

Daniel 7: God's Plan to Establish His Kingdom on Earth

INTRODUCTION

Most of you are aware that Daniel had four visions pertaining to the end times from Daniel 7—12. There are four of them, and these four visions give us significant information, I believe, about this generation of history. I really urge people to read these four visions and make a determination in their hearts to understand them.

They are understandable. The symbolism is so consistent throughout. It's quite simple, and in most cases the angel tells Daniel what the symbol means. Yet my observation is that so many believers have no interest in these four visions. But they are more relevant than tomorrow's news.

I want to encourage you to make it a point and a determination in your heart that you are going to understand these four visions. Daniel 7 is the first of these four visions; it's the one from which the other three develop. This is the foundational vision that the angel gave, or that Daniel received in a dream.

We're going to look at some of the major themes of Daniel 7. If you get familiar with some of the major themes, then you can make your way through some of the details of the chapter. We're not going to get into the details, but into the major themes tonight.

THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

I use this paragraph so often, but for those of you who are new with us, it's for your purpose. The centerpiece of God's purpose, the very centerpiece of what God is doing in history, is that He plans to join the heavenly and the earthly realms together.

Many believers are not aware of that. Without understanding this, prophecy is really confusing because it seems like we're going to leave the earth and go away to heaven and do something that we don't have any understanding of. It's the very opposite of that: The Lord at the second coming is bringing the heavenly realm to the earth.

It has always been His purpose to establish His government openly throughout all the earth. I mean the earth that we're standing on right now, the earth that we're living on. This is the realm of which the fullness of the glory of God will be manifested forever and forever and forever, on this very rock, this earth.

God is going to gather everything; it says in Ephesians 1:10 that everything, the things of the heavenly realm and the things of the earthly realm, is going to be brought together in Christ Jesus.

THE NEW JERUSALEM WILL DESCEND TO THE EARTH

B. The New Jerusalem is going to descend to the earth. The New Jerusalem is eventually going to be placed upon the earth. It's going to land on the earth. *Land* isn't the right word; it's going to come down to the earth. I'll just say it like Scripture says it: It's going to come down in two stages. I don't want to get into that right now, but I wanted to mention it to you.

THE FOUR GREAT EMPIRES OF HISTORY

II. What I'm doing right now is skipping the first eight verses. We're going right to Daniel 7:9. The first eight verses basically give an overview of world history, and Daniel is shown four world empires. These four world empires are hostile toward Israel, and God has used them to prepare Israel for the things that God is declaring here in this vision. God would use the hostility of these empires to train the saints, to train those that trust in Jesus, or *Yeshua* is His Hebrew name.

I'm skipping Daniel 7:1-8, which is the description of these four world empires through history, but the Antichrist empire is going to bring these four together. There is going to be a resurgence of the power and the cruelty and the evil of these four ancient empires that were all based in Europe or the Middle East.

They're all going to come together in the generation that the Lord returns under the Antichrist's rule. It is not an accident. God is going to use these hostile, cruel, and evil world empires in a massive way. He's going to allow them to put pressure on the saints, on the people of God.

This is actually going to prepare them to take over the governments of the earth. The theme of Daniel 7 is that God is raising up a people to take over the earth. That's the general theme. God is going to establish His kingdom on the earth.

Right now, through the Church, the kingdom has a very small presence on the earth. Through the Body of Christ, the kingdom ways and the kingdom power and the kingdom holiness is barely manifest on the earth. At the second coming of Christ, the kingdom is going to be fully manifest in every nation of the earth, and in every institution of life will come under the leadership of Jesus.

GOVERNING THE EARTH AS A MAN

Jesus is returning to the earth to govern it as a man. We are going to govern it with Him as human beings with physical bodies. We're going to govern with resurrected, physical, material bodies on a physical, material earth under a real human leader. He's a Jewish man and He has a resurrected body. He's eternally God, but a man is going to govern the earth, and that's what Daniel is seeing in Daniel 7.

This is a very common idea to the ancient Hebrew mindset. The Body of Christ struggles with it, and we more have the idea that we're going to go away somewhere to heaven and do something that we don't quite understand. Daniel 7 says there is coming a great conflict where these four

world empires are going to come together in their strong and evil points, and there's going to be a resurgence of them under the Antichrist.

The point of it is, don't worry because God is going to work out something marvelous. He is going to do something exactly opposite of what they have on their mind. Their mind is to take over the world and control it. God's plan is to allow them to have a short amount of liberty, a small time to express the evil that's in their hearts, but God is going to reverse everything, destroy them, throw them in the lake of fire, and reverse everything. He is going to have a people prepared to lead the earth under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

AN ERRONEOUS CONCEPTION OF THE RESURRECTION

Some folks have a wrong idea that by virtue of the resurrection they will be prepared to rule the earth. They think that if we're resurrected, that's all we need. We go through Bible school really fast in the resurrection. Somehow we step into the resurrection and we get this new body and everything is right and we're instantly qualified to rule the earth.

RULERSHIP TO THOSE WHO WERE FAITHFUL

That's a presupposition that people have that's not a biblical one. They think the resurrection itself is all that they need for this to happen, and they're missing a very, very important principle in the Word of God. It is this: God wants the natural, material realm to be governed by people who were faithful when they were in the natural and material realm.

He is not going to take people who were disobedient to Him in this season of the natural realm and give them the authority over it. He wants them faithful in the time when they were on the earth in the natural realm, because they will live and govern over a natural earth.

There will be supernatural dimensions to it, but it will have a very powerful natural dimension to it. Some people have the idea that they'll do what they do, claim forgiveness, go to heaven, the resurrection will equalize everything, and they'll come back and govern it.

It doesn't work that way.

In the justice of God, He will only give leadership over the material earthly realm to people who were faithful when they were in the material and earthly realm. There's something about this that is in God's justice and in the truth of who He is.

God cannot do anything that is not truth. It would not be true to have people who didn't honor God's purpose for the earth to govern the earth. Even though they are forgiven of the foolishness of it, God requires that they actually choose truth.

So even when He's raising up the people to rule, He requires that they're faithful on this side; that, while they're in the natural, they say "yes" and are prepared.

THE JUSTICE AND WISDOM OF HIS CHOICES FOR LEADERSHIP

Of course, the resurrection enhances our abilities and qualities and all our capabilities are significantly enhanced in the resurrection, but the element that God wants, the natural, physical earth ruled by people who loved God and loved His purpose in it while they were on the earth, that truth isn't cancelled out by the resurrection.

Within the justice and wisdom of His own being, He has decreed that people have to walk in faithfulness here. He is going to have a global Church, a people across the earth who will actually be faithful; while in the natural realm they will be faithful to God.

The faithful through history will also join them in the government of the earth. People think, "Lord, just skip the Great Tribulation and fix us in the Rapture, and we will come down and rule and do everything that You tell us to do, trust me!"

The Lord would say, "I know that you would, but it would be contrary to the truth of who I am when I made the earth and said it was good. I want people who love Me and love My purpose for it to govern it. I want them to walk it out in the reality of natural life here on the earth."

THE TROUBLE IS NECESSARY

The end-time Church that will be a billion or two billion people will be tested and tried and hundreds of millions of them will say "yes" and God will prepare a people in these intense final hours of natural history.

That's what He's showing Daniel here in Daniel 7: the trouble is necessary. "Lord, why is it so intense? Why not skip the trouble and fix us in the resurrection, and we'll obey You, and we will do what You say? We really will do it. We'll do it Your way, and we'll do it with a right spirit."

The Lord says, "Yes, I know you would do it in the right way and with the right spirit, but there's something about truth that requires that you did it in truth while you were on the earth."

Imperfectly, yes. Yes, there is a contingency for our failure; it's called the grace of God. But our hearts were truly engaged in truth to love God and to love His purpose for the earth, which is to bring it under His leadership and His dominion.

THE TIME OF TERRIBLE TESTING

We're skipping the first eight verses, which talk about those four historic empires, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The four famous world empires in the Middle East and Europe in the ancient world are going to come together in the strengths of their power, and their wickedness is going to emerge again.

That will be the tool under the Antichrist to get the people of God ready to make choices in this age that will qualify them in the grace of God to rule in the age to come. I'm talking about a natural physical world that has supernatural dimensions to it.

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS

II. After these four nations have been discussed, now the Father comes on the scene.

Daniel sees the Father. This is a most remarkable insight, that he sees the Father. Can you imagine seeing the Father on His throne?

John sees a similar thing in Revelation 4. He says, "I watched until thrones were set into place"—some of those thrones are related to the resurrected saints. At the end, they will be connected to the thrones on the earth that the resurrected saints will have. "I saw thrones put into place and things were set up, alignments were made, commissions were given by God the Father. Authority was distributed to individuals" (paraphrased).

Then "the Ancient of Days"—that's a name of God the Father that emphasizes that He is eternally in the past, He always was, and always will be in the future. The Ancient of Days is His name, the eternal one. The idea is that He is the ultimate One with clarity of the big picture.

The reason the Ancient of Days is being emphasized here instead of the tenderness of God is that He sees the whole picture, the big picture, and He sees how it will all work out. The emphasis is on His eternal perspective; that is why the name Ancient of Days is used.

That is one of the things that He's going to do through the trouble of the Antichrist, is cause the saints to get a view of eternity. Eternal values are going to be imparted to the saints through the trouble. It is impossible to understand the plan, or even the value of the earth, without understanding the eternal perspective. God as the eternal One is the dimension that is mentioned.

THE THRONES ARE SET IN PLACE

It says in Daniel 7:9, "I watched until thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated."

What an interesting statement—He was seated. I wonder what kind of procession is involved, if that's what's being hinted at. "His garment was white as snow"—it was pure—"The hair of His head was like pure wool"—which speaks of His eternal nature as well.

"His throne was a fiery flame" (Dan. 7:9). John saw that the very throne of God was like a sardius stone, which is a bright red color. Daniel sees it more directly as a flame of fire.

God is sitting on a fiery throne. Did you know that God's throne has wheels on it? It's the administration of His purpose on the earth.

Ezekiel 1 talks about the wheels upon Jesus' throne. It actually describes it. The wheels talk about the unfolding of His purpose in heaven and on earth. It's not just symbolic, it's actual.

A RIVER OF FIRE

“A river of fire”—that’s what the NASB says (Dan. 7:10, NASB), a fiery stream breaks out of the throne of God in this scene.

Daniel is watching a river of fire coming out of a throne of fire, because he’s about to understand that the people of God will go through God’s fire of trouble; but they’re going to end up being made worthy and prepared to be vessels of the purity and the power and the eternal dimensions of the eternal plans that have been in God’s heart.

Daniel sees fire because fire is an appropriate dimension; he sees it because it’s true around God’s throne, but one of the reasons God emphasizes this is because fire is going to come to the earth in the Great Tribulation to prepare the Church.

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him” (Dan. 7:10)—a river of fire. “A thousand thousands ministered”—or worshipped—“before Him.” Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.

THE HIGH COURT OF HEAVEN

“The court was seated” (Dan. 7:10). There’s a divine court where the thrones are established in heaven. Again, the resurrected saints will have thrones that are established in the New Jerusalem, and they will have thrones that are established on the earth. There’s a union between the thrones in the New Jerusalem that are connected to God’s throne and the thrones that are on the earth.

There will be a unity between the two.

Daniel saw the divine court, and it was seated, which means the decrees for the nations and the history of the world are about to be given. When the divine court is seated and it’s in session, when the court is session, the decrees that are issued from those sessions around God’s throne are awesome and terrifying in their implications to human life on the earth.

The books that contain God’s plans and the books that contain the record of the saints’ faithfulness and the books that contained the record of the evil of the nations and kings were opened. “Books were opened.” Payday is coming to the earth for those who chose righteousness and for those who did not choose righteousness.

WE WILL STAND AND WATCH THE TRUTH UNFOLD

The hidden plans and decrees of God’s heart are all written in His books. The books are opened. Now it is time for that which was hidden to become manifest.

Your hidden righteousness, the longing in your heart, the choices that you’re making in your heart that even believers call you foolish for making, those choices will be made manifest; the books will be opened one day.

Secret sin that is not repented of, that even the saints don't declare war on, if we declare war on it and repent of it, there is forgiveness, but the books will be opened. The hidden things of good and bad will be manifest.

There's a time when God allows that which is hidden to be made manifest. He's talking about even the purposes of His own heart for the earth.

The day is coming when the books will be opened.

We read about this in Revelation 5, when the scroll is opened and Jesus takes it, and His purpose on the earth is about to happen. When they're opened, it means that they are revealed, and about to be manifest in the natural realm.

A MOUTH SPEAKING GREAT WORDS AND BLASPHEMIES

What a terrifying scene here. He's watching—"I watched then because of the sound of pompous words"—arrogant words—"which the horn"—the Antichrist—"was speaking" (Dan 7:11).

These words will fill the earth, and the media, and the Antichrist will have the most absolutely cutting-edge technology. His pompous words will fill the earth. It's not like he will speak them once, here or there. The earth will be filled with songs and declarations, and his leaders will be the powerful kings of the earth.

They will reiterate his words and declare his decrees: The newspapers will be filled; the media will be filled with his words. The earth will be weighed down under the weight of the awfulness of what he says.

His words will terrify the nations into obeying him, and they will excite the nations into obeying him as well. Part of the nation will be terrified, and they will be so afraid that they will obey. They'll say, "Finally, there's someone who's arisen who has some common sense, and we can do our evil, and we can do it fully!"

NO NEED TO FEAR HIS FEARFULNESS

Many of the saints will be terrified by the words. We don't need to be terrified by the words; the Lord already knows what they are. We can be bold and confident, but these words will be terrifying. They will fill the earth.

The Antichrist is called the horn, and more specifically he's called "the little horn" in the book of Daniel. After the pompous words that terrify the earth and excite the evil men of the earth, in essence Daniel is saying, "Don't buy into the fear or the false promises, because he will be slain. The man who gives the words will not last. He cannot follow through on his claims, his threats, except for but a moment of time."

THE CONFIDENCE OF OUR ULTIMATE TRIUMPH

We don't need to fear his threats, because he has no power to follow through but for three and a half years. He cannot keep his promises, because he will be slain and destroyed quickly after he emerges on the global scene. Though they're terrifying and exciting, depending on what heart response you have, we will not be terrified or excited by his words, but we will be sobered by them.

We will have the confidence that he will be slain. We will declare this decree. This decree will fill the prayer rooms. We will speak in the opposite spirit of his words that fill the earth.

We will say, "He will be slain, and his body will be destroyed, and it will be given to a burning fire." We will not be glib about him; we will be sober, but we will be confident.

We know where this is going—as for the rest of the beasts, these other nations that are working together with him, their dominion will be taken away (Dan 7:12).

They will all lose out; every one of them will lose, no matter how powerful they seem. That is what happens first. The Father is King, and He oversees His plans for world history. He assures Daniel that victory will come.

DOMINION IS WRESTED FROM THEIR HANDS

III. Daniel goes on to the next part of his vision. He sees that the kingdoms are taken out of the beast's hands, because he's destroyed, and all of his co-workers, the other beasts, the other nations, all of them lose their dominion.

Who gets their dominion now? The dominion has been taken from the leaders of the earth. The leaders of the earth are now being penalized. They will be captured and judged in the presence of God, and sent to the lake of fire.

There is a huge vacuum in the earth of all the governmental roles. The earth does not disappear; the earth is never going to disappear. The governmental roles have to be filled by someone.

Who, where, what? The first man who fulfills the roles of these vacancies of all the kings—the infrastructure of the earth is completely shaken and destroyed, and God replaces it with new people; not just people who have resurrected bodies, but people who were faithful in the natural realm, and the books that make it clear.

Daniel sees the first Man. He sees the King of kings, the head Man who will be over all the governments of the earth. He sees this Man.

"I was watching... and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days" (Dan. 7:13). He came to the eternal One, who is the Father. To this

Man was given “dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages”—all the nations of the earth—should serve Him” (Dan. 7:14).

THE TEMPORALITY OF EVIL EARTHLY KINGDOMS

This Man's dominion “is an everlasting dominion, which shall never pass away, and His kingdom one which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:14b). His kingdom will never be destroyed like the kingdoms of the four beasts that Daniel has seen in verses 1—8. One characteristic of all those kingdoms—well, they're very cruel, but the most prominent characteristic is that they all pass away.

They're all temporary. They're powerful, they shake the earth, they terrify the nations, but they're gone in a minute. That's the huge point that God is emphasizing to Daniel: They all pass away, but there's a man, there's a human, who is fully God, but He is human. He will have a kingdom and it will never pass away, ever.

It will never be destroyed; it's the opposite. All kingdoms of the earth will be delegated from Him. He will have the authority over all of them.

A MAN WILL RULE THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH

Daniel 7:13 says, “I was watching... and behold, One like the Son of Man.”

We cannot grasp how absolutely shocking and incomprehensible this was to Daniel. We're accustomed to the idea; we don't grasp it so well, but we're used to the idea in a general sense—the idea that Jesus is fully God and fully Man, and that He's in heaven, and that He's going to rule the earth.

We understand that this is the very first time in the Scriptures, the very first time that a prophet sees a man who is going to rule the world. It's not remarkable that God is going to rule the earth; what's remarkable is that a human will rule the earth.

Daniel is looking up there and he says, “He looks like a human. There's no way!” This is five hundred years before the incarnation of Jesus. He says, “I don't want to say ‘the Son of Man’; I want to say, He looks like He's human. I have no other way to describe it. He's human.”

THE UNUTTERABLE BRILLIANCE OF HIS PLAN

This is way ahead of common insight and revelation. The incarnation of the second Person of the Trinity is an incomprehensible idea at this point in history.

It's not just that He's a man. I have no doubt that Daniel grasped this. He's a Jewish man. He was of the nation that was oppressed by the four beast empires. He was of the people that the peoples of the earth are against. He's of the line of David and Abraham. He's in the line of the covenant that God made with Abraham and David, etc.

Daniel sees Him. It's not just that he sees a man, but if he sees a man, if a man can reach this pinnacle of reality with God, it's a human in the presence of the Ancient of Days.

This is remarkable. A human is standing on a supernatural cloud in front of God. Daniel is saying, "I'm not getting what I'm seeing here!" and the message is clear: Humans are going to follow in His train and in His wake.

He is up there as an advocate, and He's lobbying for the human race, if you will. Because He is there, a train of multitudes of nations will stand before God in the wake of what He did.

"HIS KINGDOM SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED"

It is remarkable. These humans will not only have access to God, but they will rule the earth, is what God is going to tell this Man. "Not only are You received in My sight, but more than that, I am giving you as a human the authority of all the nations of the earth. Your authority will never, ever pass away. All the kingdoms will be raised up and established in righteousness and truth."

This is absolutely remarkable. I cannot get over this.

"His kingdom shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:14). We will decree this when the saints are being hounded, and many are in prison and martyred; we will declare that the beast will be slain, and our King and our kingdom will never be destroyed.

That will be our confession; that will be our worship. That is what we will say to one another in times of difficulty. We will say, "That pompous man who declared that he would win and we will lose is a liar. He will be destroyed. The pompous man will be seen as pompous before it is over."

A HUMAN HEIR WILL HAVE DOMINION ON THE EARTH

A. God's plan was always to establish a human heir over the earth.

Again, it's not remarkable that God has authority over the earth; that's not a remarkable idea. He created the earth in Genesis 1. What is remarkable is that a human has authority over the earth, and has all the resources of heaven to release to the natural realm. That's what's remarkable.

That's what the dilemma was in Revelation 5:2 when they gathered around the throne of God—there was no human worthy to take the cause on. There was no human worthy who could release God's judgments and restructure everything in the earth in righteousness.

There was no one who had enough power. No one was holy enough to do it; no one deserved it. There was no one who was found worthy, and then the Lamb of God is revealed as the only worthy Man in Revelation 5:2.

There's been a huge dilemma in history. Let me describe it in poetic human terms; I'm sure it happened very differently than this. Before the incarnation in history, long ago, before Jesus became man and before it was clear to the angels, there was a dilemma.

They know the righteousness and the justice of God. A human has to govern the earth, and there's no human who can do it.

ONE FULLY PERFECT MAN

“David? Maybe David.”

David is the man after God's own heart, and the guy who commits murder and adultery and does these horrendous things. He cannot do it. He absolutely is disqualified, and he cannot do it.

There's a dilemma throughout all of human history: How is this thing going to get turned around?

The Man who does it has to be a man; He has to be totally perfect, and He has to have all the power of God to bring the two realms together. There's a dilemma. God the Father already knows from the foundation of the earth what the solution is, but He hides it in His heart.

The unthinkable is this, that the fully God, second Person of the Trinity is going to lay aside His privileges as God and become human, walk on the earth and bear the penalty for sin, and then bring us with Him into the glory of God forever.

Beloved, that is why we are living lives where we're trying to be diligent and faithful. That is why we are choosing righteousness, and the world mocks at it, and even half the Church—more than half, much of the Church mocks a radical lifestyle for God. They think it's unnecessary.

There is a man who is beckoning us to get involved with Him in this grand plan.

A VAST COMPANY OF HUMANS, REIGNING ON THE EARTH FOREVER

IV. Not only is the Father going to give the nations to this One Man, the chief Man, the One who is chief among ten thousand, the One who is altogether lovely. It is more than that. He is going to give it to the people that this Man has as His inheritance, His bride.

Daniel sees it. In Daniel 7:14 he sees the Man, the Son of Man. He doesn't know who this Man is, and he doesn't know how a human got into the presence of God as the Ancient of Days, and how He got on a supernatural cloud, and he doesn't know how He convinced God to give Him the nations.

Daniel says, “I'm going to tell the story as I see it. I don't have a clue about how this thing is going to happen.”

Again, David could not pull this thing off. David blew it so badly, and he was like the best chance. He really didn't do it well enough to be the man that Daniel is seeing.

“It definitely wasn't David, and he was our best chance. Maybe there's another one.”

Now in Daniel 7:18, it really gets out there. It's not just a man, it's a company of humans. It's a vast company of humans.

Look, it says the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and they won't be like the record of history; they won't have it for a generation or even a century.

Those who get into power, they won't rule like in the Roman Empire. Some say it lasted 500 years, and some say a thousand, but either way, the ones who will be in power will be in power forever.

We're talking about sinful people who respond to the grace of God. Their dominion will never be turned away, ever. It will never be ended.

Their reign, the thing they're making choices for, for a moment in this age, those choices last for ever and ever. Daniel is overwhelmed that there's a vast company of people who have entered into this inheritance of ruling the earth that has brought together the natural and the supernatural realms under this Man called the Son of Man.

BEING CHOSEN TO RULE IN THE AGE TO COME

I want to say this clearly, and it's important to say: The vast majority of the saints through history will not be a part of the government of the earth in the age to come. The vast majority will not. Hundreds of millions will be, but there will be billions who will not.

They will be in the kingdom and in the family, but it's essential, if we're going to rule on a material and physical earth, that we are found faithful while we're on the earth to the love of God and to His purposes on the earth.

God wants truth when it comes to government. Daniel sees a host of saints that don't rule for a decade or a generation or even for a century, but forever. Paul said it right in Romans 8:18—he says, “It is incomparable to describe the glory I am getting for what I am going through” (Rom 8:18, paraphrased)—and 2 Corinthians 4:17 says the same thing. He says, “The eternal weight of the glory I'm getting for the little I'm going through isn't comparable.”

You can't compare it because Paul is tapping into Daniel 7:18. He is tapping into this reality.

YOU CANNOT VOTE YOUR WAY INTO THE GOVERNANCE

There are humans who are in this great exchange when the governments of the earth are changed. God is going to give His power and His wisdom and His glory to humans, to the ones

who want it. We choose if we want it; I mean, we declare if we want it by our choices about what we do with darkness.

One guy says, "I want it; I vote that I want it."

The Lord says, "That is not how you vote. If you want it, you live the way that you need to live to do it. If you don't, you don't want it."

The Lord says, "Whoever wants it, I will give leadership of the earth with My Son."

It's not just that they will rule, but they will rule with a Man. They will be a part of His partnership and a part of His leadership team, if they want it. The Lord lets anyone who wants it have it, but they have to want it by His definition.

They don't go standing in a line and cast their vote and say, "Yeah, give me a nation one of these days." That doesn't constitute wanting it. We will stand before the One whose name is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Truth. The truth about whether we wanted it or not will come out.

He is the Truth, and everything that He does has truth. All of His appointments will have truth in them.

THE EARTH WILL BE GIVEN TO HIS PEOPLE, FOREVER

It goes on in Daniel 7:27 and he says the same thing. "Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:27, paraphrased).

Is this remarkable? His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and the dominion shall serve and obey Him. It is an amazing thing even amongst the household of faith of the saints.

The saints are striving so much in this age; they're striving so hard to get the greatness and dominion of the kingdoms of the earth. So many will do so much; they will go to great extremes to get with the powerful, decision-making people of the earth. They will go out of their way to get themselves connected to the power people, the people of influence, the people who make decisions and the people who have dominion.

Daniel says, "Saints, you don't have to do it. It's going to be handed to you on a platter as a gift if you will obey Him now. You don't have to lobby for it; you don't have to manipulate for it. You don't have to live in the fear of man. The kingdom will be handed as a free gift to the people who want it."

THE SAINTS WILL REIGN IN POWER

I see so much in the Body of Christ, and I've done it too much in my own life. I'm not saying it as one who has been free of it. There is so much networking and so much manipulating and so much trying to get the favor of men and the Man who will own it all will gladly give it to the people that want it.

It is given to them. The dominion, the power positions of the earth will be handed freely to the people who in truth wanted it, and they made that clear by the way they lived on the earth.

Not just the power positions and the dominion, but the natural resources of the earth, the pleasures and the privileges of this earth. Again, a powerful man or woman comes on the scene and the Body of Christ will travel around the world just to have an appointment with the powerful person who might give them the stuff, the wealth, the resources, or use their positions to open a door for them.

There is One called the Son of Man, and He says, "I will freely give these to you, and they will be yours forever, but you must obey Me now in this age."

It's huge, what Daniel is seeing right here.

A BURNING TO RULE THE EARTH

A. God as a Father and Jesus as a bridegroom have a burning desire to rule the earth in partnership with believers who were faithful while on the earth.

I want to say that again: The Father and Jesus the Bridegroom, both of them, as a Father and a Bridegroom, burn with desire. They really long for you.

The Lord really longs that Jesus would rule with you. He wants you to rule with Him.

He doesn't just want you to have a nation so you can strut around and say, "That's not even what I want." That's not what He's talking about.

He's talking about in a dynamic friendship and partnership. You will have staff meetings with Him, if you want to use a term like we think. You will have planning times and talk with Him. You will do what is important to Him in that nation or in that geographic area. You will report to Him. You will carry His heart. You will do the things that the Holy Spirit gives you wisdom to do.

It will be dynamic, and it will go on for ever and for ever. It's all the dimensions of what ruling and reigning is now, but we're reporting and interfacing with the Son of Man Himself.

“THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH”

He longs that the meek would inherit the earth. When it says in Matthew 5:5 that the meek will inherit the earth, it's not talking mostly about this age. The meek mostly don't inherit the earth in this age. Most of the meek are laughed at, mocked at or in prisons or passed over when promotion time comes.

Occasionally a meek man or a meek woman will get a significant sphere of influence in the political or the financial realms. Every now and then a meek person does. Certainly 99 percent of the meek are passed by and passed over because of the way they live.

It's the way they spend their time; it's what they do with their choices. They won't play the game. The meek don't inherit the earth now, except for a little.

This verse has been taken significantly out of context. The meek inherit the earth in the full sense in the Daniel 7 revelation.

Beloved, we will literally inherit the earth; the saints will literally govern all the places of the earth.

B. God's plan is to raise up a people who have total victory over Satan and his evil works. These people will replace the people in the wicked governments of the earth.

AN ADVERSARY TO TRAIN THE BRIDE

V. God is going to raise up an adversary to train the bride.

You think, “Oh, what?” We don't want trouble to train the bride, but the bride has to make the decisions while in the natural realm.

Again, it's the unspoken presupposition that the resurrection will get us all ready for the game, so to speak. We will learn the new information and have the right spirit and be ready to go.

The Lord would say, “That will be true. You will have the right information, and you will have the right spirit, but that's not what we're talking about. I want truth. I want people who lived out their love for Me on the earth to be responsible that My ways go forth in the earth.”

The adversary has to face the people God while they're on the earth, and not in the age to come. They have to make the choices now.

THE BEAUTY OF A PURE, SPOTLESS BRIDE

One of the most remarkable verses is one which I hope to speak on tomorrow at the FCF services. It is absolutely remarkable to me. It's in time and space; it's Ephesians 5:26-27. It says that the Church will be spotless, without any blemish. That's not talking about heaven; it's not talking about the gift of righteousness. Obviously, that's what makes it possible, but it's talking

about the character trait of untold millions on the earth in the final hours before the Lord returns in the final days.

They will be blameless and spotless in their Sermon on the Mount lifestyles. A company of people, millions across the earth, tens of millions and maybe hundreds of millions, will be spotless. This is what Daniel 7 is saying. They will be a people prepared and trained on this side, where they have said “yes” to the truth, and then been found worthy to walk out on the other side, according to the Spirit, what they had on this side.

It is remarkable. I think, “Lord, You’re going to have a blameless people, millions of them? Tell me something about that!” Of course we know it’s the outpouring of the Spirit and the great trouble. It’s the combination of them both, of the north winds and the south winds. The both/and will come in such an unprecedented measure.

My thought is, “Let’s not wait until the night before the test and say, ‘I’m going to start cramming.’” That’s not a good way to live. Let’s develop roots systems in holiness and in God’s priority of our time and our money.

We don’t have to keep all the powerbrokers of the earth happy, because the Son of Man is going to give the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms and resources of the earth to the meek people. He’s going to give it to them and hand it to them; they’re going to have it forever.

THE POWER IS GIVEN OVER TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD

OK, here is the adversary. Now back in Daniel 7:11-12, Daniel has already seen the Antichrist, but he only saw the Antichrist judged. Here is what Daniel sees, and as you read Daniel 7, it will become more familiar if it’s new to you.

First, in Daniel 7:1-8, he sees the wicked nations and he says, “OK, that’s not good, but, whatever... there are lots of wicked nations.”

Then he sees the Ancient of Days and says, “Whoa, this is going to be awesome, but there’s fire around everywhere. OK, that might be good. Why is there so much fire?”

Then there’s a man who’s brought to him who qualifies. This Man destroys the evil man, the Antichrist, and takes away his dominion. “OK, that’s good...”

In Daniel 7:18, the people get the power and the authority with the Son of Man. It’s all so awesome up until verse 18; it’s a really great vision. Now it turns a really strong corner and all the positive is laid out. We win, the bad guy loses, but he hasn’t seen the power of this little horn yet, this evil man.

“I was watching; and the same horn” (Dan. 7:21)—he says, “The one from back in Daniel 7:11-12, the one whom I already know is going to lose, the pompous one who will lose, he’s making war with the saints. How is he making war with the good people, when he loses?”

The angel is going to explain all of this to Daniel. “Yes, he loses, but he’s going to get the saints ready in truth and in righteousness in their natural lives on the earth to be qualified in the grace of God.”

Nobody will do it perfectly, and we will need forgiveness, and we will need what I call “the grace of God editing system.” I love God’s editing system, but He wants a substantial “yes” in our spirits to righteousness.

He doesn’t want a perfect track record; no one’s going to have that. He wants a substantial, a sustained and substantial “yes” in our spirit to His ways. He calls that good.

THE SAINTS WILL INHERIT EVERYTHING

Anyway, Daniel sees this horn making war. I’m picturing Daniel saying, “No, wait! He’s going to be wiped out! Why is he making war? Why is he making war? I don’t get it.”

“Well, Daniel the saints (v. 18) that are going to inherit everything, they’re going to be qualified to inherit everything. They’re going to live in purity. They’re going to have eternal values before it’s over.”

“OK, wait. The horn isn’t just making war, he’s actually prevailing over them. Do you see that?”

God will allow this man, by His will, actually to kill the saints in massive numbers for a season.

But there comes a time—Daniel sees this and his heart is encouraged. Daniel 7:21 is enough to make you say, “Oh, no!” Verse 25 is the same way; you think, “Oh, no!” Verse 21 and verse 25 are the two big “oh, no!” verses in this chapter. I’ve read them over and over and over through the years, and I say, “Oh, no.”

“Yes, no; yes, Lord, I’ll do it without the pressure.”

“OK, but you’re not.”

“Well, I’m going to start tomorrow.”

“That’s what you’ve been saying for decades. I want you to do it, and you need some help. You need some pressure.”

I've told the Lord for years that I'm different from those other guys. The Lord could say the same thing. I mean, I don't hear any of this, but it's like, "Mike, I've heard the story over and over. You're the same as the other guys; trust Me that you're like the others."

EVIL CANNOT CONQUER FOREVER

Daniel 7:22. There comes a time when the Ancient of Days came; the Father came. The court was in session. The Father says, "Enough, enough." It's at the three-and-a-half year mark.

"He came"—meaning He manifested His power in the natural realm. When God comes, when God breaks in, it's in reference to the events of the earth.

A judgment was made in the courts of heaven in favor of the saints being martyred on the earth. Now it came time for the saints to possess the kingdom. In Daniel 7:21, they possess the kingdom like they did in Daniel 7:18.

In Daniel 7:23, the angel goes on to describe this to Daniel. He says, "The fourth beast"—this Antichrist, at the end of the age, will be different than all the other kingdoms.

All the kingdoms have a demonic element, but from Revelation 13:4 we know that Satan will give his authority to this man. Satan has helped out a few guys throughout the years, but never has Satan given his authority at this level to a human being. This kingdom will be different; it will have a supernatural and demonic dimension beyond any time in history.

What will this kingdom do? It will "devour the whole earth." What will this kingdom do? It will "trample" the whole earth. What will this kingdom do? It will break the earth "in pieces" (Dan. 7:23). What's interesting is that the very same phrase is what David said about Jesus in Psalm 2:9—"He will break the nations into pieces" (Ps. 2:9, paraphrased).

The Antichrist will break down everything that he can get his hands on, and then Jesus will come and break down into pieces everything the Antichrist established. Psalm 2:9 says of the Messiah, "He will rule the nations with a rod of iron," and, "He will dash them into pieces like clay pottery" (Psalm 2:9, paraphrased). He will destroy everything the Antichrist put into place.

MANY WILL BE DELIVERED; MANY WILL DIE

The Antichrist dashes what is right into pieces, and then Jesus comes and dashes what the Antichrist built.

The Antichrist will speak pompous words, and they will fill the earth (Dan. 7:25). He will persecute the saints, and the saints will actually be given into his hand for three and a half years. Many will be delivered, but many will be martyred. We don't know the number, but we know it's a huge amount of martyrs.

It will be like in Acts 12, when James dies in prison. Right next to him is Peter, and the angel comes and opens the door, and Peter comes out. One is delivered supernaturally, and one dies.

Both numbers are going to be vast.

“IT WAS GIVEN UNTO HIM TO MAKE WAR WITH THE SAINTS”

Look at what John says in Revelation, talking about the Antichrist. He’s quoting Daniel 7—“He was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies” (Rev. 13:5). John says *blasphemies* where Daniel says *pompous words*. They’re the same thing.

“He was given authority to continue for forty-two months... It was granted to him”—to the Antichrist; John is quoting Daniel 7:25—“to make war with the saints and to overcome them” (Rev. 13:5, 7)—actually to kill them.

“He was given authority over every nation of the earth” (Rev. 13:7b, paraphrased). He had his influence; he had infrastructure across the whole earth. There will be pockets of mercy, but the Antichrist’s influences, an awareness of his power and presence, will be in every place in the earth.

Even those who are protected will have to war in the Spirit and live in righteousness to be protected from the Antichrist’s influence. In the wake of his decisions, everyone will feel it, even though there will be those who by spiritual warfare are protected from it. But it will only be by a vigilant life in God.

At the very end, God will have a company of people—it could be millions, it could be hundreds of millions—where every single one of the saints who are standing at the end will be in complete unity, and there will be maturing in the whole Body of Christ.

They will be people in the natural realm, a global body of people who stayed true.

AND THEY OVERCAME THE DRAGON

A. Revelation 12 says the saints overcome Satan (Rev. 12:11). Now which is it? Does Satan overcome us, or do we overcome him?

Both of them are right. He overcomes the saints physically by martyring them and putting them in prison. The saints overcome him by loyal love and obedience.

Even those that are brought into death are overcomers, because they didn’t yield to his threats; they stayed true to light and to righteousness. Even in their deaths, they overcame him by refusing to yield.

In Revelation 12 and 13 there’s the clear parallel of one overcoming the other. Satan overcomes the saints physically, and the saints overcome Satan spiritually by righteousness.

We refuse to live in his dark ways. We overcome him.

THE LEAST SEVERE MEANS

B. This is a principle I use often. You need to be able to say this right off, right out of your heart. You don't have to say it word for word, but at least express the idea.

God is going to use the least severe means, the Great Tribulation—it's really severe, but it's the least severe means—to reach the greatest number of people at the deepest level of love without violating their free will, and He is going to raise up the future governors of the earth.

The Lord would say, "I made it as soft as possible." It will be violent. It will be the most violent time in history, but it was as easy as possible to get millions choosing righteousness at the level they need to be the heirs of the earth.

THE DARKEST HOUR OF HISTORY

Look how severe it will be. "Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved" (Mt. 24:22).

They're not talking about no flesh being born again. It means there would be no survivors.

If the Antichrist ruled for three decades instead of three and a half years—I'm just making up a number, but if he ruled for decades instead of years and months, there would be no survivors on the planet.

This is the most severe hour in history. Do you know what the first line of defense is? The prophetic Church. This is exciting, but guys, it's us. I don't mean *us* as in IHOP-KC, I mean *us* as in guys like us all over the earth, sitting in chairs, doing Bible studies, daydreaming a bit, losing their way, getting up afterwards, trying hard not to. It's us. I think, "Lord, are You sure?"

The vast majority of the Church is not remotely interested in any of this.

Don't get a Messiah complex: There are millions and tens of millions like you who are trying to go hard, but not doing so well; trying hard, but not really doing so great.

I'm thinking, "Lord, do You know how fragile this Daniel 7 plan is? I mean, I know the guys! I know scores of them. I know me; I know the guys. This is a fragile plan! No, really, because flesh and blood humans have to choose right for it to work."

I know so many leaders; so many leaders I don't know, and I say, "Lord, it's not that great right now. It's not that great right now."

The Lord says, "I know it's fragile, but it's going to work, I assure you."

He spoke it to Daniel: “It’s going to work and the thing is going to turn around.”

There’s not a pill you can take or a button you can push, or one guy who can lay hands on you in a prayer line to give you the automatic responses that are necessary.

Look at this! It says “no flesh would be saved.” No one would survive. It is that intense. The answer for God’s purposes on the earth is in the hands of humans on the earth that have our mindset, who are prone to all the things we wish we weren’t prone to.

Yet the Lord is going to pull this thing off. He is going to establish it in power.

But don’t get the wrong idea that it’s all God and not us, and so, “Well, He’ll just do it.” No! He’s setting up a context in which we have to choose, and our choices will have to be made in a real, flesh-and-blood context.

THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE UNDERSTANDING

D. God is going to establish Jesus’ eternal value system in these people. There are plenty who have chosen it in history, but there’s going to be a huge number in the last generation.

Look at what it says in Daniel 11:33. “Of the people who understand”—those are the forerunners. It’s not enough to study it; we need to understand it and embody it in our choices of righteousness and meekness.

Understanding doesn’t mean that you can make a handout. That doesn’t mean you understand it. I don’t understand it because I can give a message on it. That’s not what understanding it means. It does mean that we do need to understand it cognitively, but it’s more than that. We understand it such that we agree with it in the way that we spend time and money. We agree with it.

Look what they’ll do. “The people who understand will instruct multitudes”—they will instruct many. Some of them will fall. Some of the most prominent leaders who are leading the way will actually be martyred.

REFINED, AND PURIFIED, AND MADE WHITE

What will this do? It will refine and purify and make white a multitude of others.

The multitudes that are hearing them will be refined. They’ll say, “Whoa, this is intense. If he fell, and she fell martyred, and they stayed true, then I will stay true and I will get myself prepared, no matter what it costs me.”

Beloved, when you live with that mindset, you make all kinds of different choices.

That is what's happening. It's what's happening on the other side with terrorism. They're living and planning in their twenties to die for their cause. They spend their time and money very differently when they know they're going to die in a year or two. They're going to do it as an act of devotion.

It refines the people. Martyrdom produces refining. They all see themselves and they say, "Wow, what would I do?" There's a refining that takes place.

Amen. Let's stand.

MINISTRY TIME

Lord, we come to You, we come to You. Lord, we love this glorious vision of Daniel 7.

I want those of you to come up who, in your spirits, have been stirred specifically about Daniel 7. Maybe it's just tonight, or maybe it's been stirred at other times in an unusual way.

I mean, you're really gripped by it. You're saying, "I have got to know Daniel 7! I've got to move in it. I've got to live in it and make it known."

If some of you in this room have felt challenged by the Lord specifically on Daniel 7, recently or even now, and you're saying, "I want breakthrough revelation on this chapter in my heart," and you would like prayer, you can have that cry without needing prayer, but if you would like prayer on that, then just come forward.

You're saying, "I've been stirred by Daniel 7; I have to go there."

Beloved, we have to devour Daniel 7. We have to eat the scroll and meditate on this book. This is a huge chapter and a huge statement from heaven to the earth. It's huge!

I want to be a man of understanding. Jesus, come. Lord, I ask You for the spirit of revelation, even now.

Let's lift our voice and sing with our spirit for a minute.

Lord, give me the spirit of revelation; release a spirit of revelation. Lord, release a spirit of revelation. I ask You for the spirit of glory to be released even now. Even now, Lord, break in with a spirit of glory. Open our eyes.

We want to be people of understanding. I want to be a person of understanding. I want to instruct Your people in truth. I want to be a person of understanding. I want to teach Your people, Lord. I want to make known Your heart.

Release Your power; release Your fire even now, I ask. Break in with Your power even now, Lord. Break in with Your authority, Lord.

I want to see, I want to feel, I want to be; I want to be a vessel for Your glory. I want to be a vessel of honor, a vessel of righteousness, who is clean in the house of the Lord.

This is my cry, Abba. Reveal Your beauty. Make us holy, as You are holy. Teach us meekness, Lord. Teach us righteousness. Show us the way of lowliness, Lord. We want to walk in Your yoke with You.

Until the end of time, come and make us pure and white and bright; this is our cry, Abba. This is our cry, Lord; refine us until the end.

I want to be ready, Lord; I want to be prepared, Lord. I want to be spotless.

“I will raise up shepherds after My heart. They will feed My people on the knowledge of God” (Jer. 3:15). I want to be a shepherd after Your heart. I want to be a shepherd. I want to feed them on living understanding.

Lord, raise up shepherds, shepherds of five and ten, shepherds of fifty and a hundred, shepherds of thousands. Raise up shepherds of five people in this house, Lord.

Release the spirit of glory now, Lord.