

## Allan MacRae, *The Prophecies of Daniel*, Lecture 5

For these sections of Daniel, I want to look at the assignment for today. The assignment is important for itself, but I think more important for the principles of Bible interpretation that are vital in connection with it. As you know, in this class I'm not trying to find out what the Bible tells us about the future. It's more important to examine the message of the book of Daniel to see what can we say with certainty about it. What are the points at which there are various possibilities of interpretation. And what are, if any, widespread ideas about it that are false. We are trying to look at it very carefully from those viewpoints. And on some matters we will not get dogmatic answers. I find that for you to take a verse or a clause and think, "Now I've got to learn everything that this means," is not the right approach. You do that, and there will be many things that you get from it that are very valuable, and you should study deeper so that you get more. But there is a danger that you will take certain things out of context and that you jump to conclusions. Then those conclusions that you jumped to, you will later think that you have proven. I think it is much better to say, "Here is something that I don't know the answer to". But you will have those things in mind. And then as you study some other part of the Scripture, the answer to it may be there, but you wouldn't have noticed it if you didn't have the question in mind. So it is always helpful to keep the uncertainties in your mind in order that they can be clarified from other passages, rather than jumping to conclusions where we're not sure we have sufficient evidence.

Now for the assignment for today, I want to look at it a little bit before we go on with our outline. And in this assignment, the first thing was the question as to what is literal and what is symbolic. We use figurative language in ordinary speech a considerable amount. Most of it is quite clear to us whether it is figurative or not. But often, there are cases where we see or hear something and it may be uncertain whether it

was a figure or not. When you've got something like a vision that was given, when Daniel saw a statue, or Nebuchadnezzar saw a statue, or when Daniel saw four animals come up from the sea, you have absolutely no way to know what those symbols mean, unless their meaning is explained to you. And of course, after it is explained to you, after you have the interpretation given to you, you may have certain principles that can be helpful to you in looking at other passages.

A figurative expression may be used as a figure, and then if we use it a great deal it can become so common to our minds as to literally mean something different from what the words say. So it becomes literal language, but it is not actually what we say. For instance, I might have a discussion with someone and he didn't like what I said, and he got rather impassionate about it and I'd say, "He tore into me." Well, if you take that literally, he pulled off my arms and my legs perhaps. He tore into me, perhaps he chewed me out. That's what the phrase, the statement actually says, "He tore into me." And yet, I believe we use that enough,--I know that there are many statements that we use sufficiently--that we no longer think of its figurative meaning. They automatically assume a different meaning to our mind.

Now as we start this, before looking at the assignment in Daniel 7:13, I want to look at a verse in the Old Testament which is perhaps quoted more often than any other Old Testament verse in the New Testament. And that is Psalm 110:1. That verse, the first verse of the 110<sup>th</sup> Psalm is here quoted, or the words are used in such a way a way that it is clear that the writer had this in mind in at least 10 cases in the New Testament. The verse reads, "The Lord said unto my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool'". Now the phrase "the Lord," of course, is another case where a somewhat figurative use that has come to be established so we could call it literal.

In England, a Lord is anybody who has the particular title. We don't use it in America that way. But when I was in Germany right after the war, the people had to have all kinds of ration cards in order to get anything to eat. And they were on such a very

strict regulation that most of them hadn't seen candy for years. But as an American you could go into the Post Exchange and buy all the candy you wanted cheaper than you could get it in this country. And any American who was there at that time would give out candy bars to German people and you should have seen the look on their faces when you would do so. Well, there was a German professor there, a very famous professor who had barely enough to eat. And I took him with me as my guest to one of the best hotels that had been taken over by the army. And there, for \$.25 a piece, I got a big dinner both for him and for me. And he looked at what the Americans were enjoying there in Germany during the period of occupation only 2 and a half years after the war had ended. He said to me, "The Americans are the lords". Well, that's a somewhat figurative expression you might say. We were not appointed lords by the king or anything like that. But it was perfectly clear what he meant. Now, this term "LORD" has come to represent the biblical name of God, which is represented by the four Hebrew letters in the Old Testament "YHWH". The pronunciation of YHWH is unknown, so the American Standard Version put it as "Jehovah." So when we read "the LORD (Jehovah) said" to my Lord (king), the first "LORD" there is a somewhat figurative expression but has come to really be a literal thing.

We know exactly who is meant. It is the God of the Old Testament. It is the great Lord of creation that said to my Lord. And you remember Jesus said, "Why did David call him call him Lord?" That is, Christ referred to it in such a way to make it clear that this expression "my Lord" refers to the Messiah, which refers to Jesus Christ. Well now, the great God who is a Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, said to the Messiah "You sit at my right hand," but does God really sit? God is a spirit. He's everywhere. Where does he sit? How can you sit at his right hand? It's very obvious that this is a figurative expression.

It is a figurative expression, the meaning of which is perfectly clear to us. It means, "Take a place of glory and of power." A place of authority. I believe that most

Christians considered that this was fulfilled at the resurrection. When after the resurrection, at the end of Matthew, Jesus appeared to the disciples and he said, "All power in heaven and on earth is given unto me." This is referring to the atonement, or the destroyed power of sin, or the overcoming of Satan. He has been given all power and authority. And so this was predicted by David when he said, "The LORD said to my Lord. 'Sit thou at my right hand'". This is a figurative expression. Well I think it's quite clear to us what the figure, the symbol, means in this case. But it might not have been if we did not have the New Testament to explain it for us.

"Sit at my right hand." I think, though, anyone would, regardless of knowing about the New Testament, would take this phrase, "Sit at my right hand," as meaning, "Take the place of promise," or "Take the place of glory." "Sit thou at my right hand and I will make your enemies your footstool". Is he going to make a wooden thing that he can rest his feet on out of his enemies? Here also is a figurative expression. But the meaning of this figure is quite obvious to us, "He gives him complete victory over his enemies."

Now, in Daniel 7:13, the verse that we assigned for today, we've asked how much in it is literal and how much in it is figurative. "I saw in the night visions and behold one like a son of man." There's no "the" in the Aramaic. "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." That expression "they brought him near" is an impersonal; it would really be better to interpret in English by a passive, that "He *was brought near* before him and that dominion and glory and a kingdom *were given* to him." Now, if this was only in the Old Testament and we had no New Testament, there would be quite a variety of possible ways to interpret what Daniel saw in his night vision, just as at the beginning of this chapter when he said he saw four animals come out of the sea. What does the "sea" represent? You would not know whether this means that his country was going to be attacked by the navies of four different countries all coming together attacking them at

once, or whether they were going to have lots of fish to eat, or any one of many interpretations that might be proposed.

But of course in chapter 7 in verse 17 we are told, “These four beasts are four kings who shall rise out of the *earth*.” But the symbol said they came out of the sea. But earlier it said they shall arise out of the earth. But nobody thinks there’s any contradiction there. “Sea” and “earth” are both figurative expressions. But it is quite clear to us here what they mean. So, here we do not have in the Old Testament much of an interpretation of this, and just looking at it alone you might say right away he saw one “like a son of man.” But what does “like a son of man” mean? In the New Testament we find how Jesus Christ interpreted the term “Son of Man.” He uses it a great deal. And it is very obvious that he is referring to this passage when he does so because there is no other passage in the Old Testament in which he could have derived that usage.

You have this expression “Son of Man” used twice in the book of Daniel; the other case is over in Daniel 8 verse 17 where God sent the Angel Gabriel to explain his vision to Daniel. And angel Gabriel came to him in verse 17 starting in the middle of the verse, and we read, “He said unto me, understand all, Son of Man, for the time of the end shall be the vision.” Reading this in chapter 8 you might suggest in verse 14 of chapter 7 the “son of man” is Daniel because he is called “son of man” in chapter 8. And if you look at the book Ezekiel you will find at least 50 times the Lord addresses Ezekiel as “son of man.”

There is a common usage in Biblical Hebrew using the words “son of” to mean “one of a category,” “one of a class.” And so “son of man” is very commonly used for an individual man classifying him as a human being. And we would have no reason to think that this term meant anything more than just someone who looked like a man were it not for the way people were led by the Holy Spirit to understand this verse and the evidence we get from the New Testament as to how Jesus interpreted it, and as to the interpretation which his contemporaries took from the phrase “the Son of Man.” Without these

indications we could easily suggest the interpretation that some present scholars give. A professor in the University of Pennsylvania, two years ago, wrote a commentary on Daniel, which is perhaps the most scholarly commentary on Daniel written in this century. That is to say, he has examined just a tremendous amount of evidence.

And he has looked at the translations in many different ancient languages. It is a very scholarly commentary. It is written from the liberal viewpoint that assumes Daniel was a book written during the Maccabean period. Many of its conclusions we utterly disagree with, but it is a great mine of tremendous amounts of valuable history, valuable evidence to look through and compare when we do a very careful examination of certain parts of Daniel. But he said, "One like the son of man came in the clouds of heaven and received great authority" looks on to verse 20. In verse 18 you read "The saints of the most high shall take the kingdom." Then you look at verse 22 and you read, "Till the Ancient of Days came, judgment was given to the saints of the Most High".

Then in verse 27, "Judgment shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom". So Professor Montgomery says, "One like a son of man" is a figure for Israel. It is a figure for the saints; a figure for those who the writer, Daniel, thought would come to possess all authority. Well, that is a possible interpretation of the phrase if we did not have evidence as to what "son of man" means. "Then he came with the clouds of heaven". What does that mean? Does that mean he literally sat on a cloud? But what does it symbolize? Does it symbolize, as many commentaries say, glory and power as represented by clouds?

There are all sorts of possible interpretations that may be made for "coming with the clouds." We sometimes read in the poets somebody came "trailing clouds of glory behind him," or some such phrase. Is "coming with the clouds" this to be taken simply as a symbol, or is it meant to be taken literally, something that will indeed happen; or is it just a symbol, a general symbol? Then it says, "They came to the Ancient of Days." Well, of course, the "Ancient of Days" is one very old, one very venerable; all

interpreters agree that this represents God. But it is a phrase used of God nowhere in the Bible that I recall except in this chapter, and used three times in this chapter. The "Ancient of Days" we read, a few verses before, sat in tremendous glory.

This is a symbolic picture because God is a spirit. You don't see him in physical form. But it is a term we can take as a literal term that refers to the great God, no question of that. The "Son of Man" came to Him, but how would you come to one who is a spirit? Is it physical motion like I might come to one of you? He came to the ancient of days and was brought near before him, and there was given him dominion and glory and kingdom. Certainly then this phrase, "He came to the Ancient of Days" and "they brought Him near before Him and there was given dominion and glory" is a symbolical way of saying that God gave to the Son of Man tremendous power and authority. It is symbolic, but the meaning of that particular symbol is absolutely clear. It is identical with what we noticed in Psalm 110:1 "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool".

Now I asked you, as a second part of the assignment, to look at possibilities of this interpretation thus far, what is literal and what is figurative. And for the second part of it I asked you to look at Matthew, Mark, and Luke. I gave you specific New Testament references. The first two are clearly an allusion to this passage, the third maybe. We will look at the first two now. In Matthew 26:64, Jesus said to the high priest, "Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven". There are two very great similarities between this statement and also the statement in Mark 14:62 to the verse we just read in Daniel 7.

There is the obvious one that the Son of Man would be coming in the clouds of heaven. That is obvious. But what about the other part, "Sitting on the right hand of power," that is used in both of these Gospel references? That, of course, uses the very same figure used in Psalm 110. But here Jesus was referring to Daniel. Does it have any parallel here in Daniel 7? I submit it's an exact parallel. In Daniel we read that this one came to the Ancient of Days, was brought before Him, and given authority and power.

Here we read you see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power. It is an exact parallel. So Jesus in both cases referred to this verse in Daniel. So the parallel is very close even though a slightly different figure is used for half of the parallel. In Daniel He speaks of His being given the power; here He speaks of already possessing power and sitting at the right hand of God.

But what is the marked contrast between Matthew and Mark and this passage in Daniel? What is the marked contrast? Mark and Matthew's difference from Daniel 7 this: Jesus says you will see Him with great power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Whereas in Daniel 7 it says he saw one coming with the clouds of heaven and He was brought to the Ancient of Days and was given great power. There is a marked contrast in that the order of the two statements is different. Now which order is correct? Was he given power before he comes with the clouds, or did he come with clouds before he received power?

I was looking at a book, "The witness of Matthew and Mark to Jesus." A book written by a very earnest Christian, a believer in the Bible now deceased. A very scholarly book in which he says on one page that this is a prediction of the second coming of Christ. But on another page he refers to Daniel and he says he comes first on the clouds of heaven and comes to the Ancient of Days, so it is obvious that in Daniel he is not describing the second coming of Christ. But he is there telling about Jesus' going into the clouds of heaven, ascending to heaven where he receives the power and authority from the Father. Well now, that makes quite a big difference with the interpretation. And yet the parallel is so close between the two, are we justified in making such a big difference?

I believe that we can safely say that in Daniel, as in a few other passages in the Old Testament where you have a past statement followed by another past statement, the second can be taken as a pluperfect. There is no pluperfect form in the Hebrew. But there are a few cases where it is absolutely clear, not a great many, but a few where it is

absolutely clear that the first statement means that someone did this, or this happened, and the second statement means this other thing had to have happened. So you give the main thing and then you give the clause describing its background. The first statement is best interpreted as a perfect tense and the second statement as a pluperfect tense.

And so it is all together a possible interpretation view of the New Testament, a correct interpretation to take Daniel's saying, "I saw in the night visions and behold one like a son of man came with the clouds of heaven". And he had already come to the Ancient of Days, had been brought near to him, and had been given dominion glory and kingdom and that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him, and so on. In other words, Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, was given authority by God the Father. He says "All authority, all power, in heaven and on earth is given unto me." The LORD says, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool". But what Daniel saw in this vision was one like a son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, coming to earth, rather than one going in the clouds of heaven to God who after all is everywhere. We speak of the Holy Spirit coming into somebody. The Holy Spirit doesn't go into anybody; the Holy Spirit is everywhere. God is omnipresent, meaning He's everywhere.

But when we say that the Holy Spirit entered someone, it is a figurative expression that the Holy Spirit exerted his authority in him in a particular way. Well now, as we weigh these two interpretations: that the one like a son of man went in the clouds to meet God who would give him authority, and one who is sitting at the right hand of God and has been given this authority and is going to come back in the clouds. Between these two, what basis do you have for deciding? I believe you have a clear basis in both New Testament passages where the high priest said to Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the son of the Most Blessed?"

And Jesus said, "Here after you will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven". This is something which either the high priest himself or other human beings of whom the high priest can be taken as

representative, saw as actually happening. This is something which is still future and which will be seen by human beings and is what Jesus said. This is the prediction that Daniel made. In our second part of the question we asked, "Does this prove anything about Jesus' interpretation? I think it definitely does, but does it prove anything about Jewish interpretation at the time of Christ? Well, when Jesus said this, the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What blasphemy; what need do we have of anything more?"

The leaders at that time knew that He was calling himself the Son of Man. They are going to see him with the divine power, at the right hand of glory, coming in clouds. And so it is quite evident that Jesus is here pointing to his second coming as having been seen by Daniel, even though in the rest of the chapter we read about the saints receiving the kingdom. But it's interesting to know we never read about the saints' conquering the kingdom. There is a phrase, "The saints take the kingdom," but the Hebrew word is not literally "to take," or "to seize" but is better translated "to receive". The saints are to have the kingdom, but it is Jesus Christ who takes the kingdom by His authority which He has and then appoints the saints as His representatives over it.

Perhaps that is all the time we better take on the second part of the assignment. The third part was, "What does the term 'Ancient of Days' mean in Daniel 7:13?" "What can you tell about its precise meaning in each case?" Well, the first time it's used is in verse 9, "As I looked, thrones were placed and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool, His throne like a fiery flame .... Thousands upon thousands stood before Him." This Daniel saw in a vision. This is symbolic. This is not literal because God is a spirit. It is a picture to impress certain ideas on our minds of God's power, God's glory, and God's grace. Now some commentators say this is God the Father. And I think that it's erroneous.

We have very few passages in the Old Testament where there is a distinction made among the persons of God. And here I believe it is very clear that what Daniel sees in verse 9 is the Triune God. It is the great, glorious God. One of the great biblical

teachings is that there is one God. There are not three Gods; there is one God. We thoroughly believe that, but we also believe there is a distinction between God the Father and God the Son. And how can there be only one God, and yet how we can say there are three persons in the godhead? This is a mystery that no human being can explain. But we can accept it as a fact because it is clearly taught in the Scripture. And so here, we have the great God. The Triune God referred to in his great glory here in verse 9.

Well, if we look down a little further we read in verse 13 that the Son of Man was brought to the Ancient of Days and there was given dominion and glory and a kingdom. And knowing what we do from the New Testament about Jesus Christ, I think we are safe in saying that it is in this case the Son of Man refers to Jesus. There is a distinction between the Son of Man and the Ancient of Days so that in this case it is clearly referring to God the Father. And then we look over verse 21, "I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." Now most interpreters would naturally take this in exactly the same sense as verse 9.

Most would take the vision quite figuratively, symbolically that God gives his power and judgment to the saints. But in view of our understanding now of verse 13, we can say that it means, "until the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven," and so here is Jesus Christ, the second person of the trinity. So the term "Ancient of Days" applies to God, the triune God, and can be applied to any member of the Trinity. So I thought that was a very interesting fact of interpretation here. Now maybe just one other point; we should look on this matter of clouds. Clouds can be figurative, certainly. It can express power, it can express purity, it could express any one of many things.

But is it to be taken as a literal thing? What actually he is pointing to "one coming with clouds." Or is it a figure? Well, Jesus said to the high priest, "Hereafter you shall see this Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven," and that could be a figurative for coming in great glory. It doesn't necessarily

have anything to do with literal clouds. But when you look at Acts the first chapter, you read in the first chapter of Acts that as Jesus was talking with the disciples, you read in verse 9, "When he had spoken these things, while they beheld him, He was taken up and a cloud that received him out of their sight." It is quite obvious there in Acts 1 verse 9 that "clouds" was used literally; that he went with the clouds into heaven.

And then we read in verse 11, "Why stand ye gazing into heaven? This same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven". And if He went with literal clouds, then He would come, "in like manner as you have seen him go." It would seem very definitely that this Son of Man coming in the clouds which Daniel saw is a picture, and not a symbol, but an actual picture of something that is yet to happen. Well we took a long time going over the assignment, but it touches on many principles that are very important in our interpretative, or hermeneutical methodology.

At the end of our meeting last time we were completing our discussion of chapter 2. And we noticed there were two possible interpretations. We looked at a number of suggested interpretations that we saw as not satisfactory. But we have two that are widely held among evangelical Christians today. The first was that the church is the stone, and we saw the difficulties with that. But at this point I do not wish to rule it out. There are many very fine Christians who interpret it this way--that the church is going to grow and that it will take over the whole world. Certainly we must agree that if it was God's plan that everyone on earth would at sometime in the future be converted and to become thoroughly Christian and become completely sanctified, then what to does one do with all the wickedness upon this earth?

But that hardly fits the picture we find here in Daniel 2 or in Daniel 7. In both these passages it seems to be a supernatural intervention, rather than simply the growth of the church that sets things right. And yet though the picture in Daniel 2 shows the stone smiting the image, destroying it and then going on to fill the earth, that seems to fit better

the idea of a supernatural intervention than the growth of the church; but we don't want to push the picture too far. And we don't want simply on that basis to say that it could not be the church that is going to grow until it covers the whole earth. This was a widely held view a couple of centuries ago, and there were very many fine hymns composed based on this approach. "Jesus Shall Reign," for example, and so are many other fine hymns which I believe are true, but are true of what Jesus' love will produce at his return rather than what the church will do. I think the church is here in order to witness to the Lord rather than to change the whole earth. I think Christ will do that; I don't think that is the function He has given the church. But there are very fine Christians who hold this view. I say this view was eclipsed in the last half century, but recently the number accepting this view is coming back. Some books have been written presently saying it is very pessimistic to think that the church is not going to succeed in converting the whole world. But the question isn't what is pessimistic or what is optimistic, but what has God given the church as its function and what is His will for it? I've even known some who say that a true Calvinist must believe that God is going to convert the whole world. I think that's a great deal of nonsense. Certainly God, if he chose, could cause to have 9/10's of the world converted in one generation and only one tenth in another generation, but that He has to gradually convert the world is purely theoretical. But this view is being widely accepted, but it is coming into more problems in these last few months than I have seen in any time in my life. I do not wish at this point to rule it out; however, I want us to carefully consider the evidence and see how it fits.

But we noticed the other possibility that the second advent of Christ is the stone, which we saw seems to fit the picture best, but the difficulty is the disappearance of the Roman Empire. I mentioned a question: is an unmentioned interval a possibility? I was handed a question which I appreciated. If many of you have questions or suggestions, I certainly would appreciate your writing them up and giving them to me. We will consider them, or I will either speak with you personally about them, or they will be covered in the course as part of the lecture at a later time. The question is: "Why could

not the distinctive characteristics of the Roman Empire be seen in the Roman Catholic Church as a continuation of the Roman Empire without any unmentioned interval?" And it struck me as a very interesting suggestion. I'm not sure I would say it exactly that way. But it does seem to me that we can recognize the perspective of prophecy. That as the prophet looks to the future you might say it is as if you are up on a high vantage point, and you look out on the distant landscape. And as you look you see a range of mountains, and then you see another range behind that. And you cannot see whether there is a valley between two ranges that is perhaps half a mile wide, or perhaps it is ten miles wide. Often you cannot tell. And so the possibility of an unmentioned interval is something that must be kept in mind as a possibility.

Another possibility which I appreciate having mentioned to me here is worthy of consideration. When we look at these kingdoms that Daniel told about, we have the Babylonian Empire coming to the certain point and then being taken over by the Persians. And that was the end of the Babylonian Empire. The Persians took it over and they held it for 200 years and when they were in their prime of strength, Alexander the Great came from the west with his army, with his very skillful army and within a dozen years he conquered that tremendous empire. The Persian Empire came to an end and what we call the Hellenistic Empire succeeded. And then Alexander's successors, with their type of government were divided into several groups, but with a very distinctive type of government much different from the Persians. They continued until each of the parts was taken over by the Roman Empire and put to an end as the Roman Empire took it over. By the time of Christ the Roman Empire had taken over all the realms of Alexander's empire. The Roman Empire lasted another 4 centuries after the time of Christ. So the Roman Empire lasted nearly as long as all the three previous empires put together. And thus we are looking at the picture and see in the distance the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom. But the Roman Empire was not taken over by another empire. Instead of that, the Roman Empire was divided up into parts and was taken over by various groups, all of whom claimed to be successors of the Roman Emperor.

Even in the Middle Ages the title of "Roman Empire" was taken over by the German rulers who would get the Pope to crown them as emperors. And one of the great historians called this the "Holy Roman Empire," which was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire. Yet the name was kept right up till 1814 when the name was finally abandoned. But the general culture and features of the Roman Empire did not come to an end like the other three by being conquered by another, but instead there has been gradual change and there's been a revival of interest in Rome, and revival of many of its features, through the Roman Catholic Church that has maintained quite a bit of the machinery of the Roman Empire. For example, the word "dioceses" meant a province under the Roman Empire. The Roman Catholic Church took this term over for a region that a bishop controls. And the Roman emperor appointed the man who built the bridges around Rome, and he was called the "Pompus Maximus," the chief bridge builder. Julius Caesar, even though he probably never built a bridge, called himself the chief bridge builder, the Pompus Maximus. The popes use that title to this very day; they call themselves, Pompus Maximus-chief bridge builder. So it is possible, as we look at the future, that in the prophetic perspective, there is a long interval in between. So there may be something else which would look to us like a second phase of the Roman Empire.

And as we go on, we may find evidence that predisposes to one or another of these interpretations. But at this point I believe we should consider them both as options, and I hadn't mentioned that in my outline, but I appreciate greatly the question that was handed in which I think makes a valuable improvement in our understanding at this point.

Now, Roman numeral III in our outline is "The prophecy in Daniel 7." There are many incidental features of great interest in Daniel 7. But I question how much time I dare spend on them because we have a great deal of great importance in the book of Daniel and in the prophecies we want to look at in the time we have this semester. So I'll run over some things a bit rapidly.

Capital A the outline is "The setting of the prophecy." Now it's important to remember that Daniel 7 took place at least 45 years after Daniel 2. And so, with a 45 year span between, I think we are justified in using Daniel 2 in interpreting Daniel 7 in seeing how they fit together, but not in reading back features in Daniel 7 into how Daniel would have understood Daniel 2 since there is all this time in between.

Now why do I say at least 45 years? Because we read the vision in chapter 7 was in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar. And if we had an additional hour in the course instead of the next two minutes, I would go into the historical discovery of Belshazzar. Not so many decades ago it was said there never even was a king Belshazzar who was the last king of Babylon. Many claimed it was a mistake in the book of Daniel and a further proof that this book was not written at that time but 4 centuries later. But it has now been clearly proven and is accepted by all historical scholars, though most of them prefer to mention this in a footnote rather than to give it much prominence, but it is recognized by all that Belshazzar was a king of the Babylonian empire. But he didn't reign alone. Nabonidus made his son Belshazzar co-king along with him. And Nabonidus went off to Arabia for a number of years to study archeology. And while he was there, Belshazzar was in complete control of the empire. We know within one year the exact year when Nabonidus became king; but we can't say the exact year because different countries began the year at different times. So we know within one year when Nabonidus became king. When exactly he made Belshazzar king along with him we don't know. So we don't know exactly when Belshazzar was made king, but I can say it was at least 45 years after Daniel 2.

Number 2: "This vision was given to Daniel." There is quite a difference from chapter 7 and chapter 2 in which there was a vision given to Nebuchadnezzar vision and Daniel interpreted it. Here Daniel himself received the vision.

And number 3 in our outline: "In this case, the vision includes the interpretation." That you have noticed by this time, of course, so on to number 4 of the outline: "A part

of the vision is re-told with added detail," and that's a very interesting thing about this chapter.

Daniel has his vision and then we read that Daniel turned to one of those who stood by, that of course is still in his vision, and he says, "I stood, I came near one of those that stood by and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made me know the interpretation of these things," and then there are only two verses. "These great beasts which are four, are four kings who shall rise out of the earth, but the saints of the most high shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever even forever and forever." Only remember that word here translated "to take" is not the word "to seize" something; it is the word "to receive" something. It is quite different, and it is used comparatively few times in the Old Testament, but it is very clear that it's meaning is "to receive," not "to seize" or "to take hold." It does not say that the saints won't conquer the kingdom, but it doesn't say they will. All it says is they will get it.

But that's all we have are these two verses and then Daniel says in verse 19, "Then I would know the truth of the 4<sup>th</sup> beast," and then we have several verses up through verse 22 in which Daniel recapitulates his vision mentioning again what he's already told us but he adds further detail. So we have part of the vision re-told with added detail. Very different from chapter 2 where Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar what his vision is then tells him what it means.

Number 5 in the outline: "Symbolism and plain language are not so sharply separated as in chapter 2." In chapter 2 everything in the vision was a symbol everything in the interpretation or practically everything is given in clear language. But here the dream and its interpretation are not so sharply separated. This is brought out by the fact that for all these symbols we have a literal statement. He saw a son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, and we have literal statements mixed in with the symbol which we did not have in chapter 2. There the symbolism is entirely different: There are four obvious parallels to chapter 2. I better not mention those specific things. You all know them

from a previous assignment. I better not mention them now because I'm always telling other faculty members not to run over time, and so I do not want to keep you so late so you don't have ample time to make the change to the next class. So we will stop at this point.

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