

Manna for Your Soul

The Ancient of Days—the Beast's Judge

Wednesday, January 4, 2006

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

Daniel 7:9-10

Looking at the Word:

The sound and fury of the world sometimes causes us to forget the King of kings will one day judge even the most beastly and ferocious of world powers. Daniel's attention shifts from earth's troubled waters (7:1-8) to heaven's ordered harmony (7:9-14). The contrast could not be greater between the beasts (kingdoms of men) generated from the storms of earth and the omni-glorious Ancient of days, who sits enthroned ruling the kingdom of heaven in perfect peace. Daniel's exalted (poetic) style of expression in Aramaic has been captured by several English translations (NASB, NET, NKJV, NEV).

- **The Lord's Court (7:9a):** The phrase, "*thrones were cast down*" does not refer to the destruction of thrones but to their placement, and might better be translated as "set in place." Several possibilities come to mind as to who might be seated on these thrones such as apostles (Luke 22:30), elders (Revelation 4:4), believers (Revelation 3:21), an angelic council (1 Kings 22:19-22) or even the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity. Whoever they may be, they are not seated to judge but to honor the Ancient of days.
- **The Lord's Appearance (7:9b):** Because "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24), that He chooses to reveal Himself in figure as a man is for our edification. The title "Ancient of days" is a reference to His eternality (Isaiah 44:6; Psalm 90:2). From the beginning God has been present as witness to human history. His white garments speak to His purity and righteousness (Isaiah 1:18; Revelation 1:14) and his white hair, a reference to God's veneration and wisdom (Job 12:12; Proverbs 16:31). God's judgments are always perfectly just and right.
- **The Lord's Throne (7:9c-10a):** Daniel's description of God's throne offers an awesome display of God's glorious power to rule and judge His subjects in holiness (Isaiah 6:1-4; Ezekiel 1, 10). The universal sovereignty of God is pictured by a throne of flaming fire with fiery wheels. This throne is also described as having a stream of burning lava issuing from it. God's holiness will either purify a soul who is in submissive obedience to God's will (Isaiah 6:5-7), becoming a river of living water (Revelation 22:1), or else it will utterly consume and destroy that soul who is in spiritual rebellion (Psalm 97:2-3). Either way, God is able to enforce whatever decisions or judgments He makes.
- **The Lord's Attendants (7:10b):** The believer is never alone when standing with God. In the courts of Babylon Daniel was in a distinct minority of those still faithful in their service to God. Then (as now) men struggled with their obedience to God's will. It must have encouraged Daniel's soul to see that in the heavenly realm there are millions, if not billions, of angels who stand ready to fulfill the smallest detail God's desire (10,000 is the largest number that Daniel had a name for).
- **The Lords Judgment (7:10c):** The phrase, "the judgment was set" could also be rendered "the court was convened." Judgment of the forth beast had begun. It would take place in an open courtroom for all in heaven to see and hear. "The books were opened." The deeds of men, both good (Malachi 3:16; Psalm 56:8) and bad (Isaiah 65:6) are recorded in the books of heaven along with the names of the redeemed (Exodus 32:33; Revelation 13:8). The evidence against the beast will be presented in open session that all creation may justify God when He judges (Romans 3:4).

Application and Meditation:

Isaiah 26:3 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee." Daniel received this vision at a time when Babylon was in decline and would ultimately collapse in the face of Persian military might. He needed to know that God's kingdom was not in disarray but that all was on schedule and God would one day make right all the wrongs of men. This is also a truth we need to have in our life today. When life around us seems to be falling apart and wickedness to prosper, we need to remember that God will have the final word. © Mike Davidson