not to the last judgment, but to the fact that a kingdom on the earth would be passed over into the hands of the Messiah. He is represented as coming sublimely to the world, and as receiving a kingdom that would succeed those represented by the beasts.

[And came to the Ancient of days] Dan 7:9. This shows that the passage cannot refer to the final judgment. He comes to the "Ancient of days" - to God as the source of power-as if to ask a petition for a kingdom; not to pronounce a judgment on mankind. The act here appropriately denotes that God is the source of all power; that all who reign derive their authority from him, and that even the Messiah, in setting up his kingdom in the world, receives it at the hand of the Father. This is in accordance with all the representations in the New Testament.

[And they brought him near before him] That is, he was brought near before him. Or, it may mean that his attendants brought him near. All that the language necessarily implies is, that he came near to his seat, and received from him a kingdom.

Daniel 7:14

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

[And there was given him dominion] That is, by him who is represented as the "Ancient of days." The fair interpretation of this is, that he received the dominion from him. This is the uniform representation in the New Testament.

[And glory] That is the glory or honor appropriate to one at the head of such an empire.

[And a kingdom] That is, he would reign. He would have sovereignty. The nature and the extent of this kingdom is immediately designated as one that would be universal and perpetual. What is properly implied in this language as to the question whether it will be literal and visible will be appropriately considered at the close of the verse. All that is necessary to be noticed here is that it is everywhere promised in the Old Testament that the Messiah would be a king, and have a kingdom. Compare Ps 2; Isa 9:6-7.

[That all people, nations, and languages should serve him] It would be universal; would embrace all nations. The language here is such as would emphatically denote universality. It implies that that kingdom would extend over all the nations of the earth, and we are to look for the fulfillment of this only in such a universal reign of the Messiah.

[His dominion is an everlasting dominion ...] The others, represented by the four beasts, would all pass away, but this would be permanent and eternal. Nothing would destroy it. It would not have, as most kingdoms of the earth have had, any such internal weakness or source of discord as would be the cause of its destruction, nor would there be any external power that would invade or overthrow it. This declaration affirms nothing as to the form in which the kingdom would exist, but merely asserts the fact that it would do so. Respecting the kingdom of the Messiah, to which this undoubtedly alludes, the same thing is repeatedly and uniformly affirmed in the New Testament.

The question now arises, "What would be a fulfillment of this prediction respecting the kingdom that will be given to the saints?" What, from the language used in the

vision, should we be legitimately authorized to expect to take place on the earth? In regard to these questions, there are but two views which can be taken, and the interpretation of the passage must sustain the one or the other.

(a) One is what supposes that this will be literally fulfilled in the sense that the Son of God, the Messiah, will reign personally on earth. According to this, he will come to set up a visible and glorious kingdom, making Jerusalem his capital, and swaying his scepter over the world. All nations and people will be subject to him; all authority will be wielded by his people under him.

(b) According to the other view, there will be a spiritual reign of the Son of God over the earth; that is, the principles of his religion will everywhere prevail, and the righteous will rule, and the laws of the Redeemer will be obeyed everywhere. There will be such a prevalence of his gospel on the hearts of all-rulers and people; the gospel will so modify all laws, and control all customs, and remove all abuses, and all the forms of evil; men will be so generally under the influence of that gospel, that it may be said that He reigns on the earth, or that the government actually administered is his.