



Daniel 7:9-14
The Coronation of the Son of Man

9 " I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire;

10 A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.

11 "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.

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

13 " I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

14 Then 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 the one Which shall not be destroyed.

The trial of Saddam Hussein has become an almost irrelevant appendix to the conflict in Iraq. The newsmedia give it scant attention unless one of Saddam's lawyers is killed or he does something particularly ridiculous or pompous. It's almost funny when one considers that in order to attract attention, Saddam has to make a fool of himself at his own trial. The world no longer cares about this scruffy looking old man in a bad suit.

But what a contrast to the way our attention was absolutely fixed on him in 1990 after he invaded Kuwait, ***what would he do next, the world wondered?***

Even after the defeat of his huge army in the Gulf War, whenever he rattled the saber or defied the UN, the world listened. In 2003 everyone listened as he boasted that any attempt to invade Iraq would be repelled in the mother of all battles.

But now the Butcher of Baghdad, the maximum leader of Iraq, is nothing at all. On trial for his life, guilty beyond any shadow of a doubt, we all wait for the tedious affair to be finished and for sentence to be passed.

I can remember in the 1990s Christians wondering "is Saddam the anti-Christ?" in the same way they wondered if Nero was the Anti-Christ, or Napoleon, or Hitler, or Mussolini, the same way people are wondering if Ahmadinejad is the Anti-Christ today.

Well, today you'll be happy to hear that I'm going to answer that question once and for all, the answer is *yes* – all of those men were or are anti-Christ. They rise up from the turbulent sea of the nations and they strive in vain to become rulers of the world. As Psalm 2 puts it ***“The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed”*** and of course they persecute his people.

Like our first parents, Adam and Eve, they listen to the lie of the Ancient Serpent the Devil, ***“You shall be as God!”*** and they desire to be as God and to usurp his rightful rule, and in place of his righteous kingdom to erect their own unrighteous kingdoms. In doing so, they cease to be truly men, because of course Man was created in the image of God, and that image was obscured by sin, and what is sin but rebellion against God and his law? The more you rebel against God, the more bestial you become. The great rebel, Satan is called “The Dragon” or “the Serpent” in scripture for a reason. It is fitting therefore that these sinful world empires are portrayed as beasts and that the consummate servant of Satan, the BIG A Anti-Christ is called simply ***“THE BEAST”*** in Revelation.

In a moment I'll talk about the difference between small “a” antichrists, and the definite article BIG “A” Antichrist. But while these beasts, and the devil who stands behind them all, are terrifying the message of these three scenes or vignettes in these verses (they aren't chronologically arranged, they all essentially tell the same story – in fact they tell the same story as the statue dream in chapter 2) the message of these visions is that ***we need not fear them, because their power is fading, their rule is illusory, and their time as Revelation tells us is short.***

Wellington's army won the battle of Waterloo, even though by rights they should have lost. By the afternoon it was clear that the tide was turning in favor of the French, and yet Wellington did not retreat, because the German general Blucher had told him *“I am coming”* and so Wellington and his men held out until Blucher finally appeared and the tide was decisively turned against Napoleon.

In the same way, these scenes tell us the church the same kind of message, no matter what happens, no matter how bad the situation may appear, Christ is coming, and in that day the beast will be destroyed. It's even better than that, Blucher may have been on his way, but he wasn't in control of the Battlefield of Waterloo and the victory wasn't certain until he arrived. Jesus Christ even now is in control of this Battlefield, and His victory is certain.

1) In the first of these scenes in verse 9-10 we have a vision of God the Father, seated and prepared for judgment. Everything about Him is calm as opposed to the turbulent and chaotic sea of the nations, he is clad in white, showing his absolute righteousness. His throne is a fiery flame symbolizing his judgment. You sang about that in Psalm 50:3-4

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, And it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.

4 He shall call to the heavens from above, And to the earth, that He may judge His people:

But you notice it says in verse 9 not just throne, but thrones, and then in 10 that the court was seated. This is a court room scene, judgment is being prepared, the books are opened, all the evidence is there. Well the amazing thing, friends is that what we have here is the setting for the final judgment, and the reason that they are thrones is because the saints, believers in Jesus Christ, will be judging as well. That is why Paul says in 1 Cor. 6:2-3. *“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if*

the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?"

What a turnabout that will be, when all those who have persecuted the church, the Roman Emperors, the Ottoman Sultans, the Inquisitors, the Communist officials. When all of them stand not only to be righteously judged by the God they defied, but by the very people they tortured, condemned, and executed!

2) Then in the second scene, in verses 11-12 we see that even the Beast, symbolized by this horn that speaks arrogant and vain things will be judged and cast into the burning flame. This is the BIG A antichrist, as opposed to the little antichrists.

Now there is the spirit of antichrist, which is manifested wherever the preaching of the true gospel of Christ is opposed and there are those leading figures who have embodied that spirit, anti-Christ, men like Nero women like Madelyn Murray O'Hare. John put it this way: ***1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.***

Now this Spirit of AntiChrist, this lawlessness that marks these "last days" for that is what the entire period between the coming of Christ and His Return is called in the Bible, is to a certain extent restrained by God in His Common Grace, that the Gospel might go forth, and that the church might be protected. But a time is coming when that restraining will be removed and a singular embodiment of the Spirit of Anti-Christ, the BEAST, the ANTI-CHRIST will arise. Paul outlines this progression in 2 Thessalonians.

2 Thess. 2:5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The Beast and all his Followers, as well as the Devil and His Angels will all suffer the same fate in that day. All who have refused to bow before Jesus Christ will be Judged. Because God the Father has Given all authority and power in Heaven and Earth to Jesus Christ His Only Begotten Son. He is the true Ruler, and that is what is on display in the third section in verses 13 and 14.

3) Part of the spirit of Anti-Christ that marks these last days, is of course the denial that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He came in the Flesh. That is why John said in 1 John 2:22 ***"Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son."***

Jesus never said He was the Messiah you hear, which is ridiculous, but admittedly Messiah or Christ was not Christ's favorite title for Himself. Messiah was a term too loaded with political misunderstandings, the people had come to view the Messiah simply as an earthly ruler like David. Do you know what was Christ's favorite title? *THE SON OF MAN*.

He used it for instance in *Matthew 26:62* ***And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?"***

63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!"

That designation was taken directly from these verses of Daniel 7. The High Priest knew what it meant, the bible tells us that only God rides on the clouds of heaven, only He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and no merely Human descendent of David had an everlasting Kingdom.

No, He knew that Christ was claiming to be the Son of God, claiming to have the right to judge. Harken to an event that was about to happen, for Jesus was even then about to die and rise again, and then to ascend up to heaven to receive all Authority and Power at the Hand of the Father. To be Crowned ruler of Creation. That is why the high priest called Jesus a Blasphemer, because the high priest denied that Jesus was the Christ, the SON OF MAN. The high priest was an anti-christ.

Well, next week we will talk more about the everlasting dominion of Christ and what it means, but in the mean time let me leave you with one question to ponder:

You know where men like Saddam stand in relation to Christ, filled with their own arrogance. But what of you, where do you stand? With those who Confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of Man, those who are being conformed to his image and thus becoming truly Human?

Or are you one possessed by the spirit of lawlessness, vainly trying to be the God of your world? Which side of the thrones will you stand on in that last day?

There are only two ways to be related to Christ, to be united to Him by Faith or to be opposed. Friend or enemy, believer or anti-christ. There is no middle ground, no neutral theological "Switzerland" on the last day. Christ himself said *Luke 11:23* ***"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters."***

Heb 10:28 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.