

• LESSON 8 (February 25) •

Daniel 7: The God Who Judges

BACKGROUND:

- This vision dates to the first year of Belshazzar's reign (550-549 B.C.), meaning it took place sometime between Daniel 4-5. Belshazzar was coregent with his father, Nabonidus, and Babylon was just a decade away from falling to the Medes and Persians.
- It was in 550 B.C. that Cyrus usurped the throne from Astyages the Mede and forged a new empire; though few realized it at the time, the political landscape of the known world was headed for violent change. This vision gave Daniel notice of what was still to come.
- Consistent with the concept of God's "wind" or "Spirit" elsewhere in Scripture (Gen 1:2; John 3:8), the "four winds of heaven" (Dan 7:2) are pictured as an agent of God to exert his will on nations and peoples (Jer 49:36; Zech 2:6; Rev 7:1).

QUESTIONS WORTH THINKING ABOUT:

1. God is described as "the Ancient of Days" in Dan 7:9-10 (see also Psa 90:2; 93:2). What ought we to make of that designation?
2. "Son of Man" was Jesus' most common self-description, occurring more than 80 times in the Gospels. What was he communicating by its use?
3. In Old Testament poetry, God is often said to ride the clouds like a chariot (Psa 68:4; 104:3; Isa 19:1; Jer 4:13), and Jesus spoke of doing the same (Matt 24:30; Mark 13:26), particularly on the eve of his crucifixion (Matt 26:64; Mark 14:62). Put all that together, and what ought Christians to make of Daniel 7:13-14?
4. Based on our study so far, what is being revealed to Daniel in 7:15-28?

CLOSING THOUGHT: So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:6-11)