

## 17 – How to Spot a Fake

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### The World's Greatest Deception



One of the greatest art swindles took place in the late 1960's. David Stein, a brilliant young Frenchman, imitated the painting style of the modern masters. He counterfeited the works of Picasso, Chagall, Modigliani, Klee, and Braque, among others. He signed the real names of the renowned artists on the paintings and sold them to collectors as originals. They were masterpieces of deception. So much so, that he succeeded in having one of his forged Picasso oil paintings authenticated by the master painter himself!



Then Chagall notified authorities that forgeries of his work were hanging in a New York art gallery. Stein was apprehended and served prison terms in New York and in France. Stein certainly demonstrated that it isn't always easy to spot a fake—even for experts!



The greatest deceiver of all time, however, is Satan! The Devil stands without peer when it comes to swindling, cheating, and counterfeiting.

Of course, Satan doesn't work openly. He works through other people, other powers and agencies. If he were an open enemy of God and truth there would be little danger that any Christian would be deceived.



So he works under cover, sometimes masquerading in the very garb of religion—ingeniously mixing truth and error to draw men away from the true worship of God. This has been his all-consuming passion for thousands of years.

God does not leave us at the mercy of this great deceiver, but has warned us through the Bible of the greatest of all deceptions at the end of time.

The prophet Daniel himself had a dream of beasts rising up out of the sea.

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6

(Text: Daniel 7:2, 3)

"...I saw in my vision by night," Daniel wrote, "and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea."

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7

And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other." Daniel 7:2, 3.

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8

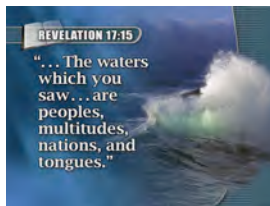
Beasts coming up out of the sea?

What could it all mean?

Let's let the Bible give us the key to unlock this symbolic prophecy.

First, in this dream, there is water.

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9

(Text: Revelation 17:15)

Revelation 17:15 says: "...The waters which you saw ... are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues." So the water the beasts come out of represent the populated regions of the earth. What about the beasts themselves? The angel told Daniel:

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10

(Text: Daniel 7:17, 23)

"Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth."

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11

... The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth." Daniel 7:17, 23

God's word clearly states that a beast represents a king or a kingdom.

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12

The beasts coming out of the populated area of the earth were to represent certain nations that would come into being.

Notice how he describes them in Daniel 7:3:

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13

(Text: Daniel 7:3)

"And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other."

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14

(Text: Daniel 7:4)

"The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings ..." Daniel 7:4

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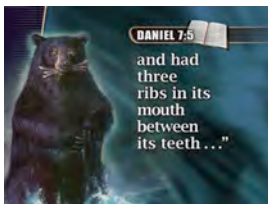


15

(Text: Daniel 7:5)

"And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side,

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16

and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth..."

Daniel 7:5

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17

(Text: Daniel 7:6)

"After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird..." Daniel 7:6

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18

(Text: Daniel 7:7)

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong."

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19

It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet."

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20

It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.”  
Daniel 7:7.



21

What an amazing vision this was! You will notice that these are not ordinary beasts. They each have special characteristics that help us to understand the vision.



22

Daniel must have remembered the dream of the great King Nebuchadnezzar. This new vision again describes the four empires of the ancient world and ends with the glorious kingdom of God! Let’s go back and look at each of these beasts or nations as they arise out of the populated part of the earth:



23

(Text: Daniel 7:4)  
“The first beast was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off;



24

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.” Daniel 7:4



25

What could better symbolize Babylon, the first world empire (represented by the head of gold in the towering statue), than a lion-the king of beasts?



26

The ancient Babylonians themselves used the lion to represent their empire. Archeologists discovered in the ruins of Babylon this symbol of the lion with eagle wings. Notice that God uses the same symbol of a lion to represent Babylon:

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27

(Text: Jeremiah 4:7)

“A lion has come out of his lair; a destroyer of nations has set out.



28

He has left his place to lay waste your land..." Jeremiah 4:7.



29

The proud, pompous king of Babylon envisioned his kingdom lasting forever. He apparently gave no thought to the idea that any other nation would ever rule the world.

He inscribed on the bricks of his buildings, “May it last forever.”



30

But it did not last forever. On October 13, 539 B.C., the Babylon kingdom (represented by the head of gold in the metal image and by the lion with eagle's wings in Daniel's dream) came to an inglorious end.



31

The kingdom or empire represented by the second beast, the bear, is none other than the conquering nation of Medo-Persia. This was the same kingdom represented by the arms and chest of silver in the image of Daniel 2.

As Daniel watched the bear in his dream, he said,



32

(Text: Daniel 7:5)

“...It raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it.” Daniel 7:5.

Daniel said that the bear had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. The Bible does not specifically identify their meaning.



33

However, many Bible scholars believe the three ribs represent Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt – the three principal territories conquered by the Medo-Persian armies.

The Persian Empire also would not last forever. God revealed that another beast, or kingdom, would arise:

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34

(Text: Daniel 7:6)

“Lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl;



35

the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.”  
Daniel 7:6.



36

Just as a slow-moving bear proves no match for the swift running leopard, so the Persian armies were unable to defend themselves against the rapid advances of Alexander the Great.



37

In Nebuchadnezzar’s prophetic dream, the bronze belly and thighs of the image represented the third world empire of Greece. Here it is represented by the leopard.



38

The four wings describe the great speed of Alexander’s conquests. He defeated Darius III of Persia in the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C., thus becoming in less than twelve years the ruler of the most extensive empire the world had ever known.  
The leopard’s four heads represent the four divisions of Greece.



39

(Text: Daniel 8:22)

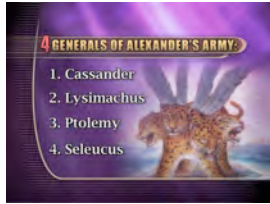
“Four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation.” Daniel 8:22.  
History tells us the Greek Empire did indeed divide into four parts.



40

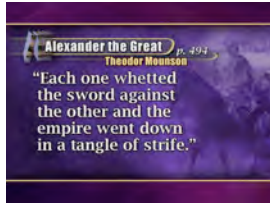
Alexander died at the age of thirty-two, just seven years after his great victory at Arbela.  
Even before he was buried, a power struggle began, first among his relatives and later among his military leaders.  
Finally, four of Alexander’s generals gained control of the empire.

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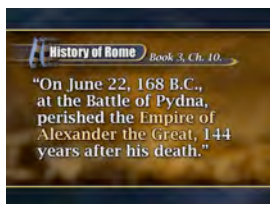


Now the leopard beast, or Greece, had four heads!  
Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus.

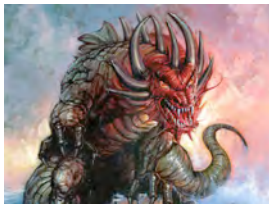
Alexander's four generals were greedy, ambitious men who wanted to rule the empire:



“Each one whetted the sword against the other and the empire went down in a tangle of strife.” - Alexander the Great, p. 494.



The unrest and strife continued among the four parts of the empire till finally, “on June 22, 168 B.C., at the Battle of Pydna, perished the Empire of Alexander the Great, 144 years after his death.”  
–History of Rome, book 3, chapter 10.



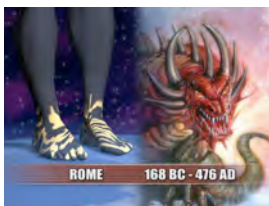
But what about the fourth ferocious beast that Daniel said would rise to power after the Greek Empire?



The angel told Daniel that this fourth kingdom would be different from the other kingdoms.  
The beast representing it was extremely powerful, and it had enormous iron teeth that destroyed its prey.  
Here is pictured a cruel, vicious power.



A more fitting description of the rise of the Roman Empire could hardly be found.  
Rome was more ruthless and brutal than all the previous empires.



This terrifying beast had iron teeth, while the fourth kingdom in the metal image was represented by iron legs.  
Daniel was intrigued by this terrible beast, and especially by its ten horns.

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(Text: Daniel 7:8)

He said, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn,



before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots..." Daniel 7:8 KJV.

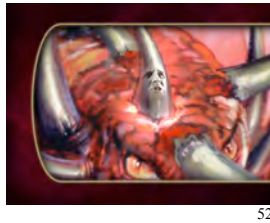


(Text: Daniel 7:24)

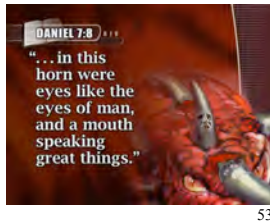
The angel told Daniel that "ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise." Daniel 7:24.



By 476 A.D. the barbaric tribes of northern Europe had largely destroyed the Roman empire. Seven of these kingdoms (nations) are still in Europe today.



But what interested Daniel most was the little horn that pushed itself up among the ten horns, uprooting three horns in its struggle for supremacy.



(Text: Daniel 7:8)

Daniel noticed that

"in this [little] horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Daniel 7:8.



(Text: Daniel 7:15)

This little horn troubled Daniel. He wrote, "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit, . . . and the visions of my head troubled me." Daniel 7:15.



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55

Why did this description of the little horn cause Daniel such concern?

Daniel recognized that this prediction was not just about secular history, but that it had to do with God's people.

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56

(Text: Daniel 7:21, 25)

Because "the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."

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57

"And he shall speak great words against the most High,

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58

and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws:

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59

and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

Daniel 7:21, 25.

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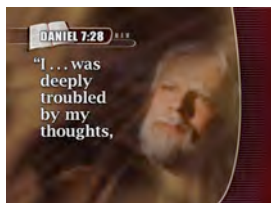


60

This little horn made war against the saints of God and actually prevailed against them for a period of time.

Obviously, it was to be a hostile, persecuting power---a power or agency used by Satan to make war against God, His people, and His truth.

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61

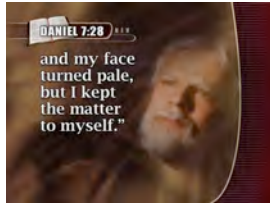
(Text: Daniel 7:28)

Daniel said,

"I . . . was deeply troubled by my thoughts,

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62

and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”  
Daniel 7:28, NIV.



63

Who is this “little horn”? Let’s examine the Bible’s description of this little horn and see what history records concerning its fulfillment.

Daniel described the fourth beast, or the fourth world empire of Rome, as



64

(Text: Daniel 7:7)

“...dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; . . . and it had ten horns.” Daniel 7:7.



65

(Text: Daniel 7:24)

Daniel 7:24 tells us that the ten horns represented “ten kings that shall arise.”



66

Instead of another world empire appearing on the scene of history at the fall of the fourth one, prophecy predicted that there would be a division of the Roman Empire, resulting in ten lesser kingdoms.

History confirms that portion of Daniel’s prophecy.



67

Historians tell us that the division of Rome was completed by A.D. 476.

According to the English historian, Edward Elliott, in his book *Horae Apocalypticæ*, the following barbaric tribes over-ran the Roman Empire from A.D. 351-476.



68

The following list gives the names of the barbaric tribes and their modern counterpart today: [You may choose to simply refer to the screen without reading what the audience can take in at a glance.] Alamanni—Germans, Burgundians—Swiss, Franks—French, Lombards—Italians, Saxons—English.

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Suevi	- PORTUGUESE
Visigoths	- SPANISH
Heruli	- EXTINGCT
Ostrogoths	- EXTINGCT
Vandals	- EXTINGCT

69

Suevi—Portuguese, Visigoths—Spanish, Heruli — Extinct  
Ostrogoths—Extinct, Vandals—Extinct



70

These are the ten horns of the fourth beast that Daniel saw.  
And according to the prophecy, the little horn was to rise to great power after the ten horns, or divisions of the Roman Empire.



71

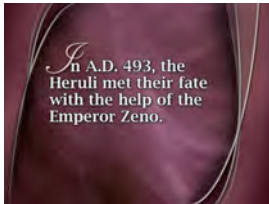
(Text: Daniel 7:24)

“The ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise:



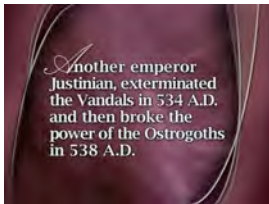
72

and another shall rise after them...and he shall subdue three kings.”  
Daniel 7:24.



73

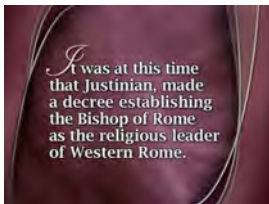
In A.D. 493, the Heruli met their fate with the help of the Emperor Zeno.



74

Another emperor, Justinian, exterminated the Vandals in 534 and then broke the power of the Ostrogoths in 538.

Thus, the three horns of Daniel’s prophecy were “plucked up by the roots,” making the rise of the church at Rome a reality.



75

It was at this time that Justinian made a decree establishing the bishop, or pope, of Rome as the religious leader of Western Rome. Daniel also predicted that the little horn would be different from the other kingdoms:

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76

(Text: Daniel 7:24)

"...He shall be diverse from the first"

Daniel 7:24. Was this beast different? Indeed it was!

The other kingdoms were political powers, but the little horn was a church that wielded political power.

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77

The prophetic finger would seem to point unerringly toward the Roman Church of the Middle Ages as the little horn of Daniel 7, just as the Protestant Reformers claimed.

Daniel gave another identifying characteristic of this little horn power:

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78

(Text: Daniel 7:21)

"I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."

Daniel 7:21.

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79

(Text: Daniel 7:25)

He also said that this power would "...wear out the saints..." Verse 25.

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80

Did the church of the Middle Ages engage in persecution?

Unfortunately, yes!

The Inquisitions against groups such as the Huguenots, Waldenses, and the Albigenses, with the use of torture and various methods of execution are an undeniable part of church history.

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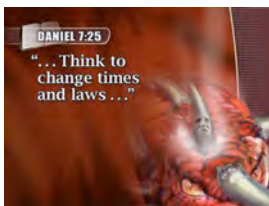


81

Hundreds of thousands were burned at the stake.

But we find that there is yet another very important distinguishing characteristic of this little horn power.

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82

(Text: Daniel 7:25)

The prophecy predicted that it would "...think to change times and laws..." Daniel 7:25.

Did the papal power in the Middle Ages attempt to change God's divine law?

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83

Yes, it claims it changed the Sabbath, appealing primarily to tradition, from Saturday to Sunday as we've already seen in this series.



84

The last characteristic that we will study pinpoints when this power would be supreme and the length of time it would persecute the saints of God:



85

(Text: Daniel 7:25)

“And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” Daniel 7:25.

Here we find more Bible symbols.



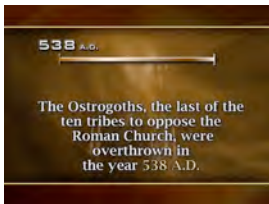
86

The term time signifies one year-and the term times signifies two years, or 720 prophetic days. A “dividing of time” would be half a year, or 180 days. When we add a time (360 days), times (720 days), and the dividing of time (180 days), we arrive at a total of 1,260 prophetic days, or years.

According to Ezekiel, a prophetic day signifies one year. “I have appointed thee each day for a year.” Ezekiel 4:6, KJV.

The little horn power was to be supreme for 1,260 years!

History confirms the accuracy of this time period.



87

The Ostrogoths, the last of the ten tribes to oppose the Roman Church, were overthrown in the year A.D. 538, leaving the Roman church free to exercise both political and ecclesiastical power.



88

Exactly 1,260 years later, in 1798, the Roman Church's political power was demonstrably ended by Napoleon's general, Berthier. Let's take a look then at the numerous biblical descriptions we've seen that identify this power.

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89

1. This little horn would come up in Western Europe among the ten kingdoms that had come out of the breakup of Rome. Daniel 7:8.



90

2. In its rise to power the Little Horn uprooted three of the former kingdoms. These three kingdoms were the Heruli, Ostrogoths, and the Vandals. These three nations were Arian in their beliefs and refused to accept the pope as the head of the church. Daniel 7:8



91

3. The prophecy says that this Little Horn would come up among the other horns after they were established. Daniel 7:20. This means that this kingdom would be established after 476 A.D.



92

4. This power would be different from the other kingdoms. It was both a political and religious kingdom. Daniel 7:24.



93

(Text: Daniel 7:21, 25)

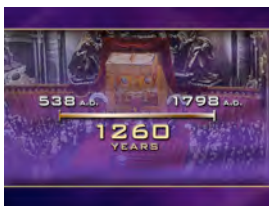
5. The Little Horn would persecute or “wear out” the saints. “I beheld in the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them”. Daniel 7:21,25.



94

(Text: Daniel 7:25)

6. This power would “think to change times and laws.” In other words this church would suppose itself able to change God’s times and His commandments. Daniel 7:25.



95

(Text: Daniel 7:25)

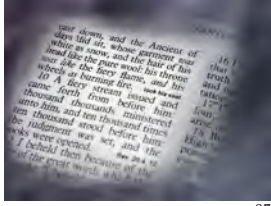
7. The prophecy points out that this power would rule supreme for a period of 1260 years. For the Bible says: “And they shall be given into his hands until time and times and the dividing of time.” Daniel 7:25.

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96

You can see by this prophecy that there is only one power in the world that arose at the right time in the right place to fulfill all of these points. This is the Roman Church. I want to make it very clear – I'm not talking about people here, but a system. A system that allowed traditions to be substituted for the truth.



97

Now, let's leap ahead to the climax of Daniel's great prophecy, for it has a very happy ending for the people of God.

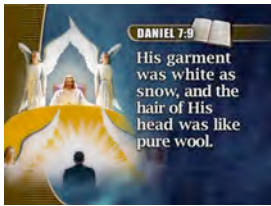
After watching the powers on earth struggle for political and religious dominance, Daniel's attention was suddenly shifted from earth to heaven:



98

(Text: Daniel 7:9, 10)

“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated;



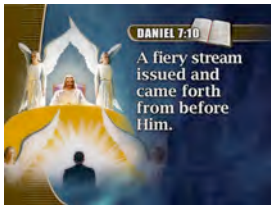
99

His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool.



100

His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire;



101

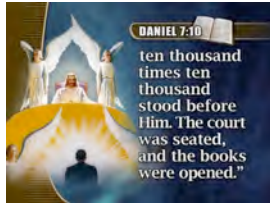
a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him.



102

A thousand thousands ministered to Him;

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103

ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:9, 10.



Daniel saw God the Father, here called the Ancient of Days, come and sit upon a glorious throne. This is all in preparation for the final scenes of this struggle for earth’s dominion.



105

(Text: Daniel 7:10)

“...the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:10. Daniel was shown the judgment in heaven, with God judging the little horn power that made war against the saints. Daniel also saw the outcome of this judgment:



106

(Text: Daniel 7:26)

“But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion,



107

to consume and to destroy it unto the end.” Daniel 7:26.

Then Daniel saw something very special, very beautiful, happen after the Father was seated and the judgment was ready to begin:



108

(Text: Daniel 7:13)

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven,



109

and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him.” Daniel 7:13.



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110

Who is this distinguished Person called “the Son of man” who was presented before the Eternal Judge?



111

When Jesus spoke of himself in the New Testament, He most commonly used the title the “Son of Man.” For example, He asked Judas, his betrayer:



112

(Text: Luke 22:48)

“...Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” Luke 22:48, NIV.

So it is Christ who is seen approaching the Father during the beginning of the judgment!



113

Christ comes to the judgment to represent all sinners who have accepted Him as their Advocate or Mediator.

As our lawyer in that court, He has never lost a case!

The text says that the books are opened.



114

(Text: Daniel 7:10)

“The court was seated, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:10, last part.

The books will contain every act in our lives whether they’re evil or good.



115

If we have accepted Christ as our Savior and Lord, then when our case comes up before God, Christ steps forth and declares that He is our Savior and that His death has taken care of every sin that we have committed!



116

In that day in the records of heaven, His sinless life takes the place of the sinful life we have lived, and the only thing that the Father sees as He looks at our record is the sinless life of Christ that has been credited to our record.

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117

We will have eternal life, not because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done on the cross for us. Daniel's vision makes it plain that the outcome of the judgment is a resolution to this whole problem of sin and suffering. The judgment is good news! Notice what Daniel saw:

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118

(Text: Daniel 7:14)  
“There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,

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119

that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him:

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120

His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,

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121

and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”  
Daniel 7:14.  
Daniel goes on with more good news about this kingdom:

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122

(Text: Daniel 7:27)  
“...The kingdom and dominion... shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High.” Daniel 7:27.  
God's people, His saints, will be joint heirs with Christ in taking possession of that everlasting kingdom:

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123

(Text: Daniel 7:18)  
“...The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” Daniel 7:18.

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124

It's clear that today we're living in the last chapters of earth's history! Daniel's vision is nearly complete. Only the judgment remains to be completed, and with it the establishment of God's people and His kingdom for eternity.

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125

After tonight's study we could become distracted. The historical facts of a great deception, the intrigue of thousands of years of church history, even the surprise of finding that a long-respected tradition is actually a prophesied counterfeit – all could tempt us to focus on error rather than truth.

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126

But as troubling as Daniel found the little horn in Daniel seven, it is clear that the predominant focus of his attention wasn't the little horn – it was the Son of Man coming in the clouds to begin the judgment. It was the triumph of Jesus and His followers, and their reception of the kingdom.

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127

Tonight we need to keep our eyes on Jesus! He is the One who the devil is trying to counterfeit. He is the One who we are to worship “in spirit and in truth.” He is the One who is seeking through the judgment to bring a conclusion to this great controversy between good and evil. He is the One we need to focus on!

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Tonight I wonder how many here would like to join me in making a commitment. You've answered calls and responded to appeals and made decisions from night to night. But tonight I think we need to make another important decision. As we learn more truth there might be a temptation to forget it's proper context. We might forget why it's relevant. At the center of all truth is Jesus. We may study the state of the dead – but at the center of this truth is Jesus, Who is the resurrection and the life. We may study the truth of the Sabbath – but at its center is Jesus the Creator who is the One worthy of our true worship. As we study the second coming, the judgment, baptism, and every other truth that has often been counterfeited we realize that Jesus is at the very heart and center of each of them. He IS the “way, the truth, and the life.”

Tonight the commitment I invite each one of us to make is a commitment to keep our eyes on Jesus. Even as we study and share the facts, the Bible verses, that teach these important truths,

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## 17 – How to Spot a Fake

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let's keep Jesus in the center of our study. Let's present the truth to others as it is Jesus. The counterfeit may be easily exposed and debunked by debate and argument, but the truth as it is in Jesus is demonstrated and revealed by hearts filled with His love, and minds that are focused on Him.

Would you like to make this commitment tonight? Would you like to simply say, "I want to keep my eyes on Jesus!" [Raise your own hand as you say this.] If this is your desire tonight, would you just raise your hand with me as we pray?

*[Suggested Prayer]*

*"Dear Lord, tonight we want to commit not only to the truth, but to keeping our eyes on the One who is the Truth. Tonight you have seen each hand raised, you know the desire of every heart. We want to commit to focusing on Jesus, the One who is the center of all truth. Even as we have identified the facts of history and prophecy tonight, we want to see the love of God in bringing our attentions back to the One who is our true priest, the One who is our Creator and Redeemer and our Advocate in the judgment. Help us to keep our spiritual eyes fixed on Him until we indeed see Him coming in the clouds. This is our prayer in Jesus' name, Amen.*

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