

#11 - Standing Up in a Smackdown World

1/18/2009 - Jim Johnson/Daniel 7:9-15; 21-28

What does a person do when there is no hope? There should be some answers in Daniel 7. This one chapter gives us an amazing overview of the future. It portrays the Kingdoms of this world as beastly empires. It looks ahead to our future to the biggest empire with the worst leader – the Antichrist. As Daniel saw these things, he also wrestled with a sense of hopelessness. (Dan 7:15) However, he kept looking as God went on to reveal a very happy ending to this story.

A. The Kingdoms of this world will be _____ – 9-12

He saw a courtroom being prepared. The final judgment of all the nations of the earth is about to commence. The Ancient of Days (God the Father) assumes the throne of judgement. (v. 9) His title speaks to His eternal nature; the whiteness speaks to His holiness; the fire speaks to His judgment. There was a crowd around the throne (v. 10) They may be angels but are more likely the redeemed that John also saw in his vision in Rev. 4:4

While this takes place the Antichrist is down on the earth waging war with the people of God (v. 21). This prompts God to open the record books to examine the evidence. (v. 10) He finds the beast guilty and renders judgment by slaying him and giving him to the burning fire. (v. 11) John pictures the scene more graphically in Rev 19:20

By judging the last and greatest of the beasts, he also brought judgment against all the others Kingdoms that have ever existed, having been previously gobbled up and conglomerated in Rome. (v. 12) Though their dominion was taken away by the Kingdom that succeeded them, their life was extended in the Kingdom that succeeded them. (v. 12)

B. The Last and Best Kingdom will be _____ - 13-15

Daniel saw a gathering of the clouds of heaven and central to those clouds was a person he described as “*One like a Son of Man.*” This would be Jesus who was called by this title some 31 times in the Gospel of Matthew alone. The clouds also indicate this is Christ (Matt 24:30; Rev 1:7; 1 Thess 4:17-18) When clouds are used symbolically in the Bible, it is almost always to indicate the revelation of Deity. (Ex. 13:21-22; 1 Kings 8:10-11) The fullness of time had finally arrived and the one who had rightfully earned the Kingdom was to have it given to Him. (v. 13)

The Ancient of Days gave Him dominion – the right to rule a fifth Kingdom. This is the Kingdom that is the repeated theme of the entire OT and the NT as well. God made a Covenant with King David that someone from his family line would always rule the throne of Israel. (2 Samuel 7:15-16). Though the nation ceased to be an independent nation in 586 B.C. the prophets looked forward, and saw a time when the nation would be restored, and the throne be reestablished and a descendent of David ruling on that throne.

(Isa 9:6-7) This Kingdom which is to come will primarily be a Jewish Kingdom because David was King over the Jews. Jesus will be that son of David who will once again reassume that throne.

In 70 AD the nation was completely obliterated. There ceased to be a nation to rule. The prophecies almost seemed meaningless until 1948 when Israel once again became a nation. After 1900 years of non-existence, the nation was miraculously raised up from the dead.

Once the Son receives His Kingdom we are told what to expect from Revelation 19:11-20. He will descend from heaven riding a white horse and the armies of heaven will follow. He will defeat the beast & his armies and cast him into the lake of fire. Then, according to Rev. 20, he will also capture Satan and throw him into the abyss. He will then establish His millennial kingdom here on the earth. It will be an enduring Kingdom (Daniel 7:15) We are told 6 times in the book of Revelation that the Kingdom will last for 1,000 years. After that, the heavens and earth will pass away, and Christ Kingdom will extend on into eternity.

Where is the Church in Daniel 7?

Remember that Daniel is primarily a book about the history of the nation of Israel. The first time God offered Christ as her King, she nailed Him to a cross. The Jews rejected her Jewish King. So God took what Israel rejected and offered Jesus to the gentiles. So for the past 2,000 years or so, we gentiles have been enjoying some of the blessings and benefits that God intended to give His chosen people.

God, however intends to resume his dealings with His chosen people in the future (see Romans 9-11) He got real specific in Romans 11:25-26 where he tells us that Israel is in a temporary condition and at some point in the future, the nation will be saved. He also tells us that God's promises to Israel are irrevocable. (Romans 11:28)

So where is the church in Daniel 7? We most likely make up the crowd around the throne (Daniel 7:9-10) How did we get there? Right before God begins to pour out his judgment on the nations. He will gather his children from the earth and remove them so that they will not experience His judgment. (1 Thess 4:15-18) We call this the Rapture. It involves the Lord Jesus coming down to the earth, except He doesn't make it all the way down. Instead, those who belong to Him, both the living and the dead will be changed in the twinkling of an eye and then we all will rise to meet Him in the air & will return with Him to heaven.

When will this happen? At the beginning of the 7 year period of time the Bible calls "The Great Tribulation. Why will this happen? Because God's wants to spare His church from the judgment he will pour out on the earth. (1 Thess. 5: 9) Just as God protected Noah and his family from the flood, He will also seal up and protect us from His wrath in the last days.

In Daniel 7, the church has already been raptured and is in heaven with the Lord Jesus. This means that we will be there to watch the scene unfold in Daniel 7.

APPLICATION

"What do you do when there is no hope? Daniel has shown us. We keep looking for that time when god will hand over all authority to Jesus who will make the wrong right. (Dan 7:21)

When we don't like what we see in this world, we need to keep _____

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth.

1. What most discourages you from Daniels' the picture of future? What most encourages you?
2. Sometimes we may need to squint our eyes to be able to see. Is there something that you need to eliminate in order to better see Christ?