

DANIEL'S VISION OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

TEXT: DANIEL 7:9, 10

INTRODUCTION:

1. The visions of Daniel the prophet provide the most comprehensive and detailed prophecy of future events to be found anywhere in the Old Testament.
2. Daniel traces the course of four great world empires: Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome, and he concludes with the greatest event in world history – the second coming of Christ and the inauguration of His kingdom.
3. The second coming of Christ has been called “the great interposition of God in human history” (W.A. Criswell), and it is this “great interposition of God in human history” that we will focus on this morning.
4. The key word in our text is “fire.”
5. In Daniel 7:9 we see “His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.”
6. In Daniel 7:10 we see “a fiery stream,” and in verse 11, “the burning flame.”

- I. FIERY FLAME – God’s throne**
- II. FIERY WHEELS – God’s providence**
- III. FIERY STREAM – God’s judgment**

I. FIERY FLAME – God’s throne

1. “The Ancient of days” is God. There have been some questions regarding whether or not this is God the Father or God the Son, but verse 13 indicates it is God the Father.
2. The Lord Jesus Christ, “the Son of man” (7:13), has a similar glory to God the Father, “the Ancient of days” (7:9).
3. Jesus said in Matthew 16:27, “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels.”
4. In Daniel’s vision, God is described as sitting upon a throne “like the fiery flame.” There are other thrones in this vision (7:9).
5. There is a contrast between the plural “thrones” in the beginning of verse 9 and the singular “throne” in the latter part of verse 9.
6. Daniel 7:9 says, “I beheld till the thrones were cast down...” The *Scofield Study Bible* margin says the thrones were “placed.” In other words, they were not thrown down, but they were put in place.
7. Who sits on the other thrones is not indicated, but it probably refers to angels, since angels are often associated with the second coming of Christ.

8. Matthew 13:39-42 says, “The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

9. Matthew 16:27 says, “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”

10. Matthew 24:30, 31 says, “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

11. A very important prophecy is given in Matthew 25:31-46.

12. The old song goes like this:

*There's a great day coming,
A great day coming;
There's a great day coming by and by,
When the saints and the sinners
Shall be parted right and left,
Are you ready for that day to come?
Are you ready? Are you ready?
Are you ready for the judgment day?
Are you ready? Are you ready?
For the judgment day? – Will L. Thompson*

13. Second Thessalonians 1:7-9 says, “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”

14. Furthermore, angels are very prominent in the book of Revelation.

15. Getting back to Daniel 7:9, the major characteristic of the throne of God is that it is a burning flame.

16. The word “like” in Daniel 7:9 is in italics (added by the KJV translators), so the Scripture literally reads, “His throne was the fiery flame.”

17. The glory of God is pictured in Daniel 7:9 as a “fiery flame.”

18. In Scripture, fire is often a symbol of judgment. We see this in Psalm 97. “A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about” (Ps. 97:3).

19. In Exodus 3, the LORD appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a burning bush. Judgment was coming upon Pharaoh and upon all of Egypt.

20. Deuteronomy 4:24 says, “For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire,” and Hebrews 12:29 says, “For our God is a consuming fire.”

21. In Revelation 1:14, the apostle John describes the risen Christ, and says “his eyes were as a flame of fire.”

22. And then in verse 15, John says, “And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.”

II. FIERY WHEELS – God’s providence

1. Daniel 7:9 says that the wheels of God are also burning. This reminds us of the prophet Ezekiel’s vision in Ezekiel 1 (cf. Ezekiel 1:13-21).

2. The wheels of God represent the providence of God. God’s wheels are always turning.

3. Ezekiel and his fellow Israelites were in exile in Babylon. Jerusalem was destroyed. The temple was destroyed. But God was still on His throne.

4. Ezekiel’s vision and Daniel’s vision are recorded in God’s Word to remind us that God is always in control. His wheels are always turning (Ezekiel 1:14-21).

5. Ezekiel’s vision and Daniel’s vision remind us that God is omnipotent and omniscient. His eye sees everything (Ezekiel 1:18b).

6. Ezekiel’s vision and Daniel’s vision remind us of God’s holiness and His power as the Lord of all creation.

7. Through His marvelous providence, God moves in the affairs of all nations to work out His own unseen plan.

8. God is always at work. He is never wrong, and He is never late.

God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform;

He plants His footsteps in the sea

And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines

Of never failing skill

He treasures up His bright designs

And works His sovereign will.

*Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.
Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.
His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.
Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain. – William Cowper*

9. The Bible assures us: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

III. FIERY STREAM – God’s judgment

1. Daniel 7:10 says, “The judgment was set, and the books were opened.”
2. “The Ancient of days” will sit on His throne of judgment (7:9). This is God the Father. God the Son is pictured in verses 13 and 14.
3. The fire in verses 9—11 refers to the fiery judgment of God.
Second Thessalonians 1:8 says when the Lord Jesus comes back to judge this wicked sin-loving world, it will be “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
4. In this scene of fiery judgment, an innumerable number of saints and angels are pictured as ministering to God – “ten thousand times ten thousand” (7:10).
5. When these books will be opened, “the beast” (the antichrist) will be killed (7:10, 11).
6. We know from Revelation 20 that when God opens His books, the wicked will be judged “every man according to their works” (Rev. 20:13).
7. God is the perfect and righteous Judge, and the Bible has much to say about God’s principles of judgment.

8. These important principles help us to understand that God is a righteous Judge, and they help us to understand how He carries out and exercises His judgment.

9. Romans 1:20 says men “are without excuse.” Sinners are always making excuses, but when they stand before God they will not be able to make excuses.

10. Romans 3:19 says, “that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

11. Another important principle – Romans 2:2 says, “But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth.”

12. Another important principle – no one can escape the judgment of God. In this wicked world, many criminals escape justice, but they will never escape divine justice!

13. Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:33). No escape!

14. Jesus said, “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him” (Luke 12:4, 5).

15. Hebrews 9:27 says, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

16. Romans 2:5 refers to the “righteous judgment of God.” God is the righteous Judge and He makes no mistakes!

17. Oftentimes human judges make mistakes. Witnesses lie. Judges and jurors and lawyers are often unreliable or dishonest. But it is much different with God.

18. But Genesis 18:25 says, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

19. Romans 9:14 says, “What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.”

20. When God, the perfect and righteous Judge arrives at a verdict, it is always right. God makes no mistakes. The Judge of all the earth will do right. God cannot do wrong. Every sinner in hell will deserve to be there.

21. Remember the story of the certain rich man, who was tormented in hell (Luke 16). He did not complain that he didn’t deserve to be there.

22. Romans 2:6 says, God “will render to every man according to his deeds.”

23. Revelation 20:12 says, “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

24. Daniel 7:10 says, “the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”

25. Another principle: God is not a respecter of persons. Romans 2:11 says, “For there is no respect of persons with God.”
26. Acts 10:34 says, “God is no respecter of persons.”
27. In Luke 16, the certain rich man went to hell, while Lazarus the beggar went to heaven. Revelation 20:12 says, “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened.”
28. Revelation 6:15 and 16 says the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”
29. Think of it – all the kings of the earth and the great men and rich men hiding out in caves and in the rocks of the mountains in an attempt to escape the judgment of God!

CONCLUSION:

1. Daniel’s vision in chapter 7 shows us where mankind is headed – “the judgment was set, and the books were opened” (7:10).
2. Humanists do not believe in the God of the Bible. Psalm 10:4 says, “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.”
3. Humanists think they can solve the world’s problems without any help from God. In 1973, they put out the Humanist Manifesto, which stated: “No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.”
4. Humanists are atheists. They are evolutionists. Evolution contradicts the Bible, which teaches that God created man in His own image and likeness.
5. Evolution teaches that man is improving, and that society is improving, etc. But the Bible teaches that men are lost sinners who need to be born again.
6. Evolutionary philosophy has produced Nazism and communism and humanism.
7. Humanism and evolution form the basis of the various modern methods of psychology and sociology that treat man merely as a higher animal, and which have led to the so-called “new morality” and ethical relativism.
8. This so-called “new morality” has led to legalized abortion, the homosexual movement, and now the so-called “transgender movement.”
9. Paul Kurtz was a prominent secular humanist who taught philosophy at the University at Buffalo. He published many books attacking Christianity.
10. He died in 2012. Kurtz said that humanists, “reject the idea that God has intervened miraculously in history or that he can save or redeem sinners.”
11. But God does intervene miraculously in history, and Daniel’s vision in chapter 7 is a vivid example of His miraculous intervention.