

Daniel 7:27-28

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After destroying the boastful horn, God will give rulership to the Son of Man and His people forever.

While Daniel sleeps, he is shown by God a bizarre sequence of events in a vision. An angel explains to him what the vision means. First, Daniel watches four beasts rise out of a stormy sea. Each beast represents a kingdom that will rise and fall. The fourth beast grows a horn that is boastful and blasphemous. The horn rules over the world and wages a war against God's saints. Ultimately God judges this horn and consumes it with fire.

But who will rule the earth now that the Enemy is defeated? The Interpreter explains to Daniel that *the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole of heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One*. The people of God will be given the earth to rule, under the kingship of the Son of Man (v. 13). The Son of Man's *kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom*, explains the Interpreter, *and all the dominions will serve and obey Him*.

The Son of Man is the final king over the earth. His kingdom will last forever. He is, of course, Jesus Christ. Jesus references Daniel 7 when He is on trial, declaring Himself the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One (God), and the Son of Man, who will be seen "sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61-62).

This king will be both a son of man (someone in human form) yet arrive with the clouds of heaven (v. 13), attaching heavenliness and deity to him. This combination of man and God is only found in the person of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God and of Man. Jesus claimed it Himself, and the mirrored imagery between Daniel 7 and Revelation confirm that this is Christ coming into the glory of His kingdom. It is also explained here (*all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints*) and elsewhere, that believers who suffer for Him will co-rule over the kingdom (2 Timothy 2:12, Romans 8:17, Revelation 3:21).

With the vision explained, the dream ends. Daniel writes that *the revelation finished*. He awoke. His reaction was fearful. After seeing a vision of a stormy sea, and monsters rising from it, a war against God's people, and God the Judge on a fiery throne surrounded by thousands of angels destroying His enemies, it is not hard to imagine why Daniel felt overwhelmed. He writes that his *thoughts were greatly alarming* him and his *face grew pale*. Although he obviously wrote down a record of this vision in this chapter, he concludes it by saying: *I kept the matter to myself*. He did not speak of it with anyone else.

Although this commentary identifies which kings and kingdoms are prophesied in this chapter (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the Kingdom of Jesus), Daniel is not given specific names for these coming empires. We can identify the kings and kingdoms with the benefit of hindsight and additional biblical revelation. The Interpreter tells Daniel only what the beasts

represent: kings and kingdoms. He is told that the horn is a blasphemous king whom God will destroy. He is told that the people of God will co-rule with a king who is both human and divine.

The overall point of this vision is not to know the details of when these things will happen, but that they *will* happen. Daniel is a stranger in a strange land. He has been a captive in Babylon since his youth. He has been surrounded by people who worship idols and scheme for power. Yet he has stayed faithful to God. And God is telling Daniel that though many monstrous empires will rise and fall, even the most wicked of them all will be destroyed, and God will put an eternal king worthy of glory and power to rule the earth, and the matter will be complete.

One of the great themes in the book of Daniel is God's authority over the earth: "that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and that He sets over it whomever He wishes" (Daniel 5:21). This vision, however terrifying and overwhelming, is a promise that ultimately God will rescue His people and establish Jesus as a forever king.

Biblical Text

27 Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

28 "At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself."