

DANIEL

Week 21, chapter 7 conclusion

The Son of Man. Who would have thought that such an innocuous phrase, one that most Christians and Messianics have heard countless times, could have so much impact on our faith and understanding of God's Word. This will be our 3rd week that we've been in Daniel chapter 7; we'll finish it and then we'll move on to chapter 8. While I know that we've spent a lot of time on the subject of the Son of Man, I think it is one of the most profoundly important theological concepts in the bible, and ironically one of the least discussed, so we'll spend a bit more time today to wrap up some loose ends. And we'll begin by seeing if we can summarize what we've learned up to now.

We need to exit chapter 7 with this firm understanding: it is here in Book of Daniel that the concept of a unique being that is both human and divine is brought forth and given a title. While one might say that the concept of heavenly Angels was similar in that they were a spiritual being that could apparently adopt the form of a human to one degree or another, they were merely holy as opposed to divine. So the Son of Man as being closely associated with God, being given divine status by the Ancient of Days, and whose essence was both human and divine, was new with the Book of Daniel. What could be more important to the Jewish and Christian faith systems than understanding the origin and impact of the Son of Man, and all it entails, in God's plan of redemption?

It is a premise of Seed of Abraham and Torah Class that one cannot possibly correctly understand the New Testament without first understanding the Old Testament, and doing so within the cultural context of the people who wrote the bible. The Son of Man concept that is born and explained in Daniel is proof positive of this premise. Yeshua offers no explanation of the Son of Man; He merely claims it for Himself. Further despite what you might have heard all of your lives in Synagogues and Churches, Yeshua referring to Himself in the Gospels as the Son of Man was not a warm and friendly reminder to His followers of His humanity so that His followers could identify with him as one of them more easily; it was to signify His deity and unmatched authority. And yet it was meant to accomplish something else as well.

The Son of Man was not a brand new title that Yeshua invented nor was it pulled off a dusty shelf and used because it was catchy. Rather He put on the mantle of that title because He was precisely the one like the Son of Man that Daniel had been shown in his vision. Yeshua **was** Daniel's prophesied Son of Man. And by Christ using that title, the Jews of that day knew exactly what was signified by it. Yeshua was saying loud and clear that He was not only the divinely appointed successor to David's dynasty as the Messiah (the next king of Israel); but that He was also divine. And this fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel chapter 7.

We also learned that ancient records within Judaism, including the Talmud, prove beyond doubt that the concept of a Hebrew god/man who would come as Israel's redeemer was deeply embedded in mainstream Jewish thought and accepted by Jewish religious leadership. This was not a fringe idea, nor a radical or heretical theology, nor did Jesus introduce it. It was something that a large segment of the Jewish population expected, and then embraced, when Yeshua did enough to convince them that indeed He was that god/man of Daniel's vision. This explains why so many tens and scores of thousands of Jews rather quickly embraced Yeshua as the divine Messiah that He said He was. And as we're told in Acts 21:20, these were no ordinary Jews who were accepting Him. The tens of thousands this verse speaks of were Judeans; they were those Jews who lived at or near the center of Jewish religious practice and teaching in Jerusalem. Even more, they were well educated in the Scriptures as the verse concludes: ***"And they were all zealous for the Torah."*** It was that zealousness and knowledge that led them to trust Yeshua, not merely because he was an exceptional faith healer.

So these throngs of Judean Jews who believed that Yeshua was Daniel's Son of Man understood what those attributes must be to qualify him to hold that title: and Christ fulfilled those qualifications (in their eyes).

Next we looked at a couple of well known New Testament incidents recorded in Mark 2 involving Yeshua and some local Torah Teachers who sought to challenge His claims and His actions. The first concerned Him offering forgiveness of sins to a paralytic. The second concerned His lack of concern over His hungry disciples plucking grains of wheat and eating them on a Sabbath. In both cases He invoked His authority on account of He was the Son of Man. And in connection with Yeshua's Sabbath debate with some Pharisees we even spent a few minutes examining an interesting debate among some revered and well known Rabbis over the issue of saving a life on Sabbath, and whether it ought to be done or not, and if it was done did it violate God's Shabbat commandment. And what we found was that in general there were a number of circumstances whereby these renowned Rabbis determined that strict observance of Shabbat could be superseded, but those instances all involved saving life (in one form or another).

What was even more interesting is that one Rabbi's rationale for it being better to trespass the Sabbath rules to save a life than to allow life to be damaged or even lost in order to be scrupulously Sabbath observant, was that God didn't make man for the Sabbath, but rather that He made Sabbath for man. Thus all-in-all we find that most of Yeshua's teachings and claims were not new or unique within Judaism, although certainly some probably were. Further that modern Judaism's accusation against Christianity in general, and the reason that they will not consider Yeshua as a valid candidate for Messiah, is that Jesus-worship is idolatry because we worship a god/man. And this turns out to be disingenuous because in fact Judaism of 2000 years ago fully expected the Messiah to be a god/man because that is what Daniel envisioned, even if that expectation wasn't unanimous.

One of the goals of our Son of Man study is to straighten out some misconceptions about what it was that Yeshua did that so riled up various groups of Jews, and also raised the ire of their Roman governors. So, let's look at a few more NT passages that frames Christ as the Son of

Man but also involves other terms that we have more thoroughly defined: namely Messiah and Son of God.

Let's look again at Mark.

READ MARK 14:55 – 62

The question put to Yeshua is this: "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One (The Son of God)?" Notice from our previous 2 lessons on Daniel 7 that the High Priest included 2 critical but entirely separate elements in his question: 1) Are you the Messiah, and 2) are you the Son of God? What this meant was: first, are you the anointed one? Are you the one who is claiming to be a kingly leader of the Jews? And second by saying are you the Son of God he meant are you of the royal line of David? So, the Cohen Hagadol's question to this point is strictly a political one: are you claiming to be the prophesied new king of Israel who comes from King David's dynasty? Yeshua answers, "I am". No reaction just yet from the High Priest.

But then Yeshua unexpectedly throws in a whole new element to the controversy by recalling the precise description of the Son as Man as found in Daniel and claiming that He is that Son of Man. At that the High Priest goes ballistic, calls that claim blasphemy and says nothing more is needed to put Jesus to death. It is the Son of Man claim that is the issue, not the claim as being Messiah or Son of God, because the High Priest understands that by Christ saying that He is the Son of Man, He is claiming that he is God. And the punishment for blasphemy is death.

Let's look at another NT story of Yeshua in the Book of John.

READ JOHN 9:13, 18 – 25, 31 – 38

The crux of the story is that Yeshua had healed a man born blind and he did it on Shabbat. Since the Pharisees had created many rules about Shabbat, one being that healing was work, and therefore there could be no healing on the Sabbath. So from their perspective Yeshua was a sinner for healing this man on Shabbat.

But even more, they were skeptical that any healing had actually occurred (it must have been some kind of trick) since no healer had ever healed someone who was born blind. The healed man insisted it was so, his parents verified, and the newly sighted man argued for Yeshua and against these Pharisees who finally kicked him out (probably meaning out of the synagogue).

Notice that in verse 22, an edict was decreed that anyone who acknowledged Yeshua as Messiah was to be banned from this particular synagogue. But that banning was only because of the political consideration that they didn't accept that Yeshua could be the new king, the Messiah, they had been hoping for. Now that the man who was healed believed that His healer was the Messiah, then he too has been banned.

Then in verse 35 Yeshua asked the man healed of blindness if he trusted the Son of Man. The man said absolutely! By the way: Who is he? In other words, this common Jew, born blind, well knew of Daniel's Son of Man and that he was divine. But he didn't realize that the one who had just healed him (Yeshua) was that Son of Man. Yeshua says: "You have seen him and he is the one speaking to you now". The man bows before Yeshua, believing that he is Daniel's Son of Man.

Let's read just one more and we'll move on.

READ REVELATION 14:13 – 16

So here we again have the precise description offered in Daniel of one like a Son of Man, who is coming in the clouds. This is course, the returning Yeshua, who has consistently called Himself the Son of Man throughout the Gospels. And the Son of Man has come to reap, to harvest, the final harvest of Believers before the End. And, by the way, this final harvest will, I am completely convinced, coincide with (and fulfill) the prophetic Feast of Sukkot, the 7th and final Feast, which is also called the Feast of Final Ingathering.

I pray that over the past 3 weeks I've achieved the goal of showing you that Daniel's direct influence is front and center throughout the Gospels, and even into the Book of Revelation. And it especially shows itself in the constant mention of the Son of Man. And Yeshua believed Himself to be, and openly claimed that he was, Daniel's Son of Man. So if it is accepted, as is the common mindset among modern bible academia, and has been adopted by a large segment of unwitting modern Christian Pastors, that the Book of Daniel is a Jewish work of fiction and that it was written 350 years or so after the time it claims to have been written; and that the visions and prophetic events contained in it are contrived and false; and that the mysterious Son of Man is a creation of the author; then Jesus Christ is at best a delusional religious nut, and at worst a deceiver and a liar of the first degree. And even more the New Testament is no more inspired Scripture than is the Left Behind book series.

However as I spent much time proving to you in our Introduction to Daniel, those who make such arrogant and false claims against the Book of Daniel have utterly no proof whatsoever to back it up; they rely only on their own speculations and love of their own intellect. But what underlies their unshakable belief that Daniel can't be true is their equally unshakable belief that there is no such thing as predictive prophecy. There is no such thing as divine miracles. And there is no such thing as spirit. For them the bible is history, legend and myth. Therefore on its face Daniel can't possibly be genuine.

So now you have a decision to make; and it's a serious one. You can't just pretend you don't know; you can't try to find middle ground on the issue of Daniel because there isn't any. If Daniel is false, then so is Christ because they are so intertwined by the Son of Man concept. If Christ is false, then so is the New Testament because the promises and hope of the New Testament depends upon a real, true, divine Messiah who bears the attributes of Daniel's Son of Man. And if Daniel and Christ and the New Testament are false then indeed we have been duped; we are alone, without hope, and without salvation. Here's the good news: Daniel is true, and everything predicted in it has come true, and what hasn't yet is still future and in

process. Christ is who He says He is, and proved it by His resurrection from the dead and ascension into Heaven as witnessed and attested to by many. And the New Testament is true, because historically, spiritually, and factually the test of time has proved it to be true and accurate, without apology and without fail and without need for revision.

But there is so much more left to discover in the Book of Daniel, so let's move on.

RE-READ DANIEL 7:15 - end

The remainder of this chapter is mostly about the interpretation of Daniel's vision. And we find that this person in Daniel's vision who says he'll explain it doesn't at all bring peace to Daniel's soul by what he reveals. Daniel remains perturbed and upset and confused by what he has seen and has been told.

Verse 17 however is straightforward; the 4 beasts are four kingdoms and so we don't have to speculate about Daniel's vision of the beasts being a parallel of Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the statue of the 4 metals. However what needs a bit of explanation is that the "holy ones" of the Most High will receive the kingdom and possess it for ever and ever.....meaning once acquired it will never change hands.

How does this square with verse 14 where it explains that it is the Son of Man that will be given rulership of this kingdom (this same kingdom) forever and ever? Quite simply, the Son of Man will be the king and the holy ones will be the members of the kingdom. There is no conflict here.

But now comes a divisive issue of the identity of the holy ones (some versions using the word saints). The most common theological answer is that the holy ones are the Church, and it is especially a rigid position held by certain Christian denominations who uphold Replacement Theology. But as that wonderful bible commentator Robert Culver says so positively: ***"The Kingdom of the Most High (Daniel 7:17) is Jewish in some definite sense..."***

We must again remember that Daniel is operating from a worldview of Jews living in Babylon in the 6th century B.C. What else would the holy ones be for Daniel other than for Jews, or more technically, Hebrews? And what else would the human element of the Son of Man be than a Jew? Can we honestly believe that heathen gentiles would anywhere fit in this Jewish conception? Let us be humble to always remember that the concept of a Messiah, the concept of a Savior, and the concept of Holy Kingdom of God is purely, uniquely, and only Hebrew.

Further, what is always happening in the Book of Daniel is the creation of a contrast between the 4 **gentile** world empires symbolized by the statue of 4 metals and the 4 beasts, versus the eventual ONE Kingdom of God that will replace this succession of gentile controlled world governments. And this ONE everlasting Kingdom of God will be an ideal kingdom, ruled by the ideal king, and the kingdom's citizens shall be all that the ideal Israel embodies.

Let me be clear: will true Believers, Christians and Messianics, who worship Yeshua as Messiah be part of this ideal Kingdom of God, and thus be some of the holy ones of the Most

High? Most certainly. But as Paul said in Romans 11, gentile Believers are grafted into this ideal kingdom that is an essentially Hebrew kingdom. And that the root supports those gentile believers, the gentile believers don't support the root.

So from Daniel's perspective the holy ones are only Hebrews; but by means of progressive revelation we find out later that gentiles who, by faith, trust in the God of Israel's Messiah Yeshua, may join them.

Verse 19 returns us to the identity of the 4th beast. This is the one that terrifies Daniel the most. It is so very different from the first 3 beasts, and is the most terrible of them all. But it is also the FINAL beast before God's everlasting kingdom is brought in. So even though Daniel was (from a historical perspective) living and writing in the days of the 1st in the series of 4 gentile empires, meaning 3 more were to come after Babylon, who wouldn't want to know the identity of the 4th kingdom when all hell breaks loose, and is the final one before the Ancient of Days steps in to end it all?

Daniel wanted to know: What did the ten horns on the 4th beast's head mean? What was that other horn, earlier called the little horn, which displaced 3 of the original 10 horns? But then verse 21 has Daniel reveal a very important detail and one that is not so easily dealt with. It is that the little horn is going to war with the holy ones, and that little horn will be winning. But then the Ancient One comes to the rescue and judges in favor of His holy ones, because the time had come for God's holy ones to inherit the Kingdom.

Thus from Daniel's perspective there is going to be a king who is associated in some unspecified way with this 4th gentile world empire who is going to war with the Israelites. And this king is going to be winning. Suddenly the Ancient One comes, disposes of the little horn, and God's holy ones are victorious. Now there's a great deal of information here, and it has birthed many different End Times doctrines. We simply can't cover everything but I'll try to hit the high points.

First, this is no doubt speaking of a time future to Daniel, and as history has proven, still future to us in the 21st century. Within Christianity, this prophecy of Daniel concerning this great war and the Lord coming to bring victory is connected to Zechariah 14. It is a familiar passage especially to that branch of the Church that is typically called Evangelical.

READ ZECHARIAH 14:1 – 9

It is clear and obvious that Daniel 7: 21, 22 are the same thing Zechariah is speaking of. But here's the thing that can become most difficult for us to deal with: almost without exception when Zechariah 14:4 says that, "On that day His feet shall stand on the Mt. of Olives...." it is said that this is speaking of the return of Yeshua, and so it is His feet who touch the mountain. The problem is that Daniel says that this figure is the Ancient of Days, and Zechariah identifies the figure as YHWH, Yehoveh. Now pay attention please: Daniel identifies two distinct figures, one older and one younger, one called the Ancient of Days and the other called the Son of Man who is summoned to come before the Ancient of Days. Zechariah specifically names the person whose feet touch the Mt. of Olives as YHWH. And nowhere in the OT or NT is there a

claim that the name of the Messiah is YHWH; rather His name is Yeshua. Our English translations mask this reality because where the word Lord is used (or Adonai in the CJB), the original Hebrew is YHWH. God's formal name. It's just that "Lord" has become such a commonly used title for Jesus, that anywhere we see the word "Lord", modern Christians tend to automatically picture Christ.

So we need to be a bit cautious with this and realize that the general mindset of modern Believers about how the End Times plays out and who all the players are isn't so clear as it has been portrayed by various Church doctrines, commentaries and novels. And if rigidity and full literalness is called for, then the one whose feet touch on the Mt. of Olives, and the One who comes to intervene and rescue His holy ones is Yehoveh, the Ancient of Days.....NOT Yeshua the Son of Man... .because that is literally what the Scriptures say.

I'm not saying that *I* know the answer to this. I'm saying that **nobody** knows the answer to this with any certainty. However the gentile led, so-called New Testament Church, generally (but not entirely) has substituted Christ for YHWH to make it work better with certain doctrinal agendas. And I think you can see that it might not be warranted. Time will tell.

Let's skip down to verse 25 as in one way or another we've already pretty well covered the subject matter of verses 23 and 24. What I want to focus on is something specific that the little horn does (the little horn is usually thought to be the Anti-Christ and I agree with that). And what he does is to attempt to change seasons and law. Some translations use the English word time or times in place of seasons. The Aramaic word used here is zeman and we've discussed this before. The word is the equivalent of saying appointed times. That is it is not a generic term that means any old time, and it not a word that means seasons in the sense of weather; spring, summer, fall, and winter. Remembering that this is Daniel's vision, and this is coming from the Jewish viewpoint, this can only mean God's biblical festivals and Sabbaths. And law only ever means one thing in association with God and the Hebrew people: the Law of Moses. God doesn't have regard for the countless and ever changing laws of the hundreds of nations that have come and gone. There is, and has ever been, but one set of immutable laws: God's laws.

Thus what we see is that the Anti-Christ (the little horn) will attempt to do away with (or alter) the Biblical Feasts and the Shabbat.

CJB 1 John 4:1 Dear friends, don't trust every spirit. On the contrary, test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 Here is how you recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit which acknowledges that Yeshua the Messiah came as a human being is from God,

3 and every spirit which does not acknowledge Yeshua is not from God- in fact, this is the spirit of the Anti-Messiah. You have heard that he is coming. Well, he's here now, in the world already!

John says that while the Anti-Christ may not be here yet, his spirit is. Let me paraphrase this using Daniel's terms: In fact this is the spirit of the little horn. You have heard he is coming. Well he's here now, in the world already.

So the thought is meant to convey that the spirit of the Anti-Christ will cause people and institutions to go about changing God's ordained Biblical Feasts and alter or do away with the Sabbath, and abolish God's Law. Has that happened? Of course it has. And so there are many commentators who have determined that since the abolition of God's law and the changing of Passover to Easter, and the changing of Shavuot to Pentecost, and the doing away with Sabbath, and the general prejudice against any Jewish holy day (meaning Biblical Feast day) that is prevalent since the Roman Church was created, means that the Catholic Papal system is the embodiment of the spirit of the Anti-Christ and that is what is prophesied by Daniel.

Let me state that I don't agree with that. Among other reasons, if we're going to blame the Catholics for this, then what excuse does the Protestant or Orthodox branches of Christianity have for doing exactly the same thing?

And we can't get around the fact that this verse in Daniel paints it as negative in the extreme for any leader that would choose to change God's appointed times and His laws. So while Christianity, generally but not entirely, has done exactly this for the past 1600 years, it seems as though the little horn, the Anti-Christ, will finally remove all choice in whether anyone on earth may obey God's laws and celebrate His festivals. There will be a one-world religion and it will not include any of the biblically mandated holy days. And since the institutional Church has long ago abolished most of these anyway, and declared that we can establish any days we want to and declare them holy by our own authority, and change them anytime we choose to, then I doubt that most Christians will so much as make a peep when the Anti-Christ does this. Now the Jews on the other hand.....

From a personal standpoint, it is exactly what we read here (and from other passages) that many years ago convinced me that something has to be done to right the ship of Christianity. The molten core of Christianity is right and in line with God's Word. But some important parts of it are not and have succumbed to manmade doctrines, just as has happened to Judaism. And perhaps the most egregious things that we as gentile Believers have ever done as the body of Christ is to think that we can change or abolish the Sabbath, discard God's ordained holy days and substitute them with ones of our own design and making, and then decide that God changed, declared His Law as inherently faulty and bad, and so we have no duty to be obedient to His laws and principles because they are extinct.

I truly believe that despite our faults and flaws, and with full disclosure that we (and especially I) do not hold all the truth and cannot see the future, the Hebrew Roots movement within the Church is a sincere attempt to find our way home. It is a needed effort to reinstate a proper reverence of God, obedience to His commandments, and observance of His holy ordained days as best we can in the circumstances under which we live. All the while knowing and declaring that Yeshua is our Savior, He is God, and that we cannot obey God as we must without Him and without the Holy Spirit to indwell and guide us. And further acknowledging that

our faith was born from the Hebrews, and they remain our partners and elder brothers and sisters of the faith.

Daniel ends this account by explaining that this vision literally sickened him. If ever the word bittersweet could be applied, this is the opportunity. Daniel's vision was full of the most vile, violent, blasphemous, terrifying, catastrophic actions brought about by world governments and then a final world leader that was evil personified. Yet, when things are the worst and seemingly beyond hope, God arrives, reinstates His chosen people and establishes His Kingdom on earth to its fullest. And never again will wickedness prevail upon mankind.

Daniel decided that he could not bear to try and communicate this to anyone; so he kept it to himself and in time simply wrote down what happened. No conclusions. No doctrines. Just mystery and no doubt many sleepless nights.

We'll take up chapter 8 next week.