

Daniel's Vision of Change

Daniel 7:1-14
SS Lesson for 03/03/2013

Devotional Scripture: Joel 2:28-32

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Introduction

Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson reviews the **Vision of Daniel** and how it effects change and offers us eternal hope. The **study's aim** is to teach that someday Jesus will rule forever and ever. The **study's application** is to show that as Christians we can rejoice because soon our Lord Jesus will bring all things under His control.

Key Verse: Daniel 7:14

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.

Commentary on Daniel 7:14 from Barnes Notes Commentary

[*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. Compare Matt 28:18; John 3:35; 1 Cor 15:27. The word dominion here means rule or authority—such as a prince exercises. He was set over a kingdom as a prince or ruler.

[*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. See the notes at Dan 3:4 Dan 4:1. 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. Compare Matt 16:18; Heb 12:28; Rev 11:15. The form and manner in which this will occur is more fully developed in the New Testament; in the vision seen by Daniel the fact only is stated. 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.

In regard to these different views, and to the true interpretation of the passage, it may be remarked,

- (1) That we are not to look for the literal fulfillment of this; we are not to expect that what is here described will literally occur. The whole is evidently a symbolic representation, and the fulfillment is to be found in something that the symbol would properly denote. No one can pretend that there is to be an actual sitting on the throne, by one in the form of an old man - "the Ancient of days" - or that there is to be a literal coming to him by one "like the Son of man," to receive a kingdom. But if one part of the representation is not to be literally interpreted, why should the other be? It may be added, that it is nowhere said that this would literally occur.
- (2) All that is fairly implied here is found in the latter interpretation. Such a prevalence of the principles of the gospel would meet the force of the language, and every part of the vision would find a real fulfillment in that.
 - (a) The fact that it proceeds from God-represented as "the Ancient of days."
 - (b) The fact that it is given by him, or that the kingdom is made over by him to the Messiah.
 - (c) The fact that the Messiah would have such a kingdom; that is, that he would reign on the earth, in the hearts and lives of men.
 - (d) The fact that that kingdom would be universal-extending over all people.
 - (e) And the fact that it would be perpetual; that is, that it would extend down to the end of time, or the consummation of all things here, and that it would be then eternal in the heavens.

For a very full and ample illustration of this passage—so full and ample as to supersede the necessity of any additional illustration here, see the notes at Dan 2:44-45.

Commentary on Daniel 7:14 from Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

Throughout world history, kings have risen and fallen. With them, hope and desperation tend to increase or decrease in concert with the quality of their leadership. The prophecy of Daniel 7 lays out that scenario on a grand scale by focusing on four Gentile empires that would take over the world by force. In Nebuchadnezzar's earlier dream (Dan. 2), the world powers were represented by the segments of a great statue or idol. Each segment's metal reflected the respective value and strength of that empire. All were destroyed by a great stone—the Rock of Ages, our Lord, Jesus Christ! In chapter seven of Daniel, the Gentile empires are presented as brute beasts. From a fleshly point of view, the empires of man are seen as valuable and strong. However, in God's viewpoint, they are like mere unperceptive beasts. Certainly history proves that many human governments behave no better than dumb animals. Sometimes they act like bloodthirsty, ravaging beasts. This week's key verse reminds us that someday all this will change. The supreme court of the universe will convene, the divine sentence will be passed on earthly governments, and the rightful King will take His throne. Human history has been compared to a giant, cosmic war: the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2) against the Prince of Peace; the evil god of this world versus the good God who made this world. God made His first move when He created Adam and Eve in Eden, but Satan made his countermove and seduced them to disobey—one battle seemingly lost for the kingdom of light. Throughout the Old Testament, history was simply the record of the moves and countermoves between the forces of darkness and the kingdom of light. In the New Testament, Satan made an all-out assault on his archenemy; he seduced the Jews and the Romans to nail Jesus to a cross. It was one of those dramatic attacks with crushing force where the opponent appears to have no possibility of escape. The kingdom of light had lost its greatest general. As demonic forces began to celebrate victory, however, God made His most strategic maneuver. He resurrected Jesus, who announced, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). The Apostle Paul summed it all up for the Christians in the church at Rome when he wrote, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen" (Rom. 16:20). This week's key verse rightly declares that there is a glorious reign ahead. God has used the world stage to picture His love and concern for His children against the beastly rule of human government. He has battled the forces of darkness and proved that His Son is the only rightful ruler for this world. He has a plan. History is His story! So when you face days of defeat, do not despair. "Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson

The concept of the major outlines came from NIV Standard Lesson Commentary and was determined by reviewing the Scriptural Text.

Verse	Phrase	Major Outline
1	Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts	The Vision Described
9	I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated	God Enthroned
11	I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame	The Beasts Defeated
13	And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven	Jesus Appears

How To Say It (From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

- Babylon *Bab-uh-lun*.
- Babylonians *Bab-ih-low-nee-unz*.
- Belshazzar *Bel-shazz-er*.
- Habakkuk *Huh-back-kuk*.
- Nebuchadnezzar *Neb-yuh-kud-nez-er*.
- Zechariah *Zek-uh-rye-uh*.

Lesson Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Daniel was one of the prominent Jews from Jerusalem who were taken to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1:1-7). There were several deportations (compare Jeremiah 52:28). The fact that Daniel was taken in one of the early ones indicates that he was considered to be among the cream of the crop of the Israelite people. During the exile, Daniel and other Jews struggled to understand what God was doing in the world. Why were the wicked Babylonians thriving while God's people, who were not nearly as wicked, suffered? Had God given up on the Jewish people? Did they have a future worth waiting for and praying for? Some Jews conspired to take matters into their own hands (compare Jeremiah 41). They believed that the best way to push forward was to rebel against the Babylonians. They did not believe the prophecies of Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others that God had decided to allow the Babylonians to triumph over the Israelites for their unfaithfulness. They did not comprehend that God would indeed punish the Babylonians for their own wickedness. Other Jews gave up altogether. They stopped following Israel's God and turned to false gods. They assumed that if their God was the one true God, then they should always triumph over their enemies. To them, Babylon's victory over Israel was a victory of Babylon's gods over Israel's God (compare Jeremiah 44:18). Why worship a losing deity? So they transferred allegiance. During times of such confusion, the Israelites needed a word from God to set the record straight. One such word came from Daniel.

From the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

If you grew up going to Sunday school, you are likely familiar with the first half of Daniel. The book opens with Daniel and his three friends refusing the royal menu. Honoring their choice, God blessed them with ostensibly better health than those who ate unclean food and drank wine. In Daniel 3, King Nebuchadnezzar erected an image and required all to worship it. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to it and were cast into a fiery furnace. God, however, rescued them. Even the king admitted that "no other God . . . can deliver after this sort" (vs. 29). In Daniel 5, King Belshazzar made a great feast for his nobles, during which they praised their idols while drinking from the vessels taken from the temple. During the feast, a hand appeared and wrote on the wall. Only Daniel could interpret the writing, which revealed that Babylon would fall. Even under Persian rule, Daniel had a prominent position. Some, however, were jealous of him and tricked Darius into signing a law against prayer. This led to Daniel's overnight stay in a den of lions, but God miraculously rescued him. Beginning with Daniel 7, the emphasis changes. Apocalyptic visions dominate the remainder of the book.

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

It is important to note which Babylonian king is reigning when Daniel has this dream. Two Babylonian kings are named in the book of Daniel: Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. (Darius, a third king, is "the Mede" by nationality in 5:31). Nebuchadnezzar reigned first, from about 605 to 562 BC. He was the one who destroyed Jerusalem and took many Jews into exile. The Babylonians seemed to realize that this was God's doing, but the Israelites did not (see Jeremiah 40:1-3). Nebuchadnezzar is presented in Daniel as a king who has his own selfish agenda, but also as a king who is capable of respecting the true God (Daniel 4:34, 35). Belshazzar, who begins reigning about 553 BC, is presented less favorably. He is depicted as an arrogant king who mocks God by toying with the sacred Jerusalem temple vessels (5:2-4). God's response to such irreverence is not to humble Belshazzar as he did Nebuchadnezzar, but to bring him to deadly justice (5:18-30). This is important because some world rulers whom God's people face after Daniel's day will be like Nebuchadnezzar, and others will be like Belshazzar. It is thus fitting that Daniel has his vision during the reign of Belshazzar, a vision about a future arrogant king whom God will bring to deadly justice.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

The Vision Described (7:1-8)

1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.

2 Daniel spoke, saying, "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 from the sea, each different from the other.

4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

5 "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'

6 "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

8 I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

Coming chaos (1-2)

Chaos in the world (Matt 24:21-25)

21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now — and never to be equaled again. 22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. 23 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. 24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect — if that were possible. 25 See, I have told you ahead of time.

Chaos in the heavens (2 Peter 3:10-12)

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. 11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

Chaos in the sky (Matt 24:27-29)

27 For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28 Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. 29 "Immediately after the distress of those days" 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

Chaos for the people (Luke 21:20-28)

20 "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. 22 For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. 23 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. 24 They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. 25 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. 26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. 27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Four beastly kingdoms of change (3-8)

Commentary from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Out of this chaotic sea emerge four great beasts, which represent four kings or kingdoms of the earth according to verse 17. These beasts are described in greater detail in verses 4-8. Some students identify these four beasts with the empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Not all agree on this identification, however.

A beast like the dragon in Revelation (Rev 13:1)

13 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

Four like the four that scattered Elam (Jer 49:36-37)

36 I will bring against Elam the four winds from the four quarters of the heavens; I will scatter them to the four winds, and there will not be a nation where Elam's exiles do not go. 37 I will shatter Elam before

their foes, before those who seek their lives; I will bring disaster upon them, even my fierce anger," declares the Lord. "I will pursue them with the sword until I have made an end of them.

Kings that were like the king described later by Daniel (Dan 11:36-39)

36 "The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. 37 He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. 38 Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. 39 He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price.

God Enthroned (7:9-10)

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.

God's righteous authority (9)

Authority of the Son of Man (Rev 1:12-18)

12 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 15 His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Authority of the Lord Almighty (Isa 6:1-8)

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." 4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. 5 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." 6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." 8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Authority over a kingdom of power (Mark 9:1-7)

1 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power." 2 After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. 3 His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. 4 And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5 Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is

good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters — one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." 6 (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) 7 Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"

God the judge (10)

Judge who is a consuming fire (Heb 12:29)

29 for our "God is a consuming fire."

Judge who is a jealous God (Deut 4:24)

24 For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

Judge of the dead (Rev 20:12)

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

Judge before whom all must stand (Rom 14:10)

10 You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat.

The Beasts Defeated (7:11-12)

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.

The beast's doom sealed (11)

A doom of a fiery lake of burning sulfur (Rev 19:20)

20 But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

A doom that Jesus performed (2 Thess 2:8)

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

A doom that includes torment day and night (Rev 20:10)

10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

A doom that came when he felt secure (Dan 8:25)

25 He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.

Other beast are deposed (12)

Commentary from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

This teaches us something about how God relates to the rulers and kingdoms of this world. All human institutions are fallen, and none is perfect. Some misuse that power so badly that God intervenes to bring them down. Other kings and kingdoms use their power in ways that God is willing to tolerate for a time. All human kingdoms ultimately will be replaced by God's kingdom. But some human kingdoms are better than others, and God relates to them in different ways.

Beasts like authorities that have their power on loan from God (Rom 13:1)

13 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Beasts like kings were warned (Ps 2:10-11)

10 Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. 11 Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Beasts are deposed like kings in the day of God's wrath (Ps 110:5)

5 The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

Beasts like kings are rebuked and sometimes destroyed by God (Ps 9:5)

5 You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked; you have blotted out their name forever and ever.

Jesus Appears (7:13-14)

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.

Jesus coming in the clouds (13)

Jesus will come with great power and glory (Matt 24:30-31)

30 "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. 31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Jesus will be coming back in the clouds (Acts 1:11)

11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Jesus will come and perform the rapture (1 Thess 4:16-17)

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Jesus will come to reward His saints (Matt 16:27)

27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Jesus' eternal kingdom 14)

An eternal kingdom identified in God's covenant (Ps 89:34-37)

34 I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. 35 Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness — and I will not lie to David — 36 that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun; 37 it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky." Selah

An eternal kingdom that God promised (Jer 33:17)

17 For this is what the Lord says: 'David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel,

An eternal kingdom that God sets up (Dan 2:44)

44 "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

An eternal kingdom where God given authority never ends (Luke 1:32-33)

32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

An eternal kingdom where righteousness is supreme (Heb 1:8)

8 But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

Conclusions and Other Thoughts

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. All human pretensions are cast down in the presence of the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9)
2. One day Heaven's books will be opened, and there will be no escaping their verdict (vs. 10)
3. No human dominion, no matter how seemingly impregnable, is safe from God's judgment (vs. 11-12)
4. The appearance of the Son of Man is the ultimate game changer (vs. 13)
5. The everlasting dominion that has been given to the Son of Man is our greatest and only sure hope (vs. 14)

Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

Jesus said that when He returns, conditions will be as in the days of Noah (Matt. 24:37). Peter said the last days will give rise to scoffers against the Christian faith who will mock the thought of Christ's return (2 Pet. 3:3-6). As we look at societal conditions today, are they not like the days of Noah? And is Christianity not under attack? It would be easy to despair, but the righteous should not give up, for help is on the way.

In visions from God, Daniel saw the span of world history, from the then-current world power, Babylon, to the end of the age, when God will judge the world and bring in righteousness. Even a casual reading of the description of God's end-time judgment hall—with the sights, sounds, and myriad attendant servants—should

capture the attention of the reader. The solemn severity of the occasion is highlighted when the text says, "And the books were opened" (Dan, 7:10). Though the context is the judging of world powers, God keeps books on individuals as well (cf. Rev. 20:12-13). The unbeliever should fear the judgments depicted in these scenes, for the Bible is clear that only those committed to Christ have their sins forgiven and need not fear future judgment. The believer in Christ actually looks forward to that future day when Christ comes in power and great glory.

The atmosphere in the throne room of God is quite different when Daniel sees in his vision the Son of Man, Christ Jesus Himself, brought before the Ancient of Days. It is a scene unlike the earlier one in that here there is anticipation of something good about to happen. Man came before God for condemnation; Jesus comes before God for coronation. When the hero of a story arrives on the scene, there can be a lump in the throat, tears in the eyes, and utter joy within the hearts of those who look forward to evil being conquered and righteousness installed where it had not been. So shall it be when God does away with evil and fulfills the promise given to those who in repentance have come to Jesus for salvation.

God has given human rulers the opportunity to make laws and rule nations with justice and righteousness, but the story of human history is not a pleasant one. Thousands of years and an even greater number of rulers have shown quite convincingly that sinners cannot do what is right and bring about lasting peace upon the earth. In his vision, Daniel saw God, having taken away human governments, installing His King over a kingdom that will promote life as it ought to be on this earth. It will be a worldwide kingdom with Christ in complete control and being served by those of all nations. Dominion and glory will be His—and deservedly so. If you know Christ as your Saviour and Lord, does your heart not rejoice in this vision of Daniel? It should, for the events described here will come to pass because God's Word is true. You will be there to behold the King in all His glory and to serve Him forever and ever. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).