Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Coming Kingdom of Christ, Part 1
Scripture: Daniel 7
Code: 27-15

Take your Bible, if you will, and let's look together at the book of Daniel. We're having a wonderful time studying this wonderful prophecy, the book of Daniel. Tonight we come to the seventh chapter of Daniel, a great and historic chapter in the Old Testament. Daniel 7.

We're going to begin tonight to study the seventh chapter. But it is so packed full of prophetic truth that we'll not exhaust in in one session, but look forward to continuing our study two weeks from tonight when our pastor's conference is complete. But we'll begin tonight. And I'm so excited about the things that we see in this tremendous chapter.

This is a chapter of pure future prophecy. It sweeps all the way from the life of Daniel to the return of Jesus Christ and touches the great epochs of history in between. It is one of the chapters that lays out for us God's incredible, unchangeable, redemptive plan for human history.

And I have to say at the very beginning that one of the great verifications of the authenticity of the Bible is this element of fulfilled prophecy. I'm convinced that beyond any other means of verification, the Bible is most singly verified through fulfilled prophecy. We could talk about the fact that the Bible is true because it touches experience and experience verifies its truth.

We could say the Bible is true because there are scientific statements made in the Bible such as, "He hangeth the earth on nothing," such as, "The earth is turned as clay to the seal," like rotation on an axis. Things that science hadn't even discovered. And we could say that a book that makes those kinds of scientifically accurate statements must be true. We could say the Bible is true because of its archaeological verification, how its history is verified in extra biblical archaeological findings. We could say the Bible is true because of the uniqueness of the person of Jesus Christ.

But more than anything else, the verification of Scripture that stands out as the most incontrovertible of all is the fulfilled prophesy. What the Bible says will come to pass does come to pass. And only God, an omniscient, all-knowing, all-seeing God, an all-powerful, omnipotent God, could both know and bring to pass the things that are predetermined.

McIlvaine says, "Prophesy is a declaration of future events such as no human wisdom or forecast is sufficient to make. It depends on the knowledge of the innumerable contingencies of human affairs, which belongs exclusively to the omniscience of God. So that from its very nature, prophecy must be

divine revelation."

Prophetic portions of Scripture are the infinite mind of God on display. For example, in Isaiah 46, 9-10, the Scripture says, "I am God and there is none like me declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done." Only God at the beginning can declare the end.

Now this is precisely what we find in the seventh chapter of Daniel. The most comprehensive, the most pervasive, the most panoramic prophesy of the future world in the entire Old Testament and perhaps even in the New Testament, at least in one chapter. Now Daniel is the first of what we call apocalyptic books. It is the first book that gives a message through signs and symbols, a prophetic message of the future through signs and symbols.

We've already seen something of the dreams and the visions of Daniel in the first part of the book. And we'll see even more of that now as we enter the second part, the last six chapters. You might look at it this way. The first six chapters of Daniel are mostly history with a little bit of prediction. The last six chapters are mostly prediction with just a little bit of history.

So we come then to the dividing point at the beginning of chapter 7. And here in this one chapter, mark this for your thinking. We have in this one chapter the outline of the sweep for the whole history of the future of the world. Then in chapters 8-12, the individual elements are dealt with. So the panorama comes in chapter 7 and the individual features are dealt with in the following chapters.

Now the predictions are given for the most part through four different visions that come to Daniel at the close of this book. And the first vision comes in chapter 7. And as I say, it is the most comprehensive, covering the entire period from Daniel's life to the return of Jesus Christ.

Now the question always arises, and I just want to touch on this, as to why God revealed this to Daniel? Why do we wait until we get to Daniel before we get this massive apocalyptic picture of the future? Why doesn't it come much earlier? Why does it come now and what is God's purpose for it?

Well, I believe that the answer is that Daniel was, you'll remember, God's prophet in a time of Israel's captivity. And all up until Israel was taken into the Babylonian captivity, they had believed that God had special purposes in mind for them as a nation. They were convinced that God had set them apart and that God would enrich them, and bless them, and bestow His loving kindness on them forever. And that they would inherit the earth and they would reign in a kingdom. And all would be theirs.

And in the midst of all of that anticipation and hope, they had been taken captive because of their sin. And now they were languishing under the ruling of a pagan monarch. And now they were mingling in a pagan society. Their land was in a shambles. Their temple was destroyed. Their walls of their city

were broken down. They were really almost a nonexistent nation.

And the question naturally comes to the mind has God forsaken us? Has God violated His originally promises and intentions? And are we now being set aside? From the human perspective, I know that it looked to them as though God had set them aside and was through with them. Jeremiah 33:24 pensively says, "Hast thou cast them off?" Is this the way it's going to be, God? Have you just turned your back on your people?

But God was not through with His people. There had to be a 70-year purging. There would have to be some time of restoring and rebuilding. But God wanted them to know in the midst of their deepest hour of trial that He had not permanently set them aside. And so He gives them in the midst of this time the word through Daniel that there is yet a glorious and marvelous future for them.

And by the way, years before this, as many as 40 years before this, early in their captivity, He had given already the dream to Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 2 which Daniel interpreted which also gave them hope that they were still in God's future.

And now in chapter 7, there is a reiteration of that promise in a much more explicit and comprehensive way. And what God is saying to them in this prophecy in chapter 7 and then in 8-12 is that I am not only not through with you, but I have an incredibly glorious future yet in store for you. There's coming a time when the world will run its course, when Messiah will come, when He will establish His kingdom on earth, when He will free you from not only physical but spiritual bondage, and when He will establish a powerful, glorious earthly empire in which you will reign as His people. So it's a great wonderful message for them. And Daniel is the agent.

Now even the timing, I believe, is so very specific. The visions at the end of the prophecy of Daniel were given to Daniel after Nebuchadnezzar had ruled. Now you'll remember that Nebuchadnezzar was a brilliant genius of a monarch. And under Nebuchadnezzar, things went well for the Babylonian Empire. And I'm sure when they got the vision or the dream of Nebuchadnezzar filtered down to them, the Jewish people thought, "Boy, that's great. Things are gonna be well for us." The promise has come through that dream that God has a future for His people and that there is coming a stone cut out without hands who will destroy the world empires and His kingdom will fill the whole earth. And they must have had some hope.

But by now, Nebuchadnezzar is dead. And when Nebuchadnezzar died, the whole kingdom began to fall apart. And it wasn't nearly as secure as it might have been. And by the time these visions come, Belshazzar is reigning. And Belshazzar was a very evil man. And no doubt, they're beginning to question whether or not God is going to be able to pull off the salvation of His people. And how will it happen that they'll be rescued from this land because the land is rapidly falling apart?

The first two visions then of the four were given during the time of Belshazzar. And the second two visions were given during the Medo-Persian period just after it began. So it was right at the moment, two before and two after, the fall of Babylon, when the whole thing seemed to be disintegrating and they would have to have been asking the questions about whether or not they were really going to see their land again.

And so God comes at that very critical time at the close of their captivity and gives them a vision of the future. It is unique. There are some common denominators between this vision and that in chapter 2. We know there are the same four nations, the four world empires that we saw in chapter 2, but they're seen in different ways, under different figures, and different signs, and different symbols. And so this carries a tremendous and powerful message all its own.

Now let's look at verse 1 in order to affirm and establish the setting for this first vision. Daniel 7:1, "In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed. Then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters."

There are so many critics. And I've been reading some of the critical writings on Daniel which deny the whole book of Daniel. There are so many critics who say the whole thing is a fairy tale. It isn't true. It's just the musings of some mind. But it always amazes me how God has a way of sort of nailing things down to historical reality. And that's precisely what He does in verse 1.

"In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream." An historical reality is thrust upon us at the initial moment as we enter this seventh chapter. We are dealing with something that really happened, in real space, in real time. This is an historical event. Nebuchadnezzar had been dead for several years. The succession of monarchs who had followed him were, to say the least, ineffective. The Jewish captivity was becoming more and more fearful, wondering whether they would ever be restored to their land. And it was in this very moment that God speaks to Daniel in a vision.

Now notice again in verse 1 that Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed. Prior to this, somebody else always had the vision and he interpreted it. But now God is giving the vision through His own Prophet. And Daniel receives it in a night vision. Apparently while he slept, God turned his dream into a revelatory vision and gave him this tremendous perspective.

And then it says at the end of verse 1 that he wrote the dream, put it in writing, and told the sum of it. And that means the essence of it. Not only did he write it down so there would be a record, a historical record, but he went around immediately telling it to people. So there would be public knowledge of the essential features of this great vision.

Now what is the theme of the vision? What is the heart and soul of the vision? Simply this, and mark it. The thrust, the theme, the major point of this vision is the coming of the King and the establishment of His eternal kingdom. That's the theme of the vision. That there is coming a final monarch, a glorious King who will establish a glorious kingdom. And His kingdom and his kingship will be unlike anything they have ever known or unlike anything the world will ever experience. The kingdom is the key.

Now you'll find it if you look at verse 13, the middle of the chapter, and verse 14. "I saw in the night visions and behold one like a son of man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days. And they brought Him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a," what? Kingdom.

Now there, people, is the major thrust of this passage. Daniel sees one like a son of man coming to receive from the ancient of days a kingdom. That's the theme.

Now I want to share with you three aspects of the kingdom that are in this chapter. First, the coronation of the King. Secondly, the character of the kingdom. And thirdly, the chronology of the kingdom. The coronation of the King, the character of the kingdom, and the chronology of the kingdom.

Let's begin with the coronation of the King. This is a fabulous picture that Daniel sees. And we're gonna kind of pick and choose as we go through the chapter in order to see it in this fashion. The coronation of the King.

This answers the question who. This answers the question who. The character of the kingdom answers the question what. And the chronology of the kingdom answers the question when. When we talk about the coming kingdom of the Messiah, we have in the seventh chapter of Daniel the who, the what, and the when. And we also have the where, which is everywhere. "For He'll reign over the whole earth."

Let's begin with the who, the coronation of the King. We find the scene in this chapter of the coronation. It is a very glorious, magnificent, crowning scene. And it is set in several key verses that we need to look at first. And that will be in verse 9, verse 13, and verse 14. Here we find the coronation of the King. This beloved is the absolute apex of history. This is the crucial moment in the history of eternity. This is the greatest event in all of God's time and eternity. The coronation of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

And by the way, this is not a new theme in the Bible, either. Do you know that the theme of the coronation of the King is as old as the book of Genesis? Do you know that you can go all the way

back to the 49th chapter of Genesis, the first book in the Bible, and you will find the promise made that one will come named Shiloh. And Shiloh means the one whose right it is. And when Shiloh comes, he will take the scepter. And anybody knows that a scepter belongs to a king. So in Genesis 49 there will come one whose right it is to take the scepter.

In 2 Samuel 7, God gave a message to David. David has great desire in his heart to build a temple for the Lord. David lived in a magnificent palace of cedar. He was incredibly wealthy. And he was living in this sumptuous, glorious, magnificent palace. And God was living in a tent, as it were.

And David went to the prophet Nathan. And he said, "Nathan, I cannot tolerate God living in that while I live in this. I will build a house for the Lord." And Nathan said to him, Nathan, the prophet, "Good idea, David. You ought to do that."

And that night, the Lord came to Nathan and said, "How come you didn't check with me? David will not build a house for me. He's a man of blood. His son will build a house for me, who is a man of peace." And Solomon was that son who built that house.

But in the midst of the promise that Solomon would build a house, in 2 Samuel 7:16, God said, "And beyond Solomon, I will send a greater than Solomon, a greater than David. I will send one who will establish a kingdom and it will be forever, and forever, and forever." So even then, the promise had been made that the Messiah would come and establish a kingdom.

In Psalm 2, we see the picture of the King and His coronation. In Psalm 45, the King at His coronation. In Psalm 72, the King at His coronation. In Psalm 110, the King as He takes His throne. In Isaiah 9, a child is born, a son is given. And the government is on his shoulders. And he rules. We find in Zachariah 9, the coronation of the coming of the King.

People, those are just samples. The Old Testament is literally filled with the message of the coming of the King. And in this magnificent and picturesque manner in Daniel 7, through a vision, God gives us a glimpse of the very coronation of Jesus Christ itself. It's as if we were ushered into the future and we were sitting down around the throne of God. And we were watching Christ being crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, which occurs just prior to the time that He gathers us all up and comes back to the earth to establish His kingdom. Oh, what a glorious and thrilling thing it is.

Let's go to that coronation scene in verse 9. "I beheld till the thrones were," and literally in the Aramaic - we're still in Aramaic for a little while here. "I beheld till the thrones were thrown down." Literally, cast down. "And the ancient of days did sit whose garment was white as snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was like the fiery flame and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him and 10,000 times 10,000 stood before Him. The judgment was set and the books were opened."

Now we'll stop there. And we're gonna talk about that more next time. But I want you to see this part. "I beheld till the thrones were placed and the ancient of days did sit." Now listen. That's a fascinating insight. You see that little verb, thrones were cast down? Now some people think that means that this is the destruction of a throne. Not at all.

If you were to go into an Arab country today, you go into the Middle East today, and this occurred in the Middle East. In fact, it occurred east of the Middle East, not far from India. But if you were to go into that part of the world today and some very, very important person, a king, a shah, a sheik, or whoever, even an ayatollah, were to appear, you would find that his throne was cast down in this sense. Cushions and pillows would be thrown down as the place where he would sit. This is oriental fashion. "A throne is established and the ancient of days takes His place on that throne."

Now you'll notice at the beginning of verse 9 it says, "I beheld." And this is six times used in this particular vision. Daniel says over and over again, "I beheld." And it literally means in continuous action, I kept on looking. All through this vision, he is completely fixed to watching what's going on. "I kept looking," he says. Intense interest. "And the thrones were thrown down," were cast down, "and the ancient of days took His place."

Now what is thrilling about this is that this parallels the apocalyptic vision of John, the New Testament apocalypse of the book of Revelation. And we find in the book of Revelation in chapter 4 and 5, 4:2, John gets a glimpse of coronation day, also. And John says in 4:2, "A throne was set in heaven and one sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone and there was a rainbow around the throne in sight like an emerald."

"And around about the throne were four and twenty thrones and on the thrones, I saw four and twenty elders sitting clothes in white raiment. And they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne, proceeded lightnings, and thunders, and voices, and lamps of fire," and so forth. "And the crystal sea," and he goes on to talk about all kinds of angelic hosts that were there. "And they were crying out, 'Thou are worthy, oh, Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power.'"

Here is John's apocalyptic vision of the same event as God takes His place on the throne. And he sees in 5:1 the one sitting on the throne who is the eternal God has in His hand a scroll. And He's crying out for someone to take the scroll and to step out and to take possession of the earth. It's coronation day and one steps up.

And he is, in verse 5, "The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David. He is a lamb slain. And he came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne." And when he took the scroll you know what happened. All the music started, and they sang a new song, and the angels began to sing.

"And the living creatures, and the elders, and the number of them was 10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands. And they were saying with a loud voice worthy is the lamb that was slained to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature that is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth and in the sea, and all of them I heard saying blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be to Him that sitteth on the throne and unto the lamb. And they fell down and worshiped Him that liveth forever and ever."

So both John and Daniel had a glimpse of the glory and the wonder of the coronation of Christ. And that is precisely what we see here as Daniel envisions the throne and the ancient of days.

Now you will notice that the word there is thrones in the plural. Now we don't know whether this is a sort of a hint of the multiple pillows that went down, very likely that's a good explanation, that they set - in the orient, they would set down multiples of pillows. I don't know if you've ever seen that, but I have seen it in seeing a tent where a shah, or a sheik, or a ayatollah is. And he's always sitting in a pile of pillows. It could be that's the plural.

Others think that the plurality of pillows indicates the presence of the trinity. Some commentators think that there were other lesser throwns for angelic beings who were with Him there. We really don't know.

But we do know that the focus of the scene is on the ancient of days. You see that same term again in verse 13 is called the ancient of days. And you see it again in verse 22, the ancient of days. Atiq yomin. This simply has to do with one who is old in age. That's all it means. One who is old in age. You could even translate it, believe it or not, the old one. The old one. But I really believe it's a biblical reference to eternalness. And the one who is eternal is none other than God Himself. The eternal God who sits in judgment, as it says in the end of verse 10. Judgment was set.

And by the way, the Lord is the judge of all the earth. And also in Psalm 29:10, it says, "The Lord sitteth king forever." So God takes His place on the throne. He is the ancient of days. He is the eternal one. That's a lovely phrase, the ancient of days

Some of you remember the hymns that contain that. "We'll worship the King all glorious above. And gratefully sing His power and His love, our shield and defender, the ancient of days pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise. Come thou, all mighty King. Help us thy name to sing. Help us to praise. Father, all glorious. We're all victorious. Come and reign over us, ancient of days." A great designation of the eternal God. That's the setting.

Now let's go to verse 13 and see what happens. "I saw in the night visions and behold one like a son of man came with the clouds of heaven. And came to the ancient of days. And they brought Him

near before Him. And it was given Him dominion, and glory, and the kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away. And His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Now into the vision of Daniel, which is primarily focused on the ancient of days, comes another person, another figure, one like a son of man. Now I personally believe that this is none other than Jesus Christ, Himself. None other than Jesus Christ.

I believe He applied this title to Himself, mark this, in direct reference to Daniel's prophecy. I don't think it was some kind of an accident that He called Himself son of man. I think in effect He was saying to Israel, "I am the one of whom Daniel spoke." He called Himself son of man multiple times. That was His favorite designation for Himself. And I believe every time He said it, He was saying to the Jewish people alive at the time He lived, "If you just understood what Daniel was saying, you'd make the connection. I am that son of man who was brought to the throne of the ancient of days to receive the kingdom, you see."

And so I think Christ was purposely linking Himself with Daniel's prophecy. Let me tell you why for a minute. It's very interesting to me that Jesus specifically uses this title. Now watch. He specifically uses this title when He is referring to His second coming. Have you ever noticed that? And that is the title used here for His second coming, when He comes in power and glory to take His kingdom. And when Jesus spoke of the second coming, He used this particular title regarding Himself.

For example, I'll show you several. And I can use three of them right in the book of Matthew. Matthew 16:27, "For the son of man shall come in the glory of His father with His angels. And He shall reward every man according to His works. Severally I say unto you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the son of man coming in His kingdom." Now there, of course, he was referring, I believe, to the preliminary glimpse in the transfiguration. But nonetheless, when He speaks of His coming, He speaks as the son of man.

A few chapters later, in the 19th chapter, I believe it's the 18th verse. Yes. "And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you that ye who have followed me in the regeneration," that's another name for the kingdom. "When the son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel." Again, speaking of His kingdom, He calls Himself son of man.

In the 25th chapter, that great chapter where He speaks of His return, verse 31. "When the son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory."

Now listen, people. To me, it is no accident that Jesus Christ, in speaking of His second coming, called Himself son of man. He didn't call Himself King of kings, or Lord of lords, or some other term.

He called Himself son of man because I believe He was connecting Himself with the prophecy of Daniel to show that He, in fact, was its fulfillment.

And because Christ so frequently spoke in terms of Old Testament language, and since this is the only time in the Old Testament where the phrase son of man can be linked with Christ, it seems apparent to me that that's what He had in mind. He was identifying Himself as the one that Daniel saw. Now can you imagine? Here's Daniel, living centuries before Christ is born, let alone live and die, return to heaven and wait, and return again for the second time. And he goes all the way through all of human history and see a glimpse of the son of man at His coronation.

Another key in verse 13. It says, "He came with the clouds of heaven." If you study the Old Testament, you will find very frequently that when clouds appear, they are a symbol of deity. God is seen manifest in the clouds. Deity and clouds go together in the Scripture. By the way, that is not only true in the Old Testament. That is also true in the New Testament.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "Then we who are alive and remain," speaking of the rapture, "shall be caught up together with them," what? "In the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." In Revelation 1:7 simply says it. Revelation 1:7, "Behold He cometh with clouds." With clouds.

In Acts 1:11, Jesus ascended into heaven and they watched Him go. And two angels appeared. And they said, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you, shall still come in like manner as you have seen Him go." In other words, He's gonna come just like He went. And how was He taken up? In a cloud. I believe that's another indication that this is the son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 24:30, it again tells us the same thing. Matthew 24:30, speaking of Christ's return, says this. "And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven. And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn and shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." And verse 31 of 25, which I just read, "The son of man shall come in His glory with all the holy angels with Him, with the angels and the clouds." And thus we see the parallel. This must be Christ.

Now if the son of man is Christ, then the ancient of days must be God the Father. For it is God the Father who gives the kingdom to the son. In Revelation 4 and 5, it is God the Father sitting on the throne who holds in His hand the title deed to the earth. And it is the son who comes and takes it from the Father. The Father gives the kingdom to the son. And so we have God giving the kingdom to the son, the great and glorious coronation.

Revelation 11. I can't resist a couple of verses there speaks of the same event with such majesty that we can't miss it. It says, "And the seventh angel sounded." There is going to be so much horn blowing when this whole coronation takes place that it's gonna really be great. And there were voices

in heaven. And here's what's gonna happen when He comes up to take the kingdom from the Father's hand.

"The kingdom of this world had become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. And He shall reign forever and ever." That's what's gonna be shouted and sung around the throne. "And the four and twenty elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying, 'We give thee thanks, oh Lord, God all mighty.'" And we could insert ancient of days. "'Who art and wast and are to come because thou has taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned. And the nations were angry and thy wrath has come at the time of the dead that they should be judged. And that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them who destroy the earth.' And the temple of God was opened in heaven and there was seen in His temple the ark of His covenant. And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunder claps, and an earthquake, and great hail."

There's gonna be a fireworks show in heaven to end all when the son is crowned as King. We can here ourselves crying with the poet. "Lo, He comes with clouds descending once for our salvation. A thousand thousand saints attending. Swell the triumph of His train. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! God appears on earth to reign. Yea, amen. Let all adore thee high on thine eternal throne. Savior take the power and glory. Claim the kingdom for thine own. Oh, come quickly. Oh, come quickly. Hallelujah! Come, Lord, come." The great day of coronation.

And so Daniel's vision focuses first on the coronation of the King. Secondly, and we'll just touch on this, the character of the kingdom. What is it gonna be like when the King sets up His kingdom? What will it be like? Well, in contrast to the limited, weak, temporal, unglorious kingdoms of men, will be the kingdom of Christ.

Let me give you some words. Five key words that flow out of this chapter that tell us what it will be like. Word number one is authority. Authority. Look at verse 14. "And it was given Him dominion." Now that's the first element introduced as far as the kingdom is concerned. The word is shalton and it means a ruling authority. When Christ takes His kingdom, He will have absolute authority.

Beloved I want you to know this, that the kingdom of our Lord will be an absolute pure and total dictatorship. There will be no voting in the kingdom. None. No democracy. An absolute monarchy. A pure dictatorship. In fact, in verse 27, "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints and the most high whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," watch, "and all authorities shall serve and obey Him."

Everything comes under the authority of Christ. He will reign absolutely. He will reign supremely. He will share His glory with no other.

Now if you go back to Psalm 2, you'll see this clearly. "Why did the nations rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rules take council together against the Lord and against His anointed saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their chords from us.' He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath and vex them in His great displeasure, 'In spite of all of them, yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.'"

He is the only authority and the nations can rage, and foment, and turmoil, and all that they want to do is useless because Christ rings supreme. In Psalm 8:6 says, "Thou hast made Him to have authority to have authority over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under His feet." And as Hebrews tells us, that ultimately has reference to Christ. He has all authority.

Matthew 28:18. "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Absolute total authority will be given to Jesus Christ. He will rule the world.

In Revelation 19:11, it tells us that heaven was opened and a white horse came and He that sat on it was faithful and true. And He came. And just this word in verse 16, "And on His vesture and on His thigh a name written King of kings and Lord of lords." He is the absolute monarch of His kingdom. All authority.

Second word. The character of His kingdom will not only be authority, but it will be honor. Honor. Authority is an absolute. Christ will have absolute authority. That takes care of controlling all that men do. But the term honor takes care of controlling all that they think. And not only will He get authority, but He'll receive honor, as well.

Look at verse 14 again. "It was given Him dominion and yecar," which literally means honor. In the kingdom, He will be honored. He will be glorified. Not only will He have the power to rule, but He will have honor from those over whom He rules. There are plenty of dictators who don't have the honor of their people, right? The people chafe under it. Not this one. "The hearts of men will honor Him." He will demand it.

That is the heart and soul of the end of Psalm 2 where it says, "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son lest He be angry." It isn't only a question of His authority. It's a question of your affection for Him. He demands honor.

In 1 Timothy 6:14, "At the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in His times He shall show who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, who no man has seen nor can see, to whom the honor and power everlasting. Amen." Not just the power and the authority, but the honor, as

well.

You know something? I can't help but get excited about that. I don't know about you, but I get weary of Christ being dishonored. Do you? I feel like the saints under the altar in the sixth chapter of Revelation crying out, "How long, oh, Lord? How long will you allow your people and your name to be so abused?"

I feel like David, who says, "The reproaches that fall on you are fallen on me." I feel like the apostle Paul, who is willing to bear the marks of Christ but longs that Christ be exalted. I feel like John who cries out, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. It is enough that you have been so dishonored. It is enough that you have been so rejected. It is enough that you have been despised for so long."

There will be a day when He is honored in a way that He is worthy. So we see the authority of the kingdom, and the honor of the kingdom, and certainly the extent of the kingdom. People wonder just how vast this kingdom will be. Well, look at the word kingdom in verse 14. The word kingdom. And by the way, the same word is in verse 18, "The saints of the most high shall take the kingdom." And in verse 27, "And the kingdom and the authority," and so forth.

The kingdom is a word that speaks of the structure of His government. "Shall be given unto Him a governmental structure." In other words - listen to me. This is very important. The kingdom is not simply some spiritual entity. There are some who say, well, the kingdom is just the rule of Christ in the hearts of believers. It's just a spiritual thing.

Listen. I believe that the context of Daniel is a series of statements about how the earth will literally be ruled. There will be four gentile world powers and then the kingdom of Christ. And I believe the context demands an earthly literal kingdom of Christ.

I think it's more than that. I think he's talking about an eternal kingdom. But the first element of that kingdom is to be that millennial earthly kingdom. The contrast you see in all of the vision of Daniel is between the earthly empires of men and the earthly empire of Christ. I think we're gonna see a real literal kingdom on this earth.

And I think that is precisely what the spirit of God promises us throughout Scripture no more distinctly than in the 20th chapter of Revelation where it says, "And I saw thrones and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God, and who would not worship the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark on their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived. And they reigned with Christ a thousand years. And following that, I saw a new heaven and a new earth. And the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."

And there you had the eternal state. But there's not a recreation of an eternal state until there is a thousand years in this earth for Christ to reverse the curse and to set up His absolute monarchy and to reign and to rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. I don't think we're talking about some spiritual thing only. I think we're talking about a real kingdom. The world will have its perfect day. The world will have that day, that time unmarred by the stain of sin. All rebellion will be set down.

By the way, for that thousand years, Satan is bound in the pit as Christ reigns supreme. The usurper is set aside. He is the only and absolute monarch.

Listen to the words of Psalm 72. Just listen. From the New International Translation, "And thou the King with your justice, Oh, God, the royal son with your righteousness. He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. The mountains will bring prosperity to the people and the hills, the fruit of righteousness. He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy. He will crush the oppressor."

"He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations. He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. In His days, the righteous will flourish and prosperity will abound till the moon is no more. He will rule from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. And the desert tribes will bow before Him and His enemies will lick the dust."

"And the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to Him. And the kings of Sheba and Seba will present Him gifts. And all kings will bow down to Him and all nations will serve Him. For He will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the week and the needy and save them from death. He will rescue from oppression and violence for precious is their blood in His sight."

Listen to this. "Long may He live. May gold from Sheba be given Him. May people ever pray for Him and bless Him all day long. Let grain abound throughout the land. On the tops of the hills may it sway. Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon. Let it thrive like the grass of the field. May His name endure forever. May it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through Him and they will call Him blessed."

Then the psalm closes, "Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to His glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and amen."

Well, that's some psalm. It's an earthly kingdom. You saw the touches of earth in that marvelous psalm. Authority, honor, extent. In other words, scope.

Who comes under His rulership? Verse 14. "All people, nations, and languages shall serve Him." Did you see that? All of them. Now there will be some rebels. But they will be dealt with immediately. Immediately. Justice will be swift.

It says in Psalm 2, again, "Ask of me and I'll give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron. Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." He will rule with a rod of iron.

Psalm 45. Another psalm of the king expresses similarly. "My heart is overflowing with a good matter. I speak of the things which I have made touching the king. My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men. Grace is poured into thy lips. Therefore, God hath blessed thee forever. Gird thy sword on thy thigh, oh, most mighty with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty, ride prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness. And thy right hand shall teach the awe-inspiring things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, oh, God, is forever."

With a sharp sword and swift arrows and a rod of iron, He will rule the world. And even those who reject and fight will be put down. You know that even the animals and the plants will come under His rule? I wish I had time to read all of those thoughts to you. So when you think about what's gonna happen to the creation, it's staggering. He'll reverse the whole creative curse.

"He will have dominion over the sheep," it says in Psalm 8. "And the oxen. And the beasts of the field, and the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea." He'll have such dominion that the earth will flourish and blossom and crops will grow. And little children can play with snakes and the lion and the lamb will lie down together. Incredibly marvelous things are going to happen.

Ezekiel writes about them in chapter 34 and chapter 47. Joel talks about how God is going to change the whole face of the earth. Hosea says the same thing, that the earth isn't going to be the same when the Messiah rules. "In that day," he says in 2:18, "I'll make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, and the creeping things of the ground." Isn't that something? He's gonna take care of all the bugs as well as everything else.

What is the scope of His kingdom? It encompasses even the rebels. They'll be put down. It encompasses the animals, the plants, the crops. The desert will blossom like a rose. Rivers will be created in the midst of the desert. Incredible things.

But the kingdom is especially for the saints, especially for the saints. Would you look at verse 18 a moment? "But the saints of the most high shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever even forever and ever." Verse 27. "It shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high. The

feature of the kingdom is this. It's for the saints. It's for the saints."

Now we ask the question, who are the saints? That's a good question. The word is holy ones. You know who it is? First of all, angels are called by that term even in 4:13 and 23. They're called holy ones. I believe the kingdom is going to be occupied by angels. I think it's going to be for them, too.

But not just for them. Who else are saints? Well, I believe the God fearing, redeemed Jews of all the ages are going to be there. I believe they're saints, too. I believe that the believers in God's truth in the Old Testament are saints and they're the saints of the most high. And they're gonna be there.

1 Samuel 2:9 says, "He will keep the feet of His saints. Psalm 34:9 says, "Fear the Lord ye His saints." Psalm 149:1. "Praise in the congregation of the saints." And Psalm 116:15. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his," what? "Saints."

Saints is a term used for Old Testament believers. The redeemed of the Old Testament, they're gonna be there. You know something else? Not only are the angels called holy ones, not only are the people of Israel called holy ones. I think there's some other saints gonna be there.

I think the apostles are gonna be there. They're kind of in the middle between the Old and the New Testament. But it tells us in Matthew 19:28. It tells us that they are gonna rule with Christ over the 12 tribes of Israel. So the saints of the gospel period will be there.

I believe the tribulations saints are going to be there in the kingdom. That's clear. Read the book of Revelation. The Old Testament Jewish saints, the Jewish saints in the period of the gospels, the saints redeemed out of the tribulation are going to receive the kingdom. And I believe we're gonna be there, too.

Paul begins his wonderful epistle to the Corinthians with this great promise. "Under the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus called saints." We're saints, too.

So who's going to be in the kingdom? Everybody. Everybody who has been redeemed by the blood of Christ. Everybody who has been blessed in the truth of the gospel. Everybody who has been given the righteousness of Christ through faith. We're all gonna be there, all the saints of all the ages in the kingdom. And He'll have a special place for all of us. Oh, what a glorious and thrilling thing to think about.

"Behold the day of the Lord cometh," says Zachariah. "And God is going to gather His people." As you read down in the 14th chapter. "The Lord shall be King over all the earth." Nobody gets left out. All the earth. "There shall be one Lord and His name one."

And a last word and I close. Duration. How long does it last? You tell me. How long? Forever. You say, well, what about the thousand years? That's just phase one, folks. The rest goes on forever.

Verse 14 of Daniel 7 couldn't be more clear at the end. "It'll not pass away. It is an everlasting dominion. His kingdom shall not be destroyed." Verse 18. "The kingdom forever." In case you didn't get that. "Even forever." In case you didn't get that. "And ever." Verse 27. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." Its duration is permanent as compared with the temporary kingdoms of men.

Listen. What a glorious glimpse Daniel has given us of Christ in His coronation. How thrilling it is to know that He's going to come back and establish His kingdom. Now all that's left for us in this chapter, and boy, is that a lot, is the chronology of His kingdom.

The disciples got excited about the kingdom. And they said to him one day, and it's recorded in Acts 1, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" We know who. The son of man. We know what. All of the elements characteristic of His kingdom. The only thing we don't know is when. But you know something? Daniel gives us the chronology. And that's exciting. And that's for next time.

Let me close with this. In all of the literature of ancient mythology, there's not to be found a finer example of constant trust than the story of Penelope and Ulysses. I don't know if you remember that mythological story, but let me remind you. Ulysses had embarked with other great heroes to the siege of Troy to conquer that city-state. That began an eventful voyage.

The voyage of Ulysses took him away for 20 years, 20 years. His wife, Penelope, was at home without word about him for 20 years. According to the mythology, she was a beautiful woman. And during the absence of her husband, Ulysses, she had more than 100 nobles propose to her for marriage. But hers was a beauty not only of form but a beauty of character. She knew it was highly probably that her beloved husband would never return. But just because there was always the glimmer of hope, she stayed faithful.

And she told everyone that she would give them an answer to their proposal when she had finished weaving a certain web. She would work all day weaving the web and all night undoing what she spent all day doing. She did that for 20 years.

One day, a man entered the palace who was a beggar. He found around her all these men proposing. And in a trial of strength, he decided to prove himself the worthiest of all. And so he defeated the whole lot of them.

Penelope was amazed at his ability. And she had kept one of Ulysses' bows all those years, a bow that only Ulysses could string. She offered it to the beggar and said, "Here. Use this to defend thyself." At which point he pressed the bow and strung it. And she knew it was him disguised to see if she had been faithful. And they were rejoined after they had taken revenge on all her suitors.

And why, I ask you, if Penelope can wait for Ulysses without word, cannot the church hopefully wait for Christ when we have the promise that he'll be back, and be just as faithful to Him whom we have not seen, as was she to her husband? "Beloved," said John, "If you have this hope in you, it purifies you."

Let's pray. Thank you, Father, for the anticipation of the coronation of Jesus Christ. Oh, what a thrill it must have been for Daniel to see this. And for us, again, to hear it reiterated to us. Thank you for the message that Jesus is coming again. Thank you for these precious people who've been with us for mizeram, that they too have heard the message and look for the same Christ which we shall see together. And though in this life on this earth we may never meet again, we shall dwell with them in eternal presence because we love that same Christ.

May we be as faithful as you would have us to be, purified because of the hope of the soon return of Jesus Christ. Keep this fresh in our minds until we come together again in two weeks to see the time schedule in which this will happen. And we thank you in Christ's name. Amen.

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