

## **A Brief Glimpse Of Heaven**

### **Daniel 7:9-14**

#### **Introduction**

In this first vision of Daniel we are given a brief glimpse of Heaven and the future. Daniel watches (v.9;v.11;v.13) and what he sees includes a summary judgment of all things. In these few verses Daniel sees the Ancient of Days seated in Heaven's glory and the summary execution of the fourth beast cast into a burning flame (vv.11-12). Daniel is witness to the final judgment and the Son of Man receiving a mighty, glorious and eternal kingdom (v.14).

Daniel has seen a lion-like winged beast (v.4); a bear-like beast (v.5); a leopard-like beast with four heads and four wings (v.6) and a terrifying ten horned beast which does not seem to correspond to any earthly creature (vv.6-8). One of these horns, a little horn with eyes and a mouth speaks pompous words.

In the most amazing economy of words Daniel sees nations and kingdoms rise and fall and the exciting revelation of a future king and an eternal kingdom (vv.13-14).

Daniel sees two beings in heaven One pronouncing judgment and the other receiving dominion and glory.

#### **The Ancient Of Days (v.9)**

*Daniel 7:9–14 (NKJV)9 “I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire;*

Daniel observes thrones put in place. The phrase can be translated “till thrones were cast down” (KJV) or “till thrones were set (put in place).” Daniel's vision greatly resembles Revelation 4-5 where there are at least 17 references to thrones. There are references to God's thrones and the thrones of 24 elders who apparently make up a kind of celestial court who observe and acknowledge the judgments of God. Again they seem in part to be set up in preparation for the coming judgment of the fourth beast and the little horn (see also John Phillips; *Exploring the Book Of Daniel*; p.118).

It is a picture of rule and authority. The exiles in Babylon must have wondered from time to time if God really was in charge and in control and if Israel's remnant in captivity would truly return to Judea and Israel. Has God abandoned Israel to the whims of foreign powers and earthly rulers? What is God's plan for His people?

The central theme of this chapter is one of the great themes of the entire Bible. God will not leave His people in a place of permanent suffering. Those who love the Lord and believe the Lord will find themselves in God's glorious kingdom. The gentile rulers who have so long placed themselves in opposition to the rule of God will one day be judged and punished.

## **A Brief Glimpse Of Heaven**

### **Daniel 7:9-14**

*The things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.*

Who is this Being that Daniel calls *yahtiq yomeen* (*The Ancient of Days*). The phrase finds no other usage in Biblical revelation other than later in our text. There is no exact Hebrew equivalent in reference to Jehovah. In Psalm 90 Moses uses the phrase “from everlasting thou art God”.

Most of us are aware that the names of God reveal something about His nature and His character. Jehovah or Yahweh speaks of God’s self-existence. He is the God who makes promises and keeps promises.

In a popular song in the 90’s the Goo Goo Dolls sang

And I don't want the world to see me  
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand  
When everything's meant to be broken  
I just want you to know who I am...

Everything does appear to be broken. But it is not true. A faithful covenant keeping God exists who makes promises and keeps promises. Some scholars see in Daniel’s descriptor of God as The Ancient of Days a reference to his eternal being. Others point as its primary meaning God’s role as absolute Judge. If that’s the case then Daniel’s vision of God putting all thrones into place (whether on earth or in heaven) then God reserves the right to judge all who occupy those thrones at some point.

#### **His Name**

##### **Ancient of Days**

The everlasting one.

##### **His Clothes**

“...*His garment was white as snow.*” This garment speaks of His unmatched holiness.

##### **His Hair**

“*and the hair of His head was like pure wool.*”

Perhaps a reference to experience and majesty.

##### **His Throne**

## **A Brief Glimpse Of Heaven**

### **Daniel 7:9-14**

*“His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels like a burning fire;”*

In his wonderful book *Unlocking The Mysteries of Daniel* Dr. Wallace Emerson writes; *“How does one describe the indescribable? What words can convey to earthly senses the awesome majesty and beauty of Him whose garments were light itself and whose court was the shining angelic host? And as is the beauty and majesty of this great assize so is its terror to those guilty ones who stand before it with no advocate to plead their cause and no righteous substitute as an offering for sin”* (p.119).

### **The River Of Fire (v.10)**

*10A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.*

The attention shifts from throne to throng. A stream of fire like a the blazing tail of a comet bathes the beings in the celestial court. The numbers used are not meant to give us a precise calculation of those celestial beings who exercise functions of ministry; but rather they are given to leave us to wonder how so vast a multitude can fit in such a courtyard.

The Celestial Court is in session. The books are opened. These books are not kept because God is forgetful. *“He keeps records, not because He needs them but so that those who are condemned might face the record of their own actions and words. No incident—however small or seemingly insignificant— in all of the long history of man’s tenure of this planet, has escaped the all-seeing eye of God. It is all written down”* (Phillips p. 118-119).

Human memory and human history might be subject to falsification, exaggeration or revision.

There is no fake news in Heaven.

Do you think the books are available in an electronic format or audio or video? Do you think they are edited so as not to offend the sensibilities of the citizens of heaven?

### **The Judgment Of Fire (vv.11-12)**

*11 “I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.  
12As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.*

## **A Brief Glimpse Of Heaven**

### **Daniel 7:9-14**

The scene moves from the throne to the throng to the King making good both promise and threat.

God has a long account to settle.

Justice will finally be served.

It would appear that Daniel could hear the sound of the blasphemies coming from the mouth of the little horn (v.8). The antichrist figure continues his speech even in heaven. The final beast is slain. The little horn is judged. Satan is judged (Revelation 19:19-20:10).

In verse 11 we are told that the body is destroyed and given to the burning flame.

In the book of Revelation John writes (v.20); *“Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”*

What does verse 12 mean? It would appear that the rest of beasts (earthly kingdoms) have their dominion taken away; but earthly kingdoms continue. It would appear that in some way Babylon continues; the Medes and the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans and the remnant of human beings thrive in what some have called A Millennial Kingdom (the thousand year reign).

### **The Son Of Man And An Eternal Kingdom (vv.13-14)**

*13 “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.*

*14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.*

## **Conclusion**