

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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Future Vision

by Dan Trygg

"I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming. And He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴ And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed. ¹⁵ As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ 'These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.' ...I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them ²² until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. Thus the angel said: '...He (that 'horn') will speak out against the Most High, and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ²⁶ But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'" Daniel 7:13-18,21,22,25-27

In our survey of the descriptions of the Kingdom of God in the OT, we have learned quite a bit. **We have learned that God was wanting to make a covenant with people, based upon His grace and His benevolent acts on their behalf.** They were to be a people who chose to follow His prescriptions for living, and responded to His leading, so **they would be a people set apart for Him, ready and willing to do His will** (Ex. 19:1-6). **God rules over all the nations, but He desires to make Himself known to the nations through these people who are dedicated to Him,** and who follow His will. They are to be a Kingdom of priests, a people set apart to serve God *and* people. He will make Himself known through His mighty acts, and the glory and majesty of His Kingdom (Psa. 22:27,28; 145:10-13). **We also learned that there will be a man, a child, who will reign with justice over an everlasting Kingdom. He will be called "God",** yet His God will anoint Him with joy above His fellows, and the government will rest on His shoulders. He will also be called Wonderful Counselor, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. **He will reign on the throne of David, and there will be no end to the increase and expanse of His government or of peace,** because Yahweh of hosts will zealously bring this about (Psa. 45:6,7; Isa. 9:6,7). We also discovered that **in the days of the Roman kings, God would cut out a stone** (a "building-block", maybe a corner stone) **without human agency. This stone will be a Kingdom that will expand and fill the earth.** It will crush and displace all the other human kingdoms, and they will be like dust in the wind, but **this Kingdom will endure forever and ever** (Dan. 2:44,45). Then, through the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar and the revelation God gave to him, this famous king of Babylon proclaimed the greatness of the Most High God, and praised Him for His signs and wonders. **The Kingdom of the Most High is the everlasting Kingdom, one that endures from generation to generation. He rules over the kingdoms of men, and He gives authority to whomever He desires,** even the lowliest of people (Dan. 4:26). They are nothing apart from the ability He gives to them, and no one can challenge or oppose Him (4:35).

In Daniel 7, another 25 years had passed since Nebuchadnezzar's dream and subsequent humiliation. Daniel has spent the previous 55 years in administrative service in Babylon. **Nebuchadnezzar II had died in 562 B.C. There had been much turmoil and intrigue in the royal house of Babylon.** Nebuchadnezzar's son and successor, Awel-Marduk reigned two years ("Evil-merodach" in 2 Kg. 25:57; Jer. 52:31), and was murdered by his brother-in-law, Nergal-sharezer. After four years, this king died and his son, who was a child, was installed as the next monarch. After only 9 months, there was another coup, and his uncle, Nabonidus, emerged as king. He was a devotee to the moon god, Sin. After 6 years, he left his son Belshazzar in charge, as co-regent, and went to Arabia to build and restore temples to his god. **So, the vision Daniel received "in the first year of Belshazzar" occurred in 550 B.C. Daniel would undoubtedly be in his 70's,** having had an accomplished and respected career as a chief administrator or "wise man" of Babylon.

In contrast to the other occasions recorded in the book of Daniel, in this case, he was not seeking anything in particular. **The initiative for this vision was all God's.** Daniel was asleep in his own bed, and received a dream and "visions of the night". Note that **Daniel had a means nearby to write down the revelations he received. This was a long and somewhat complicated dream, pertaining to events in the distant future.**

Again, like Nebuchadnezzar's dream 55 years previously, **this dream involves four kingdoms. These kingdoms are identifiably in parallel, to a large degree, to the kingdoms in the vision from Daniel 2.** First, is the

kingdom of Babylon, followed by the Medio-Persian Empire. Third, is Alexander the Great, and his generals. **The fourth kingdom would seem to be the Roman Empire, in some fashion**, ...the next major kingdom that replaced the Greek rule established by Alexander. Note, too, the parallel of the iron here, with the iron of the fourth kingdom in the dream recorded in chapter 2. Here, this kingdom is described as "...dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong... It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder..." (7:7). This certainly fits with the brutal character of the Roman Empire, and what it did with those it defeated.

At this point, the two dreams change their focus. Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2 focused on the establishment of the Kingdom of God "in the days of those kings". The emphasis was to tie down a historical starting point for this Kingdom which would then expand and fill the earth. **Here, Daniel's dream focuses on some end time events.** Note that **this revelation has to do with some of the events that immediately precede the full establishment of the kingdom of God over all the nations of the earth.**

One new ingredient is the introduction of "another horn" that would "have a mouth uttering great boasts". A "horn" is a symbol of power. In a world of rams, goats and bulls, it was a natural symbol of power and the ability to attack, injure, and dominate its opposition. **This horn arises from among ten other "horns" that were part of this fourth kingdom. It displaces three of these horns, and takes their place.** This "horn" is then called a "beast", and it is destined to be slain and destroyed with fire. Before that happens, however, **it will speak out against God, and wage war against the saints.** It will try to "make alterations in times and in law", which appears to mean that he will make changes to the religious observances and practices, diverting people away from the Most High. **He will be able to attack and have authority over the saints for three and a half years. Then he will be judged and destroyed.**

Another new ingredient is that there will be a human being, "One like a Son of Man", who will "come with the clouds of heaven". He will come before God, the Ancient of Days, and will be given dominion, glory and a Kingdom. This Kingdom will be an everlasting dominion, and all nations and people will serve Him. His Kingdom will never be destroyed. That is all that we are told about Him, but it is a prominent part of this revelation. There is a human King, or one "like" a human King, who will "come on the clouds of heaven" and will be given an everlasting Kingdom over all nations and people for all time. *All will serve Him.*

Then, the vision switches to "the saints". **The "holy ones", the ones dedicated to God, will receive and possess the Kingdom forever, for all ages to come. Which Kingdom? The same Kingdom that the Son of Man will have dominion over.** In other words, ...though it does not specifically say it in *this* passage..., they will serve and reign *with* this Son of Man over this Kingdom forever (cf. 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10; 20:6). **"Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him"** (Dan. 7:27).

These are three very important pieces of information regarding the conclusion of the age. Three important glimpses into destiny, and the working out of history.

(1.) There will be a worldly power, a historical political figure, who will somehow arise from a coalition of ten kings, somehow associated with the old Roman Empire. He will be an arrogant boaster, who will speak against God and will wage war against the people who are living for God. And, for a period of time, he will defeat and decimate them. **In the end, however, it is his destiny to be destroyed and his body be 'given to the burning fire'.**

(2.) There will be a more-than-human human, ...one 'like' a Son of Man..., who will come on the clouds of heaven. He will be given a Kingdom by the Ancient of Days, ...a Kingdom that will rule over all nations for all time, and all people will serve Him.

(3.) The saints, the people who are set-apart for and dedicated to God, will endure great persecution at the hands of the "beast", but in the end, they will be given the Kingdom that will last forever, the Kingdom which belongs to the Highest One, the Kingdom which would seem to also be the Kingdom given to the Son of Man.

We also have an amazing glimpse into the glory of God, a peek into the very court of heaven itself: "I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels were a burning fire."¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him. The court sat, and the books were opened" (Dan. 7:9-10). What comes from this revelation is that **this eternal God, this "Ancient of Days", has no equal. There is none like Him. He is clearly and absolutely in control.** The arrogant, boastful "horn" is nothing to Him. The setting is like a King's court, where judgments are passed and decrees go forth. **Decisions are made based upon His will, and the recorded actions of people.** As Nebuchadnezzar learned 25 years before: "The Most High rules over the kingdoms of men, and He gives authority to whom He decides." And **it is His will to give the eternal Kingdom to the Son of Man, and to the saints who have faithfully lived for Him.**